

October 4<sup>th</sup> to 6<sup>th</sup> 1998

**Workshop D**

**Session 1**

There are seven countries represented in Workshop D, namely Australia, Austria, Czech Republic, Kenya, Sweden, Switzerland and the United States,

and in order to fully comprehend the types of teacher training taking place in each country, a need was established within the workshop, for representatives of different countries to

1. Give an overview of the teacher training procedures undertaken in their respective countries to facilitate ease of understanding of different case studies at a later time.
2. To undertake evaluation of case studies after this undertaking.

**I. GENERAL OVERVIEW**

**Similarities**

- The continental European countries share a system where teacher training is done in two institutions, namely the Pedagogical Academies and the Universities. Teachers intending to instruct in secondary schools attend the universities, whereas those intending to teach in hauptschuleß or in primary schools go to the pedagogical academies.
- The number of years that the student teachers have to be at the institutions differ, with those attending the pedagogical academies spending less time (in years) than their compatriots at the Universities.
- It is compulsory for student teachers to take **at least** four subjects in the pedagogical academies where as those in the universities specialise in **only** two subjects.
- The pedagogical academies emphasise didactic/ methodology where as the universities emphasise the content aspects.

## **Differences:**

- In Switzerland and the United States, teacher training is determined by the state the institution is situated in, meaning that issues are emphasised or neglected depending on the state or controlled. In a similar vein, different countries emphasise different issues.

### **1. The place of environmental education in teacher training:**

Amongst the nations represented, there are those that have environmental education forming an integral part of the teacher training course (so far Sweden and states such as Wisconsin in the US), to those where environmental education is introduced as an optional but shallowly covered unit (for example in Kenya), to those universities where as a result of full curriculum, environmental education does not exist as an option at all (Australia). Teachers in the latter example have the option of undertaking the study as a further degree should they desire to do so in the future.

Participants were of the opinion that the amount of training in environmental education does not enable teachers to confidently undertake an action-oriented approach to environmental education- even if they were willing to do so. This echoes the view expressed by Prof. Regula Kyburz- Graber that "Teacher training is meant to empower teachers to gain the necessary skills for good work" (Kyburz- Graber 1998).

- *Though training in environmental education exists, it was observed as a continuum.*

## **II. CASE STUDIES**

### **1. Sweden**

Main features:

1. Governmental concern shown by different ministries taking the responsibility, and therefore initiative to enhance student training in environmental education at University level. This is supplemented by inservice training undertaken for teachers who graduated prior to this edict.

2. The different government agencies come together to work at the above. Training of student teachers in environmental education is not left to a particular ministry.
3. There is a bill in the government edict that makes it “*a responsibility of all people to seek relevant knowledge according to work done within the environmental area*”, thereby making it an individual responsibility too.

## 2. Austria

There were six case studies presented to the working group from Austria, and all of them dealt with teacher training in environmental education, more precisely from the point of view that

- A need has been established for teacher education in environmental education, and that some institutions (both pedagogical and universities) are responding to this need. Each of the representatives present introduced the different ways that their respective institutions were responding to this need.
- There is however an urgent requirement for the training to be an **interdisciplinary one**. This has resulted in such programs being developed, and tested.
- The projects represent diversity of ways that can be used to address the issue of teacher training in environmental education, but a similarity was noted in the criteria used, and these are that
  - i) Learning is interdisciplinary
  - ii) Cooperation between universities/ teacher training institutions and schools
  - iii) Learning includes a research component in terms of systematic reflection (action research).

## III. CRITICAL APPRAISAL

- The workshop achieved its aim as a result of the format that was introduced by the leaders. Participation was enhanced as a result of this facet to the workshop.
- The Swedish case study is an example of a success story in ENSI as it incorporates the objectives of ENSI, and depends on the action research component to enhance the environmental education training procedures.

- Governmental involvement makes the process of training in environmental education easier, and incorporates different facets of the society, thereby making the issue a societal one as opposed to it being solely educational. The success rate of the program is therefore enhanced.
- At the end of the session the group was divided into two groups based on language proficiency, which enabled the participants to freely express themselves, and therefore enhanced the quality of input, and therefore conclusions reached.
- In spite of the fact that there was a general satisfaction with the conclusions reached in the workshop, the participants were under pressure as a result of less time for the workshops.

### **SUMMARY OF WORKSHOP D**

The following views were expressed by the workshop at the end of the conference:

Concern that there is not enough research papers being produced on teacher education. They called for the further development of this.

The idea of developing quality criteria for teacher education in order to get “competencies for teachers in environmental education”- competencies that would be user-friendly, unlike the ones produced by UNESCO earlier. Further to this suggestion was the need for proposals to respective countries for funding this proposal.

Apart from the need for further funding from different countries, there was expressed the suggestion that the ENSI Secretariat look for funding for such issues.

Action research as was/is proposed by ENSI is good, but there is a requirement for more research on improving Action Research so that it caters for evolving environmental issues. In a similar manner, is action research the only mode of research ENSI should use?

Ecologisation of schools requiring more input such as enhancing the links that exist between schools and teacher training institutions.

A recognition of the fact that ecologisation is still a new phenomenon, meaning that it is difficult to intergrate,

Are papers dealing with environmental education in teacher training found in languages other than English, and if so, what is being done to make them more accessible to the wider ENSI world?