

# Environmental Literacy Plan

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**Louisiana Environmental Education Commission**  
**November 2024**

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# Membership of the LEEC

Representing	Name
Secretary (or designee) Department of Wildlife and Fisheries	Lindsay Seely
State Superintendent (or designee) Department of Education	Molly Talbot
Secretary (or designee) Department of Environmental Quality	Melanie Bauder
Secretary (or designee) Department of Energy and Natural Resources	Robin Narez
Secretary (or designee) Department of Health	Darcie Olexia
Commissioner (or designee) Department of Agriculture and Forestry	Joey Breaux
Chancellor (or designee) LSU AgCenter	Adriane Bercegeay
Chancellor (or designee) Southern University A&M College	Dr. Chris Chappell
Executive Assistance (or designee) Governor's Office of Coastal Activities	Gregory Grandy
Secretary (or designee) of the Louisiana Department of Culture, Recreation, and Tourism	Susan Russell
BESE	Kevin Berken
Board of Regents	Murt Conover
Environmental Advocacy 1/2	Vacant
Environmental Advocacy 2/2	Vacant
Industry Community 1/2	Ashley G. Cain
Industry Community 2/2	Dean Blackett
LEEA, Cong. Dist. 1	Vacant
LEEA, Cong. Dist. 2	Diane "Dinah" Maygarden, Chair

Representing	Name
LEEA, Cong. Dist. 3	Caitlin Joubert
LEEA, Cong. Dist. 4	Vacant
LEEA, Cong. Dist. 5	Dr. Lindsey Keith-Vincent
LEEA, Cong. Dist. 6	Danielle Dilullo, Secretary
LEEA, member at large	Vacant
Rep. Local Government (Mayor of Rayville)	Harry Lewis
Louisiana Science Teachers Association	Julius Pierre LaCaze
Professional Environmental Scientist	Jacqueline Richard, Chair-elect
Small Business	Scott Courtright

# 2024 Environmental Literacy Plan

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## Background

The Louisiana State Legislature established the Louisiana Environmental Education Commission (LEEC) with the 1993 Louisiana Environmental Education and Litter Reduction Act ([RS.17.202](#)). LEEC is a 27-seat commission composed of educators and representatives from small businesses, industry, local municipalities, state agencies, and environmental advocates. LEEC's mission is to create a comprehensive and balanced environmental education initiative that will result in an environmentally literate citizenry making informed decisions to effectively and constructively solve existing environmental problems, prevent new ones, and maintain a sustainable environment for future generations.

One of LEEC's principal responsibilities is to “develop, review, approve, and transmit a plan for environmental education” ([RS.17:202](#)) aimed at cultivating “environmentally literate citizens who will effectively and constructively solve existing environmental problems, prevent new ones, and maintain a sustainable environment for future generations” ([RS.17:201](#)). The 2024 Environmental Literacy Plan (ELP) explicitly defines environmental literacy and identifies key stakeholders. It outlines three core elements to promote environmental literacy, corresponding recommended actions, and measurable expected outcomes.

## Environmental Literacy Definition

Environmental literacy means understanding and engaging with local, regional, and global environmental issues. It encompasses the knowledge, skills, tools, and sensitivity required to examine environmental problems, design or choose effective solutions, and integrate environmental considerations into everyday activities. This literacy spans natural resource management, conservation, restoration, environmental quality, and stewardship. It fosters the development of informed and responsible citizens who are prepared to make educated decisions regarding natural resources and contribute positively to ecological, economic, and social stability, recognizing the fundamental dependence of humans on the natural world for health, well-being, and sustainable communities.

## Key Stakeholders

### Formal Education

Formal education stakeholders encompass all K-12 and higher education system participants responsible for integrating environmental literacy into curricula and fostering awareness of environmental issues. In K-12 education, stakeholders focus on embedding environmental literacy into district-approved curricula and experiences to promote student awareness, knowledge, and behaviors. Stakeholders in higher education, including community and technical colleges, universities, and colleges, engage in environmental research, workforce development, and preparing students for future roles.

## Business and Industry

Business and industry stakeholders are responsible for incorporating sustainable practices, adhering to environmental regulations, and identifying emerging workforce career needs. This includes all businesses, producers, and industries vital in promoting environmental sustainability and ensuring compliance with relevant environmental standards.

## Government

Government stakeholders are agencies and officials responsible for advising, educating, and implementing environmental regulation and sustainability policies, and delivering non-regulatory and voluntary environmental programs.

## Nonprofit Organizations

Nonprofit stakeholders are organizations focusing on community-based environmental projects, advocacy, and education. They engage in initiatives to foster environmental literacy and enhance community resilience through various environmental efforts.

## Community

Community stakeholders are members of all ages and backgrounds who are directly affected by environmental outcomes and possess the ability to influence them. This includes individuals and community groups, such as churches and other organizations, that play a vital role in fostering trust and engagement within the community.

# Primary Elements Needed to Foster Environmental Literacy

## I. Environmental Education

- A. Environmental education is a life-long endeavor that enables individuals to:
  1. experience and learn about the natural environment through direct interaction and place-based experiences;
  2. understand human impacts on the environment as well as the environment's impacts on human life;
  3. develop stewardship and a sense of responsibility towards natural resources;
  4. make informed decisions that protect, restore, and nurture the environment; and
  5. appreciate the inseparable relationship between human life and nature, recognizing our dependence on a healthy environment for thriving.
- B. Environmental education consists of both formal and non-formal education.
  1. Formal (School-Based) Education
    - a) Implementation of PK-12 environmental education curricula incorporates field experiences and adheres to the Louisiana Student Standards and Board of Regents policies.
    - b) Postsecondary (Universities, Colleges, and Vocational Institutions) Environmental Education programs foster environmental literacy and provide opportunities for environmental stewardship in preparation for current and emerging careers.
  2. Non-Formal (Nonprofit/Community-Based) Education
    - a) Non-formal partners provide opportunities for hands-on, place-based learning experiences that:
      - (1) connect individuals with nature;
      - (2) spark a sense of inquiry in science;
      - (3) are relevant to everyday life and practical applications; and
      - (4) enhance learning and engagement with environmental issues.

**II. Professional Development:** Pre-Service and In-Service Educators require initial and ongoing development of environmental education competencies.

**III. Resources:** Environmental education resources are readily available and accessible to all stakeholders.

## Recommended Actions and Measurable Expected Outcomes

The primary elements needed to foster environmental literacy are linked to the specific actions and measurable expected outcomes listed below. The actions are the responsibility of the LEEC and will serve as the 2025 priorities. All measurements will establish a baseline that will inform future revisions of the ELP.

### Support Formal and Non-Formal Education

- Formal (School-Based)
  - **Action:** LEEC will advise the LDOE on the integration of environmental concepts, skills, and experiences into high-quality curricula.
    - **Outcome:** Expanded integration of environmental education in classrooms.
    - **Measurement:** The LDOE will track the number of curricula reviewed and/or pre-service courses offered.
  - **Action:** LEEC will advise and serve as a resource for post-secondary institutions in implementing programs that encourage environmental literacy and provide opportunities for environmental stewardship and workforce development among students.
    - **Outcome:** Increased post-secondary environmental education programs, including student organizations and internships.
    - **Measurement:** Track the number of advisory meetings held with programmatic advisory boards.
- Non-formal (Nonprofit/Community-based)
  - **Action:** LEEC will support environmental education activities sponsored by non-formal education partners by ensuring they have relevant resources to teach environmental education effectively.
    - **Outcome:** Expanded opportunities for individuals to engage in environmental education activities.
    - **Measurement:** Track the number of participants and their feedback.

### Foster Professional Development for Pre-Service and In-Service Educators

- **Action:** LEEC will draft recommendations for environmental education teacher competencies.
  - **Outcome:** Share competencies with post-secondary institutions and the Board of Regents to develop guidelines for incorporating environmental education into teacher education requirements.
  - **Measurement:** Creation of said guidelines, including a timeline for sharing recommendations.
- **Action:** LEEC will engage with formal and non-formal education partners to provide educators with learning opportunities to refine their understanding of environmental education.
  - **Outcome:** Improved environmental education teacher competencies.
  - **Measurement:** Track educator participation in professional learning and participant feedback.

## Provide Resources to Stakeholders

- **Action:** LEEC will develop a detailed list of environmental education resources and field opportunities with links that will be included in the ELP.
  - **Outcome:** Improved accessibility and awareness of environmental educational resources and opportunities.
  - **Measurement:** Track the number of participants in field opportunities provided via the ELP resources.
- **Action:** LEEC will develop a grant repository of existing environmental grants.
  - **Outcome:** Increased opportunities to fund grant programs to foster environmental literacy throughout the state.
  - **Measurement:** Track the number of opportunities listed in the grant repository.

## Promote Environmental Literacy by Highlighting the Importance of Environmental Education through Increased Public Awareness

- **Action:** LEEC will leverage agency/organization/personal reach to distribute the updated ELP.
  - **Outcome:** Greater understanding and support for environmental literacy.
  - **Measurement:** Track the number of recipients provided the Environmental Literacy Plan by a commissioner.
- **Action:** LEEC will assist with state and national initiatives that support environmental literacy, such as Keep Louisiana Beautiful, the U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools, and NACD Stewardship Week.
  - **Outcome:** Growth of school/system participation in these initiatives.
  - **Measurement:** The LDOE will track the number of recognition applicants.

## Ensure the Relevance and Effectiveness of the ELP

- **Action:** LEEC will annually revisit and update the ELP based on stakeholder feedback.
  - **Outcome:** Revised ELP that continues to meet the needs of all stakeholders.
  - **Measurement:** Track stakeholder feedback and update ELP as applicable.

For additional information, please contact [environmentaleducation@la.gov](mailto:environmentaleducation@la.gov).