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Earth Charter & Education for Sustainable Development School Seal



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Reorienting education practice towards a better future

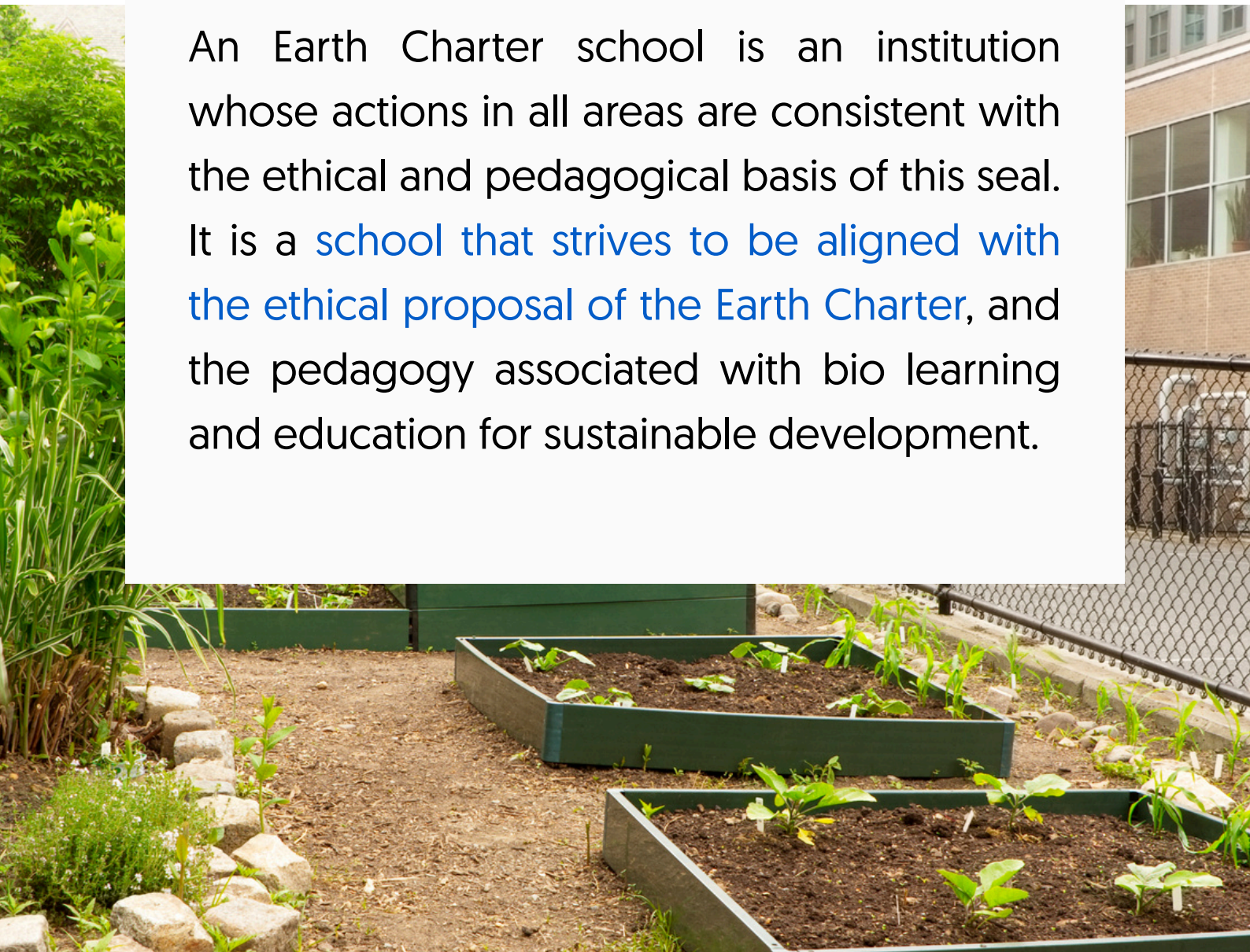
The Earth Charter & ESD School Seal (ECSS) is a pioneering quality seal for school assessments, integrating sustainability ethics with educational practices related to education for sustainable development (ESD).

Developed by Earth Charter International in response to requests from educational institutions, the ECSS aims to recognize schools' efforts with the Earth Charter and ESD. Its main goal is to foster change by encouraging schools to embed sustainability values in their practices.

The assessment helps schools evaluate how well the Earth Charter's ethical principles are reflected in their actions and teaching, identifying strengths and areas for improvement. It also gives visibility to schools committed to sustainability, supporting the global push for transforming education systems and contributing to SDG4, target 4.7.

What is an Earth Charter School?

An Earth Charter school is an institution whose actions in all areas are consistent with the ethical and pedagogical basis of this seal. It is a [school that strives to be aligned with the ethical proposal of the Earth Charter](#), and the pedagogy associated with bio learning and education for sustainable development.



Main objective

The ECSS aims to assess whether education processes that are committed to make sustainability practice central, and which are using the Earth Charter as a guide or framework, are having an impact on the transformation of people's worldview's, their behavior and in the institution's culture.

Since intrinsic transformation processes are difficult to measure and quantify, the ECSS measures whether the conditions for transformation and change are given in a school environment. In addition, this Seal aims to be a learning tool that will allow education institutions to reflect on their practices and find ways to improve.

To whom is the Earth Charter & ESD School Seal relevant to?

Just like the Earth Charter, this School Seal can be used by **anyone active in the education sector or committed to primary and secondary education**. The purpose of the seal goes deeper than just an assessment which eventually offers a recognition. It is an attempt to show alternatives for daily practices, to offer a lens through which an education community's actions can be analysed and offers inspiration to reflect and adapt.

The ECSS is especially relevant for those **education institutions interested in applying a whole-school approach to sustainability**, in connection with education for sustainable development, putting in practice SDG 4, target 4.7.



Benefits

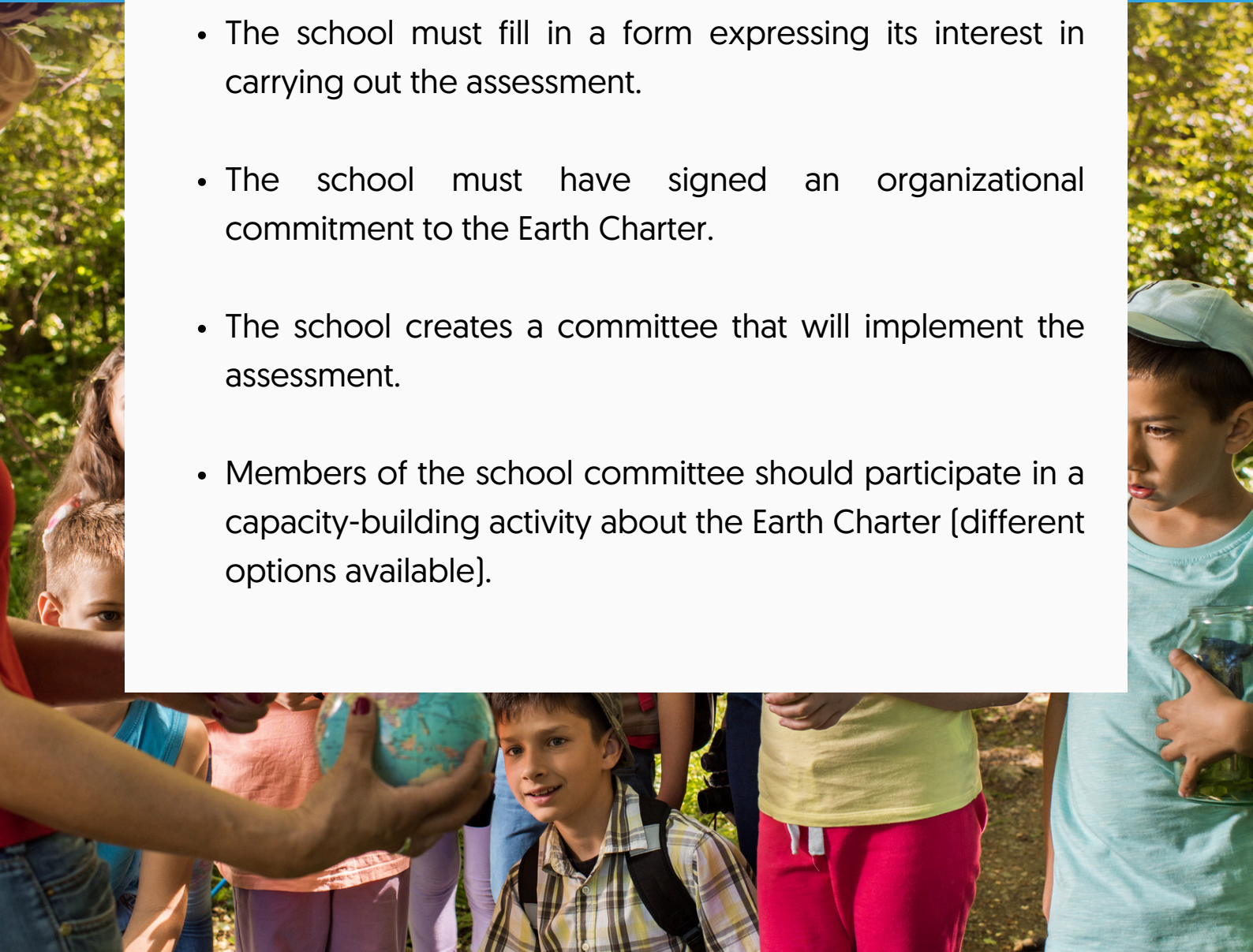


- Provides a comprehensive learning opportunity for schools to assess their sustainability actions using the Earth Charter's vision, identifying strengths and areas for improvement.
- Certified schools gain public recognition, including a logo, for their concrete actions in sustainability and stand out for positively impacting students, the education community, and surrounding society.
- Students and staff receive diploma certificates, acknowledging their role in the school's success.
- Listing on the official Earth Charter International website and widely publicized through various media outlets.
- Access to the exclusive Earth Charter global network platform, connecting with members from different countries.
- Invitations to special events [e.g., webinars, conferences] with global experts on education and sustainability.
- Special discounts on Earth Charter courses.

Getting started:

The following requirements must be fulfilled in order to start the assessment process:

- The school must fill in a form expressing its interest in carrying out the assessment.
- The school must have signed an organizational commitment to the Earth Charter.
- The school creates a committee that will implement the assessment.
- Members of the school committee should participate in a capacity-building activity about the Earth Charter (different options available).



Assessment process:

The school's assessment committee will implement two tools after approval:

- **Indicator List:** Evaluates the school's culture, structures, and sustainability procedures using a scale from 0 to 3. Evidence [e.g., documents, photos, videos] must support the assessment. The digital sheet provides performance statistics, highlighting strengths and weaknesses.
- **Student Questionnaire:** Closed-ended questions gather insights from a random sample of students (aged 10 and above) on their personal experiences within the school community.






The pathways of using ECSS:

1) Official Assessment (obtaining official Earth Charter & ESD School Seal)

In order to obtain the Seal, the school must hire an external auditor, who is certified by the Earth Charter International. The auditor will be the contact person of the school for any questions that may arise. Once the assessment committee has completed the student questionnaires and gone through the indicator list, providing all the evidence in an organized way, the auditor will review the assessment and the evidence to check and confirm the level that the School stands. When the results are officially confirmed, the school will obtain the official recognition Earth Charter School Seal which is valid for two years.

2) Self-assessment (no official Earth Charter & ESD School Seal)

The institution can use the ECSS material in form of a self-assessment to reflect on its practices and gain insights for improvement ideas, without applying for the official recognition at the end of the process. The focus is on using the tool to identify areas of improvement and to engage in a deep reflection process with the entire school community.



Costs

The Schools who want to receive the official recognition of an “Earth Charter School”, will need to cover the costs of the following items:

- Certification fee [includes the assessment materials and basic training opportunities]
- Certificate per student or staff member (optional, only if the school wants to offer a certificate to each one as member of an Earth Charter school).
- External auditor.

Self-assessment (no official Earth Charter & ESD School Seal)

Interested schools can purchase the materials to carry out self- assessment.

Specific information about the cost in US\$ will be provided upon request, please contact us info@earthcharter.org.



About the Earth Charter

Crafted by visionaries over twenty years ago, the Earth Charter is a document with sixteen principles, organized under four pillars, that seek to turn conscience into action. It seeks to inspire in all people a new sense of global interdependence and shared responsibility for the well-being of the whole human family, the greater community of life, and future generations. It is a vision of hope and a call to action.

About the Earth Charter International Center for Education

The ECI Education Center, located on the campus of the UN Mandated University for Peace in San José, Costa Rica, offers a variety of online and on-site education programmes that highlight the importance of incorporating sustainability values and principles into decision-making and education. It provides an opportunity for participants to expand their understanding of sustainability and see the possibilities for turning it into action. Since 2012, the Earth Charter Education Center coordinates the [UNESCO Chair on Education for Sustainable Development with the Earth Charter.](#)