Opening new pathways towards sustainable development requires fostering transformational change from local levels to the global level, and this can only be done if mindsets and behavior start changing (Sterling et al 2018). One way of fostering such change is through education for sustainable development (ESD).[1] UNESCO has just released a provisional version of a new "Framework for the implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) beyond 2019," which is the expression of recent insights and agreements on ESD at the global level. The Framework is intended to support implementation of UNESCO's contribution to achieving the SDGs, notably SDG4; the consultation process identified 3 key foci for ESD for 2030: (1) "transformative action" as the result of a transformative form of learning; (2) the need for understanding the deep and context-bound "structural changes" required for sustainable development; and (3) the need for reflecting critically on the challenges and opportunities of a "technological future" (https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000370215.locale=en). All 3 are relevant to education in and for mountains and mountain communities.

Thus far, there is little evidence that education as implemented to date—be it in mountains or elsewhere—has contributed to the radical change in mindsets and behavior needed for sustainable development, and this is affecting mountains and mountain communities. Of course, education is far from being the only lever of change in ways of thinking and doing: multiple other factors play a role. Moreover, education systems themselves are often jeopardized by counterproductive structural environments. But fundamentally, it is not education itself that will change things: it is people. Linking learners and teachers to practice and values is therefore key. In addition, at a local level, education may have negative impacts: formal education systems in indigenous mountain communities can increase inequality or lead to loss of traditional knowledge (Wyndham 2010)—or health problems (Barreau et al 2019). But in other cases, there is reason for hope: for example, innovations in education practices and partnerships with local communities have the potential to strengthen local identities and agency for sustainable development (Ball 2004). A multiplicity of educational experiences, programs, and approaches exist or are currently being designed—in, on, or for mountains—but they are either little known, or available only in specialized education journals.

This issue of *MRD* aims to provide answers to the question of *how education can contribute to sustainable mountain development and to mitigation of negative impacts;* answers can come from the past, present, and envisioned future of education on, in, and for mountains and mountain people. We understand "education" in a broad sense, including formal education from schools to postgraduate education, all types of training for practitioners, lifelong learning opportunities, and all types of informal and nonformal education. For its 3 peer-reviewed sections, MRD is looking for contributions that address the question in the title from various perspectives related to the goal of sustainable mountain development; this can include reflections on and suggestions in relation to thematic issues, pedagogic concepts and methods, formal and informal practices, institutional setups, and policy frameworks.

MountainDevelopment *(transformation knowledge)*: Papers should present systematically validated experiences of *how* innovative formal, nonformal, and informal educational initiatives in mountain contexts have been or can be shaped and implemented so that they contribute not only to increasing knowledge but also to changing mindsets and practices towards sustainability.

[MountainResearch](#) *(systems knowledge)*: Papers should analyze existing education forms and systems in and on mountain themes and systematically assess their effects on mountains and mountain people, how these effects are achieved along with other drivers of change, and their potential to support sustainable mountain development. An integrated analytical approach is highly recommended.

[MountainAgenda](#) *(target knowledge)*: Papers should provide well-referenced analyses of education issues related to sustainable mountain development: for example, are learners being provided with the knowledge and skills needed to become agents of change for sustainable mountain development and are institutional setups and policies supporting transformative learning? These overviews can be based on a systematic stakeholder process or a review of the literature. Resulting agendas for future research or policy with the aim of increasing sustainability through education in and for mountains should be offered at the end of the paper.

Submission details
- **Submit your full paper by 31 March 2020 using MRD's online submission platform**
- A short **notice of intent** can be submitted to mrd-journal@cde.unibe.ch: we will provide advice if needed or requested.
- Publication of the issue is foreseen in November 2020
- Guidelines for authors are available at: https://www.mrd-journal.org/for-authors/
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[1] UNESCO's definition of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is the following: "ESD empowers learners to take informed decisions and responsible actions for environmental integrity, economic viability and a just society, for present and future generations, while respecting cultural diversity. It is about lifelong learning, and is an integral part of quality education. ESD is holistic and transformational education which addresses learning content and outcomes, pedagogy and the learning environment". https://en.unesco.org/themes/education-sustainable-development/what-is-esd