



Workshop „BNE im internationalen Dialog – die UN-Dekade“

The objective of the workshop was to foster international dialogue on ESD within the Europe region. Eight European guests (Norway, Netherlands, United Kingdom, Switzerland, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia, Czech Republic) participated in the workshop by informing each other and the German participants about the actual state of ESD in their countries. Key points of the general discussion were: definition of SD and ESD, role of different ESD stakeholders, and measuring progress on ESD. Suggestions for international dialogue and cooperation were also discussed. Central to the meeting was the presentation of ESD activities by the eight international guests:

Following on from the Brundtland report and its definition of sustainable development (SD), **Norway** has a long tradition of SD and ESD. The Norwegian government has recognized the importance of SD and strong political support on the implementation of the Decade can be expected, e.g., through funding by ministries. Norway has identified a national strategy for SD and currently works on the national curriculum, which is supposed to be finished in August 2006. Today there are 53 UNESCO Asp Schools to be found in Norway, most of which are active in ESD. The Norwegian Directorate for Education and Training has created a webpage as a tool for ESD. The webpage consists of more than 150 activities spread over 12 thematic topics and is a forum including best practice examples as well as room for discussion and communication: www.sustain.no.

The **Netherlands** also has a long tradition in SD and the national strategy for SD was prepared for the Johannesburg Summit of 2002. The current national program “Learning for SD 2004-2007” which has the ambition to enable people to weigh the social, cultural and environmental effects of their actions, has adopted the Decade ESD in the Netherlands. The criteria for sustainable projects are defined as the following six: 1) People, 2) Planet, 3) Profit, 4) future generations, 5) developing countries and 6) Participation. In order to achieve the ambition of getting from niches to mainstream a three level approach has been developed, containing the learning individual, learning organizations and learning society. The three active core groups for ESD in the Netherlands are the government, NGOs and the educational sector. A missing core actor is the industrial sector with which cooperation is expected. The approach is to let different players cooperate and exchange views for

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achieving a shift in people's mindsets through awareness, knowledge, skills, understanding, attitudes and values. Websites: www.senternovem.nl/lvdo

The **United Kingdom** Government launched a national sustainable development strategy in 2005 and all departments are producing their own action plans this year. The Department for Education and Skills (DfES) produced a sustainable development action plan for education and skills in 2003. An SD advisor works closely with the DfES on SD education policy. The DfES runs a range of initiatives that support SD education including health, environment, school buildings and global partnerships. Next year they will consult on and produce a Sustainable Schools Strategy. Tools to help school leaders and teachers are being developed, including a web-based framework and case study database, and a self-evaluation environmental management tool. A project to encourage SD in post-school curricula has been underway. General information about SD and the DfES can be found at: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/aboutus/sd/>

The Swiss Commission for UNESCO has instituted a committee for ESD. This committee, however, is not the only player regarding ESD in **Switzerland**. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Heads of Education and the Swiss Forum Education for Sustainable Development also play a role in ESD. The UNESCO Commission has developed a concept for implementing ESD and has proposed an action plan. It has created a webpage (www.unesco-nachhaltigkeit.ch) and its own logo. The Swiss Conference of Cantonal Heads of Education with representatives of six federal ministries limits its area of interest to formal learning and thus only takes responsibility for one aspect of the Decade. The Swiss Forum Education for Sustainable Development efficiently exchanges information and coordinates different stakeholders. The question remains how these three actors will cooperate in the future. Furthermore, criteria for projects, evaluation of the projects, the official recognition of Decade projects, visibility and other issues are presently being tackled.

In **Latvia** the implementation process for the Decade ESD has just started. The action plan is being prepared and the first roundtable meeting is planned for the beginning of 2006. The education curricula have been renewed adding sustainable development issues and other documents in the field of education for sustainable development are in the preparation process. As is the case with other countries, one key instrument to implement ESD is UNESCO's ASP Network. At the moment Latvia is concentrating on raising awareness, visibility and involvement and motivation of different stakeholders and the society as a whole for ESD. The ambition for the implementation of ESD strategy is seen in establishing public private partnership.

Lithuania being Lead Party of Education Sector in An Agenda 21 in Baltic Sea region has introduced ESD at the national level in several approved documents. By this measure, the main ideas for ESD are included in the Lithuanian Strategy for Sustainable Development

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and Education Strategy Guidelines for Education in 2003-2012. Strategies for integrated programs followed 2005. Vilnius also hosted the high-level meeting that adopted the UNECE Strategy for ESD. National curricula and standards for pre-school, primary and secondary education were adopted in 2002 and 2003. Lithuania's action plan on ESD is in preparation. Best practice examples can also be found among the ASP schools. The current concerns are efficient coordination of activities, human resources and knowledge management.

The **Czech Republic** is also at the preparation state regarding ESD, with the involvement of a number of authorities that now need to be coordinated. Important contextual issues in this respect are plans for the decentralization of the education sector. The ASP schools are a main driver and good example of implementing ESD in the Czech Republic as well. Currently, stakeholders are searching for ways how to fund the implementation of the Decade.

Slovakia formulated a national strategy for SD in 2001. An action plan with 38 recommendations exists, but the issue of ESD has not been included so far. New curricula are needed for all school levels and there is the opportunity to incorporate SD when these changes are made. There are some initiatives for environment education and Agenda 21, but this is only regarded as the beginning. Cooperation with partners (national, international, all relevant state actors, the public, NGOs, the private sector) regarding ESD and collecting good ideas from other countries are the priorities at the moment.

In **Germany** the National Committee, instituted by the German Commission for UNESCO, is the central steering body for the implementation of the Decade ESD. The National Committee consists of 30 institutions and gathers relevant ESD stakeholders from Federal Ministries to NGOs. The roundtable with around 100 members has established 7 working groups: Preschool education, School education, Higher education and research, Continuing education, Financial consumer education, Vocational training and Non-formal learning. The German government supports the implementation of the Decade on ESD financially. Projects for ESD can apply for recognition as "Official German Project of the Decade" and are chosen by a jury composed of National Committee members. So far, 171 projects have been nominated and carry the Decade logo. These projects as well as the German National Action Plan can be viewed at the Decade's web page www.dekade.org.

The following outcomes can be noted down as the main results of the workshop:

The state of implementation of the Decade ESD in different European countries varies in terms of progress made, political and financial support, stakeholder involvement and visibility. The initiative of strengthening the international exchange of views, experiences and ideas at this roundtable meeting was welcomed by all participants because of the different

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situation of ESD in the represented countries. Ideas of how to intensify the communication between the countries were collected:

Share information material and best practices via an internet database. Link existing websites from different countries. Introduce international exchange into all 7 working groups of the German roundtable. Create an extra group for international cooperation within the German roundtable. Present international best practice projects at the didacta, a fair for education, which will take place in Hanover, Germany, in February 2006