



Comité français de la Décennie



# Progress and Possibilities for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) in EU Member States

ENSI workshop report on:  
Conférence Internationale de Bordeaux (27-29  
October, 2008)

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January 2009

*This document records the dialogue, and reports on recommendations, arising out of the Conférence Internationale de Bordeaux 'Working together on Education for Sustainable Development' (27-29 October 2008) dedicated to the assessment of efforts realized in the frame the French National Committee for the UN Decade in Education for Sustainable Development for the period 2005-2015.*

*Professeur Michel RICARD, head of the French Committee of the UN Decade for ESD and organizer of the Bordeaux conference gave a mandate to ENSI network to realize an assessment of the first part of the UN Decade in the European Union in expectation of the Bonn conference.*

*The ENSI session at the Conférence Internationale de Bordeaux was organised by Christine Affolter, ENSI Vice-President in coordination with the organizing committee of the conference.*

*Environment and School Initiatives (ENSI) is an international network which has supported educational developments, environmental understanding, active approaches to teaching and learning, through research and the exchange of experiences internationally since 1986. ENSI brings together school initiatives, school authorities, teacher training and educational research institutions, and is the only international organization for EE and ESD whose members are appointed by government and approved to represent their nation at global forums.*

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## ACRONYMS

CaSaLen	CArpathian SustAinabe LEarning Network
CERI	Centre for Research and Innovation in Education
CSCT	Curriculum, Sustainable Development, Competences, Teacher Training Project
UN DESD	United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development
DG	Directorate General
ENSI	Environment and School Initiatives
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development
EU	European Union
GMEF	Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework
HEI	Higher Education Institution
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IIS	International Implementation Scheme
MEEG	Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
SD	Sustainable Development
UN	United Nations
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UNGA	United Nations General Assembly

## 1. THE CONTEXT



On 20 December 2002, the United Nations General Assembly in its 57<sup>th</sup> session adopted resolution 57/254 to establish a Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Spanning 2005-2014, the DESD is a global platform which offers the opportunity to promote ESD at all educational levels and spaces of learning: formal, non-formal and informal, with a lifelong learning perspective. The DESD seeks to engage a wide range of stakeholders around the globe, and to strengthen the development of innovative policies, programmes and initiatives of ESD at local, national and international levels. The DESD is facilitated and promoted by UNESCO, which was designated the official international leading agency.

In October 2005, the DESD strategic framework, the International Implementation Scheme<sup>1</sup>, was released after a stakeholder consultation process. The IIS is a set of principles and strategies to which stakeholders can adhere to promote the Decade. This document is consistent in outlining a vision for a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from education and learn the values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation<sup>2</sup>

The IIS defines the DESD goals, trusts and milestones, as well as the seven strategies to move forward. Monitoring and evaluation has been identified as one of these strategies for the Decade. UNESCO, as the leading agency, has the responsibility for establishing the mechanisms to monitor and evaluate the DESD, and for reporting progress to the UNGA and UNESCO.

To this end, UNESCO established the Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group, which recommended that UNESCO published three Global Monitoring and Evaluation reports. To elaborate these reports, the MEEG designed a Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework<sup>3</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> The IIS can be found on: <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0014/001486/148650E.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> UNESCO (2005). *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014): International Implementation Scheme*. October 2005. Paris: UNESCO. pp6.

UNESCO (2004). *United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014): International Implementation Scheme*. October 2004. pp4.

<sup>3</sup> The GMEF can be found on the following link: <http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/files/56743/12137065225GMEFoperationalfinal.pdf/GMEFoperationalfinal.pdf>

A draft of the first report, based on the context and structure of work on ESD in countries, will be released at the *UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development - Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade*<sup>4</sup> in Bonn, 31 March-2 April 2009. This Conference proposes to be a gathering of key government agencies, stakeholders and experts in the field with the purpose of reviewing the strategies and achievements of the first half of the Decade.

### Why did we meet at Bordeaux?

The French Committee of the DESD organised in Bordeaux, during the French presidency of the EU, an international conference entitled, '*Working together on ESD*'<sup>5</sup> (27-29 October, 2008). This meeting proposed to provide a platform for French and international stakeholders working on ESD to reflect on and review the first half of the DESD and make recommendations for Bonn, as well as inform the remaining years of the DESD.

The conference focused not only on reviewing the contribution of France to the DESD, but also ESD activities and actions of French-speaking and non French-speaking nations were also considered. Specific attention was given to countries in the Euro-Mediterranean area and ESD progress made in EU member states was also highlighted.

The conference included 10 sessions (full sessions & thematic workshops) each focusing on different ESD aspects. The sessions were coordinated by working groups which provided information on progress and drew up proposals for the future at the plenary session.

### The ENSI perspective

ENSI -Environment and School Initiatives<sup>6</sup>- was commissioned by the French National Committee to prepare and facilitate session 1: 'Progress and possibilities for the UN DESD in EU member states' at the Bordeaux Conference.

ENSI was founded in 1986 as a decentralised international network of CERI-OECD. ENSI is a government based network, i.e., only governments or non-governmental organisations, institutions or associations with a mandate from their government can become full members of ENSI. ENSI will soon receive the status of an international non-profit organisation. The organisation brings together school initiatives, educators and other stakeholders in countries worldwide to promote and understand activities promoting sustainable development in schools and their communities (see Box 1).

ENSI objectives
To initiate, co-ordinate and support research and school development activities, as well as publish and disseminate these activities;
To promote international exchange, understanding and co-operation, including co-operation with other international organisations and programmes;
To make policy recommendations and/or statements as appropriate.

<sup>4</sup>For more information about the conference see: <http://www.esd-world-conference-2009.org/>

<sup>5</sup> The site of the conference: <http://www.decenniefrance.fr>

<sup>6</sup> For more information about ENSI see: <http://www.ensi.org>

ENSI, in its session at the Bordeaux Conference, brought together different experts and educators in ESD to review the DESD progress during 2005-2008 in the 27 countries of the EU. The discussion and recommendations arising out of the different ENSI workshop streams are compiled in this document. It is hoped that the report will serve to address questions regarding progress in the first half of the DESD. It proposes recommendations to be discussed at the World ESD Congress to be held in Bonn in March-April 2009.

ENSI's session firstly hosted different key note speakers who reviewed some of the current strategies in ESD in the EU, as well as mechanisms and frameworks to monitor and evaluate ESD. These strategies were explored in greater depth by four different workshops, attended by participants at the Conference who brought their expertise and experience in the field to inform and draw recommendations for the future.

## 2. WHAT ARE THE GLOBAL AND EU EFFORTS TO ASSESS PROGRESS DURING THE UN DESD?<sup>7</sup>

This section summarises the presentations from invited keynote speakers who were asked to introduce current global and EU efforts and to reflect on progress during the UN DESD. The different presentations commenced after a brief introduction of the session by Michel Ricard, President of the French National Committee of the UN DESD, and were moderated by the ENSI Vice President, Christine Affolter. The keynote speakers were:

Introduction of ENSI session at the Bordeaux Conference by *Willy Sleurs*;

European efforts on the Decade of ESD: Education and Training by *Elisabeth Bittner*

The German and European efforts on the DESD: The German EU Presidency Conference (2007), the EU Strategy for sustainable development and the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Bonn (2009) by *Alexander Leicht*;

The Greek efforts on sustainable development by *Andreas Karamanos*

The UNECE Strategy for ESD: Indicators to measure the effectiveness of the implementation by *Roel van Raaij*;

Monitoring and evaluation during the UN DESD : The Global Process by *Daniella Tilbury*.

### Introduction of ENSI session at the Bordeaux Conference

Willy Sleurs, President of ENSI, thanked the organisers of the Bordeaux Conference for the opportunity to lead this workshop stream. He then outlined ENSI's rationale, activities as well as commitment to ESD.

Although the word 'environment' features in the name ENSI, Willy Sleurs explained that, the term environment is understood very broadly and thought to encompass physical, social and economic aspects. This more holistic interpretation dates back to ENSI's origins. It has also consistently sought to show good practice and provide evidence through research of the need engage with new pedagogic method.

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<sup>7</sup> The French efforts have been discussed during a one-day special session and the results are presented in the proceedings of the Bordeaux conference.

Over the years, ENSI has contributed to establishing and supporting learning and research networks and to the development of innovative research projects. Willy Sleurs summarised ENSI's key initiatives as follows:

- The SEED Project

The Comenius SEED project<sup>8</sup> (2002 - 2005) addressed education for sustainable development (ESD) as a driving force for school development to foster the integration of ecological issues into daily life at school. This key focus recognised and reflected international and political thinking and is in line with the UN DESD agreed-upon international principles and objectives. The SEED-project included a comparative study across 13 countries on implicit and explicit criteria in regards to eco-school developments. One of the outcomes of this study has been the Quality Criteria for ESD schools, translated so far in 17 languages.

- The CSCT Project

The CSCT Project<sup>9</sup> was developed as a response to the call of the UNECE Ministers of the Environment in 2003 to include ESD in curricula. It was terminated in 2007 after an extensive work of fifteen partners who develop a framework for a competency based curriculum for ESD for initial teacher training and in-service training institutions.

- The SUPPORT Project

The Comenius network 'Partnership and Participation for a Sustainable Tomorrow', SUPPORT<sup>10</sup> was established in 2007 in order to address the need to enhance quality of educational practices and material in line with the challenges of SD. The overall objective is to promote ESD in European schools.

- CaSaLen Project

The CaSaLen Project<sup>11</sup> aims at establishing a support system in order to encourage the school based co-operations in the Carpathian region within the existing financial frameworks (EU – LLL program, Visegrad Found). It will be organised a regular summer school as in-service training for multiplication of the collected and structured materials, knowledge and know-how for ESD teachers.

- ENSI ESD young researchers Project

The overall goal of this project<sup>12</sup> is to pool the expertise of research newcomers and to develop a small researcher's network under the umbrella of ENSI.

## European efforts on the Decade of ESD: Education and Training

The Union must become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based economy in the world capable of sustainable economic growth with more and better jobs and greater social cohesion<sup>13</sup>. However, as Elisabeth Bittner remarked: "the social dimensions need more particular attention".

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<sup>8</sup> For more information about the SEED Project, see: <http://www.ensi.org/Projects/QCESD/>

<sup>9</sup> For more information about the CSCT Project see: [http://www.ensi.org/Projects/Former\\_Projects/CSCT/](http://www.ensi.org/Projects/Former_Projects/CSCT/)

<sup>10</sup> For more information about the SUPPORT Project see: <http://support-edu.org>

<sup>11</sup> For more information about the CaSaLen Project see: <http://www.ensi.org/Projects/CaSaLen/>

<sup>12</sup> For more information about the ENSi young researchers project visit: <http://www.ensi.org/Projects/ESD/>

<sup>13</sup> European Council, Lisbon, March 2000

Ministers of Education adopted in 2001 a report on the future objectives of education and training systems agreeing for the first time on shared objectives to be achieved by 2010 (Education and Training 2010).

In this policy context, there is a need to make economic transformation efforts as well as radical educational changes. The European Commission supports member states via the Open Method of Coordination: through the sharing of experiences, working towards common goals and learning from what works best elsewhere. In cooperation with Member States, the Commission develops guidelines for policy action and supports the modernisation of education and training systems in Europe. The Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013<sup>14</sup> serves as a wide umbrella for these objectives as well as for meeting the ones defined for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 is a holistic educational programme which also promotes ESD by funding specific ESD projects. It mainly addresses and promotes all forms of education and learning within different structures and programmes: Comenius, Erasmus, Leonardo da Vinci, Grundvig, Transversal Programme and the Jean Monet Programme. The generic actions of Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 include individual mobility, partnerships, projects and networks, operating grants or reference materials. As Elisabeth Bittner affirmed: "It is an excellent opportunity to bring bottom-up approaches".

Important work of the Lifelong Learning Programme 2007-2013 related to ESD
<p>EU recommendation of Key Competences for Lifelong Learning<sup>15</sup>: The major challenges that will have to be addressed are equity and quality gaps.</p> <p>Commission Inventory of innovative practices: Elisabeth Bittner affirms that these innovative projects in the EU countries show the shift of focus from exclusively environmental to considering the social aspects of sustainable development.</p>

The first EU Progress Report on SD<sup>16</sup> shows substantial progress in the area of ESD but there is still much more that needs to be done.

### The German and European efforts on the DESD: The German EU Presidency Conference (2007), the EU Strategy for sustainable development and the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Bonn (2009)

In his presentation, Alexander Leicht – Head of the UN DESD in Germany - summarised some of the German and European efforts in ESD. He highlighted the results from the German EU Presidency Conference in Berlin (24-25 May, 2007), which aimed at reviewing the implementation of ESD in the EU. The conference concluded by stating that much good work in ESD has been done in the EU, but ESD is still at the margins when it comes to the broader priorities in education.

At the EU level, a substantial effort was made in the development and implementation of the EU Sustainable Development Strategy<sup>17</sup>, adopted in 2006. Although ESD is included as a

<sup>14</sup> For more information about the programme see: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/doc78_en.htm)

<sup>15</sup> For more information about the EU Key Competences for Lifelong Learning see: [http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives\\_en.html#basic](http://ec.europa.eu/education/policies/2010/objectives_en.html#basic)

<sup>16</sup> For more information about the first EU Progress Report on SD see: [http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/news/index\\_en.htm#report\\_2007\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/news/index_en.htm#report_2007_en)

cross-cutting issue in the EU Strategy, Alexander Leicht stressed that there is a danger that ESD could be neglected in the formulation of policies with regard to the concrete sustainable development challenges of the Strategy.

Finally, he reviewed the plans and efforts of UNESCO, the German Federal Education Ministry and the German Commission for UNESCO in preparation for the UNESCO World Conference on ESD in Bonn<sup>18</sup> (31 March-2 April, 2009) (see Box 2).

Objectives of the Bonn Conference
<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Highlighting the essential contribution of ESD to all education and to achieving quality education</li><li>2. Promoting international exchange on ESD</li><li>3. Carrying out a stock-taking of the DESD implementation and</li><li>4. Developing strategies for the way ahead</li></ol>

## The Greek efforts on sustainable development

Andreas Karamanos –Chair of the UNECE Steering Committee on ESD- briefly summarised the ESD efforts put in place in Greece. Recognising the importance of education in fostering SD, Greece has developed and implemented a great number of actions in the country. Some of these are as follows:

In 2006, Greece nominated a coordination body for ESD, the National Committee on ESD, which meets regularly during the year to revise the National Plan on ESD.

Greece is working on changing the roles and scopes of its environmental education (EE) centres and re-orient them to address ESD issues.

In November 2005, recognising the importance of ESD and to strengthen the links in ESD amongst the Mediterranean countries, the following events were organised in Athens:

- The Official Launch of the UN DESD in the Mediterranean region
- The first south-east Europe sub-regional workshop of for implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD

In 2010, the Government of Greece expects ESD to be wholly implemented at a school level emphasising the importance of embedding sustainable development in the curricula.

## The UNECE Strategy for ESD: Indicators to measure the effectiveness of the implementation

In his presentation, Roel van Raaij –Chair of the expert group on indicators for the UNECE Strategy for ESD- introduced the monitoring and evaluation mechanism that has been designed and implemented to assess the progress of the UNECE Strategy for ESD<sup>19</sup>. This Strategy, which is specifically policy driven, is the response to the UN Decade for ESD and aims at encouraging UNECE member States to develop and incorporate ESD in their education systems: formal, non-formal and informal. Following the recommendations and proposals of the Vilnius Framework for implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD(2005),

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<sup>17</sup> For more information about the EU Sustainable Development Strategy see:

[http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/welcome/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/welcome/index_en.htm)

<sup>18</sup> For more information about the conference see: <http://www.esd-world-conference-2009.org/>

<sup>19</sup> The UNECE Strategy for ESD can be found at: <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/>

the UNECE High-Level meeting established a group of experts<sup>20</sup> to develop indicators to measure the effectiveness of the Strategy implementation.

As Roel van Raaij explained, the first step taken by the Working Group was the establishment of a framework to measure the effectiveness of the Strategy. To do this, it was important to translate the Strategy objectives into specific indicators which could show the effectiveness of each of the objectives. These indicators would answer the questions: *What do we need? What do we want? what data is available? And what methodology is available?* The challenge was to collect data, as little information in ESD is available to monitor and evaluate the Strategy, especially at national levels, as well as to find evaluation methodologies in ESD. Some work on SD indicators has already been done, but the design of ESD indicators and its evaluation is still a new area to be explored.

The expert group looked at an evaluation model which could cover the process and effectiveness of the implementation of the Strategy. A questionnaire with forty-six questions was developed considering the objectives of the Strategy. The UNECE and the UNESCO questionnaires share many similarities. However, they also differ in many other aspects.

The UNECE indicators were used to report progress on the Belgrade Conference in 2007: *Learning from Each Other*<sup>21</sup>. Thirty-six countries sent their National Implementation Reports and a data base of 'good practices' was set up. These helped inform the effectiveness of the first phase of the Strategy at the Belgrade Conference.

Roel van Raaij concluded his presentation with recommendations on how to improve the monitoring and evaluation of ESD (see Box 4).

Recommendations to monitor and evaluate ESD
Cooperation between environmental and educational sectors (and others)
Adoption of a multi-stakeholder approach
Self-assessment should be considered a 'learning process' in itself
Supporting countries in their reporting exercise
Training for National Focal Points in monitoring and evaluation
Capacity building in monitoring and assessment at all levels

## Monitoring and Evaluation during the UN Decade: The Global Process

Daniella Tilbury - Chair of the UNESCO Global Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group (MEEG)- presented the DESD as a "worldwide movement which seeks to improve opportunities and quality of education". Underpinning the UN DESD, she argued, is an assumption that education can change the world. A more peaceful, equitable and socially just world is required for the achievement of sustainable development.

Some forms of education are more aligned with this vision of the world. These involve critical reflective thinking, participatory learning, systemic thinking and values clarification. Daniella Tilbury illustrated the importance of these processes to the achievement of a more sustainable future and the realities underpinning social change for sustainable development.

<sup>20</sup> More information about the UNECE expert group on indicators can be found at: <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.EGI.htm>

<sup>21</sup> More information about the Belgrade Conference can be found at: <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/belgrade.htm>

She argued that it was important to acknowledge the ambitious nature of the DESD as well as the complexity underpinning ESD. These, she argued, provide a context for understanding the DESD monitoring and evaluation exercise.

Then she moved on to review the Global Monitoring and Evaluation process. She explained that UNESCO, as the DESD leading agency, is required to report progress on the implementation of the DESD to the UNGA in 2010 and to UNESCO Executive Board every two years. To assist with developing an evaluation and reporting process, UNESCO established the MEEG – Monitoring and Evaluation Expert Group. The MEEG, composed of ESD and evaluation experts from across the globe recommended that UNESCO published three Global Monitoring and Evaluation reports each with a different focus.

The DESD Global Reports
2009: contexts and structure on ESD in countries
2011: Process and learning
2015: Impacts and outcomes

The MEEG also designed a Global Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (GMEF) based on the ESD major thrusts for the DESD and global milestones defined in the IIS. The GMEF includes self-reporting, participatory monitoring and expert evaluation in order to validate the data and engage as many stakeholders as possible in the process. The GMEF will use questionnaires, stakeholder consultation, longitudinal assessments, self-reporting process and portfolio of evidence.

Aims of the GMEF
To raise awareness amongst stakeholders about the DESD
To provide opportunities for reflection and learning
To monitor progress across a range of sectors (formal education, community, government, business, etc.)
To assess changes in context and structures, processes and learning as well as outcome and impact
To provide a regional as well a global map of progress
To assess the contribution of UNESCO the DESD and the lessons learnt in the process of implementation

The indicators defined in the GMEF will help assess ESD progress during the DESD. Different types of indicators have been defined to establish whether the DESD is making a difference: status indicators, facilitative indicators, learning indicators, effect indicators and performance indicators.

A draft of the first Global DESD report will be released at the *UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development* in Bonn, and will document and review progress specifically with regards to changes in ESD contexts and structures at the national and regional levels.

At the start of her presentation, Daniella Tilbury asked whether perhaps the DESD goals were too ambitious given the lack of resources to support its implementation and the complex

nature of ESD. In her conclusion, she returned to this question arguing that the First Global Report will not provide evidence of how the world has changed as a result of education but will seek to establish whether education contexts and national systems have improved to promote change for a more sustainable future.

### 3. KEY DISCUSSIONS AROUND THE WORKSHOPS

This section provides a brief introduction to the key questions and findings from the four workshop stream which took place under the title 'Progress and Possibilities for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) in EU Member States'. The workshop facilitators were:

Workshop 1: The whole institutional approach to ESD and the role of school in society  
*Michela Mayer and Eugenia Flogaitis*

Workshop 2: A systemic approach to curriculum change in educational institutions  
*Maryse Clary and Guy Turchany*

Workshop 3: Professional educational competences in ESD  
*Mercè Junyent and Regina Steiner*

Workshop 4: The role of social learning in the attainment of sustainable development  
*Roel van Raaij, Antoine Heideveld and Ingrid Mulà*

#### W1 : The whole institutional approach to ESD and the role of school in society

A whole institutional approach is a relatively new concept and raises questions about existing institutional routines and structures. The UNECE describes the 'whole institutional approach' as one in which all aspects of an institution (internal operations and external relationships) are reviewed and revised in the light of SD/ESD principles. Each institution should decide on its own actions addressing the three overlapping spheres of: campus, curriculum and community.

Within a whole institutional approach, ESD is recognised as a process which contributes to the institutions to become 'learning institutions'. Such organisations find opportunities to reflect on their aims, procedures and actions. These institutions are also underpinned by internal and external collaborative opportunities; 'learning how to learn' strategies; and a focus on preparing for the future.

Questions proposed in workshop 1
What evidence do we have that the whole institutional approach has been recognised as relevant in the European and non-European educational systems?
How much has this idea been diffused and how much institutional support has it received?
What organisational/institutional changes are needed in order to transform educational institutions into 'learning organisations' and 'core social centres' for the local communities?
What has been learned from the experiences and examples of good practice?
What advice can we offer to schools and HEIs that are already engaged in these

processes?

What recommendations can we make to European, national and international educational authorities?

### Key points arising from the discussions in workshop 1:

#### Fundamental elements of the whole institution approach

The ability to work together: teachers need to find ways of working collaboratively together, but they must also seek opportunities to interact with civil society, policy makers, staff, parents, and other stakeholders.

Networking and research.

Bottom-up as well as top-down actions.

#### Needs for a whole institution approach

Policy engagement and institutional support;

Specific measures and materials to train educators;

To avoid the risk of marginalisation of institutions which take this approach;

An anthropocentric attitude in ESD: learners at the centre;

Empowering learners through participation and ownership;

Maintaining the ownership of this process at a very basic level, collaborating with the local community, looking for private/public partnerships, following the principle of subsidiarity in an atmosphere of open democracy;

Understanding that ESD is different from EE: ESD does not forget nature or the limits of natural resources but civil/democratic society is at the centre; ESD deals also with lifestyles and sustainable consumption.

## W2 : A systemic approach to curriculum change in educational institutions

The problems related to SD are characterized by complexity. ESD integrates many fields of knowledge that interact to create new understandings. ESD needs to understand this type of complexity to avoid its simplification. To understand these complex realities, there is a need to develop strategies with a systemic approach. This corresponds to a new way of thinking rather than the application of a new technique or method.

ESD implies the development of reflective and action oriented projects and working at local levels. It demands an active approach of learning through experiencing which can help to stimulate the emotional, ethical and behavioural attributes associated with ESD.

ESD cannot be exclusive to schools. Governmental and non-governmental organisations and the business sector also need to be involved. Active partnerships are needed to develop better guidance and training for citizens.

#### Questions proposed in workshop 2

What evidence is there of a systemic approach to ESD in education and teacher education?

Do teacher education programmes and processes integrate ESD concepts and new

methodologies of teaching and learning?

What are the current levels of support for these types of educational project and for field work in schools?

What collaborations exist between schools and local businesses, NGOs, civil society and media?

#### Key points arising from the discussions in workshop 2

The concept of sustainable development

The systemic approach

Active learning project work

Networking as a method

Local partnerships

Reaching beyond the school walls

Defining new roles of pupils, such as becoming active citizens and eco-managers

Values for sustainable development

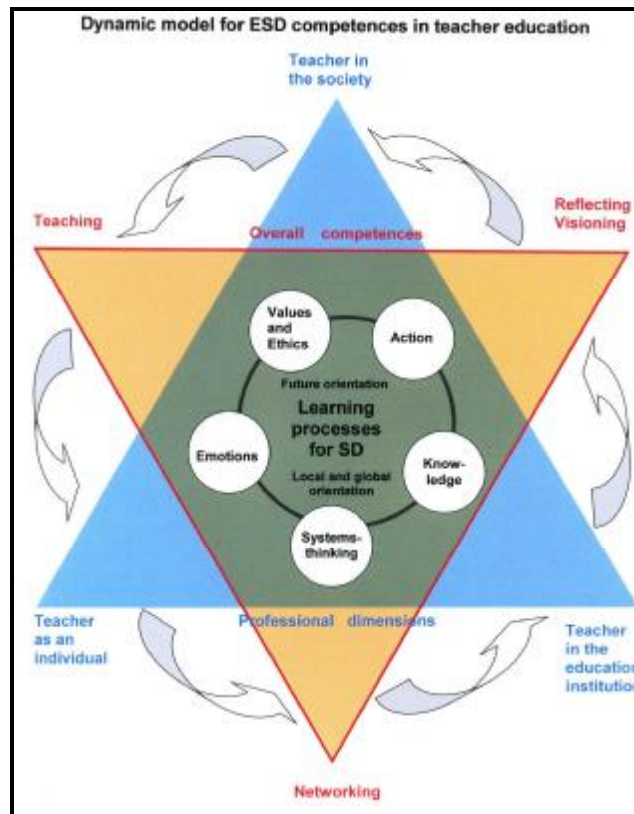
### W3 : Professional educational competences in ESD

Most countries have already taken significant steps towards implementing ESD. However, whereas there is considerable documentation on criteria and competences for SD, few studies are available regarding competences in ESD. A comprehensive example of ESD competences is the CSCT-Project<sup>22</sup>, which is a framework for a competency-based curriculum for ESD for initial teacher training and in-service training.

#### The CSCT- Dynamic model for ESD in teacher education

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<sup>22</sup> For more information about the CSCT-Project see: <http://www.csct-project.org/>



The CSCT model proposes five essential competence domains:

- Knowledge
- Systems thinking
- Emotions
- Ethics and Values
- Action

These competences are geared towards the overall purposes for ESD:

- Teaching (and communicating)
- Reflecting and Visioning
- Networking

These competences are also designed to integrate professional dimensions of the teacher role:

- Teacher as an individual
- Teacher in the educational institution
- Teacher in society

ESD neither demands new specific subjects nor extra work. ESD asks for:

- A new vision of teaching and learning
- A systemic approach to real life problems
- New competences in education

### Questions proposed in workshop 3

What progress has been made in the first half of the DESD in terms of professional

competences for teachers?

What is the status quo in our respective countries – what are the opportunities and the challenges?

What do we need to focus on next and what do we need to improve?

What advice can we offer about the nature of teacher education and training for ESD?

What recommendations can we provide to the authorities responsible for teacher education?

### Key points arising from the discussions in workshop 3

#### Some good examples for promoting ESD in teacher education

To carry out new research in pilot schools and mainstream these approaches.

To use active learning approaches in teacher education for ESD, taking guided experiences in school and sharing these experiences for discussion within the teacher training group.

To organise workshops that target all those involved in the life of the school: teachers, staff, and parents.

An ESD programme that targeted teachers, pupils and parents to learn together. This example was supported and funded by companies.

#### Discussion points in workshop 3

There is a lack of teacher trainers who are knowledgeable in ESD issues.

Across countries there are different ESD approaches and varied concepts around ESD but there is no co-operation or information exchange.

It seems that the potential for ESD is greater in early years education but in later phases of education, the curriculum is more subject-based and less amenable to ESD.

There are differences among countries in the effectiveness of top-down and bottom-up approaches; the positive driving factor is that demand comes from within each society.

Although ESD has implications for all parts of the educational sector, the main pressure is on teachers, who are considered to be at the core of ESD.

Tensions involved in using good practice as an incentive: this can be an inspiration but can also suppress the initiative and creativity of individual teachers.

A high importance is placed on the teacher's responsibility for ESD. Therefore teachers need encouragement and support to work on ESD so that they are not made to feel guilty and demotivated.

Teacher training should involve teachers learning together with business sector professionals.

It is important for teachers to be able to benefit from feedback from pupils.

ESD is socially relevant and can address contemporary concerns, including the search for sense and meaning.

There is a lack of quality assessment for ESD processes and practice.

## The role of social learning in the attainment of sustainable development

The UNECE Strategy and the UNESCO IIS for the DESD consistently emphasise that ESD includes formal, non-formal and informal learning. ESD has a broad lifelong learning perspective, not just formal education systems. However, most resource allocation has been in formal education to date and little investment has been made available in other sectors.

In the Programme *Learning for Sustainable Development* in the Netherlands, three levels of learning activity have been defined:

1. Individual learning
2. Learning organisations
3. Learning society

The idea of the 'learning society' includes the concept of 'social learning'. Social learning is the process by which stakeholders learn together around a mutual interest or topic, exchanging ideas, views, problems and possible solutions. Social learning is not a spontaneous process, it has to be structured and managed and is most effective if it is also evaluated as part of the process.

Characteristics of social learning
Uncertainty
Reflection
Interaction
Sharing
Respect
Empathy
Emancipatory learning

### Questions proposed in workshop 4

What evidence is there in Europe of new alliances and new strategies in social learning for sustainable development?

What good educational practices have been developed and have become part of our understanding of social learning for ESD?

What recommendations can we give to promote social learning during the UN DESD?

Key points arising from the discussions in workshop 4:

#### Discussion points on social learning

The term 'social learning' is not recognised by most of the participants. Mediation and participatory approaches are terms often used instead.

In most countries, examples of social learning are becoming more common. Some of them were highlighted in the workshop by the participants.

SD problems need to be tackled in ways that have not yet been fully explored. Social learning processes seem to have potential meaning and value for all stakeholders. However, social learning is not yet part of the mainstream in educational practice.

The most common approach to date has been driven by top-down decision making in government authorities. Ministries of Education alone cannot stimulate social learning.

Other organisations must be encouraged to explore and promote social learning, especially those with lifelong learning remits.

## 4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR BONN

This section presents the recommendations for the future implementation of the DESD.

The recommendations were drafted by workshop participants for consideration at the Bonn conference *Moving into the Second Half of the UN Decade* (31 March-2 April, 2009).

#### Strategic sector level approaches to stimulate further ESD innovation

Communities and local authorities should support changes to school premises in order to enable more coherent 'whole institution' ESD strategies to be put in place.

Communications, partnerships and networking between academics, schools and businesses should be improved and extended.

Teaching and learning methodologies should be improved, starting from teacher education, to support the systemic approaches envisaged for the curriculum.

Public awareness should be raised to ensure that there is civic support for whole institutional change for ESD.

Networks should be developed in order to exchange experiences, to promote partnerships across civil society and to compare practice at national and international levels.

Strategic attention to the professional competencies that will be required for teachers seeking to promote ESD with formal education.

Contextualization in terms of national priorities is an essential component of comprehensive and effective ESD.

Promotion, support and policy development on social learning.

## The whole institutional approach to ESD and the role of school in society

National strategies need to take account of the 'whole institutional' approach to ESD:

- Institutional autonomy with the time and freedom to create strategies that will enable real changes to be introduced into curricula;
- Educational approaches that create critical, reflective capabilities in learners, rather than attempting to change particular behaviours;
- Strategies and guidelines for educators and headmasters where aims and processes and evaluation tools are included;
- Enlarged learning environments open to nature, to real life and to social debate;
- Participatory approaches to decision-making within schools so that all parties take a role in developing strategies for ESD.

## A systemic approach to curriculum change in educational institutions

To fully integrate ESD into curricula and teaching practice on a wider scale, further attention is needed to the following aspects of teaching and learning methodology:

Ways to create more clarity about the values of ESD and its systemic approach, for example the processes required to integrate ESD epistemologies into teacher training.

Project learning based on SD issues that includes integrated planning for interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary working (e.g. teacher meetings, classroom time and reflection time).

New learning roles for pupils to become active learners responsible for their own decisions and to encourage co-learning and dialogue-based approaches between teachers and pupils.

## Professional educational competences in ESD

More emphasis is needed in initial and continuing professional development to encourage learning among colleagues in practical and creative ways, not only on a theoretical basis.

Teacher training can draw on existing concepts and initiatives (e.g. eco-school/global schools) and develop them further in support of the 'whole institution' approach.

Teacher training must take account of systemic approaches to teaching and learning, including methodologies and assessment strategies, as well as content and SD topics.

Further discussion is needed about the degree to which professional ESD competences for teachers should be articulated at policy level and how they can be part of professional development processes.

Strategic consideration is needed regarding the relationship between competences for ESD and for related issues such as lifelong learning.

## Social learning in the attainment of sustainable development

The DESD is an essential platform for promoting social learning and ensuring that resources are directed towards it as a policy priority. Social learning can be supported by stimulating cross-sectoral learning and by further exploration of the connections to lifelong learning agendas and the most suitable organisations to involve.

The DESD is an opportunity to gather information about social learning initiatives taking place in different countries and to use this information to inform policy-making and provide examples of existing practice to national governments.

It is important to generate greater understanding about the benefits of social learning and the types of learning process involved. Social learning processes take more time and resources; therefore it is necessary to clearly articulate their additional value and benefits.