

Advancing Education for Sustainable Development for All: The Contribution from the Early Years

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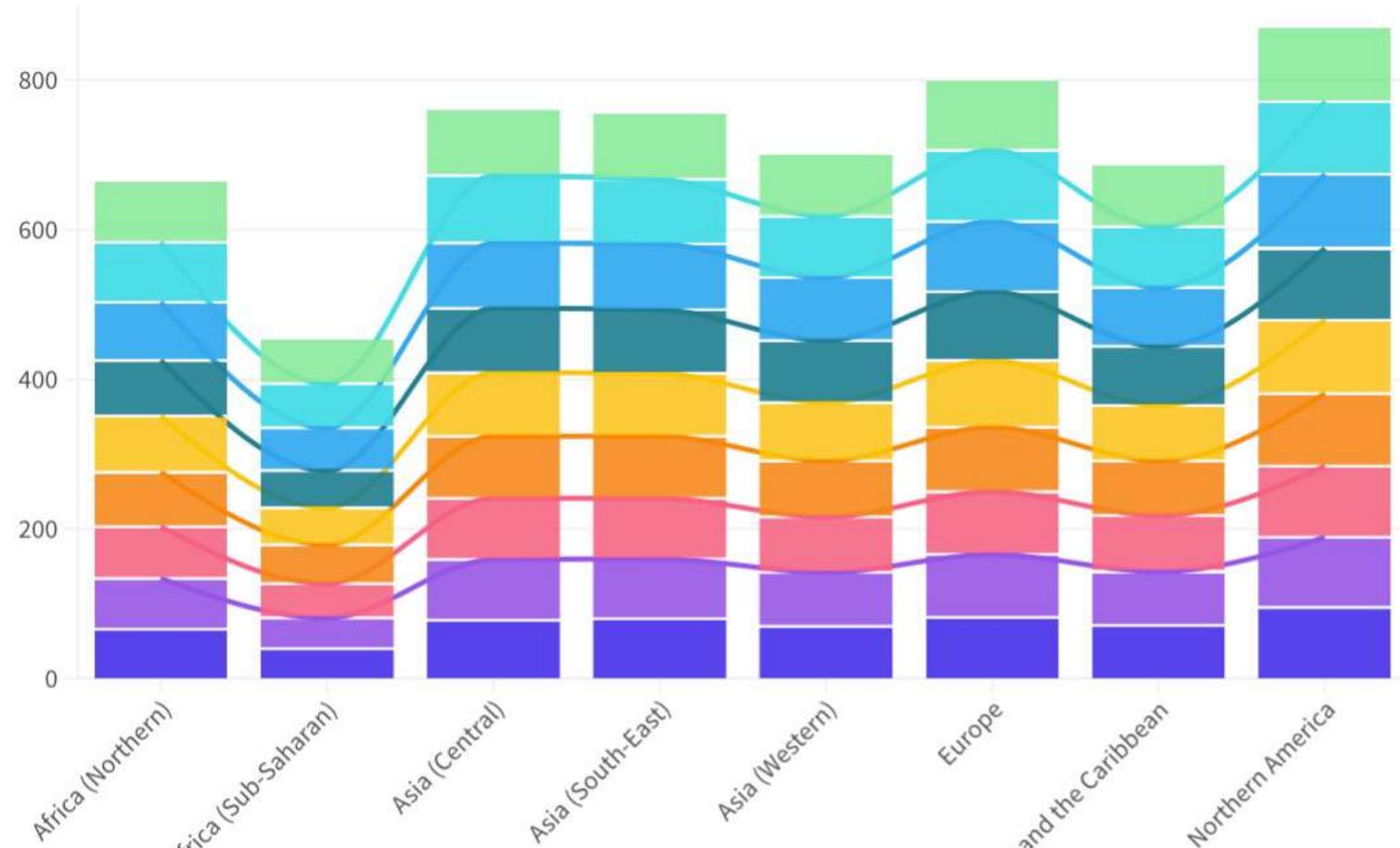
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Global Expansion of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

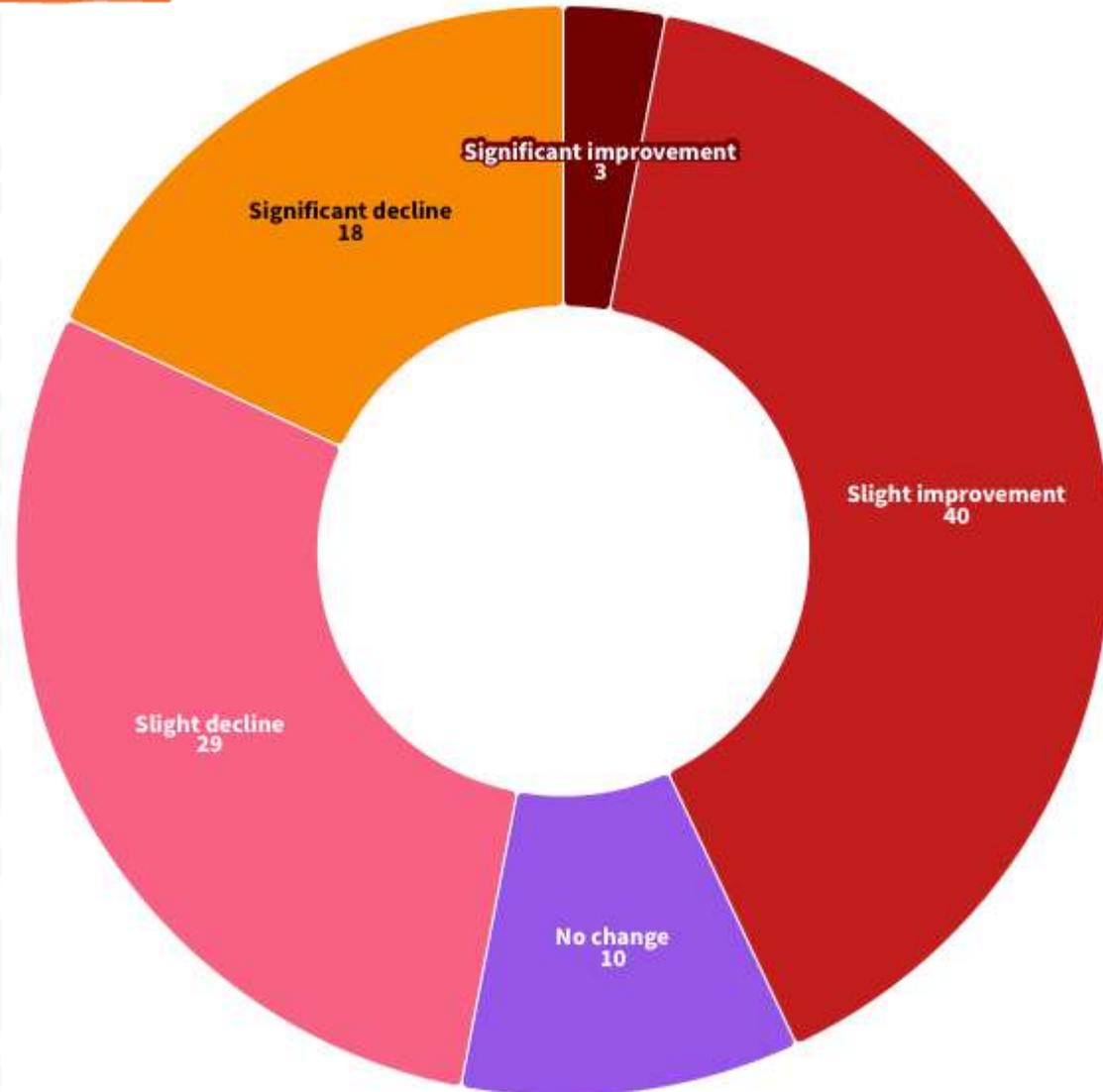
- A positive and rapid expansion of the ECCE sector at a global level.
- A slow growth in the proportion of teachers with the minimum required qualifications in pre-primary education over the last decade.

2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017 2018 2019 2020



Challenges in Teacher Qualification and Training

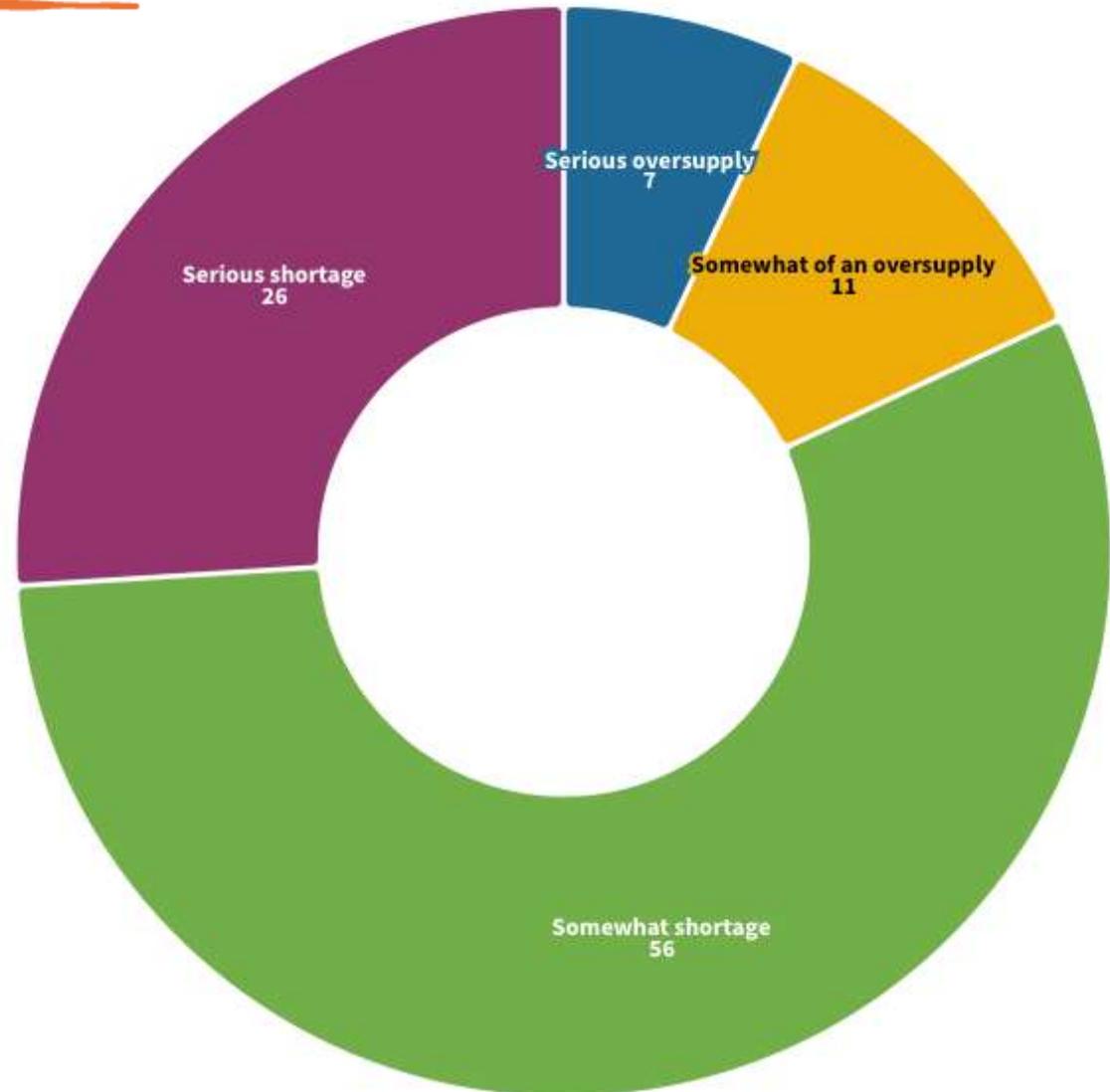
Many countries, especially LMIC, are still faced with a lack of qualified staff due to inadequate training and recruitment strategies.



Changes in Teachers' Working Conditions Over 2016-2021 (EIR, 2022)

Challenges in Teacher Qualification and Training

High-income countries deal with severe labor shortages and poor working conditions across income groups.



Perceived Extent of Teacher Shortage (EIR, 2022)

Challenges in Teacher Qualification and Training

Evidence shows a high level of attrition among ECCE teachers.



ECEC teachers' attrition rates (OECD, 2022)

Conflicting Pressures on Early Childhood Educators

- Diverse needs of children and families.
- Reduction of educational subjects to literacy, numeracy, and science.
- Push to reduce educator roles to those of mere technicians.



Expanding Early Childhood Curricula

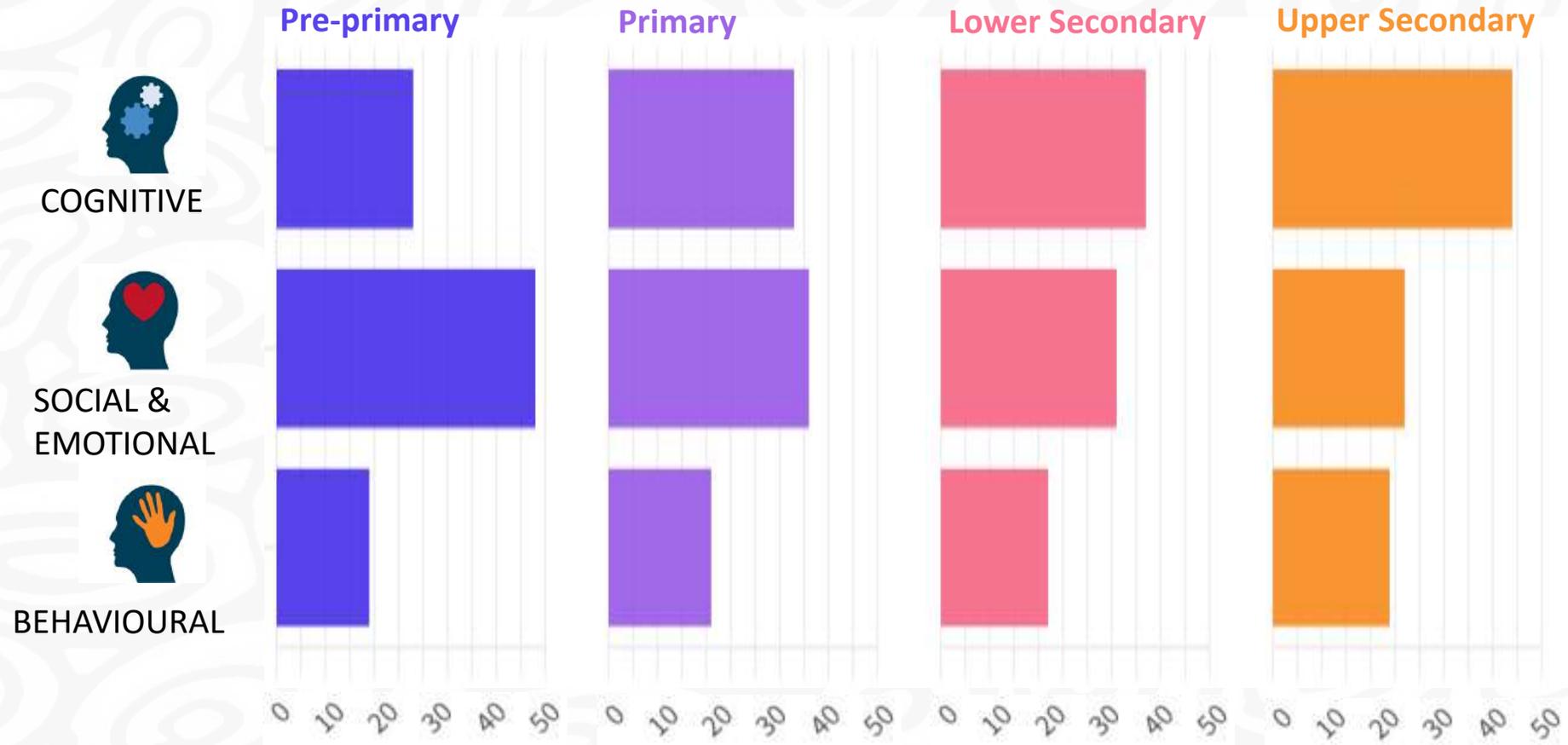
- Inclusion of environmental, sustainability, and biodiversity topics.
- Active developments particularly in Latin America and the Caribbean (López Rello, 2023).



Cognitive, Socio-Emotional and Behavioural Dimensions

- Extensive development of social and emotional dimensions at pre-primary level (UNESCO, 2019).

- Need for emphasis at all educational levels.



(UNESCO, 2019)

Addressing Economic Sustainability in Education

- Overlooked economic dimension in sustainability education (Siraj-Blatchford et al., 2016; Višnjić-Jevtić et al., 2022; Fermín-González, 2022).
- Importance of systematic investment in teacher education and professional development.



Addressing Eco-Anxiety Among Educators

- Emotional impact of climate change on teachers (Lombardi, 2013; Edwards, 2023).
- Need for mental wellness, resilience, and transformative change strategies.



ECO- anxiety

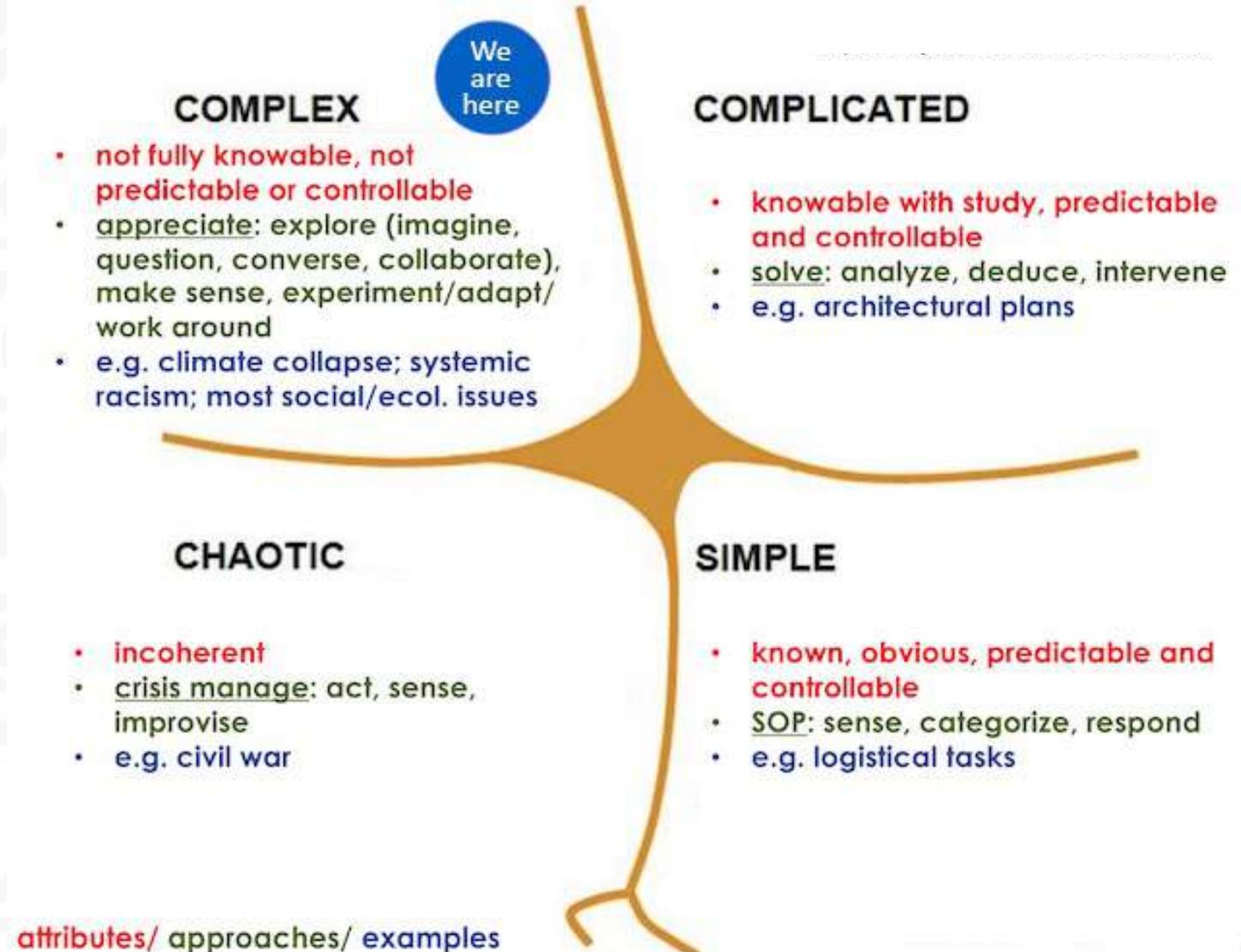
anxiety caused by a dread of environmental perils, especially climate change, and a feeling of helplessness over the potential consequences for those living now and even more so for those of later generations.



The Complexity of Teaching Sustainability

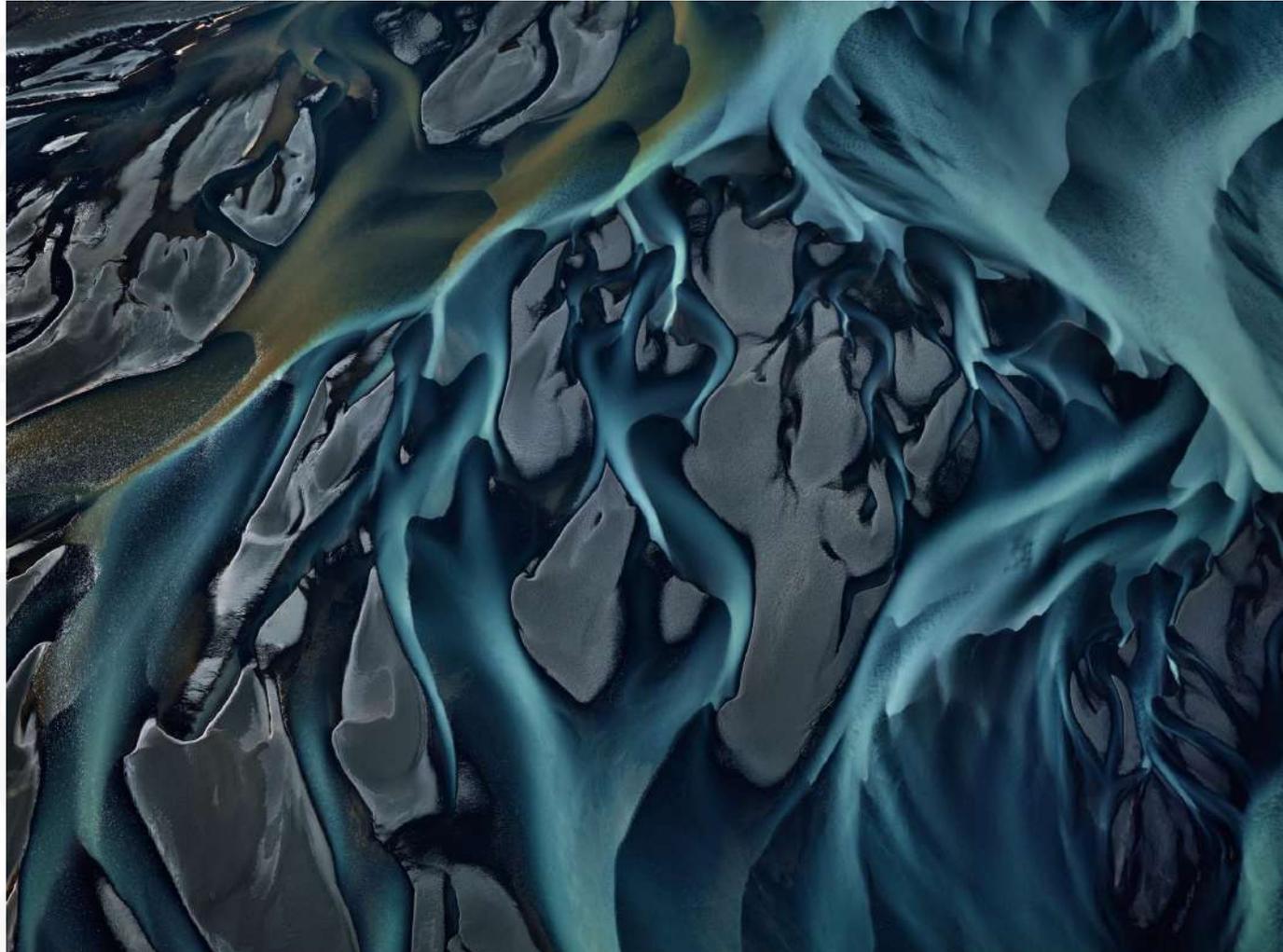
- Climate change as a complex educational challenge.

- Teachers feeling unprepared and overwhelmed (Meyer, 2017; Collins, 2023).



Promoting a non-dogmatic view of sustainability

- Sustainability is 'sold out'.
- Sustainability is more than a buzzword (Heinberg, 2012).
- Sustainability as a non-binary notion, a fuzzy concept.



Debates on Change: Incremental vs. Radical

- Incremental change:
Gradual adjustments in attitudes and behaviours.



- Radical change:
Global renewal of societal and educational systems.

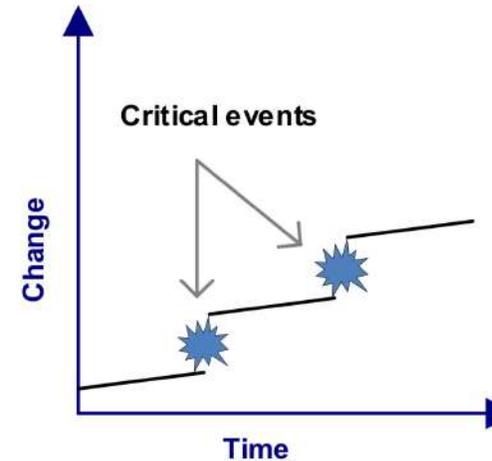


Transformative Approach to Sustainability Education

- Combining small victories with significant leaps.

- Supported by the theory of punctuated equilibria (Green-Pedersen & Princen, 2019).

- "Head, hands, and heart" approach (Cassidy et al., 2015).



Navigating ECEfS: Key points

- Counter the pressures to reduce childhood experiences to mere preparation for adult life.
- Cultivating neoteny by valuing diversity.



Navigating ECEfS: Key points

- Support teachers and children in maintaining and encouraging interdisciplinarity.
- Rotation and hybridization of educational experiences.



Navigating ECEfS: Key points

- Cultivating an ecological approach.
- Promoting teachers' relational agency.



Thank you!

