



Submission of
The Universal Esperanto Association (UEA)
and
The World Esperanto Youth Organization (TEJO)



to the UNCSO Rio+20 Conference Compilation Document, Zero Draft Version.
1st November 2011

1) Our expectations for the outcome of Rio+20, and our concrete proposals in this regard, including views on a possible structure of the Outcome document?

Since the Conference addresses issues of the whole worldwide community, we hope that the final declaration of Rio+20 will include recommendations regarding a language policy that can protect linguistic diversity and enable effective communication at the same time. Such recommendations should clearly condemn linguistic discrimination and policies that lead to language death and cultural dominance of larger languages over smaller languages.

2) Our comments on existing proposals:

a)

We would like to express our support for the following recommendations in the Declaration of the 64th Annual UN DPI/NGO Conference in Bonn, Germany, 3-5 September 2011:

p.11, line 414

EDUCATION AND LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

p.11, lines 419-422:

We call for the respect and inclusion of ethnic languages in the educational system, as these languages comprise the complexity of their respective environments, and to take into consideration the potential of a neutral international language that combines ease of learning and clarity with neutrality, and therefore can be seen as inherently sustainable;

b)

We would also like to express support for the commitment in the declaration of Ethical Commitments to Global Ecological Posture and Behaviour as one of the alternative treaties produced by the NGO community during the Rio Summit in 1992.

The commitment 14. states:

14. Contribute enthusiastically to surmounting artificial obstacles, be they political or religious, with the objective of formatting a universal human nation. We suggest the adoption of the international language Esperanto as the second language of all peoples, and we recommend that all NGOs participate in its diffusion.

3) Our views on implementation and on how to close the implementation gap, which relevant actors are envisaged as being involved (Governments, specific Major Groups, UN system, IFIs, etc.)

As with many aspects of sustainable development, a transition towards an effective and non-discriminatory language pallet in the world that safeguards linguistic diversity and makes access to worldwide communication attainable for everyone needs coordinated steps by many actors. The choices of which languages are learned by individuals are partly made by themselves, but also

greatly influenced by their government's education policy. The choice of each government will depend on choices of others, and a prisoner's dilemma is likely to lead to suboptimal choices when central guidance is lacking. The UN institutions and NGO's should be positive examples of successful application of language policies within their organisation that combine effective communication with equal right for everyone regardless of native language, for example using a neutral international language, e.g. Esperanto.

4) What specific cooperation mechanisms, partnership arrangements or other implementation tools are envisaged and what is the relevant time frame for the proposed decisions to be reached and actions to be implemented?

The transition towards a language policy including the application of a ***neutral international language*** can start with relatively easy example decisions regarding the internal processes of UN institutions and NGO's. Adding a neutral international language to the existing arbitrary choice of official languages will not induce great costs on the short term and can generate considerable savings on the long term. The decision to include a neutral international language in member-states' education programmes might require more preparation time and a thoroughly worked out transition plan, as language skills in national languages currently applied widely in international communication will remain vital throughout the desirable transition.

Nevertheless, this transition could be eased by the experience in the Esperanto movement with the propaedeutic value of this neutral international language.

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References:

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