

**EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE
CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (ESCP)
CURRICULUM FOR SECONDARY SCHOOL:**

*LEARNING AND TEACHING
GUIDE for TEACHERS*



EDUCATION *for* SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION (ESCP) CURRICULUM
for Secondary Education: *Learning and Teaching Guide*

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1. INTRODUCTION

The Education for Sustainable Consumption and Production (ESCP) curriculum hopes to produce the new generation of Malaysian citizens that will fulfil the education for sustainable consumption (ESC) objectives in educating towards sustainable lifestyles as defined by UNEP (2009):

- Responsible citizens and consumers
- Rational participation in the markets (social and environmental impacts)
- Awareness of fundamental rights and freedoms

- Participation in the public debate (values, quality of life, responsibility and accountability)
- Knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for functioning in today's society

Education for Sustainable Consumption (ESC) is recognized as a strong component of ESD as it increases one's capacity to make appropriate decisions in one's own life and respond to global challenges. At one end of the spectrum, ESC helps individuals understand the impacts of their consumption choices and increases their ability to make informed consumer decisions. At the other end, ESC helps develop capacity among producers and suppliers to increase the availability of sustainable products. Similar to ESD, ESC contributes to global citizenship by fostering social and ethical responsibility.

What is Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP)?

In our daily lives, industry produces and provides products and services. Then, we buy and use these products and services. It is a cycle. The Oslo Symposium (1994) defined SCP as “the use of goods and services that respond to basic needs and bring a better quality of life, while minimizing the use of natural resources, toxic materials and emissions of waste and pollutants over the life cycle, so as not to jeopardize the needs of future generations”. All economic activities, and hence the related environmental impacts, are driven by consumption. Household consumption patterns and behaviour have a profound effect on natural resources and the quality of the environment (OECD, 2013). Many studies were done to analyze what consumption activities cause most impacts. It was shown that mobility (car and air transport, including for holidays), food (meat and dairy followed by the other types of food) and energy use in and around the home (heating, cooling and energy using products) plus house building and demolition, cause the most environmental impacts in society.

SCP aims to do **‘more and better with less’** by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the life cycle of goods and services, to enhance the quality of life for all. SCP is a comprehensive cross-cutting concept. It cuts across disciplines, and covers all natural resources (e.g. energy, water, air, soil and all pollutants and emissions dumped in ecosystems) as well as industry sectors and consumption domains.

The concept of SCP is not to focus only on any one of the three aspects of economic growth, environmental protection or social inclusiveness but to be holistic and combine all three aspects into one integrated concept. Therefore, Sustainable Consumption and Production is seen as a holistic approach, since it integrates **economic, social and environmental** aspects (Triple Bottom Line), as well as technological and behavioural innovation, along the whole life cycle.

Why Education for Sustainable Consumption and Production?

Unsustainable patterns of consumption and production has been identified as the major cause of the continued deterioration of the global environment (UNCED, 1992).

Therefore, it is necessary to change these unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, and promote sustainable consumption and production. SCP requires “life cycle thinking” to increase the sustainable management of resources and achieve resource efficiency along both production and consumption phases.

Education for Sustainable Consumption and Production (ESCP) aims to provide knowledge, values and skills to enable individuals and social groups to become actors of change towards more sustainable consumption behaviours. The objective is to ensure that the basic needs of the global community are met, quality of life for all is improved and inefficient use of resources and environmental degradation are avoided. ESC is therefore about providing citizens with appropriate information and knowledge on the environmental and social impacts of their daily choices, as well as providing workable solutions and alternatives. ESC integrates fundamental rights and freedoms including consumers’ rights, and aims at protecting and empowering consumers in order to enable them to participate in the public debate and economy in an informed, confident and ethical way.

In order to achieve green growth, we need to build an informed and responsible consumer and business society with sustainable consumption and production patterns and behaviour. This behavioural change can only be effectively delivered through education, whether it is formal, non-formal or informal education.

"Education for sustainable consumption is a core theme of Education for Sustainable Development, and it is essential to train responsible citizens and consumers towards lifestyles based on economic and social justice, food security, ecological integrity, sustainable livelihoods, respect for all life forms and strong values that foster social cohesion, democracy and collective action" (UNESCO 2009).

For instance, the mere fact of metering and introducing a price on the use of environment-related resources has an effect on people’s decision making, even if the price is very low. This suggests that campaigns to provide information to consumers by installing smart meters that display accurate real-time information on energy use in the home will affect household decisions to some extent even at low prices. This shows that the provision of information to consumers and on public education, can have a substantial complementary role to induce changes on the demand side.

2. GOAL

Malaysia aims to be a high-income country with high quality of life. We also want to continue to live in a beautiful and comfortable place, to keep having healthy food to eat and clean water to drink, and to preserve and improve the beauty of our beloved country. The ability of a society to produce and consume goods and services determines its standard of living, but in the long-run even more critical is its ability to build and maintain the natural environment that meets basic needs like food, water, clean air and ensure the same for future generations. We could improve our lives and our environment by adopting and practising SCP. To meet this aim, the Malaysian Government is strengthening its policy and institutional frameworks to bring about a switch to Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) patterns. The ESCP curriculum is the realization of this intervention.

The Education for Sustainable Consumption and Production (ESCP) curriculum is developed in concordance with Thrust 6 of the 11th Malaysia Plan (2016-2020) to promote green growth through SCP. In the longer term this will contribute to achieving the vision 2030 as outlined in the corresponding SCP Blueprint. This vision describes at the milestone of 2030 a completed generational change of mindset the young generation towards sustainable practices. The ESCP aims to inculcate desired behaviours in daily practices that would lead to resource conservation and resource use efficiency without reducing quality of life. Current and future generations need to meet the challenges related to sustainable consumption.

The ESCP curriculum for secondary education is developed with the primary aim to improve basic education to ensure every Malaysian has access to education and the opportunity to gain the knowledge, skills, values, and perspectives that encourage and support public participation and community decision making. This curriculum is also seen as fulfillment of Malaysia's commitment, as a member of UNESCO, to re-orient education, increase public awareness, and promote training for sustainable development.

Education for Sustainable Consumption and Production aims at providing **knowledge**, **attitude**, and **skills** to enable individuals and social groups to become actors of change towards more sustainable consumption behaviors. It increases the student's knowledge of the individual's rights and responsibilities as citizens and as consumers; to acquire practical skills that will help students function as informed, critical and conscientious consumers; and to develop responsible behaviour that encompasses sustainable consumption, active social involvement, ecological responsibility and global solidarity.

3. PURPOSE AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

For teachers and educators who would like to incorporate SCP and ESD-related issues into curricula, attention should be given to:

- The background and current status of the issue, including trends and statistics (locally, nationally and globally)
- Good practices for addressing the issue (solutions and innovations)
- Relevant legal instruments and frameworks
- Traditional knowledge and customs relating to the issue
- Technical and scientific knowledge relating to the issue.

ESCP goes beyond learning information and also encompasses understanding the “how”. This enables learners to gain a deep understanding of the interconnected nature of issues, the cause and effect relationships and the impacts of taking action. The ESCP curriculum encourages learning how to:

- Recognize real-life problems (e.g. overpopulation, food security, etc.)
- Use information to make informed, appropriate decisions
- Build capacity for continuing one’s own learning
- Access information and expertise
- Apply learning to real-life situations, including tasks in daily life
- Learn from one’s own surroundings
- Prevent or minimize the threats of an issue
- Recognize the causes and effects of an issue

Students who have been exposed to this ESCP curriculum will:

- be more aware of the environmental impacts of their consumption choices
- adopt patterns of consumption and production that safeguard human rights and community well-being as well as the regenerative capacities of the earth and to ensure that economic activities at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner.
- care for the community of life with understanding and compassion;
- respect Earth and life in all its diversity;

The basic learning outcomes of SCP education can be defined as attitudes, knowledge, skills and behavior leading to the realization of the five key ***consumer responsibilities***, which are:

- **Critical awareness:** The responsibility of being more alert, questioning and making clear, reasoned judgements (rational decision-making) about goods and services used or purchased in terms of their impact and proper use (having adequate and accurate information).
- **Ecological responsibility:** The responsibility of understanding the environmental consequences of consumption demand, behavior and habits, whether

individually or collectively as a society by considering the limit of the environment's carrying capacity. (Able to take up the responsibility to keep clean and healthy surrounding, conserve natural resources and protect the earth for future generations in our daily activity and lifestyles)

- **Social Concern:** The responsibility to be aware of the impact of our consumption on other citizens, especially disadvantage or powerless groups, whether in the local, national or international community.
- **Action and involvement:** The responsibility to get involve, assertive and proactive to ensure sustainable consumption behaviour is positively acknowledged, nurtured and spread persistently.
- **Global solidarity:** The responsibility to organize together as consumers to develop the strength and influence to promote and protect our interest.

While lifestyle change is the ultimate objective for ESCP, students would also acquire generic competencies.

Learning Characteristics

The characteristics of learning associated with ESCP are affiliated with the concept of

Learning to Change, learning that is:

- Cooperative and collaborative
- Participatory
- Student-centred
- Experiential
- Evidence based or research based
- Project-based and activity based
- Interdisciplinary
- Borderless (can take place regardless of time and location, and regardless of age)
- Inter-generational

4. THE PHILOSOPHY of EDUCATION for SCP

The basic tenet for ESCP is achieving more through less, from which the philosophy of ESCP is derived:

"MORE THROUGH LESS!"

*SCP aims to achieve a better quality of life by getting
"more useful output through less input"*

5. CURRICULUM FOCUS

Sustainable Consumption and Production is a multi-disciplinary subject. As such, the SCP curriculum encompasses different branches of science and the arts concerning nature, human beings, society and cultures. It deals with issues concerning the way of life as a whole, our lifestyles and behaviors that have impact on the environment, society and economy.

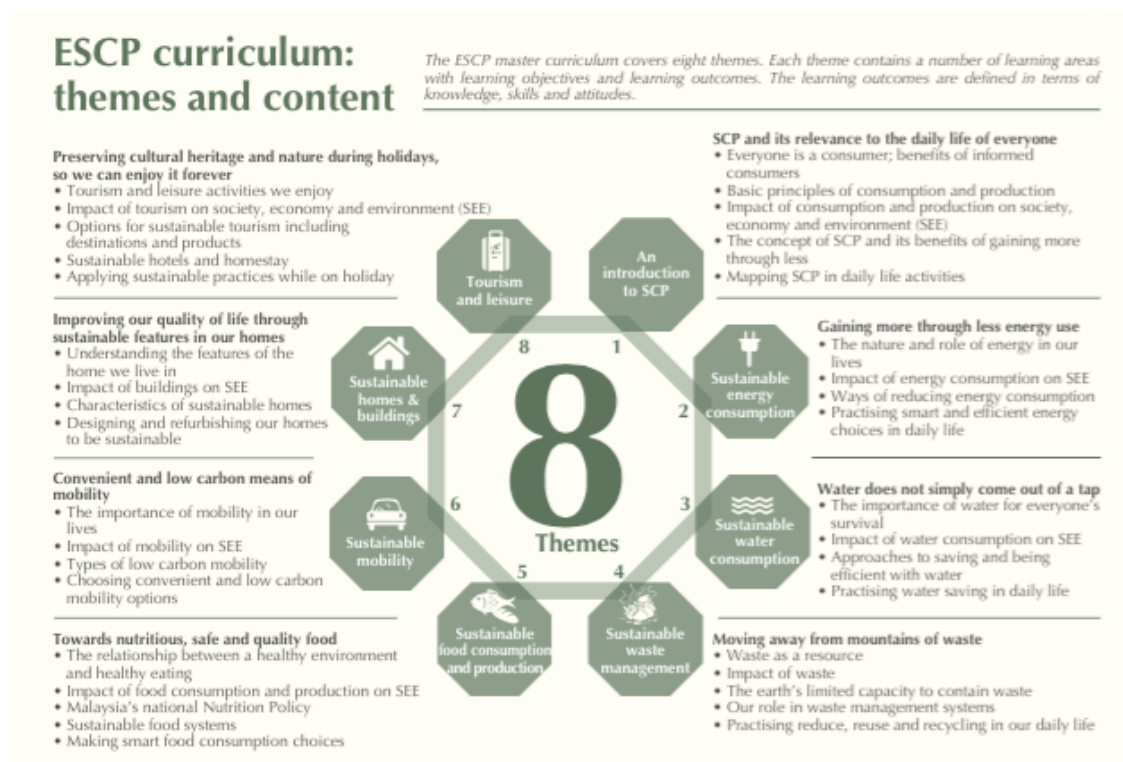
In all themes, the following cross-cutting elements could be found:

Making choices – practical and ethical aspects of making choices as a consumer

Managing resources – planning, using and protecting resources

Solving problems – rethinking strategies for resolving issues, innovating and making changes

Contributing to the future– changing behavior to manage impact



6. ASSESSMENT

Teachers may select appropriate projects and assignments to be used for student assessments. The final goal of SCP education is to develop critical, aware, consumer citizens, therefore, alternatives to the usual examinations might be more useful. Some suggestions for alternative assessments are as follows (UNEP, 2010):

- **Portfolio assessment** is a means of evaluating the student's progress by selecting examples of their work throughout the learning process that indicate progress and content.
- **Group examinations:** Because many SCP issues are controversial, a group examination demands that students move from opinion to a meta- cognitive level of understanding.
- **Showcasing**, such as producing a (school) newspaper, making an exhibition or creating "professional" presentations: boards, video, tapes are ways of making concrete summaries that can be used for evaluation of the learning process.
- **Using the internet:** to test students' abilities to carry out research via the internet and to use it as a communication platform for consumer citizenship.
- **Research and direct trials analysis** of products, production and services
- **Self-evaluation:** This is the students' own evaluation, during the course, at the end of the course and after some time (maybe one month after the end of the course), which examines if the learning process had any impact on their way of life.

a. Methodologies for ESCP

Since this curriculum is about lifestyle change, it takes on the approach of education for life-long learning guided by **UNESCO's Five Pillars of Learning**, which are:

Learning to know is about having a broad general knowledge and in depth understanding of a small number of subjects.

Learning to do is about having a main occupation but being skilled to deal with different situations and to work in teams.

Learning to live together is about understanding other people and our interdependence.

Learning to be is about personal development to make better choices and become more responsible.

Learning to transform oneself and society is about individuals working separately and together to change the world. This means gaining the knowledge, values and skills needed for transforming attitudes and lifestyles.

(UNESCO, Five Pillars of Learning)

Raising ESCP issues in our classrooms will help make sustainable consumption relevant in students' lives and at the same time, make the class more interesting and motivating by

helping students see the connections between all aspects around the issues and understand their complexity.

Some suggested learning and teaching methodologies for ESCP:

- Lectures, seminars, tutorials
- Relearning
- Dialogue and discussion
- Science and values
- Projects
- Field trips
- Inquiry Learning
- Active learning
- Case studies
- Showcasing
- Invert analysis
- Mind maps
- Strategic questioning
- Humour
- Indicators of sustainable consumption
- LOLA (Looking For Likely Alternatives)
- Future workshops
- Drama and games
- Celebrations
- Music, art and literature
- Use of media
- Using the Internet
- Networking

(Ref: UNEP (2010). *Here and Now! Education for Sustainable Consumption: Recommendations and Guidelines.*)