

Reply Level	Minister Reply		
Reference Number:	MC25-001581	Date Received in Department:	14/03/2025
Date Due in MO:	00/00/2022	Date Sent to MO:	27/03/2025
Subject:	MIN Greening Education Partnership Zali Steggall MP		
Correspondent:	Zali Steggall MP, Member for Warringah		
Previous Corro:	MS24-000055		
Key Points:			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. On 29 April 2024, you agreed that Australia would not join the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)'s Greening Education Partnership (GEP) (MS24-000055 refers). 2. As the Australian Government lead on education matters, the Department of Education prepared this recommendation in consultation with the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water—the Government lead on climate change. 3. Both parties were in agreement that joining the GEP would require whole-of-government consultation and additional resourcing for implementation. 4. Consultation with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, that has whole-of-government responsibility for multilateral engagement including UNESCO, was limited as the GEP involves implementation at the schools level that is the responsibility of the Department of Education. 5. The department has yet to formally decline the invitation to join GEP, adopting a wait and see approach given ongoing developments in climate change policy. 6. Australia supports sustainability and efforts to combat climate change through the Government's education initiatives including the Glasgow Work Program on Action for Climate Empowerment and the Net Zero Plan. 			
Minister's Office Use <i>(Relevant information to be inserted by adviser as required)</i>			
Clearance officer (for Greening Education Partnership matters):			
Title: s 47F(1)			
Telephone: s 22(1)			

Background:

1. Australia is committed to continuing its long history of international engagement on education, including with UNESCO and other multilateral fora such as the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), and the Group of 20 (G20).
2. Australia has adopted the Glasgow Work Program on Action for Climate Empowerment, which includes education as one of its six elements.
3. On 26 October 2024 Australia endorsed the Declaration on the common agenda for education and climate change (the Declaration) as part of the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting Leaders Statement, in Samoa, which was drafted in conjunction with the 4 pillars of action of the Greening Education Partnership and is committed to the actions under the Declaration.
4. Australia became a signatory to the Declaration at the United Nations Climate Change Conference 2023 (28th United Nations Climate Change Conference, COP28).
5. However, endorsement of the Declaration does not automatically mean agreement to join the Greening Education Partnership.
6. Australia is yet to respond to UNESCO's official invitation to join the UNESCO Greening Partnership, and it is recommended that Australia does not join the Partnership as it does not align with Australian Government priorities for addressing climate change under Australia's Net Zero Plan.