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THE GERMAN NATIONAL
COMMITTEE FOR THE UN DECADE
OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT
POSITION PAPER
'STRATEGY FOR ESD 2015+'

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SUMMARY

One year before the end of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) it has become clear that there has been a series of national and international successes, but that the necessary implementation of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in all areas of education still faces significant challenges. Together with the German Bundestag, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs (KMK) and also the ESD stakeholders in Germany, the German National Committee is therefore pleading for follow-up activities to the current Decade under the aegis of the United Nations. The National Committee is entirely in agreement with its international partners in this respect, as demonstrated by the UNESCO's General Conference in November 2011 and the Rio+20 Conference in June 2012.

In this position paper the National Committee presents concrete proposals for the time after 2014. This paper was drawn up in 2012/13 and thrown open for public discussion. The relevant suggestions from ESD stakeholders from the fields of politics, education, science, the media, the private sector and non-governmental organisations have been included in this version.

The essential items of this paper include:

- The strategic relevance of ESD for sustainable development needs to be emphasized more clearly.
- With the increasing diversity of projects and initiatives the main thrust of all activities in all areas of education must be focused on accomplishing the transition from project to structure.
- It is particularly necessary to pay attention to local educational processes. Sustainable regional 'educational landscapes' (educational networks, a national policy to improve cooperation between formal and non-formal educational institutions on a local/regional level) and social networks therefore need to be supported. More attention should be paid to the special role of municipalities in grouping together and further developing educational activities.

- The National Committee advocates an optimised update of the existing organisational structure of the Decade in Germany taking into account effective changes to these structures.
- With a view to the follow-up activities for the Decade in an international context, the German National Committee is in favour of developing the urgent activities needed to expand and implement ESD worldwide, which will continue also after 2014, in such a way that the positive features of the Decade are retained.

The position paper has two objectives:

1. It is intended to serve as a common self-awareness and reference framework for ESD stakeholders in Germany.
2. It is supposed to serve as a basis for taking up positions in the following years.

For a general overview on the implementation of the UN-Decade ESD in Germany please go to www.bne-portal.de/un-decade.

1. BACKGROUND TO FOLLOW-UP ACTIVITIES

Twenty years after the 1992 Rio conference, it remains a crucial challenge to shape sustainable development in the areas of production, consumerism and lifestyles. The German Advisory Council on Global Change (WBGU) talks about an urgent need for a 'fundamental **transformation of global society**' in this context. The necessary innovations in the areas of technology and economy, participatory policies, cross-financing processes between developed and developing countries as well as changing consumption patterns and lifestyles neither develop by themselves nor do they arise from merely gradual cultural evolutions. What is needed is a large-scale **mental and cultural change** which requires the systematic development of alternatives and the setting of agendas. This is not only a matter of stimulating general consciousness-raising. In fact, everybody must be offered concrete opportunities to adopt the particular values and knowledge, and acquire the skills and abilities which he or she needs to create a future worth living in. It is possible to learn sustainability - in institutions of formal learning, at places of non-formal education and also in informal everyday situations. ESD is a necessary and fundamental contribution to designing sustainable developments in a careful and appropriate manner, given that it is not possible to implement and consolidate innovative sustainable structures and processes – for example in the area of transition towards renewable energy ('die Energiewende') – without ESD.

The necessity of such '**transformative education**' was already established in Chapter 36 of Agenda 21, which was adopted in 1992 in Rio and was confirmed as such at the Johannesburg conference ten years later when the initiative for the UN Decade of 'Education for Sustainable Development' (2005-2014) was proposed. According to the OECD, the ability to act in accordance with sustainable development forms part of the overarching international education goals that are closely linked to the orientation towards human rights and the ability to act in a democratic way. It is not only professional and methodological skills that need to be placed centre stage in this regard, but this ability also reinforces those key skills that make it possible to act autonomously in the sense of sustainable development and to act in heterogeneous groups.

This is why, still today - at the end of the current Decade, the WBGU continues to demand that **science and education 'should be given greater significance in the German sustainability strategy'**. According to the WBGU, all the activities that were achieved nationally in the area of education and not least during and with the UN Decade demonstrate that this transformation 'needs to be rapidly scaled up', if the nec-

essary sense of responsibility and the ‘participatory skills in ESD (Gestaltungskompetenz; de Haan/Harenberg, 1999) to design strategies to overcome the global issues of unsustainable development are to stand any chance of succeeding. For this it is necessary to reinforce, expand and scale up the successful contribution which the Decade activities have already made in Germany in this regard in the coming years. The decision of the German Bundestag passed on 26 April 2012 ‘Permanently secure ESD – Enable **follow-up activities for the UN Decade** of Education for Sustainable Development’ also emphasises this.

Strengths and weaknesses of the Decade

Where are we now in Germany? The **strength of the Decade** is that it has clearly contributed to promoting insight into the necessity of ESD, to further refining the concept, and to reinforcing a sense of responsibility for sustainable developments. The key strategic choices made by the German Commission for UNESCO (DUK) and the National Committee for ESD (NK), the results of the activities of the Round Table (RT) working groups, conferences, campaigns and other communication strategies show how ESD can establish meaningful connections in all areas of the education system and can energise these. Creating a clear coordination structure, the involvement of cities and local authorities, the Federal States/Länder and the federal government, but also of NGOs, companies and scientists, and last but not least 1,800 projects which have been recognized by the NK as Official Project of the Decade have created a broad foundation for ESD. The overall structure of the Decade, consisting of the National Committee, Round Table, working groups and award scheme, is so sound that other countries have taken it up as an example. Internationally speaking, the DUK has moreover contributed significantly towards creating global networks by organising the UNESCO World Conference on ESD (2009) and several international workshops. Germany is an important partner in the further development of ESD. This positive outcome in Germany can be attributed to the numerous voluntary stakeholders, the commitment of non-governmental organisations, foundations and businesses, and the commitment of the Berlin office of the chairman of the National Committee and the secretariat of the German Commission for UNESCO in Bonn, the motivation thanks to the policies of the Federal Government and the Federal States/Länder and also the financial support from the Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBF), individual Federal States/Länder, foundations and businesses.

There are nonetheless also **weaknesses**, as evidenced by internal analyses and a range of studies, recommendations and decisions. Thus it has not yet been possible to clarify the relevance of ESD to a broader public audience, many central decision-makers and important stakeholder groups in the context of the Decade. This also concerns the rele-

vant actors in the area of sustainable development itself. The fact that sustainability cannot be achieved without ESD has not come across with the necessary clarity, which has been demonstrated not least by the results of the Rio+20 Conference. What is more, this topic is hardly visible in the media. This may be attributable among other things to the lack of simple language or clear messages. Many people find the expression 'Education for Sustainable Development' too awkward, abstract and 'difficult to sell' and the supposed complexity of this concept sometimes scares people off as it sounds too academic. Also the lack of links to current debates and social development or really new ideas and recommendations for action, such as regarding global cross-financing transfer requirements, prevents greater visibility in the public domain. Last but not least, as before, the strong compartmentalisation of administrations does not foster lateral thinking and inter-disciplinary action.

Teachers and trainers in vocational and general education and also institutions of higher education are not being reached in the way we wish they would be. The vast majority of them still have an entirely inadequate knowledge of ESD. But the factor that is standing in the way of actual social transformation is that the step towards structurally implementing ESD in the German education system – which is the ultimate goal of the Decade promulgated by the United Nations – has only been achieved in a piecemeal and rather exemplary manner. To move on from project based activities, the commitment of individual educational institutions and 'ESD as add-on' to a structural implementation and 'ESD as a self-evident orientation' in every institution of education, all stakeholders will have to make significant efforts. Depending on the individual circumstances this will require the involvement of both the Federal Government and the States/Länder as well as the particularly important municipal level. Education after all always takes place locally, but also specifically for that location, just as the 'big transformation' starts with many concrete small local transformations.

2. FROM PROJECT TO STRUCTURE: STRATEGIC FOCUSES AND GENERAL CHALLENGES

Firstly it must be emphasised that a ‘big transformation’ cannot only be based on pioneers and the example they set – and also not only on civic commitment and voluntary activities. Permanent structures and measures are required, which offer stakeholders planning certainty and make it easier to implement ESD into all areas of education. This also concerns **time and financial resources**. In an age when time and money are scarce goods it is therefore also necessary to state which trade-offs need to be identified if ESD is to be reinforced at the expense of other fields of action.

Against this background the following **general objectives** can be identified for activities after 2014:

- The **strategic relevance** of ESD for initiating and achieving sustainable development. needs to be made clear to political decision-makers and the general public.
- The National Committee considers the **structural implementation** of ESD in all areas of formal and non-formal education to be a central task for all stakeholders. This concerns political support, implementation in all areas of education and gaining competences for sustainable action. This step from project to structure needs to be taken forward in all areas of education while taking into account their respective specific distinctiveness (see chapter 3).
- In practice, the development and strengthening of regional ‘**educational landscapes**’ which integrate ESD must be central: Learning by individuals and groups can be optimised in multiple ways by means of a close network of educational institutions, learning facilities outside formal education and local support systems; simultaneously ESD can make an essential contribution to the general economic, social and political development of municipalities (see chapter 4).

It is also necessary to make use of the **further advantages** offered by ESD. These are not only to be found in the fact that sustainability is an essential area of learning and activity in the interests of a future worth living in and is therefore necessarily a general educational objective. ESD fulfils a range of further functions over and above this: it increases the ability to solve problems. ESD is characterised by problem-solving, mul-

ti- or cross-disciplinary and real life-oriented learning. In addition, ESD offers innovative methods, such as learning in projects and other activating and participatory forms of learning that promote future-oriented thinking (scenario technique, planning for real, future workshops, etc.). Moreover, ESD facilitates participation in social debate and consensus-finding processes, which also includes north-south themes and global justice issues. ESD encourages participation and imparts the necessary basic understanding and also values of our democratically organised communities. In this way ESD also contributes to overall innovation in the field of education.

Over and above this, it is possible to identify certain **general challenges** in all educational areas, themes and institutions:

- a. The ESD 2015+ strategy needs to be viewed **in the context of international activities**. On this basis it is possible to reinforce international relations (cooperation, exchanges, and joint international activities) in all areas of education and to link these to concrete objectives and measures. Joint international annual themes and days of action would be a good starting point for collaboration.
- b. On a national level it is necessary to reinforce exchanges with committees and institutions which work for **sustainable development in the political arena** (e.g. the Rat für nachhaltige Entwicklung (Council on Sustainable Development), the Federal Government, the Bundestag, State Parliaments, the KMK, UMK, WBGU, etc.). Only if it is possible to emphasize the relevance of ESD, to integrate ESD in existing structures, and to closely tie ESD activities with sustainable development activities, will the two areas of action be successful in the long term, as the WBGU emphasised in its report on the 'big transformation'. For this reason it is therefore, firstly, only consequent to formally appoint persons responsible for ESD at all political levels and in educational institutions. Secondly, it is necessary to develop and regularly check ESD indicators when documenting the status of sustainable development in Germany. Beyond this it is necessary to document the state of progress of ESD in both the international and domestic educational areas.
- c. Given that sustainable development – as was already emphasised in Agenda 21 – cannot be achieved without **participation**, it has to be promoted in educational processes. In particular, we can see deficits in the participation of children and young persons, given that even the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and the debate on ecological children's rights have until now not been consistently implemented in formal education.
- d. ESD is not simply a supplementary area of learning and activity but an **overarching cross-cutting task**. As far as its content is concerned, ESD encompasses very di-

verse concepts, which approach the theme of sustainable development based on a specific aspect of sustainability. Environmental education, global learning, consumer education, democratic education, cultural education, health education and many more deal with important aspects of ESD to a significant extent.

- e. The capacity of ESD has in fact been confirmed on the basis of a great deal of experience, but it has until now not been comprehensively and systematically evaluated and validated. In order to find connections between the current education reform debate and the discussion about efficiency and effectiveness, it is necessary to agree on meaningful uniform **quality standards** and certification tools within the individual educational areas.
- f. ESD in turn should **look for more connections to current debates on sustainable development**, for example recent discussions on a new understanding of quality of life, the challenge of global financial markets or government debts, safeguarding biodiversity, the (artificial) scarcity of food, or the subject of demographic change. The general relevance of ESD can be clarified by mapping the function of ESD in a knowledge-based society and for the promotion of quality of life and new lifestyles.
- g. As regards the proposed strategic development of sustainable **regional ‘education-landscapes’**, it is necessary to reinforce the cooperation of all actors who can contribute to successful learning processes in a sustainable society. A precondition for this is the establishment and management of suitable high-qualitative and effective networks (on this see also chapter 4).
- h. It is necessary to explore options of **stimuli for public private partnerships** in all areas of education, which should include reciprocal learning processes. This particularly concerns businesses where ESD plays a concrete role in their corporate responsibility and corporate citizenship strategies. In this respect it is necessary to develop and reinforce innovative models for integrating professional education in these companies with school and regional educational offerings. A good example here is the successful cooperation between the German retail company dm-drogerie markt and the German Commission for UNESCO in the context of initiatives such as ‘Sei ein Futurist’ and ‘Ideen Initiative Zukunft’ (In 2010, dm and the German Commission for UNESCO launched the competition “Ideen Initiative Zukunft” to support and encourage people who are committed to sustainability. All age groups were called upon to submit their ideas and projects for tomorrow’s world. The initiative instigated involvement of more than 1,200 dm branches throughout Germany making Education for Sustainable Development easily accessible to the general public. Long-term cooperation emerged among numerous projects and branches).

It is necessary to emphasise that implementing ESD in all areas of education comes with a price tag in terms of cost and effort. Thus out-of-school activities involve additional costs; projects are not sufficiently accounted for in formal education time budgets; the training and further education of teachers have to be expanded; networks require coordination and professional support, and so on. In order to turn projects into structures, **long-term budgeting** is required over and above short-term project funding.

3. THE CURRENT SITUATION AND OBJECTIVES FOR INDIVIDUAL EDUCATIONAL AREAS

While taking account of what has been achieved, it is in many ways necessary to continue and reinforce current activities and developments, but also to formulate new objectives in order to implement ESD in a more structural manner. The relevant required actions are deliberately set out in what follows applying it to the various areas of education, given that ESD can only create connections and be fully implemented **in the context of existing structures**. In this regard ESD contributes to innovations in these educational areas and can transform these from the inside out or result in greater permeability and potential for connections between areas of education thanks to its cross-cutting task. The regional ‘educational landscapes’ described in chapter 4 can make a particular contribution to this, insofar as these promote inter-disciplinary approaches. The orientation towards major thematic challenges such as the Energiewende, climate change, preserving biological diversity, demographic changes or taking responsibility for a more just global society must always be taken into account in this respect. These challenges have hitherto been taken up and developed further in the form of, for example, annual themes and in the context of the Round Table.

Early Childhood Care and Education

Current situation:

The opportunities offered by ESD at an early age not only for individual learning motivation but also for future commitment as ‘young global citizens’ for the society, can be surmised on the basis of the general significance of early childhood education for the individual’s future direction. However, until now there is no systematic data collection on the development of ESD in early childhood care and education. As an expert report on the implementation of ESD in the field of early childhood care and education (Stoltenberg 2009) has shown, it is apparent that there is a significant **need for education planning development** in this area of education. Although there are numerous connecting factors in educational plans and ESD is being integrated in some Federal State/Länder planning reviews, systematic development is usually lacking.

However, it is possible to identify numerous local initiatives and associations which implement ESD in early childhood care and education, often based on the concept of

'participatory competence (Gestaltungskompetenz)'. Thus there has been some progress not only but particularly in the area of the **qualifications of educators**. Some major advances in the past five years in this area have resulted in consistently significant successes. 4000 educators obtained additional qualifications between 2009 and 2012 in accordance with ESD criteria through a private partnership programme between a German NGO working on environmental education (Association for Natural and Environmental Education; ANU) and energy group E.ON. The Bavarian Association for the Protection of Birds (Landesverband für Vogelschutz in Bayern) provides additional qualifications for educators in the area of 'Values and Skills Improvement' with the 'Learning to Shape Life' programme. With its U3 (under three) programme, the Association integrates the 0-3 age group into the ESD process in crèches in the elementary schooling area. The KITA21 initiative contributes in the North German region to implement ESD on a larger scale into the elementary schooling area and is becoming more popular every year.

To ensure that this results in significant changes, it is however essential to use **systematic methods** via educational planning. For this it is necessary to make greater contact with responsible bodies and to scale up this initiative. The discussion paper 'Sustainability in the Kindergarten', which was drawn up by the Round Table's early childhood care and education working group in 2010 and adopted by the DUK can also serve as a basis for this.

Aims:

- a. The integration of ESD in early childhood care and education must equally be driven forward systematically as must be its integration in the activities of each individual institution.
- b. At the same time, greater integration of ESD into training and further education of staff is also necessary. Model-based framework plans may be useful in this respect. This is particularly urgent in the context of the academisation of the training of educators.
- c. It is necessary to explore all options in the interest of overall structure formation how networks with a diverse range of institutions can be supported effectively. These institutions need to be targeted and involved in ESD in a focused way.
- d. Day-care centres should also be considered institutions which need to be organised according to sustainability principles. The responsible bodies or municipalities are required to plan the management, fittings and grounds accordingly.

- e. The educational partnership between parents and day-care centres is particularly significant at this age. Therefore it is necessary to encourage projects and structures which will promote openness and transparency in educational work of day-care centre and always keep on actively involving parents in daily activities.
- f. Day-care centres play an essential role in establishing regional ‘educational landscapes’ as community-oriented educational institutions. It is necessary to utilise these, to identify relevant interfaces, and thus lay the foundation for a successful educational biography.

Primary and secondary education

Current situation:

If we consider the dissemination of ESD in the context of primary and secondary education, ESD has become a topic at virtually every school in the form of individual projects and course units and in the subjects of geography, biology and general studies courses in primary schools. There is indirect evidence for this: If we document the number of pages in school textbooks devoted to the themes of sustainability (often categorised under ecology, global development, resource use, waste, climate change etc.), then this set of topics apparently takes up five per cent of teaching time. However, ESD is a label that is applied very broadly to these types of school activities. More precise data about substantial integration of ESD in school curricula and priorities within schools are not available, but only approximately 25% to 38% of pupils in primary schools or secondary school level I have at any time encountered the topic of sustainability (Michelsen et al. 2012; Basis: representative survey from 2011).

The issue of sustainable development has been implemented in a growing number of **educational, learning and reference frameworks** (in particular in inter-disciplinary and subject-combining curricula). Also in the education standard for biology (intermediate-level-education) sustainability is explicitly mentioned as a topic for competency acquisition. The theme of sustainability is central to the standard for geography teaching first presented by the Deutschen Gesellschaft für Geographie (German Geographical Society) in 2007 and ESD is mentioned as an important orientation for the design of school life in the more recent legislation for primary and secondary education. However, the step from the significance of ESD highlighted in the preambles to education and framework plans to their (technical) organisation has been patchy until now. It is not yet possible to speak of a mainstreaming process in relation to the implementation of ESD.

This has been confirmed by a survey conducted by the KMK, conducted in 2012 among the Federal States/Länder regarding the 'situation and prospects of ESD' in the individual States/Länder. The survey drew a positive conclusion on the one hand: ESD is consistently taken into account when implementing changes to learning and education plans and ESD has in the meanwhile in numerous respects arrived as a topic in schools and also from time to time in teacher training. It has however also become clear from the States/Länder survey that it is necessary to scale up ESD implementation in education. Respondents again and again state that the path from one good project and activities towards actual structure (whole school approach for sustainable development) still remains on the agenda. Furthermore, one can recognise deficits in the first phase of teacher training and only rarely is ESD a guaranteed theme in the second phase of teacher training. There is also room for improvement in the cooperation with partners outside schools.

It would be possible to promote further development of education, learning and framework plans, but also the implementation of sustainability in school organisations and school life as a whole via a **recommendation** that was adopted by the **KMK together with the DUK** in 2007. This states that: 'Education for sustainable development can change teaching and schools in such a way as to make our world more sustainable'. This recommendation explicitly states that a school 'fosters education as a holistic system, insofar as it makes current areas of school reform such as quality development, profile development, opening schools, performance culture etc. a topic for everybody and structurally further develops these in a participatory process. Cooperation with partners outside schools is also very significant in this context.'

In addition, the '**Cross-Curricular Framework for Global Development Education**' in the context of ESD, which the KMK also recommended should be put into practice in 2007, constitutes a basis which sets the trend for imparting global development issues in schools. The orientation framework is the interim result of a project conducted by the KMK and the Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ). Since 2011 the cross-curricular framework has been updated in a joint KMK-BMZ follow-up project and extended to include further subjects at secondary school level. The framework takes the experiences gained from development education work and integrates these into the ESD. This encompasses conceptual foundations, specific proposals and materials and provides stimuli for the development of teaching plans and school curricula, school profiles and programmes.

Additionally, there is an **ESD orientation framework** available from the former Transfer-21 programme regarding the development of school profiles and school programmes, but also for documenting the quality of schooling in ESD schools and in relation to the underlying ESD concept of 'participatory skills (Gestaltungskompetenz)'.

Aims:

- a. ESD needs to be established as an area of learning and action, which encompasses inter-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary teaching as well as subject-based learning. In this context life-oriented learning and the reinforcement of relevant skills directed at a sustainable quality of life need to play a greater role and trans-disciplinarily needs to be clearly incorporated into subjects.
- b. In addition to the integration of ESD into the subject areas of social sciences and economics, closer linking of ESD to the so-called MINT subjects – mathematics, information technology, natural sciences and technology – in particular mathematics, physics, chemistry and technology – is also relevant. The problem-oriented, interdisciplinary approach of ESD can contribute to linking together natural science, social science and cultural sciences in accordance with the specific themes. General studies courses in primary schools, which are currently designed to be interdisciplinary and offer multiple perspectives, could play a key role in this respect as regards dealing with generic themes and thus already offer essential conditions for the implementation of ESD.
- c. In order to implement ESD in a permanent and systematic way in school teaching, it is recommended to implement ESD further in the relevant framework or education plans of individual States/Länder and the educational standards of the KMK and pedagogical methodology associations, building on the recommendations of the DUK and KMK as well as the BMZ and KMK from June 2007.
- d. In conjunction with this, it is necessary to solidly implement ESD in the training (first and second phases) of future teachers. Study and training regulations need to be modified where required, given that ESD has until now been offered as an option by individual universities or in the second phase of teacher training.
- e. The pedagogical foundations of ESD need to be introduced via specific teaching projects in all school subjects and areas of education and become a consistent component of school curricula and school programmes. In this regard, schools should accentuate ESD in their own way in the areas of learning and activities, in accordance with their current emphases. For this reason ESD should also play an important role in school inspections and evaluation processes.
- f. ESD moreover concerns schools as a whole: teaching, day-to-day school life, use of resources and cooperation with non-formal actors and partners need to support each other mutually in order to promote thinking and acting for sustainable development.

- g. Sustainable management is an important component of sustainable development. It has been demonstrated that this can be promoted by setting up sustainable 'student operated companies'. ESD has proven itself to be an area of learning and activity in this regard and also beyond this, which clearly motivates children and young persons who are educationally disadvantaged – if we consider the experiences of students – because of its proximity to the daily life of children and young people.
- h. More account needs to be taken of students and teachers with a migration background in the development of ESD teaching material.

Technical and vocational education and training

Current situation:

The working environment is an important place for learning, experience and design of sustainable development. As a value-driven approach ESD offers businesses exceptional preconditions for coming to an agreement within the business itself on the central principles underlying one's own actions. A responsible commitment to education on the part of the business as a 'good corporate citizen' benefits the region and the business equally. At the same time an economy based on sustainability requires properly qualified experts who are in a position to shape their activities to reflect the central ideas of sustainable development. If Germany wishes to remain a pioneer in the area of innovative sustainability technologies and services, then ESD needs to play a clearly recognisable role in technical and vocational education and training. We do not have reliable data regarding the dissemination, scale and issues of ESD in vocational training and further education, or about the take-up of ESD in vocational schools as important partners of companies in the German dual vocational education and training system. This also applies to vocational schools, which train 500,000 young people in Germany.

Against this background we can state the following:

It has been possible to achieve progress in vocational training as regards to 'green skills' as an important area of sustainability, among other things on the basis of the **recommendation made by the joint committee** of the Bundesinstitut für Berufsbildung (BIBB; Federal Institute for Vocational Education and Training) from 1988 and 1991. However, a further development and reorientation of the recommendation with a clear focus on the complexity of sustainability are still lacking.

There have been numerous projects in relation to the ‘technical and vocational education and training for sustainable development’ as a whole during the past 15 years. Content, methods and didactics have been tested below the level of ordering (namely determining qualification profiles, skills, knowledge and capabilities in accordance with educational framework plans and learning domains in accordance with school curriculum frameworks). In particular, this has made it possible to sound out vocational training positions as a place for ESD. **Action programmes and pilot projects** have provided numerous stimuli for the integration of ESD into vocational training and further education. The demands and possibilities of ESD have been researched and corresponding education strategies tested using pilot projects and further projects and programmes not only at the level of companies but also in different sectors. These projects have a clear image to some degree as examples of good practice.

In certain important professional areas, it has been possible to implement ESD explicitly into training regulations, for example in the electrical and metal industry professions and in the areas of sanitary, air-conditioning and heating technology. In other professions some aspects of ESD are reflected, namely by the fact that topics such as ‘environmental protection’ and ‘occupational safety and health protection’ are a compulsory component of the vocational training requirements described in the relevant training regulations and therefore this has become an integral part of the vocational education and training, depending on the specific significance for that profession. Vocational schools’ curricula include methodological reference points for ESD insofar, as these facilitate and support holistic educational processes through a thorough systems approach to solving problems. Professional capabilities are therefore not only limited to professional competence in a narrow sense, but also involve technical, safety technical, economic, legal, ecological and social aspects as components of ESD. Also on the level of **further education** there are in the meanwhile various qualification possibilities in the area of ESD offered by the relevant bodies (Chamber of Industry and Commerce - IHK/ Chamber of Crafts - HWK) and other educational establishments.

However, ESD is still a long way away from being systematically implemented in all **training regulations** – even though ESD does not have the same degree of relevance to all professions that require training. Implementing ESD in regulations is a necessary if not sufficient precondition as regards the specific definition and dissemination of ESD in vocational training and further education.

Aims:

- a. The primary aim is to integrate technical and vocational education and training for sustainable development more widely than until now in the vocational training system and in regulations. It is therefore necessary to explain how multifaceted curricula and didactic approaches as well as all-encompassing training modules that have already undergone initial testing can be incorporated as mandatory design guidelines into education (supplementary qualifications, potential [partial] implementation in training regulations in consultation with social partners, certification) and how ESD can gain greater importance as a topic in final examinations.
- b. On the further education level the qualification possibilities need to be scaled up and expanded among the various educational institutions. Such measures are relevant if they specifically meet the primary needs and demands of professional groups and sectors and reflect the relevant sustainability-related demands placed on professional conduct.
- c. The function of the world of work for sustainable social development could be reflected more clearly in curricula and made into a subject area more than it has been until now. This means that the significance of technical and vocational education and training for comprehensive socially sustainable development needs to be reflected and taken up as a theme in teaching and learning processes.
- d. Technical and Vocational education and training for sustainable development (BBNE/ESD and TVET) also provides an opportunity to increase the attraction of vocational education and training. It is therefore necessary to emphasise in the context of career guidance that the competences acquired in the context of vocational education and training for sustainable development generate numerous possibilities also to act in a responsible and sustainable way in one's profession. This also needs to be understood as a recommendation to the schools sector.
- e. In this context it is necessary to assess how it is possible to make use of the training goal of 'vocational participatory skills' on the basis of its connections and complementarity to the concept of 'participatory skills (Gestaltungskompetenz)' and how to further strengthen teaching of thematic aspects of sustainability alongside the acquisition of 'participatory skills' with up-to-date didactic approaches.

Higher Education

Current situation:

Universities and institutes of higher education as research and training institutions are crucial to sustainable development. Sustainability-related activities in higher education institutions have gained extra impetus thanks to the memorandum on ‘Higher Education and sustainability’ which was adopted by the German University Rectors’ Conference (HRK) in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO at the beginning of 2010 (DUK/HRK 2010). This publication drawn up by the ‘Higher Education’ working group of the Round Table contains **recommendations** for orienting core tasks of higher education such as research and knowledge transfer, teaching and studying to include sustainable development. In June 2012, the DUK adopted a further **Memorandum ‘Science for Sustainability: The breakthrough must succeed’**, in which the worlds of science and research are requested to take more account of inter- and trans-disciplinary research approaches in their work.

There have been increasing numbers of initiatives and programmes in the field of higher education in the last five years, whereby institutions of higher education focus individually or in collaboration (in particular among technical universities) on the theme of sustainability in research and teaching, but also in relation to the organisational structure of universities/institutes of higher education, up to general principles. A study published by the Stifterverbands für die Deutsche Wissenschaft (Donors’ Association for the Promotion of Humanities and Sciences in Germany) in August 2010, which carried out comparative research into the general principles of institutes of higher education, stated that one quarter of universities and 28% of technical universities required sustainable and ecologically aware behaviour.

This is often a reaction to current social changes. Institutions of higher education have not only acknowledged globalisation processes, such as the change from a traditional industrial to a knowledge-based society in their research and also in their teaching for some time, but this is also reflected in their research and teaching. This makes them partners in shaping the sustainability discourse with their research, which is apparent in the current dynamic of adapting sustainability relevant topics and opening up related fields of research.

Particular value must be attributed to **university networks**. They can serve, for example, to realise cross-institutional courses and teaching. One of these is the ‘Education for Sustainable Development’ network among the technical universities in the State of Baden-Württemberg. More and more institutions of higher education are also involved in the field of environmental management. Some go one step further and publish sus-

tainability reports and set up positions for the sustainable development of their institution. Also the fact that numerous projects related to higher education have been approved as official Projects of the Decade demonstrates the multiplicity of activities in the higher education sector. Here we should also mention initiatives such as the nationwide project 'Hochschultage Ökosoziale Marktwirtschaft und Nachhaltigkeit' (conference on eco-social market economy and sustainability, organised by students for students at their university) which has put on more and more meetings relating to the subject of sustainability since 2010. We see a particular commitment from students in sustainability initiatives as they increasingly form networks and make efforts to put on lectures relevant to sustainability, Studium Generale lectures or further specialised courses. Recognition of this commitment in the form of credit points can support students in their commitment, even under difficult conditions where courses are organised in the same way as in schools.

Most institutions of higher education in Germany are supra-regional in character. At the same time we see an interest in a (simultaneous) regional orientation. **Regionalisation** in this respect means a local specialisation against the background of international demands, or also a direct involvement of students in interchanges with businesses. In the field of teaching this means involving practical examples from local surrounding in the form of 'on-site learning', in relation to (applied) research, but usually cooperation with local businesses, civil society institutions and public authorities. Here we see clear opportunities for research and development, in order to investigate and promote local but also national sustainability strategies and to make a significant contribution to the establishment of 'educational landscapes'.

Even so it is clear that the field of teaching in particular needs to develop further: Higher education in Germany offers some 15,000 study programmes at present. At this time there are **study courses** at numerous institutions of higher education dealing with issues regarding sustainable development. However, their numbers are still very low in comparison to the vast amount of courses available. The numbers are less than two per cent based on a generous estimate in relation to the entire number of study courses. A study from 2007 ('Total survey on the basis of self-reporting from institutions of higher education') moreover shows that it is possible to distinguish three groups of sustainability-related courses: Courses with sustainability-relevant core studies regarding in-depth studies, special modules with sustainability relevance or optional subjects (54.6%), sustainability courses (30.8%) and courses where individual lectures are connected to sustainable development themes (14.2%). Almost half of the study courses are based in engineering sciences. The humanities offered sustainability-related courses in less than 30 cases, but nevertheless one quarter of courses had an interdisciplinary focus in the area of sustainability-oriented research.

Aims:

- a. Institutions of higher education must play a decisive role in sustainable development. One of their important tasks is the systematic development of sustainability research. This necessarily requires involving inter- and trans-disciplinary approaches.
- b. Teaching and studies must, among other things, impart competences for the identification of unsustainable developments and problem-solving abilities to all students. For this, it is necessary to develop various concepts that are accessible to all institutions and students. The interdisciplinary knowledge gained thereby must be linked to social and participatory competences. This also applies to supporting new generations of researchers, for example in the context of graduate and postgraduate education, which often still focuses on a single discipline.
- c. Teacher training needs to be reformed across the three phases to reflect sustainable development. Teachers have a central role to play in translating education into sustainable development, and they need to be suitably qualified to do this. Universities and teacher training colleges must take up the challenge along with the responsible state ministries to initiate the relevant reforms.
- d. Institutions of higher education must be given the tools to apply the principles of sustainability in all in-company organisations and areas of activities (procurement, material flows, in-house training etc.).
- e. It is necessary for Institutions of higher education and the relevant ministries to formulate key points in their target agreements for the transposition of these principles, which need to be assessed regularly to see whether targets are being achieved.
- f. At national level, it is necessary for the responsible Federal ministry to draw up an indicator-based report in coordination with federal ministries during each legislature period of the German Federal Parliament, which will clarify developments in the field of higher education with regard to compliance with elements of sustainability.

Non-formal ESD

Current situation:

Non-formal ESD in Germany is an important independent area of education, which is gaining in significance in the context of **lifelong learning**. It encompasses all educational offerings for children, young persons and adults outside the formal early childhood education, primary and secondary school, higher education and technical and vocational education system. With its broad spectrum of learning places and a large bandwidth of learning forms as well as methods, it enables multifaceted educational experiences, can reach different social groups in a targeted way and stimulate further development of formal educational processes. Non-formal education has considerable innovative potential precisely because it has to take less account of distinctly traditional structures.

Non-formal ESD in Germany takes on a multiplicity of forms: It enjoys **broad backing**, which is organised at both the municipal and also the state and federal levels. For example, this includes adult education, environmental centres, local Agenda 21 initiatives, museums, clubs, foundations, churches, trade unions, businesses and associations. Non-formal school education establishments can be considered 'local' professional partners for all stakeholders in the education system in the true sense of the word, because of their great number, their diversified content offering and their geographical spread. Furthermore, non-formal ESD is closely related to varying forms of civil society commitment and makes an important contribution to reinforcing and using this potential. It is also necessary to emphasise that out of up till now 1,800 Decade projects that have been approved, almost 1000 involved the non-formal and informal education sectors.

An important task is to implement ESD more strongly in non-formal education and further education and to develop specific concepts suitable for the informal sector. A representative study by Michelsen et al. on ESD in non-formal institutions from the year 2010 shows that the **number of actors** in this field, even if it is not possible to count these precisely, probably exceeds 4000. They have their roots – except in the case of more recent established institutions which are also 'traditionally' speaking of strong ties to ESD – in environmental education, in general and political education, and to a lesser extent in global learning. Not all such institutions however have a clear connection to ESD, but continue to maintain their own emphases (e.g. nature exploration, environmental education and development politics education). Also where institutions state themselves that they are involved in ESD this does not necessarily mean that ESD is central to the objectives of these institutions. One can assume that in the meanwhile one quarter of ESD-related providers base their approach to their activities on sustainable development.

If we look at their **key emphases** the following picture emerges from this study: The most distinct provision is in the area of nature and technology (‘nature and species protection; water, waste water; global climate change; environmentally friendly technology for crafts and production’). Actors such as Environmental Education Centres (ANU) and nature conservation organisations are particularly committed here. Both groupings however also have an affinity to aspects of natural beauty (culture and philosophy). Social aspects are taken into account in this regard in the context of ESD. Taken as a whole, it appears that ‘providers with a development policy background (e.g. VENRO members)’ deal with environmental or ecological aspects to a greater extent than providers of environmental education themes in the social context.

Thematically speaking, the **target groups** of providers are to a large extent interested persons or the general public. The largest group of participants have long been children and young persons or groups of school students. This indicates that in particular non-formal environmental education constitutes an extension and plays a supplementary role to formal education in kindergartens and schools which, in the best cases, contributes to the successful establishment of regional ‘educational landscapes’. Seniors or persons who are generally interested in further education are mentioned less frequently as target groups.

In this context it is necessary to point out the important role – even if this needs to be expanded – that non-formal ESD can play for children and young persons with a **migration background** or those from socially marginalised environments, who tend to view their own future chances rather negatively. Beyond school structures they can be reached and motivated with this approach. This is because ESD looks at the personal conditions and life histories of young people, relates to everyday themes and issues, and always involves practical uses and potential options for action. As regards content, ESD favours subjects that directly touch this target group – for example questions about the causes and consequences of migration, quality of life, equal opportunities, participation and justice, and also the consequences of environmental destruction and climate change here in Germany and other parts of the world.

A notable positive feature from the point of view of network creation in accordance with the study by Michelsen et al. is that almost all stakeholders work together with other institutions. With an average of seven the number of **cooperations** is very high. This is dominated by cooperations with schools (68%), followed by adult education institutions with 54% and municipal institutions with 53%. There are relatively few cooperations (15%) with chambers of industry and commerce or guilds.

Aims:

- a. As shown by the representative study from 2010, the provision of non-formal ESD is mainly aimed at primary schools, and less at secondary school students, adults and families, or the under-six group. It is therefore necessary to develop and expand concepts and provision for these **target groups**. In addition, a special range of programmes is needed for groups who are removed from education against the background of social developments. Another group that needs to be emphasised are older citizens, given that they are going to become a growing part of the total population because of demographic changes.
- b. It is desirable that such educational provision should be comprehensive so those living in the countryside can also profit from this.
- c. Non-formal ESD can bring together nature, technology and life, for example stimulate interest in bionics, or show the interrelations between energy production, climate change and changes to biotopes. This also makes it possible to approach people who are difficult to reach via formal education with the MINT (mathematics, information technology, natural sciences and technology) subjects. This focus needs to be systematically developed.
- d. Non-formal ESD institutions need to be able to certify performances in accordance with their own understanding of education, which not only confirm the personal learning achievements of participants individually as the case may be, but which also form part of school marks. The recently reinforced expansion of regional 'educational landscapes' with their various interfaces between areas of education can generally support this objective.
- e. The non-formal sector is not subordinated to the education administration. It is rather far more strongly characterised by the subsidiarity principle and therefore defined by independence and diversity. However, at the same time these institutions are also utilised by formal educational establishments, in particular by schools. For that reason it is necessary to guarantee low-cost access to these establishments and lectures most of all for the student group. The education administration should therefore make more resources available to this area. The often fragile and in parts precarious situation of high-quality non-formal institutions requires in the medium term at least partial personal and monetary funding for non-formal institutions as part of the 'educational landscape' in Germany.
- f. Networks between different non-formal education providers need to be systematically strengthened and effectively organised, so that on the one hand interested users (e.g. professional teachers) can get a better overview and on the other hand the ex-

change between institutions are fostered with a view to cooperations, reciprocal support or joint projects. It makes sense to expand available structures at regional level, by making funds available in the long-term for coordinating and networking tasks. The private sector could be an important cooperation partner in this respect.

- g. Non-formal ESD is not restricted to environmental centres, development cooperation organisations etc. It also concerns the activities of adult education centres, churches, youth clubs and many other associations, clubs and organisations. Aspects of ESD need to be integrated more into their activities.
- h. The evaluation, in particular the operational analysis in relation to non-formal ESD, has only been slightly developed until now. The small number of representative surveys makes it clear that there is a considerable need for research in this field.

4. CITIES, LOCAL AUTHORITIES AND REGIONAL 'EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPES'

Cities and local authorities are facing major challenges. They need to find locally appropriate responses to societal developments. They need to devise long-term development strategies, anticipate future problems and opportunities and align themselves with principles of sustainability. Ultimately, however, it is **local people** who will be involved in the development of these strategies, who will implement them and benefit from them. Ordinary citizens must be reached, motivated and empowered. The targeted integration of ESD into local development strategies and the broad, concerted involvement in all areas of municipal activity offers numerous opportunities – starting with interdisciplinary knowledge and innovation through to democracy and political understanding and, ultimately, integration and understanding of the complex global situation. 'In our view, ESD is therefore not a luxury for good times nor just another educational approach as good as any other' stress the mayors of the official Cities and Local Authorities of the Decade in Germany, in a statement issued in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO in December 2011. 'Sustainable Communities: Opportunities through Education for Sustainable Development' drafted by the Round Table of the 'Cities and local authorities and ESD' working group, which contains this statement, illustrates the many opportunities in this field by means of numerous examples. In so doing, it also creates a bridge to Agenda 21.

ESD plays an important role in the **creation and development of regional 'educational landscapes'** in local authorities. 'Educational landscapes' occupy a central position in the current debate in Germany about the future of the knowledge society. With their highly interconnected institutions, places of learning and support systems, such landscapes should contribute to reducing inequalities in the distribution of educational opportunities at the local level, thereby enabling the realisation of lifelong learning. Thus, for example, the members of the 'Alliance for Education', which was founded by the BMBF, regard such local educational networks as the key to greater educational success and improved participation opportunities. In order for this development to come about, systematic communication between institutions and cooperation between political actors with their various responsibilities are both called for; although promoting the skills of each individual person to be able to use the advanced opportunities available and to plan his or her education pathway are also needed, as the 'Central Challenges' section of the 2012 Education Report highlights.

The emergence of regional 'educational landscapes' is closely related to the creation and strengthening of social **networks** at local level. Ongoing dialogue and negotiation give networks a significant potential for generating new knowledge, finding innovative solutions, initiating structural changes and bringing about change. It is not without reason that networks are a **type of governance**, which finds an optimal organisational structure in the ESD, but which is also decisively promoted and developed by ESD. Participation, cooperation, integration and commitment are fundamental principles of ESD. Here, cross connections can be drawn on with regard to current approaches to integrated urban development and social space management.

To date, no ESD data have been systematically collected from local municipal sources that give a complete overview. Although we know that many Local Agenda 21 activities emanated from the education sector and thus ESD was often dealt with as a distinct area. In many places developments took place beyond LA21, which strengthened ESD at local level. If, in accordance with the activities identified in relation to ESD within the framework of the UN Decade, one attempts to draw a distinction between **different variants** of the local approach in ESD – grouped by intensity - then the following picture emerges:

- At the local level, ESD is often available in **individual formal education institutions** and/or from individual actors in the non-formal sector. This can take place either in singular events or due to the systematic anchoring of ESD in the mission statement of the establishments concerned (day-care concepts; school programmes; education plans, individual projects and local actors). One can expect this form of ESD take-up to be found in every municipality.
- Less commonly found in the long-term are **Local Agenda initiatives**, or permanent **networks of stakeholders** which are based on civic commitment and address educational issues in the form of miscellaneous round tables or similar forms of organisation. Ideally, there will be an attempt to systematically integrate activities relating to ESD into regional educational landscapes. The number of these networks is still very limited.
- Even fewer set-ups involving ESD activities are regarded by the relevant local authority as a **means to sustainable development of the municipality itself**. In a few exceptional cases, cities and local authorities have declared ESD to be an essential part of their general guidelines. This is the case with the 21 Official Cities and Local Authorities of the Decade. The relevant local government departments and administration offices must in this case adopt a coordinating, controlling and motivating role with regard to the implementation of ESD activities in the locality. This

involves cooperation with initiatives and local stakeholders from both formal and non-formal education.

Aims:

- a. The overarching goal for local authorities should be to recognize the opportunities that ESD offers them for their future development, and for them to proclaim that it as an essential aspect of their guiding principles. In this context, the relevant local government departments and administration offices should adopt a coordinating, controlling and motivating role with regard to the implementation of ESD activities in the locality. This should involve cooperation between initiatives and local stakeholders from both formal and non-formal education in equal forms. Even so, opportunities for cooperation with the private sector – as explicitly suggested by the association for local public utilities (Verband lokaler Unternehmen) – should also be made deliberate use of.
- b. So far, the development of local 'educational landscapes', if it has occurred at all, has only selectively involved ESD. Here the activities of ESD should be further developed as a means to sustainable development of the local authority.
- c. Insofar as civil society engages further with sustainable development (associations, Local Agenda 21 initiatives, networks, etc.), these stakeholders should also develop a clear focus on education issues and integrate ESD into their activities. ESD could radiate even more strongly 'in the local area' in particular through cooperation with the LA21 initiatives.
- d. In the long term – as has already been indicated in the Declaration of Mayors (above) – ESD should be regarded as an opportunity to make a major contribution to regional transformation and, ultimately, to sustainable community development by means of a sustainably orientated build-up of a knowledge-based society.

5. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE 2015+

International

At present the proposals at the international level are coalescing into thoughts of replacing the Decade in 2015 with a **Global Action Programme**. How this will be configured, is currently (March 2013) unclear. The National Committee has written to UNESCO headquarters in Paris, arguing for a broad coalition that includes all education stakeholders and which will not only focus on individual areas of education.

National

When creating plans for national follow-up activities in the view of the National Committee, it must be ensured as a matter of urgency that the following points are taken into account: a) the promotion of ESD is a societal responsibility. So far, ESD has not been as firmly anchored in formal, non-formal and informal education that one could speak of a secured dissemination. b) ESD as cross-cutting issue that must involve all people and age groups, institutions and companies. Therefore, continuous development of ESD in all areas is required, just as a broad alliance of all stakeholders and sponsors is needed for ESD. c) In all areas of education, clear time and target horizons must be formulated for the further development of ESD.

In the continuation of the activities necessary to ESD in 2015 and subsequent years, the **structures** that have been established in Germany during the lifetime of the Decade must be reviewed in every case and **modified**, if required. As formulated in the resolution adopted by the German Bundestag on 26/04/2012 (II.3), at the very least, the following measures are necessary:

- a. Nation-wide **coordination** of activities,
- b. Provision of a **platform** for stakeholders in education and sustainability,
- c. The **visualisation and further development of good practice** through the approval and funding of projects,

and the presentation of working group results are all bound up with each other. Its continuation therefore needs to be rethought in a fundamental way. However, its basic idea of facilitating networking opportunities should be retained: this is because it gives primarily involved stakeholders of civil society in the field of ESD a platform for exchange and enables major themes and strategies to be developed further on a participatory basis. The need to meet and exchange ideas is considerable. The need for networking is stressed by all stakeholders.

As an **alternative**, it would be conceivable to organise on an annual basis at least a two-day **conference**, which would be divided into **two parts**: On one day, an annual conference will take place that would be open to everyone and that would also be suitable for addressing all decision-makers involved beyond the immediate ESD community. The second day would be reserved for networking and participatory decision-making by a defined circle of relevant ESD stakeholders. One possibility would be that every (active) working group member would at the same time be a member of the Round Table or else each working group would send a certain number of members. This would then make it possible on the second day to invite officials who would give the working groups feedback on their work. The representatives of the Decade measures (see below) would necessarily have to be involved in this body.

Additionally, it would be important to organise a **conference** (at least) every five years that would also include an exhibition, showcasing best practice. At the end of the current Decade, the Federal Ministry of Education and Research has agreed to finance a major conference. This could serve simultaneously as a prelude to this new format.

Topic- and education sector-specific working groups for concept and strategy development

The working groups should also be retained – although with a more precisely defined function. They should be **upgraded** and should integrate educational stakeholders more clearly than to date. They should have a **clear function**, which would consist of devising concepts and strategy papers, aimed at supporting and setting in motion structure-building measures. They should also address cross-cutting issues. For this reason, it is important for the working groups to set long-term, verifiable objectives and to coordinate these with the National Committee. Equal membership of the working group speakers on the National Committee ensures the strategic integration of both bodies. The working groups should in future also be more often given the task of discussing their objectives with decision-makers and stakeholders and of documenting their results. For this purpose, small conferences and symposia held regularly seem to be a suitable format for entering into discussions with potential, as yet unintegrated ESD

supporters. In this regard, the working groups need more support, including financially (for example, in order to stage one expert conference per year).

In the interests of the overall objective 'From Project to Structure', the working groups should primarily reflect the **structure of the education system**. It will be necessary to establish or continue with working groups in at least the following areas of education: early childhood education, primary and secondary school, technical and vocational education and training, higher education, non-formal ESD, cities and local authorities and/or regional 'educational landscapes' and informal learning. In addition, central thematic priorities, such as 'biodiversity' or 'mobility' are also relevant. It is, however, necessary to verify whether the setting up/continuation of specific working groups can also be omitted, because a sufficient number of activities have been realized by other actors (e.g. operators of kindergartens). Furthermore, exchanges between working groups must be reinforced, in order to render interfaces more efficient and to promote cross-sector approaches in education.

Identification of innovative practice and appreciation of the commitment of civil society: The development of awarding an official title to good practice (projects, cities and local authorities, communities and measures)

More than 2,500 projects have applied to be recognised for their good ESD practice, of which 1,800 have been awarded the title of "Decade Project". In addition, 21 cities and local authorities and 30 measures (ESD initiatives on a larger scale) were registered. Together they form the flagship of the Decade in Germany. This format has excited considerable international interest and has also found imitators. Firstly, the awards serve to provide **recognition and visibility** of outstanding activities in the field of ESD. Secondly, they offer a very extensive **collection of best practise** that presents innovations and promotes the award process itself, due to increasing demands connected with repeat applications to improve the quality of ESD.

With the follow-up programme for the Decade, from 2015 on more forward-looking steps should be taken in order to implement and optimise ESD. We therefore propose that after some ten years of such an award scheme, this should not be given up but should be used to provide structural anchoring of ESD.

Projects of the Decade – from project to network

Networks are an expression of structure-building activities on the level of civil society and ensure the long-lasting anchoring of ESD – primarily at regional level. Thus, in future networks could be awarded, if they implement ESD in committed partnerships.

Cities and local authorities of the Decade – from initiatives to an ‘educational landscape’

The official Decade cities and local authorities have considerably gained significance over the Decade as a showcase for the bundling of ESD at local level. The aim here should be to continue the development of numerous local individual initiatives in the direction of a sustainable local ‘educational landscape’.

Measures of the Decade - from individual action to the norm

The official **Measures of the Decade** are supra-regionally orientated, long-term and should already have the potential for the formation of structures. In order to actually make a contribution to solid structures, these measures must be based on this intention to a greater degree. In combination with other structural elements, these initiatives should be accorded greater weight and should develop a normative capacity.

Collection of expertise, information and support for exchange: development of the internet platform

Internet-based communication is a necessary tool for the dissemination of information, for discourse and for the collection of expertise. Here, streamlining and simultaneous modernisation seem necessary. A restriction on the topic ‘ESD’ is advisable; there are already a very large number of portals available for ‘SD’. Furthermore, the current standards of interaction and participation (web 2.0) or more recent developments in the field of the ‘semantic web’ should also be taken into consideration.

Intensified public relations

Willingness to innovate in terms of sustainable action is still a minority cause in Germany. Thus, the Federal Ministry of the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU)'s own environmental awareness study stated in 2012: 'Survey data shows that the problems of everyday behaviour are recognised clearly in terms of environmental protection and sustainability. Equally, many respondents are aware that behavioural changes are needed. However, this is no more than a latent potential for change, because only a minority are able to identify the changes needed for innovation' (p. 64). Willingness to innovate will be fortified by learning and communication processes. For this, however, more broadly-based public relations work is needed.

As part of the Strategy 2015+ a broad alliance should be created in which different communication formats (besides the specialised portal) – as for example the website 'mehr-wissen-mehr-tun' (know more do more) illustrates – and different stakeholders, such as the German Council for Sustainable Development, the foundation 'Forum für Verantwortung' and many others, all work together.