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*The ENSI network is wishing a merry Christmas and a happy, successful New Year to all of you. May the New Year bring many fruitful developments towards our common vision of a more sustainable way of living on our beautiful blue planet!*

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*Formerly the OECD Programme on Educational Building*

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**1. ENSI in Korea and Japan! A report of a journey in a new ENSI world**

Dr. Willy Sleurs, President ENSI

2009 has been a very busy and intense year for the ENSI network, with the conference "*Creating learning environments for the future. Research and practice share knowledge*" from 26 to 28 March in Leuven (Belgium) as the highlight of the working year.

This conference brought about 120 ENSI friends from 24 different countries to Belgium, where they could exchange and share ideas about ESD. Besides participants from many European countries, we were glad to welcome participants as far as from Australia, Canada, the Republic of Korea and Japan.

This conference offered the executive board of ENSI the occasion to discuss with the Asian participants a possible extension of the ENSI network in the Asian-Pacific area. As a direct result of these discussions, organised in the margin of the conference, Christine Affolter and myself visited the Republic of Korea and Japan, from 13 to 23 November.

During this visit we had discussions and negotiations with representatives of the authorities, local and international organisations and universities. We are very grateful to Prof. Dr. Sun-Kyung Lee from the Cheongju National University of Education of South Korea, and already a very active member of the ENSI family for many years, and Dr. Mee-young Choi, from IGES, Japan, for organising the meetings between the local organisations and authorities and the ENSI members.

In South Korea, we had the opportunity to present the ENSI programme to representatives of the Ministry of the Environment (13 November) and to negotiate the possibility for a possible ENSI membership of the Republic of South Korea in the future.

On Monday 16 November we made a trip to the Cheongju National University of Education, about 120 km south-east of Seoul, where we were received by the dean, the director of the Office of Planning and Policy Development and some lecturers of the Faculty of Pedagogies. We discussed the mutual benefits of cooperation between ENSI and the Cheongju University and the possibility of becoming an associate member of ENSI. These negotiations resulted two weeks ago by the announcement of the University that they will join the ENSI network.

In the afternoon we gave a lecture for a group of 2<sup>nd</sup> year bachelor students of Teacher Education in the frame of their Environmental Education studies. Later in the day we presented and discussed the concept of 'Competencies for ESD teachers' with a group of University professors and researchers.

On November 17<sup>th</sup>, Prof. Sun-Kyung Lee organised a highly interesting meeting with the UNESCO Commission Korea, Secretary-General Dr. Taek-soo Chun. This meeting was followed by the presentation of the current ENSI projects to UNESCO staff members. Several points of common interest came up during the discussions, which may lead to some form of cooperation between UNESCO and ENSI in the future.

The same day we presented the results of the SEED and CSCT projects and the content of the new LEARN project during a lecture at the National University of Seoul for a group of professors in Environmental education and research students. Several lecturers and students showed a lot of interest in ENSI's work and expressed the hope for joining the network.

In the morning of the same day, we were invited to visit the Hwa Rang Elementary School, one of the many schools involved in the *Forest-for-life* project, which celebrates this year its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary. We were extremely surprised by the way the school integrated the natural environment in the school, it is a concrete example of good practice of a learnscape project. The jubilee of the 'Forest-for-life' movement was celebrated with a conference on 18<sup>th</sup> November, on our last day in Korea. ENSI was very honoured to be invited at this occasion to give a key note in the presence of the Minister of Forest of Korea, and the board of directors of the project and more than a hundred guests. Even an interview to Korea's TV channel for education was given by the ENSI ambassadors! This was really an apotheosis of our visit to South Korea, just before heading for Tokyo, Japan.

Korea welcomed ENSI warmly; a high interest in its work was shown by all our discussion partners. We are looking forward to future developments of our cooperation.

Notwithstanding a partner from Japan cooperated with ENSI in the early years of its existence, the last years the Asian representation was focused to South Korea and India. Therefore, it was with much gratitude that we accepted the invitation of Dr. Mee-young Choi to meet several high level representatives of the Ministry of the Environment and the Ministry of Education, and Prof. Dr. Hamanaka, the Chair of the Board of Directors of the highly renowned Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES).

The meeting with the representatives of the Ministry of the Environment focused on the work of ENSI at the authority's level and as well at the individual projects. LEARN was again in the centre of the discussion.

At IGES Institute we were warmly received by Professor Hamanaka and Dr. Choi, who explained us the activities of IGES and the knowledge IGES wants to share with the ENSI network. Prof. Hamanaka (one of the creators of the Kyoto-protocols) and Dr. Choi set a strong focus on the development for interdisciplinary studies at the university level and we shared an insight of first experiences in Eastern Asia. A future leading field!

Finally we had a very rewarding discussion with Professor Masahisa Sato from the Tokyo City University and Dr. Masakazu Goto from the National Institute for Educational Policy Research to find ways how Japan can join the ENSI network in the future.

ENSI was well recognized also in Japan. We shared many common points of interest with our partners and the need of collaboration for the empowerment of ESD was obvious to all of us.

We are very grateful to our guides and organisers Professor Sun-Kyung Lee and Dr. Mee-young Choi who made our stay in the respective countries highly comfortable and who opened new doors which offer a lot of opportunities for cooperation with ENSI in the future. Thank you very much, Sun-Kyung and Mee-Young!

## 2.



### Looking back at first nine months with “CO<sub>2</sub>nnect” – the SUPPORT project’s international school campaign for ESD

The EU Comenius project “SUPPORT – partnership and participation” is going into its final year, with its big final conference on ESD policy and practice in Bergen, Norway, in April. The project’s international schools campaign for ESD, “CO<sub>2</sub>nnect – CO<sub>2</sub> on the way to school”, carries on and will become a permanent feature of the website [sustain.no](http://sustain.no) when the SUPPORT project ends.

Since the launching of CO<sub>2</sub>nnect, in March 2009, schools from 30 countries have registered and uploaded data into the shared database. However, in most cases it is only one or two schools per country. Malaysia, Romania and Jordan have outstanding numbers of participants, followed by Finland, Norway and Greece.

#### Rewarded schools

In November, a jury within SUPPORT evaluated the uploaded CO<sub>2</sub>nnect reports and awarded the following schools:

Primary and lower secondary schools

- 1st prize: Pärnu-Jaagupi Gümnaasium in Pärnu County, Estonia
- 2nd prize: Colegiul National de Arte Constanta – Regina Maria, Constanta, Romania

Upper secondary schools

- 1st prize: Lykeio Agiou Ioanni, Lemesos, Cyprus
- Joint 2nd prize: Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Serdang, Kedah Darulaman, Malaysia – and - Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Perempuan St. George, Penang, Malaysia

Highly commended projects

- Ady Endre Elméleti Líceum, Bucharest, Romania
- Základná škola, Dr. Janského č.2, Ziar nad Hronom, Slovakia
- Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Bukit Jambul, Gelugor, Malaysia



*Pupils from Constantin Brancusi school in Romania, giving out self made flyers on how to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions to citizens in their home town.*



*Students completing their data sheets at Sekolah Menengah Kebangsaan Serdang, Malaysia*

#### Interesting findings in teachers’ evaluation of CO<sub>2</sub>nnect

The feedback received through the teachers’ evaluation is quite pleasing. Although only a little more than 100 teachers have responded so far, there are clear signs for some interesting results here. For instance, 70% of the respondents so far answered “yes” to the questions “Did the work with the campaign lead to any changes in the school’s

teaching methods?”

Another indicator of that CO<sub>2</sub>nect is worth keeping and developing further are the answers to the questions “How interested would you be in participating in another campaign like this on a different topic in the future?” 75% of the respondents say they would be very interested in doing so, and another 18% + 6% are also positive.

### **3. a) Impression in the Western Balkans**

Dr Mervi Aineslahti, Finland

I was invited to take part in a project the Finnish Ministry of Foreign Affairs is sponsoring. My role was an educational advisor in helping to create a *sustainable school concept to the Western Balkans*, Drina River basin, including three nations: Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro. An important part of the task was to attend a field trip to ten out of the 25 municipalities and schools receiving the grant.

The leader of the group was Srdjan Susic, the senior expert for local initiatives of REC (Regional Environmental Centre), a network working for environmental approaches in the Western Balkan countries. Two other members attending the trip were Serbian coordinators. For me the most important group member was another Finnish advisor, who had been working on that area earlier, knew the language and whose experiences and expertise helped me a lot in creating an overall idea about the situation. In five days we travelled all together 1300 km in a minibus and flew back to Belgrad from Podgorica, Montenegro. People in all countries were friendly, but one could not avoid sensing the close history. The bullet holes still seen on the walls were clear signs of it.

The first destination in every municipality was the mayor's office. Its purpose was to get the political leaders committed to the project, to develop their municipality in a sustainable way and support the schools in their work. The most common explanation was the present financial crisis. However, the main work is done in the schools. It was also my main interest was in the schools. It was easy to pick up the schools where the director and the staff were committed: in some schools it was more about social sustainability (e.g. student and parent councils), in some schools taking care of the school yard or then only a strong will to work for sustainability. In all schools students were well behaving, happy and open. Every time I wanted to visit the classes I met a group of students who wanted to learn, also the sustainable way of living. This grant will give the teachers a possibility to take part in field visits and training courses. Pilot schools will then mainstream the ideas to other schools, as in ENSI-project. I also hope this grant will give the schools a possibility to have the windows repaired and heating system fixed in order to get concrete results. The temperature difference in the mountain regions is from +40 C to -20 c.

But we have to keep in mind that ESD is not about money. It is a question about will to start working together, networking and sharing knowledge and experiences. I was privileged to give a helping hand as a long-term member of ENSI-network, a Finnish ENSI-school teacher. In every meeting we attended I was presented: “Mervi Aineslahti, not only a PhD but also a teacher working in a real sustainable school”. It made me feel responsible to help them as well as continuing to work for my own school. Developing and evaluation is an ongoing process.

Quoting some ENSI-articles I spread their ideology: “The journey is the goal we are aiming at!” and “Sustainable schools are schools that have chosen education for sustainable development as a central part of their mission and their educational plan. They consider sustainable development as a main principle to keep in mind when planning the school's daily life and long term changes and development”.

**b) The journal of the OECD Centre for Effective Learning Environments**  
*Formerly the OECD Programme on Educational Building*  
<http://www.oecd.org/edu/facilities/journal>

#### **4. Agenda**

**a)** The EU Comenius project “**SUPPORT – partnership and participation**” is going into its final year, with its big final conference on ESD policy and practice in Bergen, Norway, **April, 19 -23, April 2010**

The **registration form** for the final SUPPORT conference **is now open**, here: [http://support-edu.org/BergenConf\\_Registration](http://support-edu.org/BergenConf_Registration).

Please see (and spread!) the attached information sheet.

[http://www.ensi.org/media/ESD\\_conference\\_Bergen\\_April2010\\_info-sheet.pdf](http://www.ensi.org/media/ESD_conference_Bergen_April2010_info-sheet.pdf)

**b) Environment and Health in Science Education**, Conference at the University of Zurich, August 18 -21,2010

More information you will find at: <http://www.igb.uzh.ch/lehrstuehle/lehrstuhlkyburz/International-Conference.html>

**c) Two training courses by Sense & Sustainability:** New Approaches to Education for Sustainability: 16<sup>th</sup>-22<sup>nd</sup> May 2010 – Warsaw, Poland, and 10<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> October 2010 – Shrewsbury, UK

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