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Relation	



**Agenda setting in multilateral contexts:
the example of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development**

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Abstract

A number of papers have focused on UN policy formulation processes, but little is known about how particular issues come to policymakers' attention in the first place. This very early stage of policy formulation, called agenda setting, remains under researched and more so in multilateral contexts. Applying Kingdon's multiple streams model to the example of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, this study analyses the trajectory of the policy from being just an idea to the point of being placed on the UN agenda. This paper goes on to argue that there are three conditions that supported the successful trajectory of DESD: a funding-backed policy entrepreneur, policy oligopoly, and a highly predictable policy window. Its theoretical contribution is to fill the gap between current studies and theories by presenting an analysis of one policy in a multilateral context.

Keywords: agenda setting; policy analysis; multiple streams model; Decade of Education for Sustainable Development; UNESCO

1. Introduction

Several studies focusing on multilateral policies have analyzed the policy formulation process, (Clark, 1994; Heyneman, 2003; Higgott, Underhill, & Bieler, 2000; Moutsios, 2009; Reanda, 1999). However, little is known about their origins, that is, how issues come to policymakers' attention in the first place. This is generally called agenda setting, or the pre-decision process, before issues have been taken on by decision makers. This stage of agenda setting includes not only the moment that an issue gets on to the agenda but also the process that keeps the issue on the agenda until the decision is made. For this very early stage of policy formulation, much of the empirical evidence exists in the domestic context (e.g. Mclendon, 2003), though it remains under researched in multilateral contexts. In domestic contexts, many analyses of agenda setting have implications for policy formulation, highlighting the lack of synchronicity between problem definition and generation of policy solutions (Knaggård, 2015; Zahariadis, 2008, 2015). Compared with the domestic policy arena, multilateral policy contexts are both larger and more crowded. In addition, as Moutsios (2009) and Schuetze (2006) have observed, the international agenda in multilateral settings can be manipulated by certain forces that are embedded in national politics or global competition; hence the importance of understanding agenda setting becomes more crucial in a multilateral context.

This paper fills the gap between current studies and theories of agenda setting in multilateral settings by analyzing the multilateral and UN policy, the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD). The DESD is the United Nations' Decade campaign, launched at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in

2002 and implemented between 2005 and 2014. The campaign aimed to integrate the principles, values, and practices about sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning. UNESCO is the lead agency and acted as a coordinator to combine efforts made by different UN bodies and other programs and actions by organizations linked to the DESD. After ten years' activities, the report concluded that the DESD succeeded in promoting the awareness of sustainability in many countries, by integrating sustainable development into national policies and advancing learning for the principle and practice of sustainability (UNESCO, 2014). DESD was chosen as a case because it is one of the most recent and influential multilateral policies in the education sector, and moreover is closely related to the current global agenda of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)¹. While many studies about DESD have focused on its effectiveness (Kolleck, 2016; Manteaw, 2012) and on the concept (King, 2009; Mochizuki, 2010; Nordtveit, 2009), the origin and the trajectory of how it became placed on the UN agenda remains under-researched. Understanding how and why the DESD came into being is important not only for filling the gap in the agenda setting literature of multilateral policies but also for current global efforts in achieving SDGs.

2. Methodology

Multiple Streams Model

To analyze the dynamics of DESD's agenda setting, I employ the multiple streams model developed by Kingdon (1987). The model helps to describe the dynamics of the agenda setting by explaining how and why certain problems emerge on the institutional agenda at a given time, but not at others and why certain policies are formulated at certain moments in time. The model contrasts with traditional incremental models such as cycles and stage models (Brewer, 1974; Lasswell, 1956)², which assume that all decisions are made in a rational and systematic manner in a linear process. Kingdon argues that the policy process is irrational and dynamic, and takes place in a policy arena characterized by complex power relations and interrelations between powerful political agents, ideology, turbulence and complexity. Since Kingdon developed the model, the idea of multiple streams has become far more popular in policy formulation compared with the linear model or other frameworks (Zohlnhöfer, Herweg, & Rüb, 2015)³, and is still actively discussed in contributions to the development of the wider area of policy theory (e.g. Cairney & Jones, 2016)⁴.

Kingdon proposed five main concepts to explain the agenda setting process: problem stream, politics stream, policy stream, policy window, and policy entrepreneur. The first three concepts are the streams which describe the dynamics in the negotiation process. He explains that each stream is independent from the other two streams with its own rules, and that there is an interplay between them in the process. The problem stream refers to an existing problem which may be dormant or demanding to be identified as a problem. Kingdon posited that a problem captures attention either as a systematic indicator, a focusing event or feedback from the operation of existing programs. However, although a problem may attract attention, it does not always get addressed by government, but can fade from view either when the scale of the problem levels off, or because people become used to the condition, or simply because attention is fickle. The policy stream is a flow of many

idea, alternatives, and solutions suggested by a community of specialist such as researchers, academics, and interest group analysts. Using a biological metaphor, Kingdon called this the “policy primeval soup” as it resembles the process of biological natural selection, in which molecules floated around in the soup before life came into being. In the policy primeval soup, ideas confront each other and combine with one another through the process of persuasion and diffusion among specialists in the policy community, which Kingdon calls the “softening up” process. While many ideas float around in this soup, some ideas become prominent and some fade, and the ones that last, do so because they meet certain criteria. The political stream is the political context, which is distinct from what happens in the problem and policy streams. Kingdon defines the “political” in the narrow sense, limited to electoral, partisan or pressure groups and forces, which includes political organizations but also national mood and staff turnover within government. The important actors in the political stream favor certain actions and try to build a winning coalition, and thus the stream becomes a promotor or inhibitor of high agenda status. Unlike in the policy stream’s process, in the political stream, consensus is built by bargaining. The actors build coalitions through the granting of concessions in return for support of the coalition.

Kingdon’s fourth concept is the ‘policy window’, which is an opportunity that opens up for a proposal to be placed on the agenda, and is seen as coming about through the coupling of the separate streams. This is the critical moment in which advocates of a particular proposal will push their solution or push for attention to be given to the problems their proposals address. It is the moment when a problem is recognized, a solution is developed in the policy community, and political forces make it the right time for particular policy actions. A policy window will remain open only for a short period, and if the participants do not take advantage of the opportunity, the window closes and they must wait until the next opportunity comes along. Kingdon defined two types of window, depending on the cause of agenda change: a problem window and a political window, each window requiring a different trajectory, borrowed from the policy stream. A problem window is opened when decision makers become convinced that there is a pressing problem, and they look to the policy streams for a potential solution. A political window, on the other hand, is opened by an event in the political stream, in which politicians are given a theme for their administration or decide to undertake some sort of initiative on a particular subject, and they start casting about for proposals that will serve their purpose.

Kingdon conceptualized the individuals who push particular proposals through to enactment as policy entrepreneurs. They are key players in bringing about a policy action during an open window. The policy entrepreneur can hold a variety of positions not only formal positions in political system and is someone who is willing to spend their resources, such as time, energy, reputation and money, to promote their position in return for future gain. They are motivated either by their concern about certain problems, their pursuit of self-serving benefits, or claiming credit for accomplishment. Kingdon defines three junctures of stream maneuver: pushing their concern higher up the agenda, pushing their pet proposal during a process of softening up the system, and making the coupling.

Not all studies apply the multiple streams model as conceived by Kingdon. A meta-analysis of studies applying the multiple stream model between 2000 and 2013 (Jones et al., 2016) shows that only one third of studies used all five concepts (e.g. Howlett, 2009), while others use only the concept of the three streams (e.g. Minkler,

Garcia, Williams, LoPresti, & Lilly, 2010), or only the policy window (e.g. Keeler, 1993). In addition, the model has been elaborated in recent years with new concepts, such as the three-into-one tributary model (Barzelay, 2003), the three streams-two stages model (Zahariadis, 2007), and the five stream 'confluence' model (Howlett, McConnell, & Perl, 2015). Thus, the model can be applied in many forms.

The multiple stream model has been extensively applied at the domestic level, particularly in North American countries such as the United States (e.g. McLendon, 2003; Stout and Stevens, 2000) and Canada (e.g. Henstra, 2010 and Howlett, 2009). In European countries the model has been applied such as in the United Kingdom (e.g. Bache and Reardon, 2013; Rossiter and Price, 2003) and Germany (e.g. Zohlnhöfer, 2016). The model has also been applied in Asian countries such as India (e.g. Sharma, 2008) and China (e.g. Zhu, 2008) and in African countries such as South Africa (e.g. Pillay and Skordis-Worrall, 2013) and Burkina Faso (e.g. Ridde, 2009)⁵. Compared with these studies, there is far less empirical evidence in multilateral settings, with a few exceptions in the European Union setting (e.g. Copeland & James, 2014; Sarmiento-Mirwaldt, 2013; Zahariadis, 2008) and, to best of my knowledge, only one in the UN setting (Lipson, 2007). Nevertheless, a meta-analysis (Jones et al., 2016) found that twenty-seven percent of the applications utilized more than two levels of governance for analysis (e.g. Fisher, 2012; Huitema, Lebel, & Meijerink, 2011; Iusmen, 2013); thus it is possible to apply the model in multilateral settings. In terms of the UN setting, Lipson (2007) shows in his investigation of the UN's peacekeeping policy, that the UN policy arena is very much an 'organized anarchy', on which the presupposition of Kingdon's model stands, in being characterized by uncertain preferences, unclear organizational processes, and fluid participation in decision-making. He therefore argues that the UN setting is amendable to the model. In his study, he used all five of Kingdon's concepts with a small adjustment to the political stream in that he examines the setting at three levels: the multilateral setting, politics within UN members states, and politics and organizational culture within the UN. Informed by Lipson's method, in applying Kingdon's model, this study also conceptualizes the UN political stream as comprising these three levels.

Data and Analysis Method

Previous studies that have analyzed the agenda setting process with the multiple stream model mostly use a qualitative approach rather than a quantitative approach, with data collected either by interview, survey, documents (contents analysis), and participant observation and focus group (Jones et al., 2016). In this study, the policy arena of the UN is obviously larger than a domestic or regional setting, making it necessary to collect a much larger database of potential forces that influence the agenda setting. For this purpose, I chose to analyse documents, enabling me to collect a greater breadth of data from a variety of sources.

Content analysis starts with the premise that written texts and cultural artifacts are 'mute evidence' that leave a trace on the past (Hodder, 2000), and makes possible the systematic, objective, quantitative analysis of message characteristics (Kimberly, 2002). The procedure of contents analysis in this study followed three steps. First, communication documents related to the process of the DESD's agenda setting were collected using a snowballing method. Although the DESD was agreed by the international community at the World Summit in 2002, the idea had been discussed already during the preparatory process, which began in April 2001.

Accordingly, the documents produced in the World Summit and the preparatory meetings were collected through several sources such as the Summit's outcome document, the UN resolutions, and the Summit negotiation reports⁶. Other documents ranging from past conference documents, UN agency reports, speeches, books, journals and newspaper articles referred to in World Summit and preparatory meetings were collected by snowballing. As I describe later, the World Summit was not only focused on the educational sector, but on all sectors related to world development such as energy, commerce, natural resources, agriculture, the environment, water and sanitation, gender and health; thus I carefully selected the ones which referred specifically to the educational sector or were closely related to it.

The second step in contents analysis involved coding words and sentences in the documents which simultaneously referred to both 'education' and 'sustainable development' or 'sustainability,' and then counting the frequencies of codes by time and actor. The coding procedure was aided by the qualitative analysis software, Nvivo 10.

Based on the results of the frequency count, I then conducted descriptive analysis. During the analysis, I found that Japan took an important role in the process as they proposed the idea of DESD to the preparatory meeting. Thus I extended the document collection to Japanese documents. Investigating the motivation behind Japan's proposal required me to collect further documents, namely newspaper articles published in 1968. Through this process, the total number of documents used in this study became 151, ranging from 1968 to 2002. A brief summary of these documents is given in Table 1 in the Appendix.

3. Findings

Overall, the analysis found that the agenda setting of DESD can be explained by Kingdon's model in terms of the coupling of the three streams in the context of the political window created by the World Summit: a problem (inertia and the need for international policymakers to be seen as "doing something" about unsustainable development); the political climate (international mood for sustainable development, an interest group, the Japan Forum for Johannesburg (JFJ), a political force in the form of the Japanese delegation, and a newly inaugurated Japanese Prime Minister); and a solution (education for sustainable development, with softening up from environment education). Well-briefed policy entrepreneurs (JFJ, the Japanese delegation, and UNESCO), were able to sell their idea to the decision makers, and hook a solution (DESD) to the problem (unsustainable development) in the window opening. Figure 1 shows a summary of the convergence process of agenda setting of DESD at the World Summit.

Figure 1: Multiple Streams of DESD agenda setting

DESD policy arena

DESD is unusual in that a substantial part of its institutionalization took place before it appeared on the agenda of the UN General Assembly⁷, by which time the proposal had already gained the support of a number of Member States⁸ and was adopted without a vote⁹. The idea of DESD was adopted at the World Summit on

Sustainable Development as one of the outcomes of the Summit. The objectives of the Summit were to review progress of the previous targets of Agenda 21, agreed at the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992 at Rio de Janeiro, and to reinvigorate the global commitment to sustainable development (United Nations, 2001). Agenda 21 is the global goal that had been adopted a decade earlier at Rio de Janeiro, which aimed to secure economic, social and environmental well-being for the future (United Nations, 1992). The outcome document, Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, consists of eleven sections, and reference to DESD appears in the section *Means of Implementation*, that recommends to “the United Nations General Assembly that it consider adopting a Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, starting in 2005” (United Nations, 2002). The Summit is thus an event that made it possible for the idea of DESD to be placed onto the UN agenda, and that triggered the opening of a political window. In accordance with Kingdon’s model, the window remained open for a relatively short period, the ten days of the Summit event, from 26th August and 4th September in 2002.

The preparatory process, however, took far longer. The fifteen-month gestation starting from April 2001 included four preparatory committees, one regional meeting and one brainstorming session. The substantial policy input occurred in the last five months, from the third preparatory meeting in March 2002, when the Summit’s chair invited receiving comments on the baseline paper, the Chair’s Paper, to the closing of the Summit. The brief window was particularly critical since the policy arena was extremely crowded and complex, with participants from 191 countries and a total of 21,000 people from government, NGOs, civil societies, and UN agencies. In this vast policy arena, the discussion was made based on the Chair’s paper and the idea of DESD was discussed among educational policymakers.

3.1 Problem stream

In the context of Kingdon’s three streams framework, the ‘problem’ was the lack of sustainability: the problem stream of unsustainable development began in the late 1960s, and since then the issue periodically gained international policymakers’ attention, whenever international conferences were held. This time, the issue was revitalized by the implementation reports of Agenda 21, prepared for the preparatory meeting. The report by the UN Secretariat mentioned that “ten years later, despite initiatives by governments, international organizations, business, civil society groups and individuals to achieve sustainable development, progress towards the goals established at Rio has been slower than anticipated and in some respects conditions are worse than they were ten years ago” (Commission on Sustainable Development, 2002). The Member States’ national assessments similarity criticized the lack of effort: “many of the objectives set out at Rio have yet to be fully implemented (Iran on behalf of the G-77/China)” and “progress of implementation has been inadequate or less far-reaching than expected (Spain, Switzerland etc.)” (IISD, 2001).

While the issue of unsustainable development was recognized as a problem by UN policymakers, it was too broad and vague to enable policymakers to define what the specific sources of unsustainability were and which sectors were central to the problem¹⁰. The representatives from various sectors claimed their own definition of the problem and its importance. Among them, the active advocates were the ones from the environmental

sector, the governance sector, and social sector. The environmental sector's advocates were protesting about issues such as environmental deterioration, the governance sector's advocates were protesting about issues such as lack of official development aid, and the social sector's advocates were protesting about issues such as poverty eradication. The problem definition became a bit clearer towards the Summit opening, though a common understanding had not been reached by the time of the Summit. UNESCO reported that it was only "at the second or third preparatory meeting [which is in the latter half of the Summit preparation period] that the broad themes of the Summit began to become clear" (UNESCO, 2002a). Although the problem of sustainable development had not been clearly defined, it held the policymaker's attention to the extent that some kind of action had to be undertaken, or what Kindgon called the condition in which policymakers had to be seen as 'doing something' about it.

3.2 Policy Stream

Four policy solutions were floating around in the education sector's 'policy primeval soup.' They were: financial support to education in developing countries; public awareness of environmental issues; expansion of the Dakar Framework for Action; and education for sustainable development. The first two solutions had already been implemented in the international educational sector while the latter two were relatively new. The fourth solution included elements from the other three solutions and thus was able to garner broad support. This fourth solution became institutionalized as the DESD.

Financial support to education in developing countries, the first solution, has been in place since the 1960s. Many developed countries as well as multilateral bank and organizations had provided various kinds of development aid for education development (King, 1991). The need for, and increase in, financial support was periodically affirmed by the international community such as at the World Conference on Education for All in 1990 and the World Education Forum in 2000. At the time of the Summit's preparatory process another international discussion was underway for the International Conference on Financing for Development¹¹, which included discussions about financial and development issues to formulate a strategy for better resource mobilization to achieve global development. During the preparatory meeting, this idea was formalized and proposed several times in the form of: allocation of twenty percent of official development assistance to sustainable development education (IISD, 2002c); increased ODA for basic education; assistance for education infrastructure development in developing countries; earmarking ODA allocation for universal primary education (IISD, 2002f); none of them survived, however, as a solution in the final Summit document.

The second idea of increasing public awareness about environmental issues, translated into 'environmental education', can be traced back as early as the 18th century¹², though the recent global diffusion and recognition of the idea is largely attributable to two UN agencies, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). At environmental conferences, these two agencies advocated for the importance of environmental education, and by taking a lead, embedded it in international agreements such as the Stockholm Declaration in 1972, the Belgrade Charter in 1975, and the Tbilisi Declaration in 1977. A program, called the UNESCO-UNEP International Environmental

Education Programme was also implemented between 1975 and 1983. In Japan, education for the environment had wide currency in practice as well as being officially regulated in laws. Environmental education became very popular in the mid-1960s, at which time environmental pollution was a big issue for the country¹³. In many prefectures, study groups were formed for environment education at primary and secondary schools, and also teachers' unions organized study groups on pollution and education (Sajima et al., 1996). In 1988, the Environment Agency, sub-organ of the government, legislated the Environment Education Policy, and environmental education was officially included in the curriculum in primary and secondary education by the Environment law of 1993.

Expansion of the Dakar Framework of Action, the third solution, was proposed during the early part of the preparatory meeting and was a global action plan for educational development specifically adopted within the educational community in the previous year of the Summit preparation. The framework included targets considered important for sustainable development, such as that of achieving gender equality education by 2015 and ensuring the learning needs of young people and adults through equitable access to appropriate learning and life-skills programs. The activities of the Dakar framework, like DESD, was coordinated by UNESCO, who was also responsible for monitoring internationally.

The idea of education for sustainable development was relatively new to the international educational community because of being introduced gradually through environmental education, which was positioned within the environmental sector. It was in 1992 that Agenda 21 clearly identified the role of education in relation to sustainable development, and that education for sustainable development was recognized as a new solution encompassing far more than environmental education. In other words, Agenda 21 made the crucial link: "(e)ducation is critical for promoting sustainable development and improving the capacity of the people to address environment and development issue. ... It is also critical for achieving environmental and ethical awareness, values and attitudes, skills and behavior consistent with sustainable development" (United Nations, 1992). The Thessaloniki Declaration in 1997 confirmed the link by stating that "environmental education ... has been dealt with as education for sustainability. This allows that it may also be referred to as education for environment and sustainability" (UNESCO, 1997). Thus, this declaration loosely coupled environmental education and education for sustainable development. While UNESCO had implemented a programme of Education for Sustainable Future: Environment, Population, and Sustainable Development (EPD) in 1997, among Japanese policymakers it took another two years for the concept of education for the environment to be discussed in relation to sustainable development (Kamijo, 2004).

3.3 Political stream

The political stream consists of four powerful forces that affect agendas. The first is the international mood. In the early 2000s, the main international concern was environmental sustainability and sustainable development, hence the Summit's name. Discussions in the environmental sector had by then shifted from a focus on particular environmental issues to the broader focus of sustainability and development. For example, the Cocoyoc Declaration adopted at the Symposium on Pattern of Resource Environment and Development

Strategies (“The declaration of Cocoyoc,” 1975) referred to developments such as “ecodevelopment”, while the World Conservation Strategy published by the International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources referred to “sustainable development” (IUCN, UNEP, & WWF, 1980). In the late 1980s, a new international agency, the Commission on Environment and Development was established. Then in 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development took place in 1992. The other influence on increased awareness of sustainable development at a global level was the adoption of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in 2000, presented as a global blueprint agreed to by all the world’s countries. In the MDGs, the international community pledged to make concerted efforts towards world development and meeting the needs of the world’s poorest by the target date of 2015. The rise in the visibility of sustainable development was also reflected in the academic community, where there was a significant increase in international publications about sustainable development. New journals appeared, for example, Sustainable Development in 1994, International Journal of Sustainable Development and World Ecology in 1994, Environment and Sustainable Development in 2002, International Journal of Sustainable Development in 2002, International Journal of Innovation and Sustainable Development in 2005. At the time of the Summit, UNEP signaled this shift from environmental issues to the broader perspective of sustainable development stating that “the evolution from a focus purely on environment towards environment and development as inter-dependent components.....the Summit should reflect the intersection between the environment, development and poverty, are particularly relevant” (UNEP, 2001). The need for a substantial solution gained momentum as did the pressure on policymakers to take action.

Delegates from Japan at the Summit also formed an important part of the political stream. The delegates, co-led by the Foreign Minister and the Environment Minister with 9 advisors and around 380 people from 50 NGOs, economic and labor circles, and local governments (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2002a; Takahashi, 2002), were eager to make a significant contribution to the international community in the environmental sector. The Foreign Minister Kawaguchi mentioned at a press conference in Johannesburg that “(using the metaphor of a card game) I believe that the environmental sector is a key card in diplomatic relations for Japan, and we have to use the card strategically” (Ministry of Foreign Affairs, 2002b). Japan’s strength in the environmental sector is rooted in its experience of serious industrial pollution in the past and with having much national pride derived from its recovery from it; sharing knowledge and expertise globally, based on its success in addressing pollution, was seen as part of its international obligations. Minister Kawaguchi noted in this regard that “we recovered from the pollutions that ruined our beautiful land during 1960s and 70s. Now our rivers have fish and birds, and the quality of water and air have improved very much. We, a member of human society, are obliged to share our experiences and lessons” (Kawaguchi, 2002). Since the 1960s, Japan had played its part in international discussions concerning the environment, firstly in the Club of Rome formed as international expert group for environment in 1968. In 1983, they proposed the establishment of an environmental expert committee, the World Commission on Environment and Development, and in 1984, hosted a conference in Tokyo. In 1997, it hosted the 3rd Session of the Conference of the Parties (COP3) to the United Nations Framework Convention

on Climate Change in Kyoto. The delegates who were brought together for the Summit with the expressed aim of influencing the international community, were a powerful force in the political stream.

The Japan Forum for Johannesburg (JFJ) who advocated an environmental education proposal to the international community, is conceptualized in this analysis as an interest group in the political stream. The Summit committee accredited the JFJ's participation as one stakeholder throughout the preparatory meeting and at the Summit, thus, in this analysis, the JFJ is also considered as an organized political force that had the potential to bring about change in the political stream. JFJ was formed specifically for the Summit in 2000 as a consortium expert group comprising 56 environmental NGOs and 120 experts, its objectives being to collect information from the Summit, share information, and produce a proposal for the Summit¹⁴ (Sekiguchi, 2003). The forum consisted of ten special sub-groups¹⁵, and the environmental education group and the ODA group substantially contributed to the Summit (Sekiguchi, 2003). The forum had ample knowledge and experience of environmental education, as in Japan many teachers, academic scholars, and local governments had already implemented a lot of activities such as raising awareness among children by organizing research groups and making environmental handbooks (Sajima et al., 1996). This highly motivated actor was an important force in the political stream.

The Prime Minister of Japan was another key actor in the political stream of the time. Inaugurated in April 2001, when the Summit's preparatory process started, Mr. Junichiro Koizumi wanted to raise Japan's profile in the international community and increase its contribution to the UN in order to obtain permanent membership of the Security Council. In the first general policy speech at the Japanese Diet session, he stated that "in relation to diplomacy and security in the twenty first century, we aim to bring about the realization of the UN reform" (Koizumi, 2001). During his cabinet period, he and his cabinet repeatedly expressed Japan's eagerness to become a permanent member at the UN General Assembly¹⁶. This newly inaugurated representative of Japan to the UN was positively and strongly motivated to contributing to the international community, and thus constituted an important element in the political stream.

3.4 Policy Entrepreneurs

Three policy entrepreneurs are responsible for coupling the streams that led to DESD: the JFJ, the Japanese delegation and UNESCO. The JFJ and delegation were also part of the political stream, whereas UNESCO was outside of the stream. All the entrepreneurs were willing to invest their resources of time, energy and reputation in the hope of future returns. For the JFJ, this return was to be recognized by the international society for their value, experience and knowledge about environmental education; for the delegate of Japan it was to contribute to the international community in the environmental sector; and for UNESCO, it was to secure the education sector's position under the new agenda of sustainable development.

According to Kingdon's framework, the JFJ and the Japanese delegation can be viewed as a collective policy entrepreneur, since they pushed their proposals in cooperation when the window was open. More precisely, the JFJ acted as a pure policy entrepreneur, developing a package of policy solutions for the policymakers (Kingdon, 1984) while the Japanese delegation was more of a political entrepreneur, taking up somebody else's

idea and getting it adopted (Roberts & King, 1991). It was primarily the JFJ who conceived of environmental education as a solution to the issue of sustainable development. They first took the idea of environmental education to the Asian-Pacific region roundtable meeting (IISD, 2002b), where it was virtually ignored (Sekiguchi, 2003). The JFJ then responded to the call for comments from the Japanese delegation on the Summit chair's paper (Sekiguchi, 2003) by submitting the same proposal. In the third preparatory meeting, JFJ and the delegation jointly proposed a Decade of Education for Environment (DEE) to the Summit (IISD, 2002h), which was soon changed to Decade of Education for Sustainable Development as the entrepreneurs realized that the scope of DEE was too narrow in that it did not encompass sustainable development. The new proposal could thus include additional areas of development education, peace education, and human rights education (Kamijo, 2004). By the fifth day of the fourth preparatory committee, DESD was placed on the agenda, and following agreement of all the delegates, appeared in the outcome document. The Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Koizumi stated at the end of Summit: "my government, together with Japanese non-governmental organizations, has proposed that the United Nations declare a 'Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.' We shall provide no less than 250 billion yen [approximately 2.5 million US dollars] in education assistance over a five-year period" (Koizumi, 2002b).

As the third policy entrepreneur and the only one to be outside the political stream, UNESCO contributed significantly to the process of softening up in the policy stream. UNESCO had been advocating the importance of education in a quest for sustainable development from the early years of sustainable development discussions. They recognized the concept of sustainable development as an "overarching concept that cuts across all UNESCO's major programme areas" (UNESCO, 2002a), and for the Summit, established an inter-sectoral Task Force on Sustainable Development. An additional motivation was to protect or expand their bureaucracy's budget within the UN system under the sustainable development umbrella. In preparation for the Summit, their position paper proposed "educating for sustainability" in first of the six contribution themes. (UNESCO, 2002b) The representative of UNESCO repeatedly pushed the idea during the preparatory committee by saying "education should have prominent consideration at the Summit" (IISD, 2002e) and "education...to become agents of change and modify their behavior and lifestyle" (IISD, 2002d). UNESCO's lobbying to promote education in discussions about sustainable development softened up the policy community and the wider audience of participants before and at the Summit, which made the policy stream ready for the coupling.

4. Discussion

Analyzing the dynamics of the three streams and the interplay between them provides an explanation of why DESD ended up on the agenda at the Summit and not earlier and the factors contributing to this.

In the problem stream, unsustainable development as a problem came to light in a number of assessment reports. However, although widely recognized, the problem was ill defined. Meanwhile, two key ideas were floating in the policy 'primeval soup': education for the environment and education for sustainable development. The environment for education was well recognized in the international community, advocated by UNESCO, UNEP, and the JFJ. The idea of education for sustainable development, developed via expanding

the elements of education for the environment, and mainly advocated by UNESCO¹⁷, was relatively new. In the political stream, the international mood was moving in the direction of sustainable development, influenced by discussions in the environmental sector and the MDGs. The Japanese delegation was formed for the Summit with the explicit aim of contributing to the international community in the environmental sector. The JFJ was also organized for the Summit, poised to push their proposal for environmental education. The Prime Minister of Japan had just started his cabinet and was looking for an opportunity to raise Japan's visibility in the international community so as to earn its place on the Security Council. Seeing a window of opportunity, all players in the political stream joined forces towards securing diverse objectives through a single solution.

The collective policy entrepreneurs (the JFJ and the Japanese delegation) successfully coupled streams by hooking their proposal (DESD) to the problem (unsustainable development) at the predicted window opening (the Summit). In the policy community of the policy stream, the idea of education for sustainable development was already accepted due to the efforts of another policy entrepreneur (UNESCO). In the political stream, the forces joined together in building a coalition for education for sustainable development, in which both the JFJ and the Japanese delegation voluntarily compromised their original motivations: the JFJ granted the change from environmental education to education for sustainable development, and the Japanese delegation gave up on contributing to the environmental sector, and instead contributed to the educational sector. Although there is no explicit evidence in this contents analysis, this coalition building may have been empowered by the political connection between the two policy entrepreneurs, the Japanese delegation and UNESCO. As Kingdon explains, successful policy entrepreneurs often have political connections; it is likely that the delegate of Japan had a strong cooperative relationship with UNESCO, in which the then Japanese Director-General, Mr. Matsuura, had previously been a diplomat in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. In addition to these favorable conditions in the policy and political streams, the short duration of the open window created a powerful magnet for problems and proposals.

This study has identified three key factors that specifically contributed to the agenda setting of DESD, which seemingly has the particularities of policy-making to the United Nations and educational sector. First, the policy entrepreneur who coupled the streams was a funding-backed entrepreneur, who already had enterprise funding for the proposed idea, as Japan had offered to contribute 250 billion yen to the educational sector at the Summit. As Kingdon points out, budgets directly affect governmental activities, and it becomes a constraint, holding some items low or even off the agenda because they cost more than policymakers are willing to spend. In general, annual national budgets in the policy arena are fixed, and thus policy solutions are examined under these budgetary restrictions with several criteria such as cost-effectiveness and level of impact. On the other hand, if members bring new funding to the policy arena of the United Nations, new policy proposals can be considered along with their budgetary implications. Furthermore, if funding is attached to the proposal, it becomes much easier for it to get onto the UN agenda. If the proposal fails to be on the agenda, the funding will usually be withdrawn rather than be used for another proposal. As a result, the entrepreneur with attached funding has more influence than the regular entrepreneur, and their proposal is more likely to be placed on the agenda.

The second factor that helped DESD at the agenda setting stage was that there was a certain degree of coherence in terms of ideas in the policy stream. This study found several very similar proposals at the Summit, all drawing on the notion that education contributes to problem-solving through educating people. Therefore, there was a high degree of consensus and no opposition to DESD as evidenced by the two statements about DESD in the fifty-one daily negotiation reports in contrast to the twenty-one statements about the enactment of the Kyoto Biosafety Protocol¹⁸, one of the more controversial environmental proposals. While for DESD only one delegate recorded any reservations¹⁹, eight disagreement statements were recorded for the Kyoto Protocol. This may be partially attributed to the feature of the UN conference policy arena, in which participants tend to use the arena for expressing their political stance instead of bringing specific ideas, as reported that “almost all the presentations and speeches made by many delegates and agencies during the committees were not really plans, but wishes, expectations and calls for international support” (Hirono, 2002). Another contributing factor may be the nature of the close-knit policy community in the educational sector, in which people have a common language and generate a common orientation and ways of thinking, as Kingdon found in the case of the health sector and not in the transportation sector (Kingdon, 1984). In this policy oligopoly, DESD was one of a few options that participants could agree on.

Thirdly, the window of opportunity was known well in advance in that global-level conferences for environmental issues have been scheduled every ten years since 1972²⁰. International policymakers knew there would be a window at the Summit in 2002 and the policy entrepreneurs therefore did not need to create a momentum towards an open window but simply needed to prepare for the conference by strategically planning towards coupling streams. It is hard to think of a particular educational crisis or educational player who could instantly influence educational issues in the UN governance. In this sense, the predictability of this particular window opening enabled DESD to climb onto the UN agenda.

By applying Kingdon’s model, this study has shown the continuing relevance of the model but also its limitations when applied to multilateral settings. Kingdon’s model was developed for a single level of governance, whereas the context of the current study comprised two very independent levels of governances, the UN and Japan. It was therefore necessary to investigate the two sets of three streams separately. The analysis suggests that the Japanese-specific problem stream, political stream and policy stream, were independent from UN governance, while at the same time very much influenced by the UN’s set of streams, and changed its dynamics to match the UN streams. In addition, at the Japanese governance level, there was a separate policy window prior to the UN’s policy window, where the problems were placed on the agenda of the delegate from Japan. Kingdon’s model does not take account of the possibility of two levels of streams nor the interaction between them. Therefore, future studies on agenda setting in multilateral settings will require a more sophisticated model that incorporates these multiple levels.

5. Conclusion

This study has proposed Kingdon’s multiple streams as a model to explain the agenda setting process and uses the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development as an example. It has suggested that the DESD agenda

setting can be seen as a confluence of three fluid dynamics, a problem stream, a political stream, and a policy stream; the brief and chance encounter of these three streams at the Summit are what put the DESD on to the agenda of UN policy arena, and later became a UN Decade campaign. The study suggests three conditions that supported the successful trajectory of DESD from an idea to the UN's agenda: a funding-backed policy entrepreneur, policy oligopoly, and a highly predictable window. These conditions in the policy environment enabled the DESD to find its way into the outcome document of the World Summit.

My findings also provide an evaluation of the conceptual contribution of Kingdon's model that framed the analysis. However, this study should not be considered a full and definitive test of the theory because the DESD was only one global multilateral policy among many, and policy in the educational sector might be very different from those in other sectors. Therefore, further single and comparative studies in multilateral settings are needed. Furthermore, to strengthen the argument made in this study, more evidence from other investigations are needed, using other policy theories such as the punctuated equilibrium theory or the advocacy coalition framework. Lastly, a full understanding of the entire process of multilateral policy formulation requires more research into how networks are built, how institutions are organized and how the decision-making is processed in multilateral settings, and thus remains as a future work.

Despite these limitations, this study of DESD provides important insights for policy theory by providing evidence from a multilateral setting, and also for the international education sector by providing insights about how education sector situates itself under the umbrella of sustainable development.

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¹ The Sustainable Development Goals is a new global agenda for universal peace in large freedom, which was adopted in 2015 and is in action until 2030.

² For instance, Lassweel shows seven stages: (1) intelligence-gathering, (2) promotion, (3) prescription, (4) invocation, (5) application, (6) termination, (7) appraisal). Brewer shows five stages: (1) invention/initiation, (2) estimation, (3) selection, (4) implementation, (5) evaluation (6) termination

³ Zohlnhöfer, Herweg, & Rüb, (2015) shows that the number of literatures applying the multiple stream model is 311 since 2000, whilst the one applying the Punctuated Equilibrium Theory is 240 since 1991 and the one applying the Advocacy Coalition Framework is 203 since 1987, respectively.

⁴ There are also special issues for multiple streams model in the *European Journal of Political Research* in 2015, *Policy Science* in 2016, the *Policy Studies Journal* in 2016, and the *Journal of Comparative Policy Analysis* in 2016.

⁵ For more detail, please see the meta-analysis by Jones et al. (2016)

⁶ The International Institute for Sustainable Development, Reporting Services Division (IISD-RS) of the Earth Negotiations Bulletin (ENB) is the main source of the Summit negotiation reports. It is an independent reporting service on United Nations environment and development negotiations. The IISD was taking notes of the discussion through the preparatory committee and at the Summit on daily basis. These reports are available at <http://www.iisd.ca/enb/>

⁷ The General Assembly is the main policymaking organ of the UN held annually at the UN Headquarters in New York. The UN regulations rules that draft resolutions need to be submitted it to the General Assembly Affairs Branch (GAAB) prior to the Assembly. The GAAB prepare the agenda for the Assembly. The draft resolution of DESD was submitted for deliberation to the 57th General Assembly, attended by 193 member state representatives.

⁸ The draft resolution submitted to the GAAB was co-sponsored with 46 member states.

⁹ In principle, voting is implemented for decision of a draft resolution. But in recent years the majority of the resolutions are adopted without a vote except the important issues, such as security and peace, admission of new members and budget, based on the rules 82-95 of the Rules of Procedure which allow chair to do so after having consulted and reached agreement with delegations.

¹⁰ Prior to the Summit, the chair asked participants what the main concerns were in terms of sustainable development. Answers ranged from poverty eradication (China, EU, Netherland, Nepal and Norway), protection of natural resources, global environment, globalization, international governance (Iran), involvement civil society, promoting good governance, secure greater financial resource (Spain), unsustainable patterns of consumption and production (Brazil) (IISD, 2002a)

¹¹ The International Conference on Financing for Development was held in March 2002 at Monterrey, Mexico. Its preparatory process had started from February 2000.

¹² One of the most influential book about the environmental education is Jean-Jacques Rousseau's book "Emile: or, On Education" in 1911.

¹³ The pollution was caused by the rapid economic growth after World War II, supported by industrialization and development of heavy and chemical industries. The most severe pollutions is called the four big pollution diseases of Japan, namely the Kumamoto-Minamata disease in 1956, the Niigata-Minamata disease in 1965, the Yokkaichi asthma disease in 1961, and the Itai-itai disease (Japan Environment Agency, 1982).

¹⁴ Other objective was to provide logistic support for participants by opening the field office in Johannesburg. The forum was formed with the period until March 2003 after the Johannesburg summit was finished.

¹⁵ Other groups are globalization and environment, poverty reduction, sustainable production and consumption, management of natural resources, fertilizer/food and environment, sustainable development and ODA, the role of diversity under sustainable development, mechanism of funding sources/international institution/international legislation

¹⁶ Prime Minister Mr. Koizumi stated that "we believe that the role that Japan has played provides a solid basis for its assumption of permanent membership on the Security Council" (Koizumi, 2004), and "in a reformed Council, Japan is ready to play a large role as a permanent member"(Koizumi, 2005). Mr. Machimura, the Foreign Minister stated that "I believe that Japan....should serve as the basis for a larger role for Japan as a permanent member of a reformed Security Council" (Machimura, 2005).

¹⁷ UNESCO showed its support to the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development at the Summit (IISD, 2002c).

¹⁸ The Kyoto Biosafety Protocol is a legal framework that poses ratified Parties to set a binding target of emission reduction, suggested at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change held in Kyoto in 1997. By the time of the summit, the protocol had not yet entered into force because the minimum number of countries had not signed the ratification.

¹⁹ The United States and Switzerland expresses their concern about "difficulty in reorienting national education to sustainable development education" (IISD, 2002g)

²⁰ The United Nation Conference on the Human Environment was held in 1972 in Stockholm, the Stockholm plus-ten conference was in 1982 in Nairobi, and the United National Conference on Environment and Development was held in Rio de Janeiro in 2002.