



**Message from Ms Audrey Azoulay,
Director-General of UNESCO,
on the occasion of
World Science Day for Peace and Development**

10 November 2022

Scientific discoveries surround us and shape our world – from the billions of transistors in our smartphones to the mechanics and thermodynamics powering the cars we drive.

The immense, yet often underestimated, potential of science is what we are celebrating today and every day until June 2023, as part of the International Year of Basic Sciences for Sustainable Development led by UNESCO.

Science does indeed have the potential to change our world by making it more sustainable. For example, climate modelling gives decision-makers insights into ways of limiting the impact of climate disruption. Biomass, green hydrogen, carbon capture and electric cars offer promising solutions for reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

But to explore these opportunities, scientists need access to data and information, they need finance and equipment to carry out research. They need to collaborate with their peers to accelerate progress, while bridging technological and knowledge gaps within and between countries. They need to engage with society.

Supporting scientific development that is more accessible, more equitable and more effective is precisely the aim of UNESCO's Recommendation on Open Science, adopted by our 193 Member States last year.

This Recommendation makes it clear that there can be no open science without gender equality in science. The UNESCO Science Report has shown that just one in three researchers is a woman – and at a time when we are in dire need of more scientists, the world cannot afford to be deprived of so much talent.

For this reason, UNESCO works proactively to get more girls and women into scientific fields. We do this for instance in Africa, one of our Organization's global priorities, where our scientific mentoring programme in East Africa has reached more than 11 million students, especially girls. We also do this through our partnership with the L'Oréal Foundation. Over the past two decades, we have supported the careers of nearly 4,000 women scientists across more than 115 countries.

Basic sciences can and should be our best allies to respond to contemporary challenges. During this decisive time of climate disruption, supporting scientific development and fostering scientific understanding is no longer an option, it is a necessity.

This is why UNESCO tirelessly advocates to improve science education at all ages and increase basic research budgets. Because science that is more open, better funded and more equitable is the science the world needs.