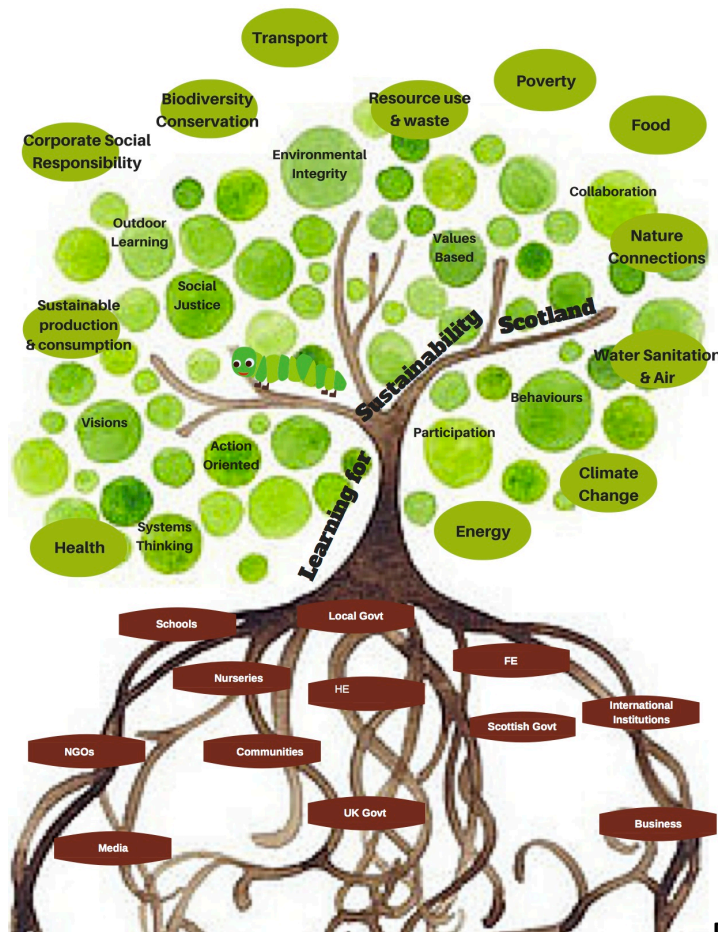# Mapping opportunities for learning for sustainability in Scotland

Learning for Sustainability Scotland

Scotland's United Nations recognised Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) in Education for Sustainable Development

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December 2015

Acknowledgements

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Executive Summary

The field of education for sustainability has evolved. The development of a new organisation, Learning for Sustainability Scotland (LfS Scotland – Scotland's United Nations recognised Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)) has catalysed reflection on and exploration of the framing, scope and opportunities of education for sustainable development and, in particular, learning for sustainability (LfS) in Scotland.

The aims of this project were to produce an opportunities map for LfS; to explore areas in which LfS is well advanced in Scotland and those in which we have achieved less; to articulate an ideal state of LfS and appropriate targets; and to set this against a global context.

We began with a brief literature review and historical overview. The principal action plans and history of development of LfS in Scotland were summarised. We explored how LfS can be experienced throughout the life course of an individual, through formal and other influences. We then undertook more interactive research, drawing on the experiences and expertise of our Steering Group and members.

The methodology included initial scoping with LfS Scotland members, followed by an interactive Delphi process undertaken with up to 14 members of the Steering Group of LfS Scotland.

Delphi Round 1 explored the ideal state of LfS in Scottish sectors, Scotland as a whole and globally; assessment of the UN Decade of ESD (UNDESD) and Scottish targets for the last decade; proposed targets for sectors, Scotland as a whole and globally. Round 2 consolidated mutual targets and an assessment of progress made to date against targets defined in round 1; yet permitting diversity of views to emerge. Input from LfS Scotland members was sought at an AGM and a final Round 3 then sought consensus on points of agreement and divergence; and on action points to take forward. Respondents represented a range of sectors (school, Further Education (FE), Higher Education (HE), Non-Government Organisation, community, government), with some having multi-sectoral interests. All had local and national experience with ten also citing international experience.

This Delphi process allowed us to engage key informants and members to develop strategic priorities based on dialogue. By so doing, we redefined our field of theory and practice. This process also encouraged reflection by and between practitioners and academics in learning for sustainability. We hope to take these results forward as an example of collaborative, dialogic working; as outcomes to inform practice; as ideas to provoke further thinking.

Our starting point of exploring an 'ideal state' of LfS gave us the opportunity to open up definitions and framing of this concept. Iterations allowed us to develop consensus around this issue and derive a comprehensive framing of LfS. We recognised that the UNESCO targets set for the UN DESD were ambitious but broad, but the Scottish targets for the second half of the decade offered a more relevant action plan. Whilst it was agreed that these targets had been largely met in some sectors, particularly in schools, there was agreement that the remaining challenges were significant and much work remains to 'mainstream' LfS in HE and FE and in informal and non-formal learning contexts.

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After three Rounds of discussion, a holistic framing of learning for sustainability emerged as:

Learning for sustainability enables visioning of sustainable futures and planning of the journey towards these aspirations. These futures would be culturally specific and contextualised within place, enabling different visions to be realised with a spirit of collaboration. This learning strives to create a fair and flourishing society and enable empowerment, particularly of the currently disempowered, whilst ensuring we live within ecological limits. Ultimately such learning uses innovative pedagogies and relevant curricula that enable a process of ongoing reflection to support specific skills as well as personal and community resilience within our changing world. It encourages people to reflect on values and may lead to escape from a market based, competitive and consumerist dominated worldview.

The strategy for action includes a joined up, systemic, interdisciplinary approach building on partnerships across governance sectors and scales (from local to global). We need strong leadership to pursue innovative practices. Our policy makers will need to be committed, sensitive and brave to develop embedded and integrated policy and action across not only school and other formal education, but also informal (such as community, business) and non-formal (such as media, culture) sectors. Individuals, families and communities will learn through individual transformative experiences as well as collaborative capacity development. Such learning will enable critical reflection and action for value based goals. It would respect traditional, local and practitioner forms of knowledge as well as academic knowledge.

and the role of LfS Scotland emerged as:

The role of LfS Scotland is to cut across sectors and enhance network and partnership in a space full of different organisations and initiatives, recognising the fundamental role of learning in our journey towards sustainability and releasing the potential of individuals, communities and sectors to create human and planetary wellbeing. It can help maintain the place of Scotland as a world leader in the field of learning for sustainability. It is uniquely placed to exploit local partnerships and deliver a joined up, systems approach with a synthesis across sectors, issues and stakeholder groups. It is unbiased and independent, benefiting from the previous success of the SDE network, held to account by a diverse membership constituency and known for commitment and expertise in its staff and Steering Group. The timing is right for LfS Scotland to take Scotland forward and pursue the momentum of the successful UN DESD whilst continuing to play a major role on the international stage in ensuring that learning underpins the emerging UN Sustainable Development Goals.

LfS Scotland as a network organisation is poised to take forward activities to further develop this area of thinking and practice.

Priority actions agreed by Delphi key informants and members include maintenance of the momentum established by the UN DESD, with further events, seminars, policy engagement and networking facilitation key in this endeavour.

Additional agreed areas of activity include deepening of engagement with community groups, HE and FE, business and ultimately a more responsive conversation with the popular media. There is potential to facilitate Scotland's role in the UN's Global Action Programme and to contribute to the UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

However, challenges lie ahead in communicating the wider aspects of sustainability and supporting the shift to a fairer, greener, values based Scotland whilst recognising the plurality of perspectives around what this might mean.

Mapping opportunities for learning for sustainability in Scotland

1. Introduction

The field of education for sustainability has shifted, consolidated and expanded again over the past few decades. The development of a new organisation, Learning for Sustainability Scotland (LfSS - a United Nations University Regional Centre of Expertise (RCE) in Education for Sustainable Development) catalysed reflection on and exploration of the framing, scope and opportunities of learning for sustainability in Scotland. Previous activities engendered discussion with the membership of this network organisation, but deeper investigation was seen to be necessary to provide an opportunities 'map'. We also sought deeper examination of what learning for sustainability is and might be.

It was seen to be necessary to develop a strategic approach for this area of practice in Scotland. At the same time, it was discussed that there was a place to reflect on the theory of this area and contribute something more widely to other UN RCEs and to the academic debate on this area. This report thus focuses partly on LfS Scotland (the gaps for the new network organisation) but also draws more widely on the history and future of the field of learning for sustainability (referred to in this report as LfS) in Scotland and beyond.

This work has taken place against a background of rapid global change with regard to learning for sustainability. The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development came to an end in 2014, the new Sustainable Development Goals have just been established and we await the outcomes of the climate change negotiations in Paris in December.

The aims of this project were:
- **to produce an opportunities map for LfS**
- **to explore in which areas LfS is well advanced and those in which we have achieved less**
- **to articulate an ideal state of LfS and appropriate targets**
- **to set the results within a global context**

2. Learning for Sustainability Scotland

In order to build on the outcomes of the UN Decade of Education in Sustainable Development (UN DESD) as it came to an end in 2014, Scotland put in an application for a UN Regional Centre for Excellence in Education for Sustainable Development. This was approved and Learning for Sustainability Scotland (LfS Scotland) was born in 2013. Learning for Sustainability Scotland (LfS Scotland) is a network organisation now with over 400 individual and institutional members from a variety of sectors including universities, colleges, schools, communities, local and national government and NGOs.

LfS Scotland brings together members to share good practice and knowledge, to collaborate on projects and research and to engage with policy makers in order to increase capacities in learning for sustainability and hence contribute to a more sustainable future. The vision and mission of this network organisation are shown below.

> Our vision is for Learning for Sustainability to take place across the whole of Scottish society, building our capacity to contribute to sustainability – locally, nationally and globally.

Vision

> Our mission is to work co-operatively to harness the transformative potential of Learning for Sustainability to create a flourishing, sustainable world; where communities are rooted in their landscape, the whole ecosystem flourishes, fairness and social justice is the norm and the economy is vibrant; locally, nationally and globally.

Mission

This project included discussion with members of LfS Scotland at different stages over the past two years, and a Delphi process to explore key informant perspectives on LfS in more detail. The methodology is described below and the report then includes a brief summary of relevant policy and progress to date in the development of the field of learning for sustainability in Scotland,

offering a critical narrative on relative achievements in different fields. Drawing from discussions with members, it then frames the scope of LfS, maps gaps and opportunities and identifies partnerships and ways of collaborative working that could further stimulate activity in this area. The results of the Delphi process are then reported and the report finishes with conclusions and recommendations for the way forward.

3. Methodology

In order to gain a wide range of perspectives from those engaged in LfS in Scotland, discussions were held at an open meeting of the network organisation in 2014. All participants were given an opportunity to contribute to three out of five different topics:

1. Framing the scope of learning for sustainability
2. What gaps and opportunities are there for LfS in Scotland?
3. What sort of partnerships are we seeking in learning for sustainability?
4. How does the wider context influence what we do in LfS in Scotland?
5. What networks and resources can we draw on to strengthen LfS?

Notes from these discussions informed the output of this report. However, further refining and prioritisation of the many inputs received was required in order to develop a strategic view of the field. A Delphi process was thus conducted with members of the LfS Scotland Steering Group plus other key informants identified as being representative of areas of sustainability learning not well covered by Steering Group members. A Delphi process consists of rounds of questions in which informed respondents offer their perspectives on a number of questions, usually enabling development of a quantitative assessment of an issue and convergence to a consensus situation. In this process, three rounds of questions were undertaken.

Initial scoping: framing the scope and questions with LfSS members

Delphi Round 1: the ideal state of LfS in Scottish sectors, Scotland as a whole and globally; assessment of the UNESCO DESD and Scottish targets for the last decade; proposed targets for sectors, Scotland as a whole and globally.

Round 2: consolidation of mutual targets and assessment of progress made to date against targets defined in round 1; yet permitting diversity of views to emerge

Intermediate scoping: testing initial results with LfSS members
***Round 3**: consensus on points of agreement and divergence; and on action points to take forward*

4. Exploring progress to date in the development of LfS in Scotland

Progress can be mapped in terms of sector (for example, in schools, the Higher Education sector, in local government or in communities); according to the activities of organisations and institutions that have promoted activity; and along a timeline indicating sequential and interlinked influences. Given the frequent focus on sectoral approaches, we present here a summary largely based on a narrative across time, but with sectoral and organisational detail. We focus on the period from 2005 in order to analyse impacts throughout the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) (2005-2014). The UN DESD stimulated coordinated activity and catalysed some policy and practice progress. This is not a complete analysis; a further and more detailed analysis including reference to theoretical and academic debate is underway.

The Scottish Government's commitment to the UN DESD resulted in two Action Plans setting out expectations for schools, universities and colleges and lifelong learning (community learning and development, workplace and public awareness) (Scottish Government 2006; 2010). Support for the setting up of the UN RCE LfS Scotland is an acknowledgement of its desire to maintain momentum on LfS.

There is as yet no recent detailed analysis of progress against the actions set out in the Action Plan, particularly that for the second half of the Un DESD. Some indication of areas in which progress has been made and is still required can be drawn from reports by the Sustainable Development Commission (2010), Learning and Teaching Scotland (2011) and the UK National Commission for the UK (2013).

Sustainable Development Commission Scotland (SDC)

External reports on progress were compiled by the Sustainable Development Commission until it disbanded in 2010. The 2010 Report acknowledged the UN Decade Action Plans as a significant driver of progress on SDE in Scotland. Substantial progress in school education policy was noted, but also significant gaps in implementation, such as: "There is little evidence that teachers are sufficiently prepared to deliver SDE effectively"; and "Eco-Schools alone cannot deliver the whole SDE agenda for schools".

In Colleges the important commitment to a Sustainable Development Education (SDE) post and an HMIE Aspect report on Sustainability was noted, and in Universities and Colleges the importance of the 2005 Guidance letter from the Scottish Funding Council, the EAUC in Scotland and Higher Education Academy Leadership. The report warned that: "It is important that progress on campus sustainability is not used as a proxy for progress on the whole SDE agenda in the tertiary sector".

Lifelong learning was highlighted as an area where substantial progress was still needed: "the plan does not cover the full breadth of community learning such as that provided by Transition Towns groups, Development Trusts and eco-congregations" and ''there is a starting point for work on SDE in communities but wider spread of action will be needed".

The SDC Report notes that "the actions are output not outcome focussed", highlighting the need to demonstrate the impact of Learning for Sustainability.

Education Scotland

A summary report on progress detailing achievements and challenges was produced by Learning and Teaching Scotland (now Education Scotland) in 2011, responsible for co-ordinating national strategy in SDE in partnership with Scottish Government. Considerable progress was reported in schools and colleges and initiation of work in community learning and development. The challenges identified were:

In schools – "much needs to be done to provide appropriate CPD for educators to ensure they are competent and confident in delivering global citizenship and ESD using appropriate learning experiences and pedagogies".

Wider community partnership – "Work needs to be developed to further encourage these links to be made at a strategic level but there is much good practice nationally and many schools have recognised the importance of strong links to connect young people to their local community and provide them with opportunities to be effective contributors and responsible citizens".

Tertiary Sector

Colleges – "A number of colleges can be identified as 'champions' of the sustainable development agenda and have assigned responsibility for SDE at senior management team level and have started to build the capacity to deliver across the whole institution and/or curriculum. … At present there is no single appropriate 'curriculum response'".

Community Learning and Development – "good work is being undertaken by various community and environmental groups across the country but more needs to done in communicating this more widely and sharing practice".

UK National Commission for UNESCO

In March 2013, a UK Policy Brief was compiled by the UK National Commission for UNESCO. The section discussing Scotland is copied in full below, since this gives the most contemporary indication of how LfS sits. It is recognised that such documents seek to offer a positive perspective on the situation, and this is discussed.

> "Sustainable development is one of the Scottish Government's key national performance outcomes and features in many aspects of Government policy. A 'greener' and 'fairer' nation is one of their overarching strategic objectives. It has set ambitious targets for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions through the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009. In these processes the Government has emphasised the importance of societal change towards a sustainable future and highlighted the role of education in informing that process.
>
> **Education for sustainable development in formal education**
> The Scottish Government has made a substantial commitment to the DESD. It has stimulated activity in Scotland through policy initiatives and the core justification for these has been laid out in a series of documents, the most recent of which, Learning for Change[i], sets out expectations for schools, universities and colleges, and communities, highlighting that 'creating a sustainable future for Scotland will require widespread understanding and huge cultural change – and the key to achieving this is education for sustainable development'
>
> In 2011 the incoming government made a manifesto commitment to explore the concept of 'One Planet Schools'. This signalled an intent to help schools move towards a One Planet future – where they will gradually reduce their use of resources and develop a values orientation that addresses sustainability. The intention is to take a whole school approach to this through the integration of three equally important facets – Education for Sustainable Development, Global Citizenship and Outdoor Learning. The Ministerial Advisory Group report was published in December 2012[ii] and Scottish Ministers will respond in early 2013. The report's recommendations chime with the work of the now independent General Teaching Council for Scotland (GTCS) which finalised the revision of its 'Professional Standards' in December 2012. These now require all teachers to address 'Learning for Sustainability' (defined as for "One Planet Schools") in their teaching. This is a significant development that will require a national commitment to pre-service and in-service training of all members of the profession.
>
> The recent major revision of the curriculum in Scotland, 'Curriculum for Excellence' (CfE), and its phased introduction has allowed ESD to be fully integrated into many aspects of the curriculum, particularly in technologies, science and social subjects. More broadly CfE provides the overarching philosophical, pedagogical and practical framework and context in which ESD ought to be applied. One of the four core capacities of all learners defined in Curriculum for Excellence, that young people should become 'responsible citizens', signals a

strong impetus towards living sustainably and equitably.

Sustainability is often a feature of the informal or extra-curricular work of Scottish schools. Almost all schools are registered with the government supported Eco-Schools scheme, with nearly 50% having achieved a 'Green Flag'. Other initiatives, such as the John Muir Award, Rights Respecting

Schools, Fair Trade Schools and Forest Schools have also facilitated a wider understanding of ESD in schools. However, as these are not curricular initiatives they are not available to all school pupils, and there is a clear tension between the valuable role of the 'third sector' and core mainstream provision.

Education for sustainable development in non-formal education and the community

A range of initiatives has been established to encourage local communities to engage with sustainable development (SD). These non-formal education streams have been successful modes of learning and embedding SD across Scotland. The Climate Challenge Fund (CCF) made funding of £37.7million available to communities in the period 2008 –12, supporting 345 communities across Scotland to take action on climate change and thereby deriving educational benefits. A proportion of all future CCF will support projects run by and for young people; this activity will be titled the Junior Climate Challenge Fund.

In addition to Scottish Government funded initiatives, schemes to build sustainable communities have increased in strength over the years, embracing a 'for themselves, by themselves' philosophy, such as those supported through CADISPA (Conservation and Development in Sparsely Populated Areas). Since establishment in 1987, CADISPA has supported grass-roots community-led initiatives across rural Scotland and offered guidance on how to address sustainability issues in local areas through a focus on experiential and nonformal learning through place-based action research.

The Transition movement has had some impact in communities with a growing number of groups in Scotland.3 There have also been projects in university communities at the University of Edinburgh and the University of St Andrews. The St Andrews project has worked with both the university and the local town community, recently winning a grant for joint sustainability projects.

A United Nations University recognised Regional Centre of Expertise in Education for Sustainable Development (UNU RCE) for Scotland was approved in December 2012.4 It has the support of the Scottish Government and will maintain momentum as we approach the end of UNDESD, providing new opportunities for collaborative working between practitioners, academics, government and civil society."

This policy brief establishes several relevant points for LfS Scotland:

- Scotland is playing a leading role in LfS within UK; we can consolidate this position and see it as underpinning a strong future for our RCE

- Recently there have been advances made in policy and practice, with good engagement by policy makers and support for reports such as the One Planet Schools report; this engagement serves as a solid basis for continued action

- LfS in schools is being promoted (especially through professional standards for teachers) and Curriculum for Excellence (CfE) combined with Eco-Schools and other voluntary sector programmes offers opportunities to embrace it within schools

- 'Community' and 'sustainability' are recognised and promoted within Scotland

The policy brief does not fully document the progress on LfS in Scotland and this is a key role that LfSS could play.

There is no consideration in the Policy Brief of

- progress in HE nor the arguably slower progress in FE, including the attempts to link campus operations with core research and teaching activities by EAUC Scotland;

- the challenges with the implementation of CfE and the relative paucity of research on early years education and sustainability;

- the complexity of community engagement;

- the positive policy framework for community engagement and LfS;

- struggles by Local Authorities and other sectors to tackle behaviour change in relation to climate change imperatives

- business, agriculture, forestry, marine management and other sectors

In summary, in Scotland we have made great progress recently in policy and practice in formal education, especially in schools, and we are stronger than many regions in acknowledging informal education for sustainability within communities, but we still have gaps and challenges.

5. Framing the scope of learning for sustainability

The focus groups with members of LfS discussing how they framed the scope of LfS elicited diverse and ambitious views. Learning for sustainability can be understood as a personal journey on which one uses one's experiences to explore values. It is not an event in a person's life, nor is it confined to formal education. Rather, it is 'learning for life', and LfSS members discussed that it can be considered a 'pedagogy for life'. Learning for sustainability experiences can challenge assumptions and provoke dangerous questions; they can also be liberating and empowering. The learning can be enhanced if reflection is encouraged after experiences or knowledge gain. Ultimately, LfS is about creating a society in which the individualistic 'I' is shifted to 'we'; in which cultural norms support a healthy society and environment; in which we live locally yet with an awareness of our global connections. LfS empowers people to ask difficult questions about their own and societal assumptions. There was discussion that perhaps excellent learning for sustainability, or, as it is often known, ESD, merely promotes excellent education; all education should provoke reflection and action, combine different forms of learning, empower individuals and build society. Such concepts can and must be understood differently by different actors, and sustainability to some extent is about respecting and working with diversity. Some of these attributes are summarised in Figure 1.
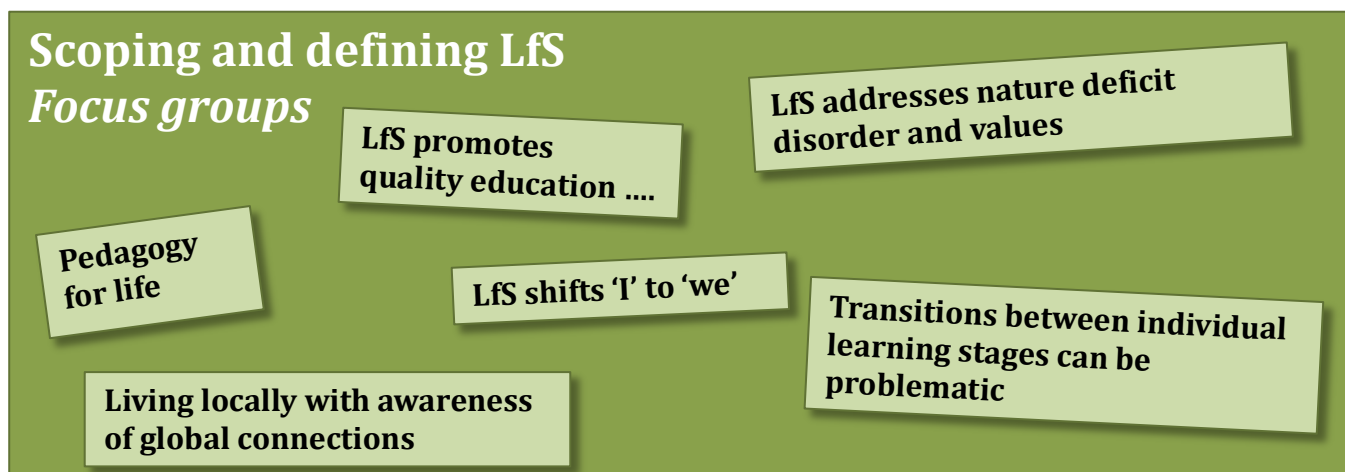
Scoping and defining LfS
Focus groups

LfS promotes quality education ….

LfS addresses nature deficit disorder and values

Pedagogy for life

LfS shifts 'I' to 'we'

Transitions between individual learning stages can be problematic

Living locally with awareness of global connections

Figure 1. *Perspectives on learning for sustainability offered by LfS Scotland members in focus groups during a LfS Scotland meeting.*

Such concepts need to be put into practice in accessible and often simple ways; getting children outside, helping communities celebrate together, promoting organisational change; embedding care. Sometimes we need to engage people through cost benefit before discussing values. We need to encourage positive messages and actions and the feel good factor to engage people, especially if there has been an assumption challenge.

The groups discussed what the relative roles of formal, informal and non-formal educational experiences were in LfS. Further reflection by the authors of the report led to schematic illustrations of some of the individualistic and scale issues discussed above. An individual may experience forms of LfS in different ways at different stages of their life, and we recognise that this experience will be individualistic. We also identify potential challenges with the transitions from one stage to another; and highlight the feedbacks loops and iterative nature of LfS (Figure 2). The LfS members focus groups also elicited discussion of transitions, and in particular the challenges in Scotland of children graduating from Curriculum for Excellence and Eco-schools approach and then attending Further or Higher Education with less focus on sustainable development. There was much debate around the wider influences on people from the popular media and advertising, and about the drift into 'nature deficit disorder'. The lack of political literacy in young people and possible reasons for this were lamented as being a barrier in promoting civic engagement and reinforcement of a set of values beyond the individual.

Pathway for an individual

Early childhood

Nursery

Primary school

Secondary school

Wider cultural influences

College

University

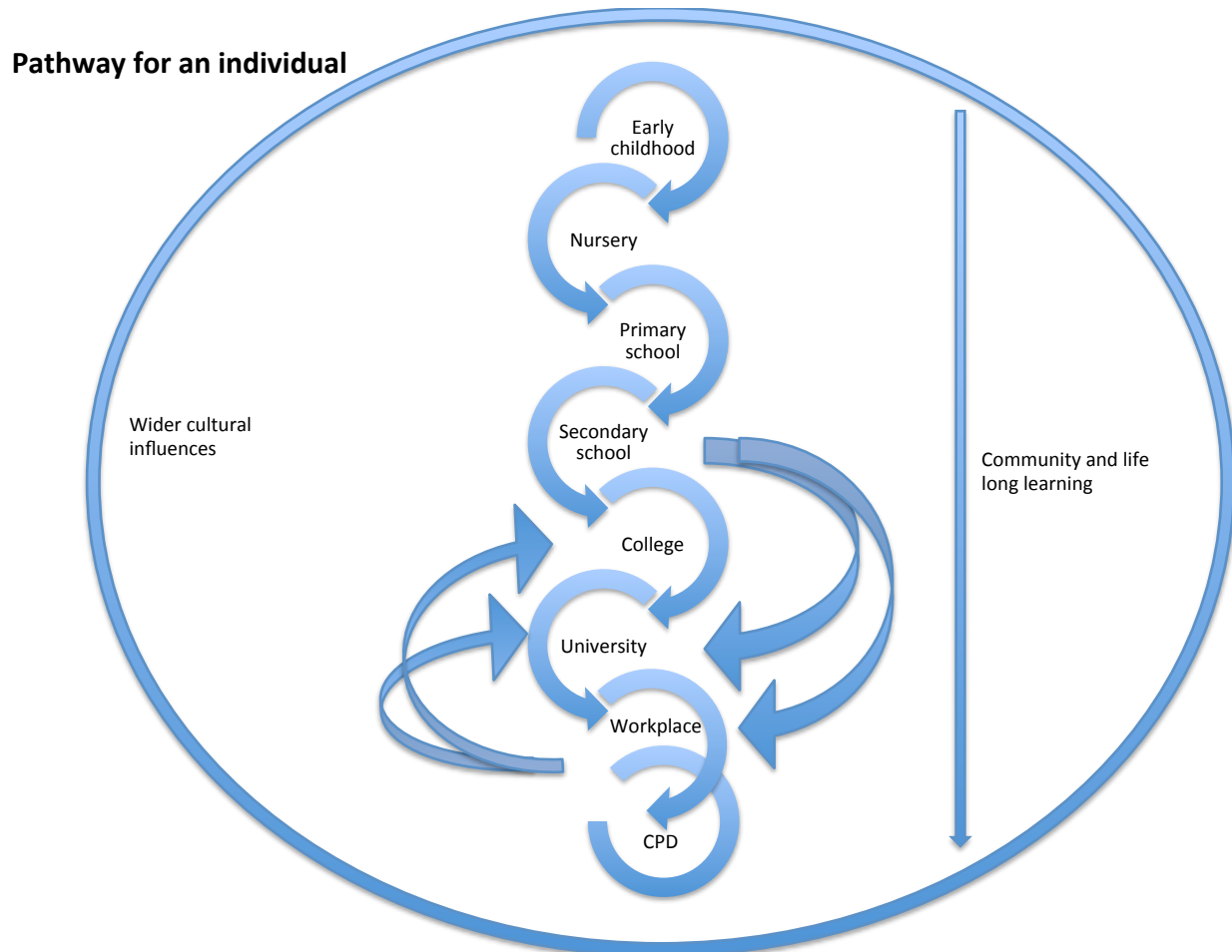Workplace

CPD

Community and life long learning

Figure 2. Pathway of learning (for sustainability) throughout the life of an individual. Wider cultural influences comprise media, socio-cultural norms and international effects.

Attributes useful to LfSS in framing the field of learning for sustainability that were proposed by the focus groups are shown in Table 1. We also see that scale is important; that individuals live within households and communities, and that communities of interest cut across places and landscapes. LfS is also governed through a policy framework established at national level and international impetus such as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (Figure 3).

We argue that learning can occur through formal teaching or through experience and practice; that the pursuit of knowledge in research is also a form of learning and that research, teaching and practice feed back into each other and are interlinked (Figure 4). In this way knowledge can be produced not only by academics but also by practitioners and through indigenous wisdom. Knowledge is mobilised not only through formal education but also through peer exchange in communities; through family and place based generational exchange; through dissemination of best practice within sectors. Knowledge is implemented not only by experts or new graduates with shiny degrees, but also by practitioners, local people.

Table 1. *List of attributes and strategies of that learning for sustainability should pursue as proposed by focus groups of members*

| Attributes required	Strategies needed
• Combination of emotion and STEM… • Nature connection • Different learning spaces • Positive not all negative • Systems thinking • Reflection on transformative experiences • Reflection on experiential learning • Critical thinking & education • Lifelong learning • Inclusivity • Values & behaviour change / social norms • Political literacy and activity	• Leadership • Start young! With children • Build on existing enthusiasms / energy! (in all ages especially young people & kids) • Enable use of local spaces • Do not 'preach' • Change from 'the green thing' to do 'the right thing' to do • Need to promote statutory requirements & regulation e.g for outdoor education in each school • Develop a powerful voice to influence media • Share positive and powerful stories • Members act as ambassadors in different sectors
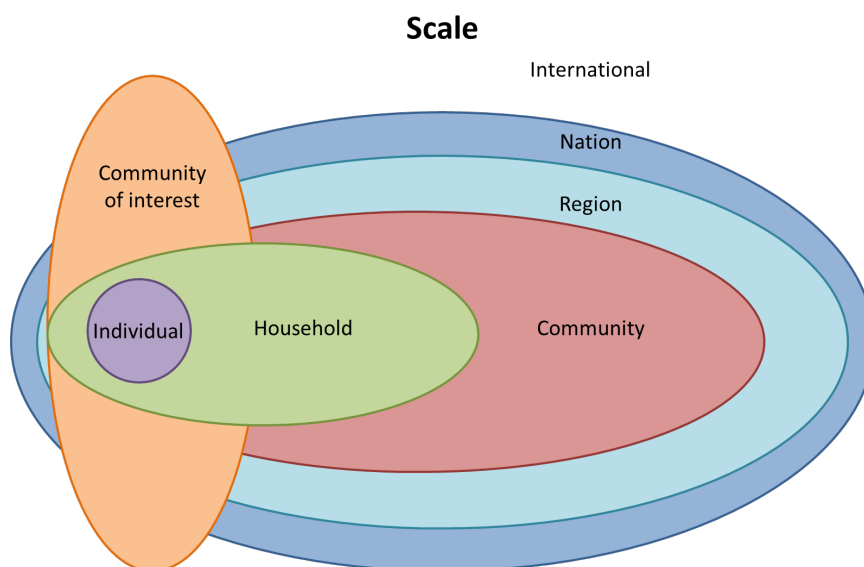
Figure 3. *Scale influences on learning (for sustainability) of an individual in a point in time. Immediate effects of household and wider effects of community, region and greater scales affect how an individual experiences and interacts with the world. A more recent and less place based influence is that of communities of practice.*
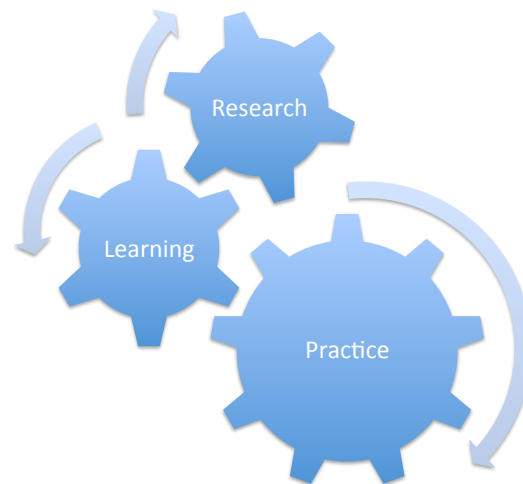
Figure 4. *Interlinkages between learning for sustainability and sustainability research and practice enable knowledge production, mobilisation and implementation.*

LfS is not an activity to be relegated to teaching formally in schools. It can vary from learning informally, transformative individual experiences, collective capacity building, skills gain at different times and in different contexts. In Scotland, in the school education sector we have chosen to characterise LfS as a combination of ESD Outdoor education and Global Citizenship. This relationship was discussed in the One Planet Schools report. Even in this report, the scope of LfS was quite wide, as seen in the wordle below.

Figure 5. *WORD CLOUD from the One Planet Schools report 2013.*

Learning for sustainability is not only a recognition of learning around topics related to sustainable development in its widest articulation, but also of the importance of mode of learning, or pedagogy. Hence learning forms and approaches such as outdoor, place based or experiential learning, for example, might lead to transformative learning; and learning practices such as reflexivity, participatory engagement, shared and embodied experiences might deepen the potential for

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learning for sustainability. Topics include not only environmental issues but also issues around, for example, global citizenship, social justice, development, ethics and values and behaviours.

6. Current context, gaps and opportunities for LfS from members

The member focus groups were asked what gaps have existed in LfS until now, what the opportunities and challenges are in filling gaps and what LfSS should prioritise as opportunities. It was recognised that there is already a lot of good practice and that this needs to be built upon.

6.1 Current context

Member focus groups explored how policy and regulation at national and international levels could and should influence LfS. They also discussed how the current context was influencing LfS in different sectors, in particular aspects of the audit culture and era of austerity.

6.2 Gaps

- A vignette explanation of what LfS means – words, concepts, frames – that gives members confidence to communicate with key decision makers. Perhaps a simple brochure?
- Audit (literature review?) of existing & baseline research to (across all learning) determine what **evidence gaps** exist with a view to **demonstrating the impacts** all this work including new policy (such as the new GTCS standards and the longitudinal impacts of CfE)
- Horizontal links between school and community; and between HE/FE and non-formal learning
- Greater use of the term 'community' beyond place based meanings; for example employees of a company can be considered a community; communities of practice such as Scottish horticulturalists exist
- Dissemination of existing ways and development of new ways of measuring the sustainability of a community
- A regional space and planning approach in which within a local authority area, all leaders in Local Authority, business, HE and other system areas work together in partnership
- Zero Waste links with Community Councils
- Progress towards general ESD qualifications for industry

Table 2. *Critical aspects highlighted in various sectors by LfS members in focus groups*

Sector/area	Critical aspects
Government policy	Offering a more holistic approach to the economy Influencing policy in other areas Tackle bigger complex issues such as extremely unequal distribution of wealth Strengthen local, collective and individual capacity for sustainability action Join up agenda across different sectors for government and action Promote cross party (political) long term planning
Media and social media	Influence social media such as films on TV to normalise sustainable behaviours Influence themes in computer games Working with social norms to reach the general public Need to prioritise messages to give Work towards empowerment Seek a stronger presence on LINKED IN Develop strong media relations
Awareness and education	Provide examples and good practice Give people choices
Food production and consumption	More research coming online to provide stronger evidence base for decision making Farm to Plate view becoming more widely accepted Need to embed sustainable foods into V programmes and soaps so they become the norm
Business	Seeking to offer services and products in a way that benefits local people Supporting cooperatives Develop community based business Recognising materials shortages Supporting approaches such as the Circular Economy that emphasise circular rather than linear resource flows
Communities	Need to build the capacity to grow food locally Promote resilient communities

6.3 Opportunities and priorities

- LfSS could help co-ordinate and avoid duplication; needs to prevent 'reinvention of the wheel' with too many organisations.

- LfSS could 'join the dots' – putting people in touch with each other

- LfSS could **share good practice across sectors & organisations** to build on current sustainability activity and encourage uptake and replication elsewhere

- LfSS could build on its 'pan sector' identity to showcase good practice and empower different sectors (for example, communities, schools, FE, industry) to actively share their experiences & ideas. This might include online activities or a series of seminars.

- Opportunities to exploit funding opportunity for organisations working in partnership

- Opportunities for HE to produce interdisciplinary leaders and for FE to deliver vocational education on sustainability

- Opportunities to research the links between primary and secondary education. Are both sectors embedding LfS?

- The challenge of standards for teachers is an immediate priority. There is a need to bring them to life and embedded into accreditation of programmes TEIs

- LfSS could create a flexible standard for LAs to work to

- Practical networks of physical assets and opportunities for people and groups to tap into (eg renewables, outdoor learning)

- Opportunity to influence sector and policy leadership

- Opportunity to do research on whether LfS and pro-social values lead to improved well-being and social outcomes

- Opportunity to capitalise on the broad membership of LfSS and challenge each LfSS member to go visit a key decision-maker to speak face-to-face about how the framework of this agenda would help them

These discussions thus focused on the need for LfSS to offer a place for illustration and discussions of LfS; to play a role in inter- and inter-sector knowledge sharing and discussion of good practice; to play a proactive role in influencing sector and policy leaders about LfS; to capitalise on immediate opportunities; and to promote research in key, under investigated areas.

7. Partnerships and key stakeholder identification

7.1 Partnerships and effective collaboration

LfSS is an example of a new type of organisation that is essentially a network of individuals and organisations or institutions. LfSS thus has to develop collaborative working strategies in which members benefit from its activities and LfSS does not compete with members but rather leverages greater opportunities, through funding, awareness, advocacy or other areas. LfSS also has a mandate to work with other external organisations in the broadly defined field of LfS. The collaborative working practices and partnership approach practiced will thus be essential to both LfSS as a network organisation and to its efficacy in operation.

The member focus groups explored how LfSS might implement a successful model of partnership. They discussed what the roles of key individuals and leadership are in initiating and maintaining LfS initiatives and how we might establish effective collaborations that enable social learning and release capacity.

People indicated that there was a need for a wide definition of education, that recognised the roles of community, emphasised groups like young people, re-examined the place of colleges in LfS, included Local Authorities, business innovation, the Voluntary Sector and worked across scales including European and other international interactions and with organisations promoting international exchange, such as the UN. People suggested new thinking around advocates of knowledge exchange, for example, hairdressers. Enthusiastic debate addressed reversal of current hierarchies and a more horizontal process of knowledge exchange. Groups agreed on the need for systemic change. There was a sense of frustration about engagement strategies generally in LfS. Business works much more effectively through advertising schemes to engage people in an inspiring or amusing way. Why could we not work with the creative industries to find more innovative and fun ways to inspire people? We could look at residencies and the government departments responsible for skills. Discussion veered from the significant challenges of supporting a sustainability value system, particularly in young people; of promoting community empowerment and value based action; of transforming the educational sector, to the practicalities and small steps required.

The focus groups then explored further how we could promote effective collaborations with partners. Again it appeared that we needed to work effectively around wider cultural norms, particularly addressing the contemporary materialistic and individualistic focus, but it proved challenging to identify with whom and how we could work in this area, apart from a recognition of the role of the media. It was suggested that local authorities used to work in a value based manner, but that this approach had been eroded by the audit culture and other pressures. Perhaps even promoting partnerships once again would be a role for LfSS. However, it was acknowledged that promoting a values based approach can be problematic; whose values should be supported? A focus on awareness, education and critical reflection would perhaps be a more democratic approach. There was also discussion of the need for an evidence base to support claims for LfS, and for research and research dissemination around the links between values and behaviour. Finally, even within the focus groups there was disagreement over language, and it was acknowledged that the terminology used was critical to prevent fragmentation and promote inclusiveness & partnership.

7.2 Stakeholders and potential partners

Across these different sectors for LfS there are many key stakeholders. Here we begin to list these, but this list will be extensive and can be augmented by SDEN lists. This list serves both to identify the current support network for LfSS and those on whom we could draw in tackling other areas.

Table 3. Possible stakeholders to engage in the LfS debate in Scotland, and more specifically in the actions of LfSS

Sector	Stakeholders
Communities	Transition
	CCF groups
	CADISPA
NGOs	Community Energy Scotland
	WWF
	RSPB
	Greenpeace
	Woodland Trust
	Scottish Native Woods

Schools	Eco Schools
	Outdoor education providers
Colleges	College Principals' Convention
	College Development Network
Universities	EAUC
	Association of University Vice Chancellors
	HEA
	NUS
Government	Local authorities
	SSN
	COSLA
	Scottish Funding Council
	Departments: Education, DEFRA, Tourism
	Scottish Natural Heritage
Business	Ellen Macarthur Foundation
	Climate 2020 group
	Tourism and food/hospitality industries
	Professional bodies e.g. architects, GMC, RSE
Media	

7.3 What is the purpose of LfSS?

In seeking resourcing and opportunities for LfSS, we should not neglect a strategic vision that will permit us to achieve our mission. We should not be so reactive to funding calls that we forget our main priorities as an internationally based UN RCE in ESD; as a national body with an eye on policy as well as practice. In particular, we should recognise the needs and requests of LfSS members.

The focus group discussions with LfSS members also allowed members to indicate what they wish to gain from LfSS and what they or their organisations could bring to LfSS. Views fell into the following

categories, from an invitation to a deeper conceptual exploration of the nature of LfS to more instrumental functions:

- Facilitation of 'deep' conversations regarding LfS
- Wider engagement regarding LfS, making action in this area more widely accepted and supported
- An opportunity to increase the diversity of those engaged in the LfS conversation; across gender, ethnic, socio-economic divisions; supporting inter-generational and cultural learning
- Facilitating grassroots voice in national and international LfS debates
- Opportunities to learn from each other and to know about progress and strategies
- Cross sectoral knowledge exchange
- Stimulating interaction between social enterprise and the third sector
- Disseminate LfS relevant research and practice outputs
- A language and set of tools to reach out and enhance awareness in different sectors

Networking regarding resource opportunity

7.4 Opportunities and priorities

Priority opportunities identified in this report through either literature, policy context or from members' focus groups include:

- Play a major role in taking forward ESD/LfS in Scotland at the end of the UN DESD
- Evaluate DESD action plans' progress
- Take forward a new action plan subsequent to the UN DESD
- Develop and disseminate teacher training in response to the new regulations for new and CPD courses
- Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice
- Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures
- Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE
- Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities
- Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation

- Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community
- Develop closer links with business
- Develop closer links with mainstream media

We need to both build on existing strengths and develop a strategy to tackle gaps.

7.5 Resourcing and funding

We need to build strategies to enable LfSS secretariat and steering group, task groups and members to capitalize effectively on funding opportunities. We can develop a matrix of likely sources of funding together with potential times of calls. However, the greater challenge will be that of building a collaborative model in which we work together to leverage additional funding rather than competing with other members.

Table 4. *Possible funding sources for different aspects of LfS*

Funder
Scottish Government
SFC
HEA
NUS
Education Scotland
UK Government
EU
Esme Fairburn
Creative Scotland
Carnegie
Leverhulme
AHRC
ESRC
SUII
HCF and Lottery funding
Membership
Charitable Trusts
Zero Waste Scotland
People & Comm. Fund
OSEG – Glasgow City Council
CCF and Junior CCF
LUSH

8. Results of Delphi survey and additional member input

8.1 Respondents

Fourteen members of the Steering Group responded to the Round 1 Delphi questions, eleven to Round 2 and eleven to Round 3. Respondents had different ways of briefly expressing their roles and experience in relation to LfS. Some briefly listed only current roles and others offered more autobiographical detail. Some described their experience as sectoral and others as task related; and a few indicated a wide scope of interest. Most respondents had multi-sectoral experience and some indicated longterm involvement in LfS (since its emergence) and documented influence in the story of LfS in Scotland. All respondents cited local and national level experience, with ten specifically mentioning international experience as well. There was broad cross sectoral representation evident, with most respondents listing experience across more than one sector. Sectors listed by all fourteen respondents included NGOs (7 respondents); Higher Education (HE – 7); School (5); community (5); Government (3) and Local Authority (3) with experience across Further Education (FE) and Early Years also each mentioned as specific areas by each respondent. Formal biographical information on the steering group suggests even wider experience across sectors, but even these reported summaries indicate wide representation and understanding of many relevant sectors, with business and media being notable exceptions.

8.2 Summary of Round 1

The ideal state of LfS

This round began by addressing what the ideal state of LfS should be at different scales, firstly within different sectors in Scotland, then across Scotland and finally globally. This question offered respondents the opportunity to develop a vision before considering appropriate targets.

Ideal state of LfS in different sectors in Scotland

The most common frequently recurring theme proposed by respondents was that LfS should be **embedded** in all sectors, permeating all sectors and **integrated** into systems or learning (10 respondents). It was stated that LfS was should be in all subjects - "not an add-on". More strongly, one respondent suggested that LfS should be "at the core of each sector's work, training and strategy"

Secondly, respondents proposed that in an ideal situation, all Scottish sectors would have understanding and respect for the **principles and ethos** of LfS (six respondents). Only a few respondents made reference in this section to the specific fundamental principles of sustainable development itself, with three proposing a socially just ideal state and two indicating that we would be living within environmental means and exhibiting environmental understanding. It was also considered important that sectors implemented LfS in practice (six respondents).

Two respondents considered an element of this ideal state to be a strong, well supported network of people. Yet it was also considered that in an ideal state there would be a statutory and mandatory framework supported by the state (two respondents). Other aspects of this ideal state described included freedom from binary thinking, a state of mind, an ethos of responsibility, fostering of sense of community, (re)connection to place and embodiment in institutions.

Many respondents made sector specific comments. One respondent felt that a priority was school education because the state can influence this agenda and this is where children formally learn, and another suggested that at school sustainability could be rooted in society. Two respondents felt that in an ideal state, LfS would build on the principles of Curriculum for Excellence and two cited the need for appropriate curriculum and pedagogy. In an ideal state, Scotland would have "a fair, inclusive and socially aware education system". As indicated above, several respondents declared the need for LfS to be integrated across the curriculum.

Beyond school education, in an ideal state:
- Scottish FE and HE institutions would "assist other sectors with knowledge transfer and expertise" and offer sustainability research capacity. HE would also demonstrate LfS curriculum and pedagogy, in all subjects.
- Vocational and professional training would be critical.
- Communities would think about LfS when making plans and put into practice all of their work; people would be equipped with the values, attitudes, skills and knowledge for transformation of Scotland
- NGOs would form a network of people supporting each other, and with core support and active learning opportunities. This support would be both practical and strategic. Businesses

would engage in corporate social responsibility to connect key messages to the wider society; with less focus on profit and more on provisions of service.

Ideal state across Scotland as a whole

Four respondents considered their answers to be similar or the same to both parts of this question (ideal state across sectors and Scotland more widely). For those responding differently to their views on an ideal state for Scotland as a whole, the vision of the ideal state included reference to both what this state might be, in visionary language, and how to get there – strategies for action.

Three respondents proposed a strong policy response. They indicated the need for a joined up, interdisciplinary approach within Government. Our policy makers will need to be "sensible, sensitive and brave" and be held to account; we need political leadership and commitment. The notion of embedded and integrated policy and action was cited again by two respondents. It was noted that we have committed funding to LfS.

In an ideal state, Scotland would have "effective inclusion and empowerment of ALL sectors of society". We thus need to engage more widely across other sectors whilst building on the advances made to date, especially regarding school education. In an ideal state, LfS would enable a fair and just/flourishing society (three respondents) and offer opportunities for empowerment (two respondents) whilst ensuring that we live within ecological limits (four respondents). A focus on wellbeing was suggested by one respondent. It was proposed that, in an ideal state in Scotland, LfS would become the norm and be accepted as a national priority with every person contributing to LfS (three respondents). There was recognition of scale with people tackling issues as individuals, in communities and in work places (two respondents); and working with local heritage and sense of place whilst engaging with those beyond Scotland (two respondents). Within the country, LfS would thus be "regarded with a sense of national pride"; with other nations seeing Scotland as a leader.

A need for pragmatic responses as well as visionary ideals was highlighted by one respondent. It was suggested that a role of LfSS could be to cut across sectors and enhance network and partnership in a space full of different organisations and initiatives.

A cautionary tone was also offered in creating visions of an ideal state. For example, one respondent reminded us that the definition of a community is both inclusive and exclusive; and definition of a national boundary is both useful and problematic as it cuts across communities of practice.

Ideal state of LfS globally

Three respondents felt that their answers to the previous questions covered their responses to this section. Again, the notions of empowerment, networking and innovation were raised. Three respondents recognised the need to respect environmental limits, the planet or the local environment. A just and equitable society and peaceful world was envisaged by three respondents with one respondent highlighting the need to feed and equitably support the 8-9 billion people on earth without planetary destruction. There was recognition that social justice and environmental integrity are interconnected

In an ideal state, LfS would be a priority for all. However, as one respondent pointed out, education would need to be available to all across the world so that LfS could be a possibility within formal structures. Ideally, global LfS would work across borders, with countries learning from each other. Two respondents specifically proposed a systems perspective and two supported a different value foundation, with less focus on the 'greed-orientated, free-market-led economy'. There would be a shift to renewables.

In an ideal state of LfS globally, traditional societies and solutions would be respected and a culture of tolerance and diversity encouraged, ensuring that the ways of knowing in the global North are not dominant over those in the global South. A local emphasis was also suggested by a respondent, who stated the need for individuals to retain connection with their local environment.

There would be strong and committed political leadership. The position of Scotland within this global context would be as a leader, even as an exemplar, with a good reputation.

Across all of these three sections exploring the ideal state of LfS at different scales, the need for values, attitudes, skills, knowledge and understanding were mentioned. There was also the

recognition of learning "at every stage of life" and in all arenas of personal and professional life. There was the sense that LfS will be a journey, destination unknown.
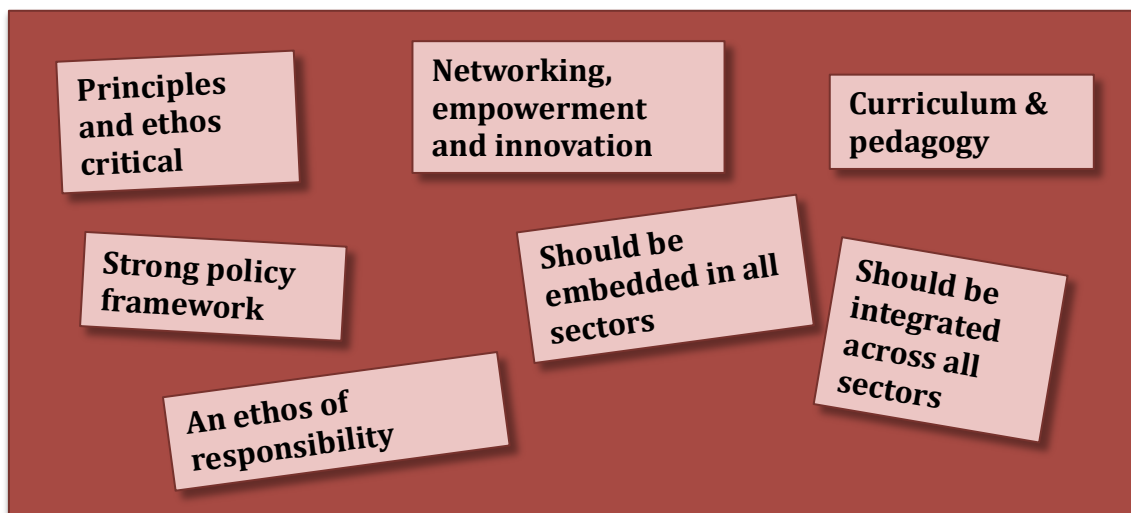

Figure 6. *Attributes of LfS suggested by Delphi respondents*

Targets for LfS

Respondents were asked to comment firstly on the UN DESD targets for ESD and secondly on the Scottish targets before defining what targets they thought appropriate at different scales. In other words, were the UN and/or Scottish targets appropriate for us to measure our progress later in Round 2?

UNESCO targets for LfS

Overall, 13 respondents suggested that the UNESCO DESD targets were **appropriate for that time and context.** These targets comprised general objectives to which any country could sign up, but not the specific targets required to effectively monitor and evaluate progress (three respondents). However, this set of rather generic targets did enable flexible interpretation by different countries. Two respondents felt elements of the targets were lacking, with one suggesting that they were probably not ambitious enough and another suggesting they were too ambitious and hence not realistic. One respondent commented that the connection to behavioural outcomes was well written but the lack of specificity to the diversity of stakeholders meant that the targets could too easily be interpreted as applying only to formal school education and not being applied to other sectors, such as business.

Although the purpose of Round 1 was to assess and develop targets to move towards an ideal state of LfS, some respondents did offer preliminary assessment of progress. It was commented that,

globally, a good deal of progress has been made, but LfS is still seen as minority "leftie" pursuit and the wider context has not changed sufficiently; unfettered pursuit of economic growth continues.

Assessment of targets for LfS set by Scotland

There were five targets overall set by Scotland in the second half of the DESD:

1. to build on the momentum created in the first half of the decade;

2. to celebrate our successes;

3. to develop networks to share experiences, skills and ideas and offer support;

4. to look for new and innovative approaches to ESD;

5. to support the development of leadership in ESD

One respondent commented that the first two of these were not really targets and two stated that LfSS has been a key element of progress towards achieving the others. It was said that specific, within sector targets have been more challenging.

The majority of respondents (twelve) commented that these were sensible overall targets, appropriate for the political and educational climate in which they were set. It was suggested that the targets were not ambitious enough in the first half of the decade but catalysed increased action in the second half of the DESD. The lack of SMART targets makes progress difficult to measure (three respondents) although these did emerge in later policy documents eg Learning for our Future. The targets were thus said to enable an 'evolutionary approach', but it was stated that it is now critical that we progress more rapidly. One respondent noted that they were broad aspirational goals rather than targets but another had a different view, suggesting that they enabled a Scottish approach that was "more instrumental than inspirational".

Again, respondents discussed these targets partly in relation to assessment of progress. It was noted that the best progress had been made in the schools sector (three respondents), especially through Curriculum for Excellence (CfE), but that deep critical value based education was still not achieved. Less progress has been made in HE with only patchy adoption of LfS in the curriculum.

It was also commented that Scottish Government was supportive and proactive in adopting the DESD targets (three respondents) and that they developed specific policy documents with targets.

The Scottish targets in Learning for the Future (2006) and Learning for Change (2010) were more relevant and ambitious than the UN DESD targets.

It was said that sectoral division of goals was necessary to enable sector specific progress but it may have meant that the sense of "structural change within society promoted by UNESCO was lost". Other respondents also felt that sustainability goals still remain far away and more could have been done. However, it was noted that there is now an opportunity to expand, enhance and refresh how LfS is delivered.

Desired targets for LfS in Scottish sectors over the next decade

Respondents were then asked to consider what appropriate targets might be for specific sectors in Scotland, given their reflection on the UN DESD and Scottish targets for the last decade.

There were many specific suggestions for schools including consolidating achievements; measuring how much schools have implemented the Learning for Sustainability report; integrating monitoring and evaluation into the HMI inspections, GTCS accreditation and GTCS overview of professional update; offering support for training, monitoring and policy development; developing more values driven, knowledge based curricula to assist a focus on global connections. It was suggested that we need a coordinated approach to assist delivery through CfE leading to representation in every learner's Achievement Portfolio and that all teacher training should include LfS. It was noted that there had been more government commitment in this sector than others.

With regard to universities, it was commented by a few respondents that there is a long way to go. Whilst work has progressed well in school, we still need a policy framework for HE. It was said that currently participation is largely voluntary and informal. HE needs to see LfS incorporated across all disciplines – it is currently patchy. Universities need more debate in areas that are usually less involved e.g. humanities. It was highlighted that the process will not be the same as that in schools. HE can offer theoretical critique and enable the implementation of sustainability practice. One respondent emphasised the need to see operational aspects integrated with teaching and research in whole institutional processes. It was proposed that we see LfS embedded as a graduate attribute across tertiary education. Having LfS as an essential entrance requirement for university education would strengthen its role.

It was also commented that in colleges there is a long way to go. In contrast to schools, they still need a policy framework.

Community learning and development needs to build on previous work and consolidate the partial achievements. It was said that communities require support to build the LfS ethos. LfSS could coordinate this together with existing community umbrella groups.

It was suggested that business partner with organisations; and that employers could be made aware of what LfS entails.

Concern was noted about developing sector specific targets difficult without the adoption of a bigger picture target. We need a serious shift in government and commitment to address the dominance of the economic growth paradigm. One respondent exhorted a move beyond the carbon agenda and basic messages of recycling and switching off lights to exploration of deeper aspects such as sustainability actually being good business; social cohesion being desirable. Given this context, it was suggested that perhaps we should focus on strategic targets e.g. encouraging every business school in the country to engage critically with the basis of economics.

Despite this wider context, there was agreement that SMART targets would be required and that monitoring and evaluation would be essential aspects of this journey (three respondents). Two respondents again cited that any targets set required commitment from Scottish Government; political leadership backed by funding.

Desired targets for LfS in Scotland overall over the next decade
Seven respondents said their comments above applied to Scotland as a whole.

One respondent phrased the target as being "To build national and international alliances as a leading representative and strategic advocate which will share good practice and facilitate dialogue and policy development in ESD".

It was suggested that we need to have a plan similar to that for the second half of the DESD but with SMART targets (two respondents) with more emphasis on HE, business and policy makers. Individual respondents proposed that as well as targets, we develop a closer connection between people and place, greater cultural confidence and a deepened sense of responsibility for place.

It was noted that we need strong political leadership supporting resources to implement the LfS agenda. Scottish Government thus needs to commit to this agenda (two respondents) with LfS explicitly referenced in the National Performance Framework. Local Authorities should establish LfS based ethos and link sustainability leaders in their regions (two respondents).

It was also suggested that we aim for LfS to become normalised in business. Targets suggested by respondents also included infusion of LfS through the whole population, via better media, social networks and positive messages from government; enabling more debate on issues such as prosperity without growth; alternative forms of enterprise; altered role of local government.

It was suggested that LfSS has a potential role to play in coordinating activities; and its vision may serve as a good long term ambition.

Desired targets for LfS globally over the next decade
Four respondents indicated that their responses above were also relevant to the development of targets for LfS over the next decade globally.

Other targets proposed by individual respondents included:
- awareness of policy makers, sector professionals, formal educators, general public, community and other leaders
- capacity building and strengthening of leadership
- specific skills training
- international agreements
- LfS enshrined in regulation and policies
- an international standard of LfS defined and measured?
- sustainability principles more widely inform development
- raising educational standards on a global basis

- building, supporting and influencing international links to LfS activity and monitor spread of Post Rio+20 Launch

- pursuit of targets similar to those made by UNESCO in the original UNDESD documentation

It was suggested that the Global Action Programme should focus on deepening the transformative impact of LfS in countries that have made progress in DESD, whilst at the same time networking and sharing practice with those countries that have to date engaged less.

There were several pessimistic comments from four respondents on the wider context within which we would be setting our global targets. This included a shift in global priorities; a dominant world paradigm driven by politico-military interests; the suggestion that we are unlikely to achieve sustainability goals unless there is a worse environmental crisis of economic collapse to catalyse real change. It was emphasised that sustainability principles need to shape global economic approaches. It was also commented that "you cannot reason with a starving man", and the need to address global inequalities across developing/developed countries before global sustainability can be seriously considered was stated.

Summary and conclusions
Overall there was good consensus on some aspects of an ideal state of LfS. There was much coherence across scales, with common and agreed aspects desired in LfS being:

- based on principles and ethos of sustainability
- joined up thinking employing a systems perspective acknowledging complexity;
- interdisciplinarity;
- LfS embedded and integrated within and across all sectors;
- effective practice implemented on the ground;
- social justice and empowerment;
- living within environmental limits;
- recognition and addressing of the wider global context that is not conducive to sustainability.

There was wide consensus that the UN DESD targets were appropriate. Although relatively vague, they permitted buy in and flexible interpretation by different countries. It was also recognised that

the Scottish targets for the second half of the decade were widely applicable, although they lacked SMART targets. Such targets were really only applied within the school sector. It was commented on several occasions that the Scottish government has done particularly well in supporting school education with some progress in community but other areas less well pursued.

Some targets for the next decade were developed but overall respondents indicated merely the need for sector specific SMART targets alongside a strategic approach to engage sectors less engaged in the LfS agenda and a wider debate about societal priorities.

One respondent commented that we needed to retain the distinction and define the relationship between LfS and sustainable development better. Certainly some of these responses appeared to be geared more towards visions of sustainability than LfS.

The next round will seek more specific perspectives on the extent to which progress has been made in LfS at different scales. Given the overall agreement that Scottish targets were appropriate for the context, even though they have not moved us far towards our ideal state of LfS, and the lack of SMART targets defined in this round, we will assess progress against those Scottish Action Plan targets.

8.3 Summary of Round 2

Introduction

In Round 2, we sought consensus and omissions around an ideal state of learning for sustainability and asked for quantitative assessment of progress made in different areas plus a ranking of the importance and timeliness of different actions for LfSS.

Ideal state of learning for sustainability

In order to understand our ultimate goal, we wished to open up debate on the ideal state of LfS; what would it look like to have largely achieved our goals? In Round 1, we had identified the following aspects and we asked participants to agree, disagree and add to these:

- based on the principles and ethos of sustainability
- social justice and empowerment
- living within environmental limits

- *joined-up thinking, employing a systems perspective, acknowledging complexity *interdisciplinary
- LfS embedded and integrated within and across all sectors
- effective practice implemented on the ground
- recognition of and addressing the wider global context that is not conducive to sustainability

There was agreement on these issues, although it was observed that the first three aspects were more about sustainability concepts in general and the latter aspects were more learning approaches; and that the difference between sustainable development and LfS itself was not always well defined. It was suggested by two participants that there was a skew towards Western notions; and two participants suggested that transformative learning was important to mention. Other participants suggested the notions of connected communities and empowering all people; of understanding and appreciating a variance in beliefs and values; of future thinking/inter-generational approaches; and of the need for paradigm change. Additional aspects to those above thus include:

- connecting and supporting individuals, communities and organisations
- recognising and celebrating a diversity in beliefs and values and their links to motivation and action
- enabling transformative learning and empowerment of all people
- acknowledging local, regional and international contexts and partnerships
- accommodating locally relevant curricula, mindful of global needs, and pedagogies commensurate with active, experiential, reflexive as well as transformative learning
- accepting that these principles challenge a dominant worldview

Sectoral progress assessed against the UN DESD goals

Participants were asked what progress they believed had been made against the UN DESD goals. It should be recalled that in Round 1, participants had indicated that these goals were relevant and appropriate although they lacked specific targets.

There was broad agreement about progress in Early Years and Primary and Secondary Schools, with the majority of participants (except one for Early Years) indicating some or good progress, with the highest number (eight) citing good progress in Primary School and lowest (three) in the Early Years

sector. It was acknowledged that there has been progress made in Early Years, with some nice examples of outdoor nurseries and outdoor learning practice, for example, but that there was significant scope to work more with educators in this area to embed ethos and practice. In Primary Schools, the changes induced by Curriculum for Excellence and more recently the requirements for teacher education were applauded. Other initiatives such as Rights Respecting Schools, Eco Schools and Global Citizenship Education projects were mentioned and some excellent examples offered. Slightly less progress was acknowledged at Secondary school level, with five participants citing 'good' and the rest 'some' progress. Issues with implementation of Curriculum for Excellence were cited as challenges. At all school levels the potential for Scotland to engage with UN DESD educator training was noted.

In Further Education, most respondents (nine) cited some progress with one suggesting that good progress had been made and one indicating no progress, although this individual indicated they were not aware of the sector and so had ranked cautiously. All respondents cited only some progress in Higher Education made towards goals. A 'bunker mentality' and 'protectionism' were cited by two respondents as preventing open minded debate and action, with an additional participant also noting that whilst campus progress had been made, little headway had been achieved in curriculum. Greater progress was believed to have been made in Community learning and development, with respondents indicating that either some (eight) or good (two) progress had been made. Opinion varied for Business. The situation was generally considered less advanced with three respondents indicating no progress at all, six suggesting some progress had been made and one claiming good progress. As far as the Third Sector was concerned, there was a wide spread of opinions, perhaps indicative of the diversity of organisations and contexts, with most respondents citing some (five) or good (four) progress but others (two) suggesting no progress had been made. Respondents suggested that the General public had made some (seven) or no (four) progress with comments suggesting that whilst more information is now available, the economic crisis narrowed peoples' focus. Similar views were offered with regard to the media, with nine participants suggesting some progress and two none. It was commented that there were different media perspectives; the 'Daily Mail/Daily Express' versus the 'Guardian/Independent' views.

Achievements of the Scottish Government were realised in that seven respondents indicated good progress and four some progress, with indications that this was demonstrated through schools

progress, hence logically making this the area in which more progress was made than in any other except Primary schools. However, it was recognised that despite endorsement of LfS in some departments, "the dominant paradox of economic growth at all costs" still prevailed. It was also noted that Scotland has made notably more progress than a disengaged Westminster. Local Authorities fared less well in evaluation, with seven respondents citing some progress, three good progress and one no progress. Patchiness in this sector across different local authorities was recognised and the excellent work of Sustainable Scotland Network noted.

Sectoral progress assessed against the Scottish UN DESD Action Plan for the second half of the Decade goals

In general, assessments were more positive with regard to progress made against Scotland's goals, perhaps because these goals were more specific and were measureable. For Early Years, six participants cited good progress, with four suggesting some progress and only one indicating no progress. For Primary School, there was even greater optimism; eight cited good progress and two some progress but one even suggested that achievements in this sector exceeded expectations. Again, Secondary schools were considered less advanced, with six participants indicating good and five some progress. In all school areas, the development of CfE and the GTCS standards will ensure all learners engage in some LfS, noted two participants. In addition, the UNESCO related work linking LfS with quality education will support this area further.

The tertiary education sector has made less progress with most (nine) respondents citing some, one each citing no and one good progress. Almost all participants (10) suggested that in HE some progress had been made, with one claiming good progress. Again, estates and policy achievements were noted, with a paucity of progress across learning and teaching observed.

With regard to community learning and development, whilst one participant suggested that no progress had been made, all others suggested that some (seven participants) or good (three) progress had been made. Comments indicated the complexity of this area, which covered aspects of lifelong learning as well as grassroots activity illustrated by the Transition movement, allotments and food projects and supported by the Climate Challenge Fund. However, in some areas LfS was said to be lacking or minimal, with little evidence of its integration into youth work, adult learning, poverty alleviation or environmental justice.

Views on Business were mixed, with one participant suggesting no progress had been made and one that good progress had been made, but the majority (nine) citing some progress. It was suggested that this was due to an increased focus on Corporate Social Responsibility, but that there were less specific targets in this area. The perspectives on the Third sector were even more mixed, with two suggesting no, six some and three good progress. Comments showed that in part this was due to changes over the decade in emphasis, with a decline in formal education policy staff in some NGOs. Over the decade, this sector has experienced many and varied pressures, including changes in funding direction, meaning that LfS may not always explicitly be given priority, even though many NGOs use an approach commensurate with at least some LfS principles.

Respondents were generally quite pessimistic about the General Public, with three suggesting no progress and eight that some progress had been made. Particular campaigns by public bodies were acknowledged, including waste education and Greener Scotland efforts and more recently the plastic bag levy, but deeper understanding with potential to catalyse social change was not commonly achieved. This area overlapped with community learning in what some places call lifelong learning. It was pointed out that Media was not even mentioned in the Scottish targets, so it would be hard to measure progress, but only one participant indicated no progress had been made and the majority (10) indicated some progress. It was acknowledged that climate change is now on the agenda, for example, but that links between the environment and health and evidence of systems thinking were still lacking.

With regard to Scottish targets, the Scottish Government was considered to have variously made no (one), some (two) or good (seven) progress or even exceeded expectations (one), perhaps reflecting the chequered record of achievement illustrated in the sectors above meeting targets and difficult to measure because again this sector was not specifically mentioned in the targets for Scotland. However, achievements in LfS in schools were mentioned as a reason for commendation, with one person suggesting that more joined up thinking was evident with SD seen as a cross cutting issue. Local Authorities were not included in the Scottish targets either, but respondents suggested that they had made no (two), some (six) or good (three) progress, partly because of increased focus on statutory compliance such as climate change and waste, and that the financial cutbacks had actually increased focus on such areas. Whilst regional and strategic progress was acknowledged by most

participants, there was doubt as to whether this translated effectively into individual or organisational change.

Overall, eight participants cited some and three good progress made towards the Scottish targets for the UN DESD. Several comments indicated that progress was slightly disappointing, with one noting that the recession and Independence debate impeding progress generally in the latter half of the decade. Some sectors, of course, demonstrated greater achievements than others. A more optimistic view (1 participant) suggested that we had 'exceeded expectations' whilst another suggested ironically that if we were 'world leading' the rest of the world was in dire straits. A need to make cross sectoral linkages such as linking formal education with the business/industry and community/third sector was acknowledged.

Progress in Scotland in comparison with other nations

Participants were then asked how they felt that Scotland's progress had compared in relation to the rest of the UK and other parts of the world. Six respondents specifically and strongly indicated better performance in Scotland than other parts of UK, with mention of some progress in Wales but very limited progress in England. All respondents indicated that Scotland had generally performed very well (world leading said three participants) in relation to other countries, due in part to a strong educational tradition, a connected and coordinated response and good strategic direction from the Scottish Government. However, it was noted by two respondents that Scandinavian countries had progressed well in embedding sustainability aspects in life and that Sweden in particular already had plans for post decade activities.

Looking back: the decade in relation to LfS progress since the 1980s

Participants were then asked what impact the decade had made in relation to progress in LfS since its emergence approximately from the 1980s; how it had influenced the trajectory and what other key initiatives or events had influenced our journey so far. Responses naturally varied depending on whether or not the individual had been involved throughout this period, although only one respondent indicated a total inability to comment. In Scotland the bio-cultural and political context (education, community, identity, land reform, response to climate change) enabled progress and provided a fertile background within which Decade activities could flourish and further catalyse progress (one participant). Devolution was key to the progress exhibited in Scotland, enabling such

political steps to be taken (one). It was reported that the decade has had a strong effect in focusing interest in government and pressure groups (four), but less effect on the general public (one). In particular the effects on formal school education were lauded (2), with one respondent citing "A sympathetic and visionary GTCS, plus extensive and perceptive work done by Education Scotland". Perhaps we are now shifting from environmental education to a more holistic, collaborative LfS approach (one), with the Decade enabling a more coherent, coordinated response (one). One respondent described a shift "From saving stuff, whales, tigers, rainforests and the like - to stopping stuff, ozone holes, climate change, global warming - to a greater understanding of the concept of sustainable development and ESD - social sustainability". It was also suggested that the trajectory has not always been upwards, that progress is ultimately impeded by the dominant western paradigm of economic growth (one). Not all respondents were optimistic, with two indicating that in general progress has still only been a slow permeation.

Ranking of opportunities for Learning for Sustainability Scotland

Finally, respondents were asked to focus on the opportunities for the network organization Learning for Sustainability Scotland, given the preceding reflection and analysis. They were asked to rank opportunities that had previously been identified by members at the AGM and by the steering group in relation to overall importance, timing and applicability for the current mandate of LfS Scotland.

Table 5. *Priorities in terms of overall importance (value score is sum of values attributed by all participants; rank determined by value scores; n=11)*

8. Please rank these opportunities firstly in terms of overall importance, 1=high priority, 10=low priority	Value	Rank
8.a. Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan	**117**	**1**
8.g. Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation	**100**	**2**
8.i. Develop closer links with business	**84**	**3**
8.c. Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice	**83**	**4=**
8.d. Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures	**83**	**4=**
8.f. Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities	**83**	**4=**
8.h. Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community	**75**	**7**
8.b. Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards	**72**	**8=**
8.j. Develop closer links with mainstream media	**72**	**8=**
8.e. Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE	**71**	**10**

Table 6. *Priorities for LfS Scotland in relation to timing, with options scored with regard to urgency (value score is sum of values attributed by all participants; rank determined by value scores; n=11)*

9. Please rank these opportunities secondly in terms of timing. Which is the most urgent or appropriate to tackle first? (1=most urgent).	Value	Rank
9.a. Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan	**98**	**1**
9.g. Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation	**86**	**2**
9.d. Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures	**85**	**3**
9.e. Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE	**71**	**4=**
9.f. Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities	**71**	**4=**
9.b. Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards	**67**	**6**
9.i. Develop closer links with business	**63**	**7**
9.c. Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice	**62**	**8**
9.h. Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community	**61**	**9**
9.j. Develop closer links with mainstream media	**44**	**10**

Table 7. *Opportunity priorities in relation to applicability to LfSS mandate (value score is sum of values attributed by all participants; rank determined by value scores; n=11)*

10. Please rank these opportunities in relation to applicability to the mandate of Learning for Sustainability Scotland, the network organisation. Which is most applicable? (1=most applicable).	Value	Rank
10.a. Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan	97	1
10.g. Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation	94	2
10.d. Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures	92	3
10.c. Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice	82	4
10.b. Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards	73	5
10.f. Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities	70	6=
10.i. Develop closer links with business	70	6=
10.e. Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE	69	8
10.h. Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community	66	9
10.j. Develop closer links with mainstream media	59	10

Table 8. *Ranking of opportunities for Learning for Sustainability Scotland (n=11):*
1) *firstly in terms of overall importance, then*
2) *in terms of timing (which is the most urgent or appropriate to tackle first?) and finally*
3) *in relation to applicability to the mandate of Learning for Sustainability Scotland, the network organisation (which is most applicable?) 1=high priority, 10=low priority*

	1) Rank IMPORTANCE	2) Rank URGENCY	3) Rank For LfSS role
Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan	1	1	1
Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation	2	2	2
Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures	4=	3	3
Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities	4=	4=	6=
Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice	4=	8	4
Develop closer links with business	3	7	6=
Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards	8=	6	5
Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE	10	4=	8
Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community	7	9	9
Develop closer links with mainstream media	8=	10	10

Summary and conclusions of Round 2

Consensus and consolidation of the definition of the ideal state of LfS was reached after the initial impetus of Round 1. It was proposed that LfS would be thoroughly embedded when practices were:

- based on the principles and ethos of sustainability
- promoted social justice and empowerment
- enabled living within environmental limits

and that LfS would be implemented according to the following:

- joined-up thinking, employing a systems perspective, acknowledging complexity
- interdisciplinary
- LfS embedded and integrated within and across all sectors
- effective practice implemented on the ground
- recognition of and addressing the wider global context that is not conducive to sustainability

and

- connecting and supporting individuals, communities and organisations
- recognising and celebrating a diversity in beliefs and values and their links to motivation and action
- enabling transformative learning and empowerment of all people
- acknowledging local, regional and international contexts and partnerships
- accommodating locally relevant curricula, mindful of global needs, and pedagogies commensurate with active, experiential, reflexive as well as transformative learning

Respondents discussed sectoral progress in relation to the UN DESD goals and the goals set out in Scotland's Action Plan. It was recognized that exceptional progress had been made in some areas, such as schools, with some progress in communities, HE and FE but relatively little in other sectors. The Scottish government was generally applauded for strategic and coordinated leadership although some respondents cited a slow and disappointing progress relative to expectations with the ideal state still nothing but a theoretical ideal. The UN DESD catalysed further progress but the political and bio-cultural context of Scotland permitted a flourishing of Decade activities. LfS is an area in which Scotland has done very well in comparison to the rest of the UK and has been world leading, although Scandinavia offers interesting exemplars.

Finally, respondents looked ahead to priorities for opportunities for LfS in Scotland in terms of importance, urgency and relevance to the mandate of LfSS (the network organization). The top priorities identified, in order across all categories, were to:

1. Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan
2. Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation
3. Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures
4. Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities

Input from members at the AGM 2014

In line with the participatory and inclusive ethos of sustainability, we sought the opinions of a wider group of people before concluding with Round 3. Members of LfS Scotland who attended the AGM were invited to comment on this process and to themselves score future priorities in terms of overall importance, urgency and applicability for action by LfS Scotland.

Respondents recognized that fundraising for core activities had to remain a priority for the work of LfS Scotland. In addition, they expressed a desire to see a focus on areas other than formal education moving forward, especially on communities (four respondents). Other comments demonstrated the value of widening the scope of learning through leading a public debate and the value of interdisciplinary working across sectors. There was a question as to what members got for membership and a request for more information from task groups and encouragement to get involved in core work. Other specific suggestions were to influence educators, pursue the Global Action Programme and support enhancement themes in HE and FE.

As can be seen from the table below, opinions varied widely with average values clustered in the centre of ranking options and with relatively large standard deviations. Averages rather than total scores (as acquired for key informants) were calculated for members because of variable numbers of responses across categories (ranging from 12 to 17). Some members indicated that they did not know enough about particular options to be able to respond effectively. Member responses in terms of ranking broadly mirrored key informant responses.

Table 9. *Opinions from members at the AGM regarding ranking of priorities for learning for sustainability in terms of importance, urgency and priority for the organisation LfS Scotland (n = 12 to 17 per value).*

	Importance		Urgency		Priority for LfSS	
	average	sd	average	sd	average	sd
Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan	3.67	2.38	3.00	2.42	2.85	2.38
Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice	3.82	2.46	4.71	2.70	3.43	2.21
Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation	4.00	3.57	3.21	2.01	4.00	2.08
Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures	4.29	2.08	4.79	2.75	3.33	1.95
Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE	4.56	3.18	4.31	2.66	5.00	2.58
Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities	5.00	2.87	5.00	2.88	4.27	2.43
Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community	5.13	2.16	5.38	2.79	6.54	1.85
Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards	5.94	3.00	5.85	2.91	5.75	2.73
Develop closer links with business	6.75	2.89	7.31	2.29	8.62	2.36
Develop closer links with mainstream media	7.63	2.85	7.62	2.47	8.38	1.94

8.4 Summary of Round 3

Introduction

Round 3 was designed to enable participants to move towards consensus regarding the meaning and practical scope of LfS, whilst still respecting the plurality of perspectives that tends to emerge from discussions of sustainability. Participants were also asked to consolidate views on the priorities for LfS Scotland, given results of previous Rounds and from the members at the AGM, and were given an opportunity to offer any final comments on the mandate of LfS Scotland.

Ideal state of learning for sustainability

Although this was the third opportunity to offer input to the ideal state of learning for sustainability, there was still substantial comment offered, with only one out of the eleven participants happy that everything was already covered. Previous Rounds had generated the points below (and see page 8 above):

"Ideal state of learning for sustainability

- *based on the principles and ethos of sustainability*
- *social justice and empowerment*
- *living within environmental limits*
- *joined-up thinking, employing a systems perspective, acknowledging complexity*
- *interdisciplinary*
- *LfS embedded and integrated within and across all sectors*
- *effective practice implemented on the ground*
- *recognition of and addressing the wider global context that is not conducive to sustainability*
- *connecting and supporting individuals, communities and organisations*
- *recognising and celebrating a diversity in beliefs and values and their links to motivation and action*
- *enabling transformative learning and empowerment of all people*
- *acknowledging local, regional and international contexts and partnerships*
- *accommodating locally relevant curricula, mindful of global needs, and pedagogies commensurate with active, experiential, reflexive as well as transformative learning*
- *accepting that these principles challenge a dominant worldview"*

Additional points made included a request from two participants that sustainability be explicitly introduced as being more than about environmental concerns, with a stronger emphasis on the anti-poverty agenda. However, another participant wanted a stronger definition of sustainability in terms of environmental constraints as "'not harming the potential of all species and planetary bio-geo-chemical systems to be self-sustaining over the long-term future". One participant simply defined LfS as "challenging the accepted worldview." It was suggested that we need to focus more on "personal sustainability", particularly "through pedagogical interventions such as outdoor learning and …… mindfulness". It was also suggested that we unpack the types of learning included in the term, acknowledging "everything from information and awareness to capacity building to community empowerment to formal education at all levels; a recognition of different kinds and levels of learning, each appropriate for context." Three participants called for clear language in the expression of what we mean by LfS and attempts to communicate effectively with the people who are currently most disempowered. It was proposed that we acknowledge international goals, mentioning commitment to UN Sustainability and Development goals, but also that we recognize and support each sector adequately, particularly moving from the focus on schools to other sectors. Two participants mentioned the need to focus on collaborative working, partnership and co-production. It was pointed out that celebrating a plurality of perspectives brings challenges with regard to which definition and culturally specific understanding of sustainable development we employ. Who decides on the "definitive parameters of sustainability"? It was remarked that we need to engage people, especially those who could most benefit, without "middle class preaching." Finally, one participant commented that essentially learning for sustainability can be framed as an on-going process of people learning and reflecting, being "empowered and equipped to deal with the uncertainty and change which are a result of all the complex challenges that the world faces", capturing a sense of resilience.

Taking all of these comments into account we can thus produce a conclusive list of points as indicated below.

Ideal state of learning for sustainability

- *based on the principles and ethos of sustainability*
- *social justice and empowerment*

- *living within environmental limits*

- *joined-up thinking, employing a systems perspective, acknowledging complexity*

- *interdisciplinary*

- *LfS embedded and integrated within and across all sectors*

- *including collaborative and partnership working and co-production*

- *effective practice implemented on the ground*

- *recognition of and addressing the wider global context that is not conducive to sustainability*

- *connecting and supporting individuals, communities and organisations*

- *recognising and celebrating a diversity in beliefs and values and their links to motivation and action*

- *enabling transformative learning and empowerment of all people, but especially the currently disempowered*

- *a process of ongoing reflection and learning that enables personal and community resilience within our complex, ever changing world*

- *noting the importance of 'personal sustainability'*

- *acknowledging local, regional and international contexts and definitions of sustainability*

- *accommodating locally relevant curricula, mindful of global needs, and pedagogies commensurate with active, experiential, reflexive as well as transformative learning*

- *including information and awareness raising, capacity building and community empowerment, skills and vocational training and formal education at all levels*

- *accepting that these principles challenge a dominant worldview*

Our wider text outlining the 'ideal state' of learning for sustainability and the role of LfS Scotland, drawing on all three Rounds of comments plus those from members, is thus:

Learning for sustainability enables visioning of sustainable futures and planning of the journey towards these aspirations. These futures would be culturally specific and contextualised within place, enabling different visions to be realised with a spirit of collaboration. This learning strives to create a fair and flourishing society and enable empowerment, particularly of the currently disempowered, whilst ensuring we live within ecological limits. Ultimately such learning uses innovative pedagogies and relevant curricula that enable a process of ongoing reflection to support specific skills as well as personal and community resilience within our changing world. It encourages people to reflect on values and may lead to escape from a market based, competitive and consumerist dominated worldview.

The strategy for action includes a joined up, systems, interdisciplinary approach building on partnerships across governance sectors and scales (from local to global). We need strong leadership to pursue innovative practices. Our policy makers will need to be committed, sensitive and brave to develop embedded and integrated policy and action across not only school and other formal education, but also informal (such as community, business) and non-formal (such as media, culture) sectors. Individuals, families and communities will learn through individual transformative experiences as well as collaborative capacity development. Such learning will enable critical reflection and action for value based goals. It would respect traditional, local and practitioner forms of knowledge as well as academic knowledge.

The role of LfS Scotland is to cut across sectors and enhance network and partnership in a space full of different organisations and initiatives, recognising the fundamental role of learning in our journey towards sustainability and releasing the potential of individuals, communities and sectors to create human and planetary wellbeing. It can help maintain the place of Scotland as a world leader in the field of learning for sustainability. It is uniquely placed to exploit local partnerships and deliver a joined up, systems approach with a synthesis across sectors, issues and stakeholder groups. It is unbiased and independent, benefiting from the previous success of the SDE network, held to account by a diverse membership constituency and known for commitment and expertise in its staff and Steering Group. The timing is right for LfS Scotland to take Scotland forward and pursue the momentum of the successful UN DESD whilst continuing to play a major role on the international stage in ensuring that learning underpins the emerging Sustainable Development Goals.

This may be summarized as:

Learning for sustainability enables visioning of culturally and place specific futures and contributes to the creation of a fair and flourishing society and empowerment, particularly of the currently disempowered, whilst ensuring we live within ecological limits. Such learning uses innovative, reflexive and potentially transformative pedagogies and curricula to enable skills development and resilience and encourage people to explore values based worldviews. Learning promoted action requires a systems based, interdisciplinary, partnership approach with strong leadership and integration across formal education and informal (such as community, business) and non-formal (such as media, culture) sectors. The role of LfS Scotland is to support networking and collaboration, releasing the potential of individuals, communities and sectors to create human and planetary wellbeing within local, national and global contexts.

Opportunities and priorities for LfS in Scotland and for the role of LfS Scotland

Participants were asked to reflect on the analysis of participant views in Round 2 and on the views put forward by members at the AGM to inform their final analysis of the opportunities and priorities of different actions for LfS at this time. The ranks (one being most important and 12 least) and overall scores (from all rank scores) are shown below to indicate the most important opportunities for LfS, the most urgent and the most applicable to the network organization LfS Scotland at this

time. Slightly different questions reflected the earlier focus of the project on the UN DESD evaluation, but with a shift towards stimulating post UN DESD action rather than writing up a plan. There was also a shift towards general action points rather than specific areas, with schools still considered a priority area (following up implementing previous policy gains in this area) then communities with other areas following a consistent pattern. Although members and steering group recognized the need to engage sectors such as business and media, limited resources might indicated prioritization of other work.

Table 10. *Most important and most urgent tasks overall in Scotland and most applicable tasks for the network organization LfS Scotland as ranked by Delphi participants after viewing the results of Round 2 and AGM members' perspectives*

Opportunity	most important overall (1=most important)	priority for timing (1=Most urgent)	most applicable to LfS Scotland (1=most applicable)
Play a major role in taking forward ESD/LfS in Scotland beyond the end of the UNDESD	1 (130)	1 (111)	1 (121)
Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan	2 (103)	2 (104)	3 (100)
Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures	4 (82)	3 (97)	4 (97)
Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation	3 (87)	4 (92)	5 (88)
Evaluate UNDESD action plans' progress	6 (68)	4 (73)	2 (101)
Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice	5 (74)	6 (72)	6 (79)
Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards	6 (68)	4 (73)	7 (61)
Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities	8 (65)	8 (65)	8 (54)
Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE	9 (57)	10 (48)	9 (51)
Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community	10 (48)	9 (59)	10 (45)
Develop closer links with business	11 (41)	11 (44)	11 (42)
Develop closer links with mainstream media	12 (31)	12 (31)	12 (30)

Further reflections on the role of LfS Scotland

Participants were also offered the opportunity to make final comments on the role of LfS Scotland and the direction of LfS in Scotland more widely. It was stated that "The time is right now" for LfS Scotland, and three respondents specifically cited a need to maintain the momentum generated by the UN DESD. All respondents strongly supported the need for LfS Scotland to play a leading role in the future within Scotland and beyond. A national focus was recognised by all, with one respondent noting a need to engage political parties through a manifesto, one acknowledging the need to further engage government in all sectors, another citing the need for holistic, cross sectoral engagement and another recognising the potential of LfS Scotland to help develop a more politically engaged electorate. Two respondents reminded us of the need to work internationally, with one calling for greater engagement with activities round the emerging Sustainable Development Goals. Six respondents cited concerns over how funding would be acquired to maintain and deepen ongoing activities. There was a sense that much had been achieved and the network organisation has much to celebrate (e.g. "LfS Scotland needs to shout more about it[s] successes and be a bit more bold in approach"). It was commented that "The collaborative culture of LfSS ensures a 'non-partisan', unbiased, and truly independent model for the development and dissemination of learning, teaching, and 'good practice'." However, it was also felt that that the focus could have been stronger in other areas, such as exploring and strengthening the shift to co-production in the community arena. One respondent warned that there was a need for constant vigilance to ensure the conversation was opened up to members and sectors of society currently less involved, both home and abroad.

Summary of Round 3

Despite the small number of questions seeking to move towards consensus in this final Delphi Round, participants still had plenty to contribute. Paradoxically, individuals wanted both more detail and yet greater simplicity in defining the ideal state of learning for sustainability. There was consolidation of views regarding prioritisation of opportunities for exploring learning for sustainability in Scotland and for the strategic direction of LfS Scotland. Finally, there were constructive comments regarding the nature and intention of LfS Scotland, with a strong call to maintain the momentum of the UN DESD and yet warnings to keep channels of communication open to include new voices in the debate and move beyond the success in schools.

9. Conclusions

Scotland should be proud of achievements gained during the UN DESD, with significant progress made especially in schools but also some progress in HE and FE and recognition of relevant learning in communities. Within the UK, Scotland has demonstrated considerable commitment to this area. However, challenges remain in gaining significant traction in non-school sectors. These challenges represent opportunities for LfS Scotland to reach out to other sectors and widen the debate over LfS. Resourcing options exist although the political and financial climate make long term funding of organisations such as LfS Scotland very difficult.

In this project, we articulated new thinking on the scope and framing of LfS. We explored how it can be experienced throughout life and demonstrated scale influences and visualised articulation between learning, practice and research. Perspectives of those working in the field were captured to offer new insights on LfS.

The Delphi process allowed us to engage key informants and members to develop strategic priorities based on dialogue. By so doing, we redefined our field of theory and practice. This process also encouraged reflection by and between practitioners and academics in learning for sustainability. We hope to take these results forward as an example of collaborative, dialogic working; as outcomes to inform practice; as ideas to provoke further thinking.

Our starting point of exploring an 'ideal state' of LfS gave us the opportunity to open up definitions and framing of this concept. Iterations allowed us to develop consensus around this issue and derive a comprehensive framing of LfS. We recognised that the UNESCO targets set for the UN DESD were ambitious but broad, but the Scottish targets for the second half of the decade offered a more relevant action plan. Whilst it was agreed that these targets had been largely met in some sectors, particularly in schools, there was agreement that the remaining challenges were significant and much remains to 'mainstream' LfS in HE and FE and in informal and non-formal learning contexts.

LfS Scotland is a network organisation poised to take forward activities to further develop this area of thinking and practice. Priority actions agreed by Delphi key informants and members include maintenance of the momentum established by the UN DESD, with further events, seminars, policy

engagement and networking facilitation key in this endeavour. Additional agreed areas of activity include deepening of engagement with community groups, HE and FE, business and ultimately a more responsive conversation with the popular media. It is strongly recommended that these areas be resourced through a combination of motivating members through task groups and in partnership with other organisations and clusters, via gatherings, communication and knowledge sharing, in sector or topic specific projects and through support of LfS Scotland in its capacity to mobilise those interested in LfS within domestic and international arenas.

There is great potential for LfS Scotland to facilitate Scotland's role in the Global Action Plan and to contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals. However, challenges lie ahead in communicating the wider aspects of sustainability and supporting the shift to a fairer, greener, values based Scotland whilst recognising the plurality of perspectives around what this might mean.

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11. Appendices

APPENDIX 1 Questions asked in Delphi Round 1

Q1. Please outline your role and main area(s) of experience in relation to LfS

Q2. Given the freedom to dream what do you believe the ideal state of LfS should be? a) in different sectors in Scotland e.g. school education, further and higher education, community, business. Please specify the sector if you are only referring to one area

Q3. Given the freedom to dream what do you believe the ideal state of LfS should be? b) in Scotland as a whole

Q4. Given the freedom to dream what do you believe the ideal state of LfS should be? c) globally

Q5. **Please comment on the targets set for the end of the UN Decade of ESD by: a) UNESCO**http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001486/148650e.pdf page 38. **Were they appropriate targets in your view and can you justify your response?**

Q6. Please comment on the targets set for the end of the UN Decade of ESD by: b)Scotland http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/05/20152453/4 . **Were they appropriate targets in your view and can you justify your response?**

Q7. What targets for LfS would you like to see set for the end of the next 10 years? a) for different sectors in Scotland e.g. School Education; Further and Higher Education; Community, Business -- please specify the sector if you are only referring to one area.

Q8. What targets would you like to see set for the end of the next 10 years for Scotland overall?

Q9. What targets would you like to see set for the end of the next 10 years globally?

APPENDIX 2 Questions asked in Delphi Round 2

Q1 Do you have additional comments in agreement or disagreement with the broad aspects of an ideal state of LfS identified in Round 1?
  - ➢ based on principles and ethos of sustainability;
  - ➢ social justice and empowerment;
  - ➢ living within environmental limits;
  - ➢ joined up thinking, employing a systems perspective, acknowledging complexity;
  - ➢ interdisciplinary;
  - ➢ LfS embedded and integrated within and across all sectors;
  - ➢ effective practice implemented on the ground;
  - ➢ recognising and addressing the wider global context that is not conducive to sustainability.

Q2 What progress do you think we have made in achieving LfS goals in different sectors between 2005 and 2014, assessing these against the UN DESD goals?
(http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001486/148650e.pdf page 38)

Q3What progress do you think we have made in achieving LfS goals in different sectors in Scotland between 2005 and 2014, assessing these against the Scottish targets for the UN DESD?
http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Publications/2010/05/20152453/4

Q4 Where are we in Scotland overall regarding LfS relative to where we think we should be?

Q5How does progress in Scotland between 2005 and 2014 compare with progress in UK and elsewhere in the world? Please comment.

Q6 How would you describe progress in LfS in Scotland since the 1980s? What effect did the UN DESD have on the trajectory and were there other key initiatives or events influencing our journey so far? Please comment

Q7 What additional stakeholders do you think we should include in the debate?

Q8 Please rank these opportunities firstly in terms of overall importance, secondly in terms of timing (which is most urgent or appropriate to tackle first?) and finally in relation to applicability to the mandate of Learning for Sustainability Scotland (which is most applicable)?
  - Play a major role in taking forward ESD/LfS in Scotland beyond the end of the UNDESD
  - Evaluate UNDESD action plans' progress
  - Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan
  - Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards
  - Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice
  - Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures
  - Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE
  - Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities

- Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation
- Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community
- Develop closer links with business
- Develop closer links with mainstream media

Q11 Are there additional priorities and opportunities to add to this list and how would you rank them in terms of urgency, timing and applicability to LfSS?

Q12 Please offer any additional comments you may have on our progress to date across specific sectors , opportunities and barriers to progress and our priorities as we aim to meet our goals for the coming decade.

APPENDIX 3 Questions asked in Delphi round 3

Q1. Ideal state of Learning for Sustainability

Given the responses from Rounds 1 and 2, do you have any further comments to make specifically with regard to the 'ideal state' of learning for sustainability as identified below and on page 8 of the Summary Report?

Ideal state of learning for sustainability
- based on the principles and ethos of sustainability
- social justice and empowerment
- living within environmental limits
- *joined-up thinking, employing a systems perspective, acknowledging complexity *interdisciplinary
- LfS embedded and integrated within and across all sectors
- effective practice implemented on the ground
- recognition of and addressing the wider global context that is not conducive to sustainability
- connecting and supporting individuals, communities and organisations
- recognising and celebrating a diversity in beliefs and values and their links to motivation and action
- enabling transformative learning and empowerment of all people
- acknowledging local, regional and international contexts and partnerships
- accommodating locally relevant curricula, mindful of global needs, and pedagogies commensurate with active, experiential, reflexive as well as transformative learning
- accepting that these principles challenge a dominant worldview

Q2. Opportunities for LfS in Scotland
Given the summary data offered by key informants (page 11 of the Summary Report)and the opinions offered by LfSS members on importance, urgency and priority for LfSS (pages 11-14 of the Summary report), and taking into account the opinions of the AGM members (on pages 14-15 of the report), please rescore your ranking of these goals to see if we can achieve greater consensus .

Please rank these opportunities firstly in terms of overall importance, secondly in terms of timing (which is most urgent or appropriate to tackle first?) and finally in relation to applicability to the mandate of Learning for Sustainability Scotland (which is most applicable)?

Opportunity	Q2. most important overall (1=most important)	Q3 priority for timing (1=Most urgent)	Q4 most applicable to LfS Scotland (1=most applicable)
Play a major role in taking forward ESD/LfS in Scotland beyond the end of the UNDESD			
Evaluate UNDESD action plans' progress			

Develop and take forward a new post UNDESD action plan			
Develop and disseminate teacher education at all stages in response to the new GTCS Professional Standards			
Continue the role of SDE Network, with a new approach catalysing deeper engagement, sharing resources and good practice			
Run events for members both within and across sectors, for example, from school to FE or HE; across formal education and community ventures			
Focus on areas with less progress, for example, early years and HE			
Build on community development and in particular sustainable business models for communities			
Work closely with government to influence policy development and implementation			
Work with local authorities to influence sustainability action; a critical intersection between national government and community			
Develop closer links with business			
Develop closer links with mainstream media			

Q3. Role of the organisation LfS Scotland and future of LfS in Scotland generally

Please offer any additional comments you would like to make in relation to the role of LfS Scotland and the future direction of LfS within Scotland and more widely.

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