United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
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UN DECADE WITH IMPACT – 10 YEARS OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN GERMANY

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FOREWORD

Dear Reader,

In the decade from 2005 to 2014, key steps have been taken towards the systematic establishment of Education for Sustainable Development throughout the education system. Thanks to political approval and support and to the tremendous civil engagement of numerous professional and voluntary stakeholders, Germany is now able to look back on a successful implementation of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Intensive preparatory work began in Germany soon after the Johannesburg World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002. The German Commission for UNESCO recognised the key importance of ESD early on and gave its backing to the concept. An expression of this is the German Commission for UNESCO's Hamburg Declaration on ESD adopted as early as 2003. This became the reference document for implementation of the Decade in Germany, and laid the foundations of the German organisational structure for the Decade.

The German Commission for UNESCO took over coordination of Decade activities under a German Bundestag (national parliament) resolution in 2004. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research spearheaded support and assistance for these activities from the outset. The Coordinating Office for the UN Decade and the two main bodies – the German National Committee and the Round Table – began work in the same year. This made it possible to present the first National Plan of Action for the UN Decade with detailed recommendations for implementation in time for the Decade's commencement in 2005.

Since the proclamation of the UN Decade, Germany and the German Commission for UNESCO have likewise made a major contribution at international level to ensuring the success of the ESD concept and the UN Decade itself. ESD thus featured as a central item on several occasions in German position statements in UNESCO governing bodies and in resolutions of the UNESCO General Conference. The culmination of all this committed work is without doubt the staging of the first UNESCO World Conference on ESD halfway through the Decade in 2009. The Bonn Declaration adopted by the over 900 participants from all over the world remains the global reference document to this day. This has given new impetus to implementation of the UN Decade and of ESD in education systems worldwide, and underscores the fact that Education for Sustainable Development is a shared global responsibility.

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Walter Hirche
President of the German Commission for UNESCO

As the UN Decade comes to a close, it is time to make use of the experience gained in the last ten years to press ahead with shaping the Global Action Programme – both in Germany and internationally. The German Commission for UNESCO and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research are conscious of their responsibility for further establishment of ESD. The same applies for the numerous dedicated stakeholders across Germany. These have worked hard for the Decade goals in the last ten years. They wish to continue this work and would like to see it continue to fall on fertile soil in future years.

Last but not least, we, too, are conscious of our international responsibility with regard to ESD. We wish to share our experience, take part in global exchange and networking on the challenges, and actively participate in shaping the Global Action Programme on ESD – to no lesser degree than during implementation of the UN Decade.

A sustainable society needs ESD, and for the future we aim to continue doing all we can to spread this insight.

Minister (retd) Walter Hirche
President of the German Commission for UNESCO

„DISCOVERING OUR OWN RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABILITY“

Speech by Cornelia Quennet-Thielen, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF) on the Occasion of the Opening of the National Conference Marking the End of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in Bonn on 29 September 2014.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to welcome you to the German conference to mark the end of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. This conference together with the international conference in Nagoya in November is a milestone on the long societal and political path towards sustainable development.

To put it in a nutshell, one could say that everything began with the Brundtland Report in 1987. This report contained the now famous definition of sustainable development:

“Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

The Report goes on to explain that these „needs“ are primarily the needs of the poor and that we must accept certain constraints in order to meet the demands of sustainability.

This was a sweeping demand from the very beginning: It linked the necessary protection of natural resources with the question of current and inter-generational justice and at the same time with economic action. After all, in many cases needs can only be satisfied by economic means. Sustainable development took a universal approach from the very start adopting the three-pillar model of ecology, economy and social equity.

This is both a fascinating and at the same time a major challenge.

The UN World Conference on Environment and Development took place in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and sustainability became the normative guiding principle of the international community.

And many of you have been championing sustainability ever since – some of you even longer. Others embraced the topic much later and are contributing new impulses. But we all cannot let go of this topic because we know that there is such a lot to do. I would like to thank you for your suggestions, your solutions and your great commitment.

The old questions still sound familiar: climate change, poverty, participation, sustainable economy, resource protection and conservation. Unfortunately, many problems are still acute today. The fascination and the challenge remain. Last week’s UN climate conference in New York is such an example. A further example is Ebola, the epidemic which is spreading most in three of the world‘s poorest countries[1] : In countries which – in the words of the Brundtland Report – are not in a position to meet their current needs. And this is why they need our help now – once again within the framework of sustainable development.

The societal significance of sustainability began to gain centre stage following the new awakening in 1987 and 1992 and at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg[2] in 2002. If sustainability is a guiding principle and is to remain so, how can it enter our everyday lives? How can it influence the action of the individual? It cannot simply be proclaimed: it requires active involvement. It needs Education for Sustainable Development.

How can education worldwide meet the great and universal aspirations of sustainability? This was the question at the time and it will persistently demand new and convincing answers. All of us – and people all over the world – have tried to provide these convincing answers, not just but also and in particular in the course of the last ten years:

1 Liberia, Guinea, Sierra Leone. Ebola seems to be under control in Senegal and Nigeria.

2 Following the recommendation of this summit, the UN General Assembly proclaimed the years 2005 to 2014 the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in December 2002.

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in the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

It sounds so easy: „UN Decade". Behind this concept is the conviction of the large majority of the international community that this topic is of huge significance throughout the world, but that we have not yet done enough in this context. We could say it is a wake-up call that has been sounding for ten years. Anyone who is still asleep is beyond help.

The draft of the Bonn Declaration gratefully affirms that the decade has been a success in Germany due to the cooperation of a broad alliance. A Bundestag resolution ensured that several federal ministries, the *Länder,* the conferences of ministers of education and ministers for the environment as well as numerous civil society stakeholders and NGOs were closely involved in the implementation of the Decade on the German side under the lead of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research. The German Commission for UNESCO established a steering body, the National Committee of the UN Decade. At its first meeting at the BMBF in May 2004, the Committee agreed on the objectives of the Decade in Germany and particularly on enhancing public perception.

Five years later, in 2009, an international mid-term conference took place here in Bonn. Representatives from 196 UNESCO Member States agreed on the „Bonn Declaration".

This once again took a holistic approach, stating that Education for Sustainable Development „provides the values, knowledge, skills and competencies for sustainable living and participation in society and decent work" (No. 4).

We will adopt a new Bonn Declaration at the end of our conference today and tomorrow. It describes the German way, the challenges we are facing and our attempts at a solution. The Declaration was drafted in an open collaborative process: initially by the National Committee, which unites representatives of NGOs, federal and Länder politics, industry and science. In a second step the text was put online for comments. Now we will prepare the final version together, here at this meeting.

This conference is not focusing on „politics" but rather on the many initiatives at local and regional level – often borne by committed members of the public working on an honorary basis. This is why we have also developed the conference programme in a collaborative process. Here I would like to sincerely thank the committee of experts and all those who have cooperated in this effort. We will continue this open discussion, not least when implementing the future Global Action Programme in Germany.

What has happened since the meeting at the BMBF ten years ago? And what has happened since the 2009 Bonn Declaration? We are going to consider these questions at today's meeting. Tomorrow will be devoted to looking to the future and will include a speech by Federal Minister Johanna Wanka on this topic.

One often hears the words: We have achieved a lot, but there is still a lot to be done." This is precisely the case with the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Let me mention just a few of our joint success stories:

- Over 1,900 individual projects were honoured as UN Decade projects.
- Forty-nine Decade measures act as beacons, linking regional initiatives in the area of Education for Sustainable Development.
- Twenty-one local authorities – ranging from the city of Hamburg to Eggolsheim with just 6,700 inhabitants – have received awards. They all have one thing in common: they have made sustainability the basis of their local policy – and this is precisely what we need. They are all acting according to the motto: „Think globally – act locally."
- The BMBF's competition to promote local education and competence networks is therefore an important element in progressing from an individual project to the development of a genuine structure.
- And, last but not least, four collaborative projects funded by the BMBF at ten universities have provided scientific support for the process initiated by the Decade in order to make Education for Sustainable Development even more sustainable.

Within ten years we have established an entire educational and political field, smoothed communication pathways, set up working structures and thus set the course for firmly anchoring Education for Sustainable Development in the German education system.

- The National Committee has linked numerous stakeholders – in the fields of science, administration, politics, industry and civil society. This networking has formed the basis for establishing joint priorities.
- Round tables have taken place once a year to provide forums for specialist exchanges and networking activities.
- Working groups on topics ranging from biodiversity to individual areas of education have developed schemes and defined positions. They have given Education for Sustainable Development a voice and will carry specialist knowledge further afield.

I would like to sincerely thank everyone involved. My Ministry too has embraced this topic and has set priorities in recent years. Let me cite just a few examples:

- The „House of Little Scientists" association, which we are funding, is in turn funding more than 16,000 nursery schools. Children learn about sustainability through play.
- The BMBF is funding competitions in the MINT subjects – Mathematics, Informatics, Natural Sciences and Technology – for children and adolescents. These also focus on sustainability – in particular the „Young Researchers" contest and the National Environment Competition. More than 8,000 participants have submitted almost 3000 projects since this competition was introduced.
- We funded a pilot scheme to promote „Vocational Training for Sustainable Development", which ran from 2010 to 2013 and aimed to include Education for Sustainable Development in training in companies. Permanent networks will ensure the long-term effect of the schemes for initial and continuing vocational training. They are strengthening the sustainability skills of instructors, teaching staff and trainees.
- Another priority is sustainability in higher education. Education and research on questions of sustainability are particularly effective when researchers, students, universities and research institutions apply the principles of sustainability themselves. By introducing the Sustainability in Science Initiative (SISI) in 2012, my Ministry is supporting research in assuming responsibility vis-à-vis society.

The successful work of the Decade is based in particular on broad civil society commitment. The strength of Education for Sustainable Development in Germany, which is recognized internationally, stems from civil society involvement. Sustainability is becoming an everyday experience.

- I am particularly fascinated by one of the Decade projects involving a firm set up by school students which does not merely recycle garbage such as plastic bags and fabric remnants but uses them to make higher end products.

- I am inspired by the way the LWL Clinic in Münster is bringing sustainability into everyday clinical practice: Staff members ranging from gardeners to doctors are involved in the hospital's environmental working group. They do not only put forward good proposals but determine the clinic's environmental objectives. Sustainability is a subject in all training occupations; vocational schools are also involved.

- I am enthralled by an inter-generational learning module in which a „green thread" is being spun „in the labyrinth of forgetting". This involves older people with dementia teaching young people how to look after plants and animals.

All of this stands for Education for Sustainable Development in Germany. It shows that Education for Sustainable Development has intensified in Germany and has become more relevant. This is a huge success. Let me congratulate you all!

Today is a day to celebrate – a day for exhilarating discussions. I would therefore like to close with some questions:

- How can we use our experience with good projects to strengthen good structures? This is one of the demands of the National Committee's Future Perspectives 2015+ strategy paper.

- How can we transfer the good results to a wider field? And how can we secure findings on how to successfully organize Education for Sustainable Development?

- Furthermore, must we not focus even more on education for sustainability in order to become as specific as possible? To do so we must distance ourselves from and at the same time link up with the general discussion on sustainability.

- And finally, must we not stop talking about deficits and concentrate more on potential? I firmly believe that each and every one of us has the potential to live a sustainable lifestyle. We have a tendency to be wasteful. But our everyday lives, as different as they may be, contain decisive resources for sustainability[3]. It is a matter of discovering and using these resources. Education for Sustainable Development is the key.

Thank you.

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3 Based on an approach by the *Stiftungsgemeinschaft anstiftung*, Munich.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE **MARKING THE END OF THE UN DECADE AND THE BONN DECLARATION 2014**

The National Conference marking the end of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) came to a close on 30 September 2014. The two-day conference brought together some 500 experts to take stock of the UN Decade in Germany. In the jointly adopted Bonn Declaration 2014, they recorded the conference outcomes and looked ahead to the coming Global Action Programme.

The conference – "UN Decade with impact. 10 years of ESD in Germany" – was organised jointly by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and the German Commission for UNESCO. The event gave participants an overview of the many activities that took place as part of the UN Decade in Germany. In presentations, panel discussions, forums, and 29 workshops on diverse topics, some 500 participating experts analysed the outcomes of the UN Decade and formulated perspectives for 2015 and beyond. International guest speakers extended the field of view beyond Germany's borders.

The conclusions were overwhelmingly positive. The initiatives launched by policymakers, business and civil society in the ten years of the UN Decade, it was agreed, meant that ESD was no longer a niche subject in Germany. "The 2,000 or so separate ESD projects recognised during the UN Decade are a great success," said Walter Hirche, President of the German Commission for UNESCO, on the adoption of the Bonn Declaration 2014. The Decade had proven, he added, that ESD is a particularly effective catalyst for the long-term sustainable development of regions. "The task now is to continue the projects, develop new initiatives and systematically integrate ESD into education and training curricula," Hirche said with a view to the years ahead.

Conference participants used the two days in Bonn not only to look back, but also to discuss the coming Global Action Programme on ESD and the catalogue of goals developed by UNESCO. "We shall make a concerted joint commitment to achieving the Global Action Programme goals in Germany in the five years until 2019," the parties set down in the Bonn Declaration 2014.

Policy support in Germany, including provision of the respective resources, is to be continued and wherever possible intensified. Particular attention is to be paid to ESD-related qualification of education specialists and teachers in all areas of education. A greater say is to be given to youth in national committees and forums concerning implementation of the Global Action Programme. Young people are to be encouraged to use their own initiative to assume responsibility for ESD. Local and regional cooperations between education institutions, local authorities, companies and civil society are to be given suitable support.

Johanna Wanka, Federal Minister of Education and Research, was likewise in Bonn for the conference. She opened the second day of the event with a keynote speech in which she thanked Decade stakeholders for their hard work during the last ten years. The Decade goals, she said, united many who had contributed their ideas and concepts, working together to continuously improve the preconditions for ESD. She added that much

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Minister Johanna Wanka (centre) with the participants of the national conference in Bonn.

had been achieved, but there still was very much to be done. She also informed the participants of the conference that the German Government plans to continue and step up its commitment to ESD. While the Bonn Conference marks the end of the UN Decade on the one hand, it should also be the starting point for the ongoing development of ESD in the years ahead.

Further high-ranking speakers at the Conference included Cornelia Quennet-Thielen, State Secretary at the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, Maria Böhmer, Minister of State at the Federal Foreign Office, Sylvia Lörmann, President of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder, and Prof. Gerhard de Haan, Chairman of the German National Committee for the UN Decade.

Closing the conference, Shigeharu Kato, Secretary General of the Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, Alexander Leicht, Chief of the Section of Education for Sustainable Development, UNESCO, and Prof. Charles Hopkins, UNESCO Chair of Education for Sustainable Development, York University, Canada discussed the status and future of ESD at international level.

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BONN DECLARATION 2014

We, the participants of the national conference marking the end of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development on 29th and 30th September 2014 in Bonn, adopt the following declaration and call to action:

I. WE TAKE NOTE:

The United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) established the central role of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and focussed worldwide education systems more closely on the requirements of sustainable development. The Decade strengthened ESD stakeholders and networks, further developed the understanding of ESD as a concept with its comprehensive and transformative requirements of education systems, and documented and initiated numerous examples of good practice.

Considerable progress was made in Germany during the Decade: stakeholders from all sectors of society actively participated in implementing its objectives and clarified the multifaceted aspects of groundbreaking ESD. The structures devised in Germany for the implementation of the Decade and its goals as well as the wide scale mobilisation of networks, institutions, organisations and stakeholders have considerably increased awareness of the significance of ESD in our society, especially as an expression of a living culture of sustainable development. The UNESCO mid-term conference held in Germany in 2009 and the resultant Bonn Declaration provided important impulses for the global development of ESD.

Education is a key to achieving global sustainable development goals. ESD promotes “Gestaltungskompetenz” (shaping competence), dialogue abilities, orientation knowledge and the recognition of systemic correlations. ESD focuses on lifestyles, participation, values, global responsibility, and consumption and production patterns. ESD enables sustainable action and encourages readiness to accept responsibility for one‘s own actions.

ESD marks a new culture of education and a new direction in the teaching and learning of content and methods. ESD emphasises creative and critical thinking, long-term approaches, innovations and the ability to deal with uncertainties, the solving of complex problems, and participation in shaping a democratic and culturally diverse society. Teaching and learning are devised along the learners' perspective, teachers assume a stronger learner role, and participative learning processes and methods are re-designed.

The messages of the World Summits in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 and Johannesburg in 2002 were taken seriously. The final document of Rio+20 in 2012, „The future we want", also provided a new impulse for strengthening ESD after the Decade. Sustainable development and ESD have thereby gained significance on all political levels around the world. At the same time, education systems and institutions still face challenges in establishing sustainability as a model for educational and institutional development. At the 37th General Conference in November 2013 the UNESCO member states therefore agreed to present a proposal of a Global Action Programme to the United Nations. The draft of the post-2015 Agenda for

Sustainable Development currently being negotiated also emphasises the importance of ESD. The contents of the Global Action Programme shall serve as key guidelines.

The necessity to further strengthen ESD as a cross-sectional task is also recognised in Germany. For instance, the government's coalition agreement for the 18th legislature period states that ESD shall be more firmly anchored in all areas of education. The Federal Ministry of Education and Research, further ministries, the Länder and civil society partners support the planned Global Action Programme and its implementation in Germany. The end of the Decade is therefore at the same time the starting signal for further cooperation in orienting education systems towards the requirements of sustainable development.

II. WE ACKNOWLEDGE WITH GRATITUDE:

that the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development was a success due to the cooperation of a broad alliance of various stakeholders. On the basis of a decision by the German Bundestag and under the leadership of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, various federal departments as well as the Länder, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs, the Standing Conference of Environmental Ministers, local authorities, non-government organisations and numerous other civil society stakeholders were closely involved in the implementation of the Decade. The German Commission for UNESCO provided, with support from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the platform for cooperation between civil society experts, including the national committee initiated by the Commission, the annual round table discussions, the working groups and the awards given to projects, initiatives and local authorities. Over one thousand associations, institutions and civil society partner organisations have a considerable stake in the conceptualisation and implementation of the Decade. We thank them all for their active participation and multifaceted development of the joint goal.

III. WE OBSERVE:

a) that the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development has forged paths for the structural establishment of ESD in the German education landscape and has identified corresponding conceptual options;

b) that the Decade has sharpened and better conveyed the concept of ESD as an integral element of education whilst at the same time being its comprehensive and systemic reorientation;

c) that during the Decade a considerable amount of full-time and voluntary commitment and expertise was successfully mobilised for the goals of ESD;

d) that viable networks of organisations and experts were formed and supported;

e) that local ESD initiatives were supported with awards for Decade projects and local authorities, their strategic orientation towards ESD was strengthened, the variety of existent good practice made visible and the transfer of the ESD concept into the mainstream has been started;

f) that Germany has provided important impulses in the international implementation of the Decade. Using many measures, for example on European level and with bilateral and multilateral development cooperation, Germany has successfully contributed to globally highlighting the importance of ESD.

IV. WE RECOGNISE THE FOLLOWING CHALLENGES FOR THE FURTHER IMPLEMENTATION OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT FACED AFTER THE DECADE:

a) the consistent establishment of ESD in formal and non-formal education; that applies both to curricular content as well as the learning environment and learning forms, cooperation between school and non-school educational operators, and the conceptualisation of whole-institutional and participative approaches;

b) the establishment of ESD in the (further) training of teachers and education specialists at preschool and school level, in higher education institutions and vocational and extra-curricular education, and other stakeholders;

c) the continuation and transfer of successful projects, including the use of longer term and multi-topic and multi-sector promotion tools;

d) the visibility of pioneers of change through awards and the further development of existing awards practice;

e) the systematic consolidation and further development of local ESD projects into local and regional education landscapes;

f) the attainment of new target groups, partner organisations and companies, and stakeholders for ESD, in particular from other educational and socio-political sectors;

g) more intensive inter- and trans-disciplinary research on ESD, with particular reference to skills development, the transfer of good practice into the mainstream, and the contribution of ESD to education quality, including in overall research on sustainable development;

h) the interlinking of national and international expert discourse on ESD with sustainability discourse, in order to promote the societal transformation process;

i) more intensive, multi-departmental cooperation and increased political support for ESD on a federal and Länder level;

j) the establishment of ESD furthermore in all political processes on national, Länder and local level that are relevant to the central challenges of sustainable development, in particular in the respective sustainability strategies and corresponding progress reports;

k) assessment of goal achievement using suitable indicators and a results-oriented reporting method;

l) better international networking and exchange of experiences and good practice with ESD, including exchange between teachers and education specialists, as well as the development of international standards;

m) an explicit establishment of ESD in the post-2015 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

V. WE RECOMMEND:

We, the participants of the conference, welcome and support the declaration of the Global Action Programme by the United Nations and the catalogue of goals developed by UNESCO, the implementation agenda and the five priorities of the Global Action Programme. We shall make a concerted joint commitment to achieving the Global Action Programme goals in Germany in the five years until 2019:

a) Policy support: Policy support in Germany, including the respective resources, shall be continued and wherever possible intensified. That particularly applies to multi-departmental coordination and an even more intensive exchange between the federal and Länder governments, local authorities and civil society. The available coordination and implementation structures must be further developed in order to achieve the jointly agreed goals. ESD shall be increasingly integrated into education, research and sustainability agendas in consultation with all societal stakeholders. New ESD financing instruments shall be evaluated.

b) Whole-institution approaches: Education facilities shall cultivate a clear sustainability profile. Realistic goals and quality indicators shall be developed for the comprehensive sustainable orientation of formal and non-formal education institutions (facilities which encourage learning about sustainability and act sustainably themselves). Companies and other institutions shall include ESD in their apprenticeship, further education and further training programmes and CSR strategies.

c) Educators: Particular attention should be paid to the ESD-related qualification of education specialists and teachers at pre-school, school and further education level, of training and apprenticeship personnel in vocational and extracurricular sectors, and of full-time and voluntary multipliers. This applies to first qualification in all training phases as well as apprenticeships and further training.

d) Youth: Youth shall be given the opportunity and encouraged to use their own initiative to assume responsibility for ESD. They should be given varied, innovative learning opportunities and freedoms and be involved in their design. They must be given more say in national committees and forums concerning the German implementation of the Global Action Programme in order to articulate their requirements of education and learning opportunities which fulfil their important and already active role as stakeholders in sustainable development; where possible, self-organised youth advisory committees should be set up on the various levels. Better structures and processes are required to enable youth to participate and contribute, including the use of digital media. All ESD stakeholders are called upon to enable their following generation to codetermine and shape their world, and support self-organised ESD activities. Where possible, young people shall be given budgeting responsibility for their projects.

e) Local communities: As has been proved during the Decade, ESD is a particularly effective catalyst for the long-term sustainable development of regions. This especially applies to local and regional comprising school and extra-curricular institutions, including cultural institutions, NGOs and companies, institutes of higher education and local authorities. The participating stakeholders must agree on which contribution each makes according to abilities and area of activity, and they shall support each other. These local and regional cooperations ought to be equipped with appropriate structures and resources and be integrated in transregional networks. The accompaniment of multi-topic and multi-sector education processes and close coordination with concrete commitment for sustainability is a task that must be expanded for all multipliers in formal and non-formal education.

VI. WE CALL UPON

all stakeholders, networks, institutions and facilities that have made and will in the future make contributions to a stronger establishment of ESD in our society, to the United Nations, UNESCO and UNECE and their respective member states, to the European Union, the German Bundestag and the German government, to the Länder, local authorities and the German Commission for UNESCO, to intensify efforts in the implementation of ESD in line with this declaration.

ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE OF THE UN DECADE IN GERMANY

Even before the official launch of the UN Decade in Germany, plans were already in place for its implementation. The National Plan of Action, the National Committee and the Round Table provided the institutional framework for ESD activities in Germany and an exchange and networking platform for stakeholders throughout the ten years of the UN Decade.

The German Commission for UNESCO went into action straight away after the end of the Johannesburg World Summit in September 2002 and the recommendation to proclaim the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. It set about identifying ideas on ESD that had already been developed in Germany and worked to incorporate such ideas into the preparatory process ahead of the Decade. The Commission adopted a declaration on ESD at its General Assembly in Hamburg in 2003. This Hamburg Declaration contained detailed proposals for a national implementation structure. The German Commission for UNESCO proposed the appointment of recognised experts to a National Committee as a central steering and consulting body. A Round Table was additionally proposed to encourage new forms of cooperation between key ESD stakeholders.

National Plan of Action on the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

The Hamburg Declaration invited authorities at federal, Länder and city/local authority level together with interested parties from the private sector, research and civil society to form an alliance called "Learning Sustainability" in which they would work together on developing the National Plan of Action for implementation of

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Open Space during Round Table of the UN Decade 2011 in Berlin.

the UN Decade in Germany. An unanimous resolution adopted by the German Bundestag in 2004 took up this idea and recommended that the Federal Government should support implementation of the UN Decade. On the basis of this resolution, the German Commission for UNESCO took over coordination of the UN Decade in Germany. German Government activities were spearheaded by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), which supported implementation throughout the UN Decade.

The National Plan of Action was adopted in January 2005. The primary goal of the strategies formulated in the Plan of Action is to permanently embed the concept of sustainable development throughout all education sectors in Germany. Four strategic objectives and sub-goals were laid down in order to achieve this primary goal. Designed to guide the way in enhancing ESD in Germany, the four strategic goals were as follows:

1. Further develop and pool activities, and ensure the transfer of good practice to a broad base: The main aim here was to permanently establish the many good and innovative activities, giving them visibility and integrating them on a lasting basis into the educational landscape.

2. Create a network of ESD protagonists: ESD was implemented at many different levels in the Federal Government, Länder, cities and local authorities, and in both top-down and bottom-up processes. This placed the emphasis on cooperation between the many stakeholders to support ESD and on exploiting synergies.

3. Improve public awareness of ESD: This is about specifically working to raise public awareness, making it clear to all that sustainable development is in the public interest and necessary.

4. Strengthen international cooperation: The UN Decade was a global initiative. Accordingly, it was important to work together with other countries and cultures to identify common solutions and perspectives and to exchange ideas.

Plenary discussion during Round Table 2013 in Frankfut/Main.

Meeting of the National Committee 2013.

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Workshop during Round Table 2013 in Frankfurt/Main.

The Plan of Action underwent two revisions, in 2008 and 2011. The purpose of these revisions was to record key progress, lessons learned and developments in implementation of the UN Decade and to incorporate additional goals and recommendations. There was no further revision of the Plan of Action in 2013. Instead, on the basis of extensive consultation, the National Committee drew up a position paper, Strategy for ESD 2015+. This goes into the strengths and weaknesses of the UN Decade implementation, identifies challenges in the various areas of education and formulates goals for the time beyond 2014.

The National Committee for the UN Decade

The top-level consulting and governing body for the UN Decade is the National Committee appointed by the German Commission for UNESCO and in place since 2004. The National Committee intermediates between the initiators and stakeholders of the UN Decade by bringing together partners, projects and initiatives. It coordinates and monitors implementation of the UN Decade in Germany and puts it in an international context. The 30 members of the National Committee represent relevant Federal Ministries, the German Bundestag, the Federal Länder, and cities and local authorities. To these were added delegates from the private sector, foundations, the media, various non-governmental organisations, federations and associations, and adult education colleges, plus experts from applicable academic disciplines. The National Committee also notably aims to cover the various formal areas of education, including primary and secondary education, vocational education and training, tertiary education and the extracurricular education sector.

The Chairman of the National Committee is Gerhard de Haan, Professor of Futures and Education Studies at the Free University of Berlin. His Deputy is Professor Lenelis Kruse-Graumann of the University of Heidelberg. The work of the National Committee is supported by the Coordinating Office for the UN Decade, the Working Groups of the Round Table and by sub-groups of the National Committee supplemented by additional experts. The National Committee generally met twice yearly at the invitation of Länder governments or other institutions. Meeting agendas covered all issues relevant to the UN Decade, with a focus on the onward development and revision of the National Plan of Action and its goals. Since 2007,

the National Committee has selected an annual theme for each year with the aim of promoting and focussing activities and to reach out to new partners on the respective theme across Germany. Members of the Committee also made up the jury for the recognition of Official German Projects of the UN Decade.

The Round Table

In November 2004, at the invitation of the National Committee, numerous representatives from policymaking, educational practice, research, administration, non-governmental organisations, associations and initiatives for ESD in Germany came together in Berlin to discuss the first iteration of the National Plan of Action. Working groups on the various sectors of education were also formed at this first meeting. From then on, the Round Table – initially still under its original name, the "Alliance Learning Sustainability" – met once a year, with the Federal Länder taking turns to host it. In total, twelve Round Tables were held in nine different Federal Länder, including two extraordinary meetings in 2008 and 2009 for salient issues.

Over the years the Round Table became the central exchange, consulting and networking body for the UN Decade in Germany. Alongside networking among stakeholders, a major focus was on cross-sectoral and cross-issue discussion of substantive and strategic questions relating to ESD. Impetus to refocus the UN Decade came on multiple occasions with the addition of new stakeholders. The Round Table also provided the inspiration for many new activities and cooperation projects.

The work of the Round Table largely focused on questions that cut across issues and education sectors. Key topics included the UN Decade's goals and their detailed implementation, international cooperation and the establishment of ESD, activities of the working groups, devising a communication strategy and review of past activities.

The Round Table ultimately consisted of 175 members from a wide range of institutions and associations. The last Round Table for the time being was held in November 2013 at the invitation of the Government of Land Hesse in Frankfurt am Main.

The institutional structure of the UN Decade in Germany supported ongoing exchange and created a national platform for all involved. A notable feature of the Decade platform was that it co-opted ESD stakeholders from all parts of society. This made it possible to launch a continuous stream of new activities and to introduce and establish the issue of ESD in society.

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Workshop during Round Table 2012 in Dresden.

MILESTONES OF THE UN DECADE IN GERMANY

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2005: NATIONWIDE KICK-OFF CONFERENCE

Mainz, 13 January 2005

The official kick-off event for the UN Decade in Germany was held in Mainz at the invitation of the ZDF broadcasting service. Attendees included the Federal Minister of Education and Research, Edelgard Bulmahn, the Director General of ZDF, Markus Schächter, and the President of the German Commission for UNESCO, Walter Hirche. Also in attendance was the present Federal Minister of Education and Research, Johanna Wanka, at that time Minister of Education and Cultural Affairs of Land Brandenburg and President of the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder.

2005: ADOPTION OF THE CATALOGUE OF MEASURES UNDER THE NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

Berlin, 17 May 2005

The first Plan of Action for the UN Decade named four strategic goals. At its third meeting, the National Committee for the UN Decade adopted a catalogue of measures operationalising those goals. The catalogue of measures names the responsible stakeholders and describes the development steps leading to the establishment of ESD throughout the education system.

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2005: INAUGURATION OF THE UNESCO CHAIR IN HIGHER EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Paris, 12 September 2005, and Lüneburg, 25-27 September 2005

The Director-General of UNESCO, Koichiro Matsuura, and the President of Leuphana University Lüneburg, Professor Hartwig Donner, signed the agreement between the University and UNESCO in Paris. An international inaugural conference was held two weeks later in Lüneburg. The aim of the newly created UNESCO Chair is to establish the vision of sustainability in university research and teaching and to advance that vision worldwide through international cooperation between universities.

2006: EXPERT CONFERENCE ON CULTURAL EDUCATION AND ESD

Berlin, 22 June 2006

The National Committee for the UN Decade and Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung contributed to the 2007 annual theme of cultural diversity with an expert conference on Cultural Education and Education for Sustainable Development. The aim of the 60-participant conference was to identify common features and overlaps between cultural education and ESD. The conference outcomes were recorded in a joint publication.

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2006: INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP/ BONN WEEK OF THE UN DECADE

Bonn, 28-29 November 2006

As part of the Bonn Week of the UN Decade, the German Commission for UNESCO and the Land North Rhine-Westphalia Ministry of Generations, Families, Women and Integration staged an international workshop. Education experts from 35 countries discussed the joint basis of ESD worldwide, differing regional challenges and priorities, and good practice examples.

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2007: INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON THE UN DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT – THE CONTRIBUTION FROM EUROPE

Berlin, 24 - 25 May 2007

Participants of the conference held in Berlin City Hall and organised under the German Presidency of the Council of the European Union discussed how to strengthen ESD within the European Union and how to step up cooperation between EU Member States. The conference was organised jointly by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the Berlin Senate Department for Education, Science and Research, the Berlin Senate Department for Economics, Technology and Women's Issues, and the German Commission for UNESCO. The keynote speaker was Carl Lindberg, Special Advisor to the Swedish National Commission for UNESCO and Member of the High-Level Panel on the UN Decade.

2007: BNE WEB PORTAL ONLINE

Key information on the UN Decade in Germany is available online at www.bne-portal.de. The website also provides news and information on events and competitions in the field of ESD. It also features a comprehensive database of Decade projects and a large collection of teaching material on ESD.

2007: KMK RECOMMENDATIONS ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AT SCHOOL

The Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (KMK) and the German Commission for UNESCO issued joint recommendations on Education for Sustainable Development at School in 2007. The recommendations aim to promote, in the classroom, young people's understanding of the connection between globalisation, economic development, consumption, environmental pollution, population development, health and social conditions.

2008: REVISED NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

In 2008, the German National Committee for the UN Decade presented a revision of the National Plan of Action first published in 2005. The catalogue of measures contains 66 far-reaching education policy measures that contribute in orientating education towards sustainability for the long term.

2008: KICK-OFF EVENT FOR THE FIRST NATIONWIDE ESD ACTION DAYS

Bonn, 19 September 2008

The kick-off event for the first nationwide ESD Action Days was held in the Altes Rathaus, Bonn. The event was launched by Bärbel Dieckmann, Lord Mayor of the City of Bonn, Prof. Gerhard de Haan, Chairman of the German National Committee for the UN Decade, and Dieter Offenhäußer, Deputy Secretary-General of the German Commission for UNESCO. The ESD Action Days from 19 to 28 September 2008 saw over 300 stakeholders from all over Germany present their project contributions to the UN Decade to the general public.

2008: SYMPOSIUM ON WATER – EDUCATION – FUTURE

Hanover, 22 September 2008

In line with the UN Decade's 2008 annual theme of water, 200 education experts discussed quality criteria for educational material on the subject. The symposium addressed sanitation, the virtual water trade, protection of water bodies, clean drinking water, flood risk management and the European Water Framework Directive, giving an insight into related substantive and teaching issues. A possibilities market-place presented good practice examples and current educational material.

2009: UNESCO WORLD CONFERENCE ON ESD ('HALF-TIME' CONFERENCE)

Bonn, 31 March to 2 April 2009

The first ever UNESCO World Conference on ESD marked the halfway point of the UN Decade. The focus of the conference was on highlighting the central contribution of ESD in the attainment of education quality. With large numbers of participants from emerging economies and developing countries, the conference also underscored that ESD is a shared global responsibility.

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2009: THE 'LEUCHTPOL' PROJECT

Frankfurt am Main, 19 March 2009

The energy group E.ON and ANU, the umbrella and professional association for extracurricular environmental education, launched 'Leuchtpol', a lighthouse project to promote ESD in preschool. In training courses offered until 2012 and based on academic research on childhood learning and education processes, preschool teachers were able to acquire the skills needed to implement the ESD concept in their work.

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2010: 1,000 OFFICIAL PROJECTS OF THE UN DECADE

Cologne, 17 March 2010

The UNESCO Day at didacta on 17 March 2010 went under the banner "Money – Education – Sustainability." The event also saw recognition of the 1,000th official project of the UN Decade – Karl-Schiller-Berufskolleg, a vocational school in Dortmund. Retailing trainees learn at the school how they can incorporate climate protection and fair trade in their daily work.

2010: CONFERENCES ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON UNIVERSITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Bremen, 15 April 2010 and Berlin, 3 December 2010

Some 200 participants from around 40 different universities took part in the two conferences. During the events, researchers and others experts in politics, administrations and other parts of society brought forward ideas on how to implement sustainable development at universities. Workshops on thematic areas ranging from teacher training and interdisciplinary offerings on sustainability to e-learning events on sustainability showed that many universities have already taken up the impetus given by the declaration adopted earlier in 2010.

2010: WORKSHOP ON NEW PATHS IN ECONOMIC EDUCATION

Bonn, 29 September 2010

The workshop was dedicated to the economic dimension of sustainability – a dimension often neglected in ESD – and how to address it in education practice. The event was aimed primarily at decision makers and facilitators from educational policy and administration, teacher associations, and individual teachers. Experts from research and practice presented new concepts and ideas.

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2011: GERMAN SUSTAINABILITY AWARD FOR IDEAS COMPETITION

Düsseldorf, 4 November 2011

The dm-drogerie markt drugstore chain and the German Commission for UNESCO won the German Sustainability Award 2011 for their sustainability competition, "Ideen Initiative Zukunft." The award was presented in front of an audience of 1,200 guests at the German Sustainability Congress gala. The competition supported some 2,800 sustainability projects across Germany and was a contribution to the UN Decade on ESD. It lent a "unique widespread impact" to the issue of sustainability in Germany, the jury concluded.

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2011: REVISED NATIONAL PLAN OF ACTION

The main reference document for implementation of the UN Decade, the National Plan of Action, was presented in another updated and revised version in 2011. The new Plan of Action set out national goals through to 2014 and presented the new list of criteria for recognition of education initiatives as Official Measures of the UN Decade.

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2012: RECOGNITION EVENT FOR THE FIRST 17 OFFICIAL MEASURES OF THE UN DECADE

Berlin, 15 June 2012

Following the revision of the recognition criteria for Official Measures of the UN Decade, the first 17 large-scale education initiatives were publicly recognised. The Federal ministries, the Federal Länder, non-governmental organisations, industry associations, companies and foundations were acknowledged for their dedicated work regarding both the projects themselves and the resulting structures.

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2012: INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP, HORIZON 2015

Bonn, 27-28 February 2012

Over 50 experts from five continents came to Bonn to discuss the future of ESD at the invitation of the German Commission for UNESCO. The international workshop was held in cooperation with the Land North Rhine-Westphalia, the City of Bonn and the German Savings Bank Association (DSGV). The participants adopted the Bonn Recommendations on ESD beyond 2014, calling on the United Nations to continue supporting ESD activities beyond the end of the UN Decade.

2012: THE UN DECADE IN THE WEEK OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Berlin, 5-6 June 2012

The German Commission for UNESCO was among 200 exhibitors taking part in the fourth Week of the Environment. In the grounds of Schloss Bellvue in Berlin, they presented communities and successful projects in the UN Decade on ESD in Germany. The 1,500th official project of the UN Decade was also recognised as part of the presentation.

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2013: MOBILER ALLTAG 2023 VIDEO COMPETITION

For the 2013 annual theme of mobility, the German Commission for UNESCO launched a creativity competition in cooperation with Deutsche Bahn, the Association of German Transport Companies (VDV) and the German Cyclist's Association (ADFC). Over 100 participants presented their ideas for everyday sustainable mobility in 2023 in the form of 48 videos.

2014: NATIONAL CONFERENCE MARKING THE END OF THE UN DECADE ON ESD

Bonn, 29-30 September 2014

The National Conference marking the end of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development was organised by the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO. Participants comprised some 500 political, industry and civil society stakeholders who contributed to the success of the UN Decade in the last ten years and will continue to be involved in shaping and implementing ESD into the future. Together, they adopted the Bonn Declaration 2014.

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AWARDING GOOD PRACTICE

At the very beginning of the Decade, the German National Committee for the UN Decade adopted a resolution providing for the official recognition and acknowledgement of good practices in the field of ESD. This recognition of Official Projects, Measures and Cities and Local Authorities of the UN Decade became a key element in the implementation of the Decade as well as publicity for ESD in Germany.

The main aim of recognition awarded by the National Committee for the UN Decade was to give greater visibility to ESD activities and the objectives of the Decade. The National Committee also hoped to encourage other stakeholders to adopt the recognised good practices. Recognition was awarded to innovative education initiatives implementing ESD at local, regional or national level. Cities and local authorities could also apply if they incorporated ESD into their vision and policy and supported ESD projects locally.

The National Committee laid down criteria and compiled application documents for use by education initiatives, cities and local authorities wanting to apply for recognition under the UN Decade. Selection was made by an expert jury comprising ten members of the National Committee. Recognised projects, measures, cities and local authorities were issued with a certificate, banner and stamp bearing the logo of the "Alliance Learning Sustainability". All good practice examples featured in a public UN Decade online database. Recognition ceremonies, attracting local press and audience, were held several times a year in formal settings such as the German Bundestag or the grounds of Bellevue Palace, the residence of the Federal President in Berlin. The recognition ceremony at didacta, Europe's largest education trade fair, became an annual tradition.

Official Projects of the UN Decade

In early 2005, the National Committee issued a call for stakeholders and organisations to apply for recognition as Official Project of the UN Decade for ESD. To qualify, projects had to implement the goals formulated in the National Plan of Action and additionally:

- Be innovative pilot projects with a broad impact
- Meet high quality standards
- Be linked to other projects
- Cover at least two of the three dimensions of sustainability (environmental, economic and social)

The criteria were revised twice during the Decade. The first revision complied with a request from numerous stakeholders, making it possible for

projects to be resubmitted. Recognition applied for two years as before. Provided they were able to show further progress, however, projects could now be awarded recognition multiple times. Halfway through the UN Decade and after awarding recognition 750 times, the National Committee revised the selection criteria a second time. Projects were now required to cover all three dimensions of sustainability and have a website that provided general information on the educational concept of ESD and showed how the project promoted participatory skills.

The projects awarded recognition are fascinating for their sheer variety and quality. The types of projects recognised included – among many others – cultural and media projects for children in the elementary sector, schools with a dedicated sustainability profile, vocational education and training projects on sustainable construction and sustainable business practices, resource conservation and fair trading initiatives, environmental centres, sustainable student companies, mobility and consumer behaviour projects, undergraduate initiatives, degree courses and entire universities.

Recognition by the German Commission for UNESCO supported ESD stakeholders on the ground. In many cases, recognition acknowledged the work of volunteer projects and thus helped with fundraising. The UNESCO 'seal of approval' was always sure to attract public attention.

At the beginning of the Decade, the jury hoped to award recognition to 1,000 projects in ten years. The actual number far surpassed expectations. At the end of the Decade, well over 1,900 education initiatives in Germany carry the title Official Project of the UN Decade.

Official Measures of the UN Decade

In contrast to the mostly locally focussed Projects of the UN Decade, Official Measures of the UN Decade systematically implement ESD in education structures. Official Measures are carried out in most cases by federal and Länder ministries, state agencies and non-governmental organisation and in a few instances by companies, foundations and research institutes.

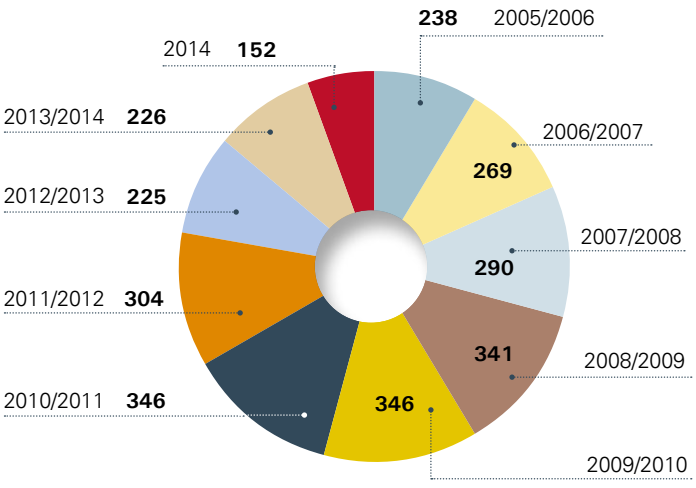
As well as satisfying the criteria for Official Projects, Official Measures primarily have to meet three requirements:

1. Their activities should have a political-strategic approach.
2. Their scope is at least supra-regional.
3. They demonstrate they have a lasting impact on the educational sector in Germany, i. e. their effects clearly extend beyond the end of the Decade in 2014.

Measures are therefore recognised 'for life'.

NUMBER OF RECOGNITIONS PER YEAR (2005-2014)

TOTAL: **2,737**



Number of Official Projects of the UN Decade, which have been…

… recognized once:	**1,378**
… twice:	**362**
… thrice:	**125**
… four times:	**45**
… five times:	**16**

As best practice examples of the structural and systematic establishment of ESD, Official Measures are central to attainment of the four sub-goals of the National Plan of Action for Germany:

- Further develop and pool activities, and ensure the transfer of good practice to a broad base
- Create a network of ESD protagonists
- Improve public awareness of ESD
- Strengthen international cooperation

The list of all measures is an important part of the National Plan of Action and shows progress and outcomes in implementing the UN Decade in Germany. Examples of successful measures include integration of the sustainable development vision into the national vocational education and training system by the Federal Institute for Vocational Training (BIBB) and the 'Schools of the Future – Education for Sustainable Development' campaign by the Academy for the Protection of Nature and Environment, North Rhine-Westphalia. This latter measure raised awareness among stakeholders in school education with regard to ESD content and the concept of participatory skills, and brings them together with partners from the extracurricular education sector. VENRO, the umbrella organisation of development non-governmental organisations in Germany, gained recognition for disseminating teaching material and carrying out campaigns to embed the millennium development goals in political education.

In total, 49 measures had been awarded recognition by the end of the UN Decade.

Official Cities and Local Authorities of the UN Decade

Local authorities – commonly referred to in the German context as municipalities – are the smallest government division in Germany. Getting cities and local authorities on board unlocks huge potential for ESD as they can link together a range of education stakeholders and bring in people from different backgrounds and stages of life at local level. The ESD concept, in return, offers diverse opportunities for local development.

Cities and local authorities face the challenge of finding locally appropriate answers to wider societal trends. At a time of rising costs across the board, they have to find suitable ways of coping with demographic and social change, climate change and globalisation. They therefore need far-sighted development strategies that take future problems and opportunities into account while being based on the principle of sustainability. The local population must be involved in shaping such strategies. Their willingness and ability to help responsibly shape the future of society is indispensable to sustainable local development.

ESD aims at participation, engagement, integration and solidarity, imparts theoretical and practical knowledge, and nurtures innovativeness. As an education concept it can therefore lend useful angles for the solution of urgent urban and local problems and helps involve the local population in shaping viable development strategies. ESD also improves the attractiveness of a city or area as a place to live, work and go out, and demonstrably improves the quality of other, existing educational offerings and content.

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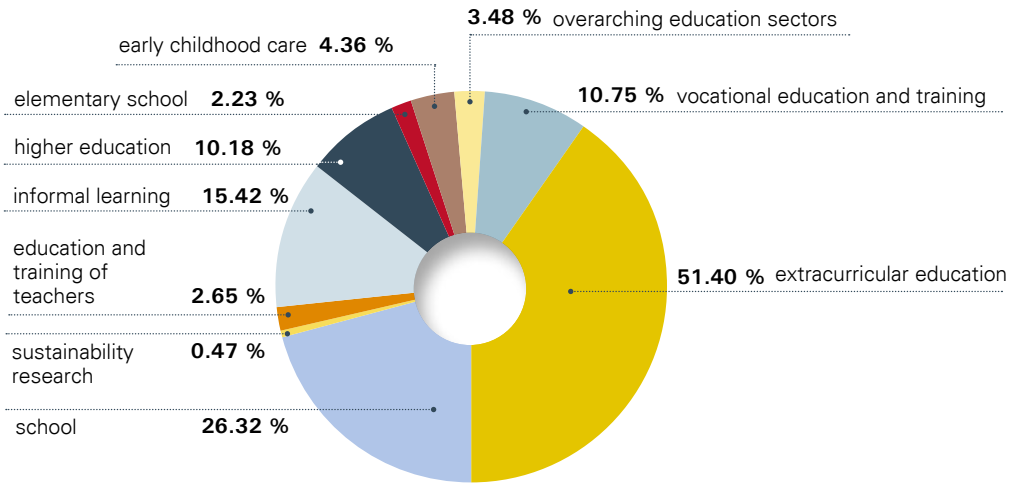
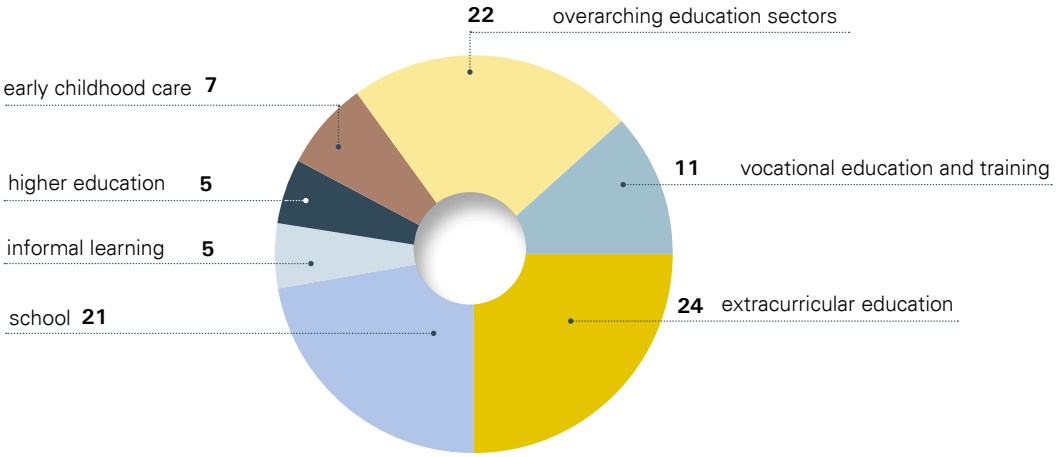
OFFICIAL PROJECTS OF THE UN DECADE SORTED BY EDUCATIONAL SECTORS CONCERNED

TOTAL: **1926**



OFFICIAL MEASURES OF THE UN DECADE SORTED BY EDUCATIONAL SECTORS CONCERNED

TOTAL: **49**



The 21 cities and local authorities awarded recognition have seen the potential in integrating ESD in local development strategies on a targeted basis across all education sectors. In gaining recognition, they have committed to ensuring that ESD:

- Is part of their vision at policy level and is laid down as a goal for the next two to five years.
- Is actively promoted under the framework of the four strategic goals of the National Plan of Action.
- Is a focus area within which the city or local authority aims to excel or to support pilot activities and projects.
- Has positive outcomes in urban education activities (such as changes in mobility choices, resource savings, or international cooperation).
- Has a prominent place on the local or city website, giving an insight into local activities.

The officially recognised projects, measures, cities and local authorities of the UN Decade are proof that ESD can be integrated into all parts of the education system, into policymaking processes and into everyday life. Recognition assured that ESD activities under the education initiatives received public attention, gave motivation to further extend them, and inspired other stakeholders to make their own contributions to the UN Decade.

OFFICIAL CITIES AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES OF THE UN DECADE

MAJOR CITIES
(UP TO 1.8M POPULATION)

Bonn
Alongside the United Nations, some 150 sustainability NGOs are based in Bonn. Involvement in international networks and projects is brought about through exchange and knowledge transfer in ESD.

Dresden
Dresden has the goal of permanently integrating sustainability within city planning and operational processes, notably through the implementation of local education management. Much impetus is provided by Lokale Agenda 21 für Dresden e. V., a not-for-profit association.

Frankfurt am Main
The centrepiece of the Frankfurt programme is the Learning Sustainability in Frankfurt network launched with a wide range of institutional, corporate and civil society stakeholders in 2008. ESD activities in the city are coordinated by Umweltlernen in Frankfurt am Main e.V.

Hamburg
The Free and Hanseatic City of Hamburg launched the Hamburg is Learning Sustainability initiative as far back as 2005 and has integrated the sustainable development vision in all sectors of education. The initiative involves authorities, federations, associations, companies and individuals.

Munich
Sustainable development is a cross-cutting issue in Munich, in policymaking, administration and civil society. Munich aims to create a 'sustainability culture' in order to permanently embed sustainability in city society. The Bavarian capital is supported in carrying out activities by BenE e.V, an association specially launched for the purpose.

MID-SIZED CITIES
(UP TO 250,000 POPULATION)

Erfurt
Erfurt has integrated ESD into numerous measures and structures though a large number of Agenda 21 projects. The administration, NGOs, stakeholders in school and extracurricular education and business work together to implement ESD.

Freiburg
Freiburg has long been committed to the sustainability principle. The city has appointed the Freiburg Sustainability Council, consisting of experts, the city council and administration, and civil representatives.

Gelsenkirchen
On the basis of Local Agenda 21, the sustainability process centres around participation by residents, a wide range of organisations and associations, churches and business.

Heidelberg
ESD is practiced across many areas of city life in Heidelberg. Thematically the concept takes in the entire breadth of ESD. Activities are coordinated by the agenda office in the city's environment department.

Osnabrück
Sustainability issues have a long tradition in Osnabrück. Local Agenda 21 has been an active process for 20 years in a well-linked education landscape and the city has developed a sustainability strategy.

Solingen
ESD plays an important part in Solingen, as shown by the many projects and campaigns in the Solingen Action Plan 2013 spanning areas such as environment, climate and resource protection and intercultural education.

SMALL CITIES
(UP TO 80,000 POPULATION)

Aalen
Implementation of ESD is addressed in Aalen by the Agenda Parliament, comprising administrative heads, councillors and residents. The focus is on Local Agenda 21, schools and trans-disciplinary projects, the latter in cooperation with Aalen University.

Bad Honnef
Bad Honnef brings together ESD activities under the banner of healthy living, conserving the environment and shaping the future, motivating residents to take an active part in ensuring healthy ways of living. A healthcare fair and a sustainability congress are held each year.

Dinslaken
The agenda office in Dinslaken promotes the establishment of networks and takes part in campaigns, including at international level. ESD is integrated in education and made accessible to the general public.

Minden
Implementation of ESD is coordinated by Aktionsgemeinschaft Friedenswoche Minden e. V. This is the nucleus of all activity, with a colourful mix of some 25 initiatives, churches, state institutions and parts of the private sector in a network focusing on the old town centre, Obere Altstadt Minden.

Neumarkt in der Oberpfalz
The focus of ESD activities is on climate change with extensive education and funding programmes and on the implementation of projects in the context of Global Development Education. A sustainability department has been set up to coordinate ESD activities.

LOCAL AUTHORITIES
(UP TO 9,000 POPULATION)

Alheim
Alheim's vision "Alheim – full of energy" takes in five major areas: The energy switch in society, strengthening the economy, sustainable education from young to old, creating an energy, healthcare and education region, and a generation network.

Dornstadt
A network dedicated to jointly shaping the future forms the core of activities in Dornstadt. Art and culture projects for young and old provide a wide variety of impetus for enhancing the quality of life in the area for the future.

Hellenthal
Hellenthal's mission consists of creating binding conditions for sustainable development of local residential, living, working and recreational quality. The local vision integrates ESD in a range of areas.

Hetlingen
The focus in Hetlingen is on elementary education. Education offerings are provided for children and adolescents in cooperation with local water utilities.

Markt Eggolsheim
Markt Eggolsheim aims to build public awareness of ESD. Based on a life-long and life-wide learning approach, every age group is individually addressed and taken seriously as an important facilitator.

Official Cities and Local Authorities of the UN Decade in Germany

GIVING VISIBILITY TO ESD IN GERMANY

Various measures were taken to bring as many people as possible into contact with ESD and to publicise the goals of the UN Decade in Germany. A few examples are described in the following.

ESD web portal and newsletter

ESD web portal (www.bne-portal.de) is the central instrument for presenting the ESD education model to the general public in Germany. It also provides German ESD stakeholders with a shared platform for networking. The website has been online since 2007, is operated by the German Commission for UNESCO and is managed

editorially by the Coordinating Office for the UN Decade. The ESD portal offers basic resources and background knowledge on the ESD education concept in general and on the UN Decade. It also provides interested members of the public and professionals with news and information on events, articles on the current annual theme and a large database of teaching and learning material. A second database contains information on all Official Projects, Measures, Cities and Local Authorities of the UN Decade. A regular newsletter informs over 4,000 subscribers about implementation of the UN Decade.

Nationwide ESD action days

The Action Days on Education for Sustainable Development were launched by the German National Committee for the UN Decade in 2008. ESD action days have since been held once a year. They give participants all over Germany an opportunity to present their own activities and innovative ideas for a sustainable future and also to gain new inspiration.

Events were mostly staged by Official Projects, Measures, Cities and Local Authorities of the UN Decade. But other organisations, associations, companies and individuals can register, too, and become part of the nationwide UN Decade network. Events take a huge variety of forms: From full-blown conferences to standalone presentations and workshops and from school and preschool project days to exhibitions and open days.

Prospective participants should aim to cover all three dimensions of sustainability – environmental, economic and social. Events should also have clear education relevance. All submissions are presented in a special events calendar on the ESD web portal. The Coordinating Office for the UN Decade provides support with public relations. Key materials in this regard comprise the official posters, postcards and leaflets made available with financial support from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research and other partners such as dm-drogerie markt, Stiftung Forum für Verantwortung and Deutsche Bundesstiftung Umwelt.

Over 2,000 events in six years have done much to increase awareness of ESD. The concentrated public relations work over the timeframe and the great variety of events meant that for many people

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Logo of the ESD action days

the action days were their first encounter with the concept of ESD and the UN Decade.

The UN Decade and the didacta education trade fair

Thanks to support from Didacta Association, the German Commission for UNESCO has presented the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development each year since 2005 at didacta, Europe's biggest education trade fair. A special show provides an opportunity to present Official Projects of the UN Decade and their innovative approaches to ESD. The Coordinating Office for the UN Decade also supplies suitable teaching and learning material. This allows teachers and other facilitators to acquaint themselves with ESD or to gain new inspiration supplementing their existing knowledge.

Each year's didacta fair also includes a one-day congress on ESD known as "UNESCO Day". This addresses the current year's annual theme in the UN Decade or topical issues relating to ESD and implementation of the Decade. The UNESCO Day thus contributes to the substantive development of ESD and attracts media attention by featuring prominent guest speakers.

The "Sei ein Futurist!" and "Ideen Initiative Zukunft" competitions

The "Sei ein Futurist!" ("Be a Futurist!") youth competition was a joint initiative of the German Commission for UNESCO and the dm-drogerie markt retail company in 2008. The objective of the competition was to encourage young people to get involved in working for a future worth living. The competition primarily aimed to attract project ideas from school students. More than 50,000 participants from all over Germany submitted some 2,500 projects. As there were so many good entries and at that time there were exactly 1,082 dm stores in Germany, that many projects were each awarded €1,000.

Another competition that met with a strong response was "Ideen Initiative Zukunft" ("Future Ideas Initiative"), which was staged in two rounds between 2010 and 2013. In the first phase, a competition was announced targeting all age groups. A great variety of ideas were submitted, from creative ways of saving electricity to intercultural integration and sustainable consumption. There were 4,500 project entries in total. To turn as many

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Discussion during UNESCO Day at didacta 2010.

ideas for a sustainable future as possible into reality, dm-drogerie markt put up a total of €1.5 million in funding and awarded up to €1,000 for the best ideas. In the second round, entrants were allowed to occupy the till of a dm store for half an hour and put the proceeds towards their project. Before that, they were given the opportunity to present their project in the store, enabling them to reach a broad public with information on their activities and ESD and to attract additional helpers.

dm and the German Commission for UNESCO were recognised for their commitment in November 2011 with the German Sustainability Award in the Initiatives category.

Annual themes of the UN Decade

Beginning in 2007, each year of the UN Decade in Germany had an annual theme. The annual themes were selected by the National Committee for the UN Decade. The aim was to focus the work of ESD stakeholders, reach out to new partners and to publicise important issues relating to ESD. The annual themes were not meant as the exclusive focus of activities for each year, however. Activities with a different focus than the current annual theme have always been accepted and welcomed. The annual themes of the UN Decade in Germany:

2007: Cultural diversity
2008: Water
2009: Energy
2010: Money
2011: City
2012: Food
2013: Mobility
2014: Bridges to the future

© Universität Rostock

Official Project of the UN Decade: Degree program „ecology and education“ at Rostock University

IMPACT OF THE UN DECADE

ESD is a cross-cutting responsibility. The concept must be embedded in all sectors of education to take full effect – from preschool to university, in formal education just as much as in informal, everyday learning. The following is a assessment of activities in Germany during the UN Decade from the point of view of education sectors and progress made.

The federal character of the German education system makes it difficult to draw general conclusions. The responsible ministries in the 16 Federal Länder set different priorities and launched different activities to establish ESD. In a survey by the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (KMK), the Länder were content with the outcomes of the UN Decade and made clear that they wanted to continue their ESD activities.

The same applies for the working groups of the UN Decade Round Table. These gave key impetus – and not just through the recommendations they produced for federal policymaking and administration. They also contributed materially to the onward development of the ESD concept, with expert analysis, events and numerous publications for education practitioners. The working groups also played an important role as forums in which institutions and individuals could deepen their working relationships by professional cooperation.

EDUCATIONAL SECTORS

Early-Childhood Education

Early childhood education lays down the foundations for later life. Some ten percent of preschools in Germany (about 4,000) have now incorporated ESD in their mission statements. This is partly due to the work of the Round Table Working Group on Early-Childhood Education. Several of the Federal Länder also integrated ESD in their education and orientation plans for the preschool sector. Numerous local initiatives offer ESD in early

childhood education. Significant progress has also been made in further training for staff. Between 2009 and 2012, some 4,000 nursery staff took ESD training in the national 'Leuchtpol' training programme – a cooperation project between Arbeitsgemeinschaft Natur- und Umweltbildung and E.ON, the energy group. More systematic integration of ESD into early childhood education is yet to come, however.

School Education

One of the main goals of the UN Decade was to bring ESD to schools. The UN Decade Round Table Working Group on School Education gave ministry specialists, teachers, academics and NGO representatives a forum in which to draft the recommendation on Education for Sustainable Development in Schools. The recommendation gives specific guidance on the implementation of ESD in schools and addresses enabling conditions. It was jointly adopted in 2007 by the KMK and the German Commission for UNESCO, making it a key element of the schools agenda. The orientation framework for global development education likewise recommended by the KMK provides a further planning aid for the implementation of sustainability issues in school education.

A number of very positive changes have occurred in schools: In many of the Federal Länder, ESD is now a standard feature of the general objectives of education plans, curricula and frameworks. Most schools at least have individual ESD projects and modules. This new focus ought also to be reflected in subject-specific curriculum implementation, however. Significant deficits remain here.

Extracurricular Learning

Extracurricular ESD is an important education segment that is gaining in importance in Germany. It is mainly offered through adult education colleges, environment centres, local Agenda 21 initiatives, museums, associations, foundations, churches, trade unions, companies and federations. The initiatives are remarkable in terms of diversity, originality of approach, civil engagement, quality and also quantity. By far the majority of recognised Decade projects relate to the extracurricular and informal education sector. The greatest range is in the thematic areas of nature and technology with stakeholders such as Arbeitsgemeinschaft Natur- und Umweltbildung and nature conservation organisations. This work primarily targets children and adolescents – proof positive that extracurricular education can complement formal education and be a meaningful part of the education landscape. Lively exchange between the numerous stakeholders on the various UN Decade bodies resulted in a lasting network in Germany. The ongoing exchange between stakeholders ensures that ESD is soundly established in extracurricular education.

Vocational Education and Training

Numerous sustainable development projects were launched in vocational education and training over the last few years. The projects aimed to pilot education content along with teaching and learning methods. Programmes of action and trial models targeted the better integration of ESD in initial and continuing vocational education and training. These go back to recommendations of the Steering Committee of the Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training (BIBB) in 1988 and 1991, well before the UN Decade started. The UN Decade has seen the emergence of completely new occupations with a sustainability focus. ESD

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Official Project of the UN Decade: „Bildungsraum Grüngürtel" (the green belt - space of education) in Frankfurt/Main.

© Naturschutzgesellschaft Schutzstation Wattenmeer e.V.

Official Project of the UN Decade: „Pracitical ESD“ by the nature protection association Wattenmeer

has also made its way into framework curricula and vocational training plans. This is especially the case in industrial electrical and metals-related training occupations, for example, and in heating, ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) occupations. In other occupational groups, ESD is at least present in the form of stipulations in vocational training plans on environmental protection or occupational health and safety. The UN Decade Round Table Working Group on Initial and Continuing Vocational Education and Training pooled experience from theory and practice, developed basic strategies to promote ESD in vocational education and training, and helped begin the process of establishing ESD in this part of the education system.

Higher Education

The activities of the UN Decade Round Table Working Group on Higher Education led in the course of the Decade to a network of over 130 dedicated stakeholders at universities and other institutions of higher education. This network, and a series of national congresses, played a major part in putting sustainability on the agenda in research, teaching and university life at a large number of German universities. The integration of ESD was helped along by the Declaration on Universities for Sustainable Development which was prepared by the Working Group on Higher Education and jointly adopted in early 2010 by the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German Commission for UNESCO (DUK). The Declaration gives recommendations for aligning university core competencies such as research and knowledge transfer, teaching and study to sustainable development. Various universities now publish sustainability reports or have set up sustainable development functions. Special mention should be made of university networks, such as the Education for Sustainable Development network of universities of applied sciences in Baden-Württemberg, and of initiatives such as "Hochschultage Ökosoziale Marktwirtschaft und Nachhaltigkeit", a series of university congresses on the eco-social market economy and sustainability. Despite the wide range of relevant courses, it should not be forgotten that the total number of offerings is still too small compared with the number of degree programmes.

BEYOND EDUCATIONAL SECTORS

ESD means acquiring integrative practical knowledge. At the same time it also involves new forms of teaching and learning and new awareness building processes that can only take effect if ESD is made a guiding principle in all areas of learning. The wish to see ESD reach this breadth and depth of penetration has prompted UN Decade stakeholders to think out of the box defined by conventional education sectors. Focal issues in Germany included informal learning, biological diversity, cultural education, and economics. The formation of Round Table working groups on these issues was a necessary and logical consequence.

Media
Looking at ESD in the mass media, the Decade has not attained its informal education goals to the extent wanted. Topical programming still attracts relatively small audiences and has a hard time holding a slot in programme schedules, especially in the commercial broadcasting sector. Considering its importance for the future of society, ESD is underrepresented in the media. Regional daily newspapers, on the other hand, more frequently give space to sustainable development stories. While sustainable development itself seems fairly easy to put across, the related education concepts present a greater challenge. The UN Decade Round Table Working Group on New Media primarily focused on digital media and communication forms. It studied these with regard to sustainable development, brought together relevant stakeholders and developed an agenda for future ESD media work.

Informal Learning
People learn not just in school, but at play, in leisure activities and in work time. The Working Group on Informal Learning looked into what for ESD was a previously untapped field and carried out activities with the primary aim of awareness building. The main outcome is a compendium that brings together the various facets of informal learning and links them with sustainable development issues.

Biological Diversity
The protection, conservation and sustainable use of animal and plant species, their habitats, genetic diversity and equitable benefit sharing are focal issues of Education for Sustainable Development. The Working Group on Biological Diversity aims to highlight the connections between the environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects of sustainable development and give guidance when it comes to linking biodiversity with other issues.

Cultural Education and Cultural Policy
Sustainability, the arts and culture are mutually dependent. Cultural change always goes hand in hand with specific forms of cultural and aesthetic expression, communication and reflection. The Working Group on Cultural Education and Cultural Policy aims to help link up stakeholders and contribute to a discourse on the role of cultural education in relation to sustainable development.

Economics and Consumption
The UN Decade Working Group on Economics and Consumption primarily addresses the question of how to incorporate ESD in consumer education in order to nudge economic processes in the direction of sustainability. It follows a regional approach, looking at the contribution that ESD can make to local prosperity. In this the Working Group employs a definition of prosperity that is largely based on ascribing value (in all senses) to personal wellbeing and the concept of societal or community welfare.

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Official Project of the UN Decade: Workshop „digital storytelling“ for ESD-stakeholders

UNESCO WORLD CONFERENCE ON ESD 2009

The first UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development was an international milestone in the UN Decade. The conference took place in Bonn from 31 March to 2 April 2009, just short of halfway through the UN Decade. It was organised by UNESCO and the Federal Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO.

About 900 participants from 147 countries gathered for the Conference, including 49 ministers and deputy ministers, representatives of UNESCO Member States, UN and civil society organisations and educational institutions, as well as representatives of youth, the private sector and individual experts. They discussed the various facets of ESD, exchanged ideas and launched joint activities to make the second half of the Decade a success.

Opening the UNESCO World Conference in the former plenary hall of the Bundestag in Bonn on March 31, 2009, the then Federal Minister of Education and Research, Annette Schavan, advocated an enhanced role for ESD. "Sustainable development can only succeed if civil society is involved. Local actions have global consequences," Minister Schavan said. "Education is very much key to sustainable prosperity." The Millennium Development Goal 'Education for All' should therefore have top priority, Schavan added. The then UNESCO Assistant Director-General for Education, Nicholas Burnett, placed the emphasis in his address on international cooperation. Burnett noted that the success of sustainable development depends on better cooperation between all countries, and that everybody is part of the transformation process.

The former Minister of Education and Culture in Mozambique, Graça Machel, in an inspiring speech as part of the opening plenary, called to mind the pledges on 'education for all' and sustainable human development made in the Jomtien Declaration (1990) and at the World Education Forum in Dakar (2000). She also called for an "education that empowers young people to question, to develop their minds and skill sets, to make choices, to find meaningful employment and to take constructive roles in their families, their communities and their nations." Education, she said, must enable young people to value other human beings, encourage them to understand the importance of equality and equity and help them recognise the importance of collective responsibility and action. "I want to see education that produces young people who will not tolerate their peers living in abject poverty in the midst of plenty; young people who will be outraged by inequality and impatient to bring about change."

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Machel's address set the stage for the conference to follow, in which participants looked at what Decade objectives had been attained by 2009 and developed strategies for activities that lay ahead. The conference featured various plenary sessions and 22 thematic workshops. Outside of the meeting rooms, there was an opportunity to experience ESD 'in action' with presentations on numerous Official Projects of the UN Decade and their education offerings.

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In the high-level segment of the conference, education ministers from all over the world discussed the status and future of ESD. They stressed afterwards that for the shift in education policy towards more sustainability, dialogue was of paramount importance – most of all between countries of the North and the South. They noted that education systems in poorer countries were particularly vulnerable in times of crisis.

The Bonn Declaration

The final document of the UNESCO World Conference, the Bonn Declaration, was drafted in a transparent, inclusive and participatory process and adopted by consensus in the closing plenary session. The Declaration reflected the discussions held during the conference and provided strategic orientation for the second half of the Decade. It highlighted the importance of ESD in the global situation prevailing in 2009. The conference participants called for a pact to be made with the global ESD movement aimed at improving knowledge, skills and competencies and strengthening values and attitudes oriented towards a transition to a more just, fair and viable world.

In light of the financial and economic crises and global challenges like climate change, they called upon Member States and UNESCO to expand their activities in ESD and placed emphasis on several key areas:

- Reinforcing the educational response to sustainable development challenges
- Developing and building capacity for adapting to change; sharing knowledge and experience
- Reinforcing synergies between different education and development initiatives

“Investment in Education for Sustainable Development is an investment in the future,” the Declaration reads. It emphasises that education must furnish all-embracing responsibility, from earliest childhood through to adulthood, this being the only way for everyone to learn that their individual actions have global consequences. The Declaration also accentuates that Education for Sustainable Development is equally relevant in all regions of the world, access to education not being enough on its own to make society sustainable. The Declaration identifies the need for sustainability-oriented educational content and methods to attain high-quality education.

The impetus emanating from the World Conference in Bonn and its final declaration had a decisive part in shaping the second half of the Decade. They heralded a major step forward in promoting high-quality education to make sustainability a reality.

THE UN DECADE OF ESD IN GERMANY: **A REVIEW**

© Institut Futur

Prof. Dr. Gerhard de Haan

With the resolution adopting the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development shortly after the turn of the millennium, the United Nations made clear that sustainable development is a shared responsibility. We can only deliver on this responsibility together, through structural changes in education systems. The goal of the UN Decade was to enable all people to acquire the values, knowledge and skills to live more sustainably and help build a positive future for society.

The urgent need for a sustainability-based transformation was recorded as far back as 1992 in Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, adopted by the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development in Rio de Janeiro. It was underscored once again at the Johannesburg Conference 10 years later. A key outcome was the recognition accorded to the importance of education, and at the recommendation of the Johannesburg Conference, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).

The overarching objective of the UN Decade as set down in the National Plan of Action for Germany was to establish the concept of sustainable development permanently in all areas of education in Germany. The response to the Decade was substantial from the outset. Most of the Federal Länder developed Plans of Action of their own – mostly based on the National Plan of Action – and revise them on an ongoing basis. Some have established their own Round Tables or set up facilities for ESD. This development is particularly significant because the Federal Länder are responsible for the formal education sector.

Practical commitment to change

That sustainable development is substantively dependent on education and research is something that is now also highlighted by stakeholders that have not always been close to the education sector. As the German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) concluded in its 2011 flagship report, "World in Transition: A Social Contract for Sustainability," the knowledge and resources to meet one of the greatest challenges – climate change – are available in sufficient quantity. What is lacking according to the WBGU is a general shift towards a culture of sustainability. This critically depends on people and organisations setting an example by putting sustainability into practice, the WBGU said.

Many such 'pioneers of change' (WBGU) from all parts of the education system have championed ESD in Germany in the course of the Decade in order to bring about this fundamental societal transformation. Since the start of the UN Decade, the German Commission for UNESCO has recognised nearly 2,000 projects, 49 measures and 21 cities and local authorities that have implemented the idea of Education for Sustainable Development in an exemplary manner. Recognition of projects was a key element in implementation of the Decade in Germany. This gave broad public visibility to the wide variety of stakeholder commitment. By highlighting specific, exemplary activities, it also helped move ESD beyond the realm of theory and make it easier to understand. The purpose of recognition was not only to motivate those concerned to keep up the good work, but to encourage others to follow their example. In addition, recognised projects were able to use a special logo that served as an aid in canvassing for sponsors and funding.

A huge variety of institutions and companies applied for recognition as Official Projects of the UN Decade. They spanned the entire range from mainstream education establishments such as nurseries, schools and universities to service and other companies, public agencies, non-governmental organisations and local projects. Elementary school pupils learned how to be energy detectives and save energy at school and at home. In student companies, children saw how commercial objectives can be made compatible with sustainability and social responsibility. Facilitators ensured that their target publics were better informed about sustainable consumption, fair trade and sustainable investment.

Public attention, public pressure and political legitimation

ESD has developed in Germany since 2005. It is not possible to say exactly what share the UN Decade and its implementation in Germany had in this. Then again we have no control group, no experimental design and no second Germany to promote ESD – or fail to promote it, as the case may be – in the absence of a UN Decade or even awareness of a UN Decade.

What can be said in general terms is that the Decade reinforced three key conditions for promoting ESD. Firstly, it directed greater attention to ESD as a focus and action area for an extended period. Secondly, on the basis of ESD activities already in place, it increased the pressure on policymakers to commit. And thirdly, a crucial factor for the work of the German Commission for UNESCO, the National Committee, the Round Table and the numerous Working Groups was the political legitimation they gained through the UN Decade not only to articulate their agendas and to develop activities in the civil society arena, but to call for innovation – including in the very structure of the education system.

It is quite plain to see that the UN Decade had a supporting and in many cases impetus-giving effect – even if the degree of success varied from sector to sector within the education system. The policy and administrative recommendations developed by Working Groups in the UN Decade Round Table were not the sole source of major impetus. The many publications for practitioners and the focus on quality issues and skill-related concepts likewise delivered important, innovative contributions for the practice of ESD and its analysis, and set communication processes in motion.
The UN Decade as basis for future ESD activities
One general strength of the Decade that should not be underrated has been its ability to show how ESD can be integrated into all areas of the education system. The clear coordination structure of the UN Decade in Germany provided the organisational framework needed for this purpose.

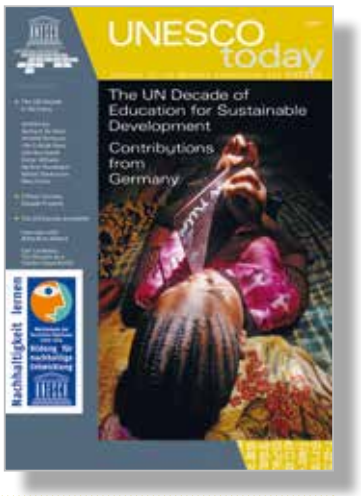
Once a year, sustainability stakeholders from all over Germany – representing the Federal Länder, cities and local authorities, and non-governmental organisations – convened for the Round Table to work together on the onward implementation of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Federal and Länder-level policymakers repeatedly called for a transformation in the education system towards more ESD and gave backing to the transformation process. Internationally, too, the UN Decade allowed Germany to enhance its profile as a key partner in the policy area of sustainable development. That the necessary financial resources were available is largely thanks to the support of the Federal Ministry of Education and Research, the various Federal Länder, foundations and companies. Most of all, however, all that was accomplished in the course of the UN Decade would not have been possible without the unpaid work of volunteers in countless projects and campaigns and the activities of non-governmental organisations.

The end of 2014 marks the close of the UN Decade, but it does not put an end to the process of implementing ESD in the education system. However, any education reform of the kind that offers students a new way of looking at the contemporary situation, new perspectives, norms and choices will always be a long, drawn-out process. It is not enough to propagate new features in recommendations and resolutions, and to postulate a commitment to sustainable development goals in preambles to master plans and in school or corporate vision statements. ESD must not only be given a fixed place in school syllabuses and nursery programmes, university curricula, vocational training plans and the event calendars of other education providers. For the goals formulated by the UNESCO in 2005 to become at least potentially attainable, it must be made a permanent and natural part of everyday academic life. And this not only means tweaking syllabuses, it requires new methods of teaching and learning. Participatory learning methods, systematic instruction with close, individual support of learning progress, hands-on initiative, experimentation, self-regulated learning and project-based learning are just a few examples of learning approaches that motivate.

In all sectors of education, we have laid foundations that can now be built upon to make sustainable development a natural, integral part of education for a viable future. The crucial work of implementing ESD across the structures and everyday practice of the education system is nonetheless still ahead of us.

Prof. Dr. Gerhard de Haan
Chairman of the National Committee for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

English language publications UN Decade Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014 published by the German Commission to UNESCO



UNESCO Today (Journal of the German Commission for UNESCO)

The UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. Contributions from Germany. (2007)

The magazine „UNESCO Today" is published by the German Commission for UNESCO. This issue gives an introduction to the activities for the UN Decade and its political and structural implementation in Germany. Important German stakeholders give some insights in their own words.

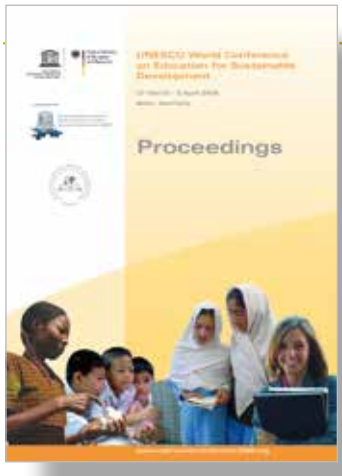
http://bit.ly/11iL0SO

Learning Sustainability

Stakeholders and Projects in Germany. (2009)

The publication gives an overview of the implementation of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in Germany. It intends to familiarize the reader with the stakeholders and projects active in the UN Decade as well as with the overarching structures put in place to implement the Decade. Another aim is to foster new international partnerships within ESD.

http://bit.ly/1CgUeub



UNESCO-World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development (31 March – 2 April 2009, Bonn)

Proceedings (2009)

In 2009, the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development took place in Bonn. The proceedings of the World Conference contain the outcomes of the Bonn Conference and provide the reader with reports on plenary sessions, the high-level segment with almost 50 Ministers and Deputy-ministers, twenty-two workshops on a variety of ESD topics, project-based workshops in and around Bonn, a workshop for young people engaged in ESD, and the Bonn Declaration which was adopted by the participants in the closing plenary.

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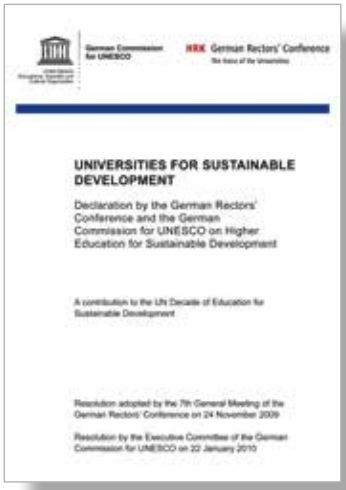


Universities for Sustainable Development – Declaration by the German Rectors' Conference and the German Commission for UNESCO on Higher Education for Sustainable Development

(2009)

Joint declaration by the members of the German Rectors' Conference (HRK) and the German Commission for UNESCO. The HRK admits to the responsibility of the universities to make a contribution to sustainable development.

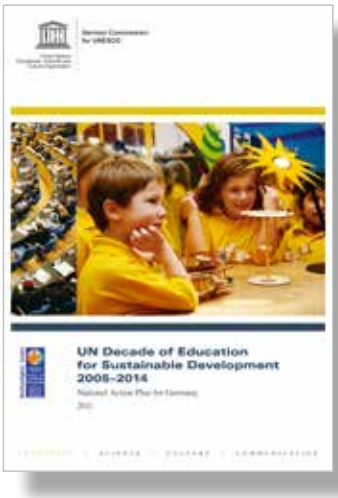
http://bit.ly/1vbHkh2

Delivering Future Capacity in the Kindergarten

Giving Children a Stronger Role, Advancing Sustainable Development.
A Contribution to the Discussion by the German Commission for UNESCO. (2010)

A contribution by the German Commission for UNESCO. Addressed at those responsible for early childhood education in the federal and state governments, in local communities, non-governmental organisations and churches, as well as child carers.

http://bit.ly/1vZW41l

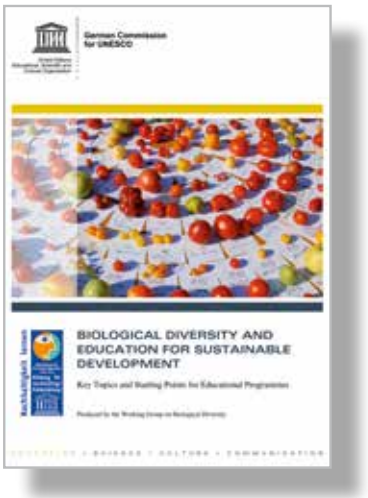


UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014

National Action Plan for Germany 2011. (2011)

A revised and updated version of the National Action Plan for the UN Decade „Education for Sustainable Development". It is the main document of reference for the implementation of the UN Decade's goals in Germany. This publication informs which goals Germany has set for itself until 2014.

http://bit.ly/1yyFZDs



Biological Diversity and Education for Sustainable Development

Key topics and Starting Points for Educational Programmes. (2011)

This brochure aims at practitioners in schools and non-formal education. It shows how educators can link the issue of biological diversity with other problems of a non-sustainable development. The guidelines have been developed by the Working Group „Biological Diversity" which is part of the UN Decade's Round Table in Germany.

http://bit.ly/1tqMmaM

Education for Sustainable Development – International Workshop „Horizon 2015“

Report and Recommendations 27.- 28. February 2012, Bonn, Germany. (2012)

This document records the dialogues and reports on recommendations arising from the International Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Workshop „Horizon 2015“ (Bonn, Germany 27-28 February 2012) organized by the German Commission for UNESCO, in cooperation with the federal state of North Rhine-Westphalia, the City of Bonn and the German Savings Bank Association.

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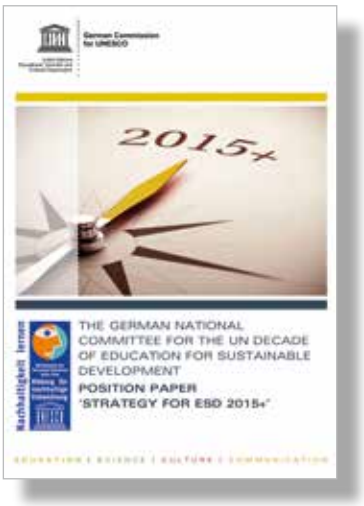

Position paper ‚strategy for ESD 2015+‘

The German National Committee for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. (2013)

The German National Committee for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development takes a look at possible follow-up activities to the UN Decade. The Position Paper „Strategy for ESD 2015+“ lists the challenges in various areas of education and is supposed to be used as a basis from which to approach these challenges. The main focus lies upon making the step „from project to structure“.

http://bit.ly/1vZWqp0

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Imprint

Publisher:
German Commission for UNESCO (DUK)
Langwartweg 72
53129 Bonn, Germany
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Editorial board:
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Translation: Robins Stocks (words-worth.de)

Layout: MediaCompany GmbH

Printing: Hachenburg GmbH

Photos front cover from left to right:
Gajada_Fotolia; DUK/Danetzki; DUK/Studnar; Markt Eggolsheim;
DUK/Danetzki; DUK/Mike Krueger; Maximilian Schmid; DUK Danetzki
Photo back cover: Stadt Solingen

Bonn, October 2014

Printed on chlorine-free bleached and recycled paper.

ISBN 978-3-940785-62-6

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

German Commission for UNESCO

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ISBN 978-3-940785-62-6