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The Asia-Pacific Programme of Educational
Innovation for Development
Education for Sustainable Development



ESD

ON THE MOVE

National and Sub-regional ESD Initiatives in
the Asia-Pacific Region

Looking Ahead from **2006**

ESD on the Move:

National and Sub-regional ESD Initiatives in
the Asia-Pacific Region



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The effectiveness of the DESD will depend on the strength and inclusiveness of the partnerships, networks and alliances that develop among stakeholders at all levels...DESD partners must look outward, seeking to make connections with initiatives, programmes, groups and networks to promote, plan and implement ESD.

International Implementation Scheme for the DESD, October 2005

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACCU	Asia-Pacific Centre for UNESCO	MTT	Mobile Training Team
APCEIU	Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding	NGO	non-governmental organization
APPEAL	Asia-Pacific Programme for Education for All	OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
ARIES	Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability	PACE-SD	Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development
ASPnet	Associated School Project Network	PCSD	Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development
CAREC	Regional Environment Centre for Central Asia	PIF	Pacific Islands Forum
CAWG	Central Asian Working Group	RCE	Regional Centre of Expertise
CEE	Centre for Environment Education	SANZ	Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand
CLC	Community Learning Centre	SDC	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation
CLCC	Creating Learning Communities for Children	SEASCO	Southeast Asian Science Cooperation
COE	Centre of Excellence	SPC	Secretariat for the Pacific Community
CPCESD	China Programme Committee of Education for Sustainable Development	SPREP	Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
DESD	Decade of Education of for Sustainable Development	UN	United Nations
EE	Environmental Education	UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
EFA	Education for All	UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
EFAnet	Education for All network	UNLD	United Nations Literacy Decade
ENDP	Education for National Disaster Preparedness	UNU	United Nations University
EPD	environment, population and development	USP	University of the South Pacific
ESD	Education for Sustainable Development	UTCO	UNESCO Teheran Cluster Office
FAO	Food and Agricultural Organization	WHE	World Heritage Education
INES	Iran National ESD Secretariat	WSSD	World Summit on Sustainable Development
ITB	Institute of Technology of Bandung	ZEF	Centre for Development Research
ITU	International Telecommunication Union		
IUCN	World Conservation Union		
IYPF	International Young Professionals Foundation		
JFIT	Japanese Funds-in-Trust		
KNCU	Korean National Commission for UNESCO		
MAP21	Mongolian Action Plan for the 21st Century		
MoE	Ministry of Education		
MSRT	Ministry of Science, Research and Technology		

FOREWORD

The basic vision of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UN DESD) 2005 – 2014 is a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from education and learn the values, behavior and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation. Understanding how such a vision can be achieved will require the interaction of governments with other stakeholders at all levels.

The International Implementation Scheme for the DESD endorsed by the UN General Assembly and the Working Paper (prepared to inform an Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development) provide guidance about processes for initiating the DESD. Both documents focus on collaboration and networking as underlying key elements, and emphasize the importance of coordination due to the great number of issues, stakeholders and sectors involved in education for sustainable development.

Perhaps the greatest challenge for the Decade is that of very different groups learning to work together towards a common goal. Different missions, mandates and visions mean that there will be different approaches to sustainable development. A host of different challenges arise when attempting to coordinate the work:

- *How can we begin to bring such diverse groups together?*
- *How do we make the concept of ESD meaningful to those who have previously had little involvement or interest in the subject?*
- *How do we build a common vision for ESD?*
- *Why do partnerships appear easier for some countries to manage than for others?*
- *Once we have established partnerships, how do we go about maintaining them?*
- *How do we make the most effective use of partnerships?*
- *What skills and other resources are required?*

This publication takes a look at how some Asian and Pacific countries have attempted to forge partnerships to begin developing initiatives for the Decade. While there have been many successes, it is clear that many challenges remain and new ones have been identified. It is hoped that the experiences highlighted in this publication will serve as a guide for other countries as they take steps towards implementing the Decade. Many of the initiatives highlighted in this publication have been assisted by the Funds in Trust for ESD contributed to UNESCO by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT) of Japan. This continued support is gratefully acknowledged. The preparation of the document has been the culmination of work carried out by the ESD Unit at UNESCO Bangkok, and many thanks are due to Derek Elias, Aya Yokoi, Rikka Vuorela, Seema Deo, Hayden Montgomerie, and Joel Bacha.

As the lead agency for the DESD, UNESCO continues to mobilize partnerships, initiatives and resources to increase the capacity of Member States in order to build and consolidate national ESD initiatives.



Sheldon Shaeffer

Director

UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education

OVERVIEW OF THE CASE STUDIES

The stories in this publication have a number of similarities in terms of challenges experienced and reasons identified for success. Some of these lessons are outlined below.

Factors for Success

An analysis of the case studies suggests that certain factors were helpful in ensuring the success of the initiatives:

- The availability of existing publications has given strength and guidelines to the Decade. In particular, these are the Asia-Pacific Working Paper for a Regional Strategy, the Asia-Pacific Situational Analysis and the International Implementation Scheme for the DESD. For some countries, the Situational Analysis has provided a valuable starting point for planning.
- The presence of a core group of motivated, committed and influential people is important.
- Government, community, business/industry and education sector collaboration are necessary for widespread ownership of, and commitment to, the DESD.
- There is a recognition of the need for high-level involvement, particularly with regard to cooperation between governments and the UNESCO National Commissions.
- Authorities align DESD objectives with those of other global education initiatives and national priorities/commitments, and learn to work with (rather than attempt to reinvent) existing national strategies and other guiding documents.
- Programmes use existing networks (as opposed to establishing new ones in the immediate phase).
- Programmes focus on initial ESD awareness-raising for government officials and others in key positions through the use of non-threatening methods (eg. meetings, informal discussions, etc.) rather than embarking on full-blown campaigns at the early stage.
- Environmental education is viewed as an important entry point for ESD.
- Planners recognize the value of a national launch in providing impetus for action and private sector involvement.

Challenges and Gaps

A number of constraining factors have also been identified and will need to be addressed if ESD is to be successfully implemented in countries:

- Changing established structures and ways of thinking is not easy and takes time, commitment and understanding.
- Environmental issues still dominate ESD thinking – this needs to be changed if other partners are to be involved and if ESD is to achieve the transformative impact that is its objective.
- Partners and stakeholders have different mandates and focus on different thematic areas. The challenge is aligning these mandates towards ESD without weakening the comparative advantage that each of the partners has to offer.
- Specific projects and activities must be identified at an early stage to ensure that momentum from launches and initial activity is maintained.
- Coordination of the Decade requires committed personnel. In almost every case, human resources were considered to be inadequate.
- Government officials, school administrators and others in decision-making positions must be provided with ESD training if systems are to be changed to integrate ESD into current policies and plans.

Looking Ahead from 2006

The information contained in this publication was corrected and written in 2006. Events and activities planned at that time may have already been implemented while some of the challenges identified still remain. This publication is best used to identify long term challenges and review national initiatives in the first stages of the ESD implementation.

1. AUSTRALIA^{*}

STRENGTHENING EXISTING NETWORKS

Introduction

Australia has a population of approximately 20 million people spread across an area of 7.6 million square kilometers. The country has a federal government system made up of six states and two territories, each of which also has an extensive network of local government bodies. Coordination across these levels can sometimes be challenging. In education, this situation is affected by factors such as the diversified structure of the Australian education system and the division of responsibilities for education and sustainable development across multiple portfolios and levels of government. The Secretariat for the UNESCO National Commission for Australia is the Department of Foreign Affairs. An 18-member board of experts from UNESCO's four major thematic areas of Education, Natural Sciences, Culture and Human and Social Sciences makes up the National Commission.

^{*} Written by John Fien and Josephine Lang, RMIT University, Melbourne.

National Steering Committee

The UNESCO National Commission for Australia took an immediate interest in the DESD and viewed it as a natural progression from Environmental Education and other conservation initiatives. Australia considered as vital the need to establish partnerships and alliances to facilitate national, state/territory and local/regional coordination to ensure that DESD activities are coordinated into a holistic programme. The Australian National Government nominated the then Department of the Environment and Heritage (now the Department of the Environment and Water Resources) as the lead agency for the Decade in Australia. The Department has been working closely with the National Commission, and takes the lead in terms of implementing initiatives for the Decade.

Commitment to the Decade

In October 2006, the Minister for the Environment launched 'Caring for the Future': The Australian Government Strategy for the UN DESD.¹ The strategy seeks to develop understanding, knowledge, skills and capacity within Australian to contribute to sustainable development. Its goal is to have sustainability as an intrinsic value and a national aspiration. The strategy focuses on aligning practical actions with national priorities to achieve real change in support of sustainable development. The strategy proposes six key mechanisms via which interested stakeholder groups can help Australian society to connect with, learn and act for sustainability (see below).

The Department's anticipated Environmental Education Grants Scheme supports a diverse range of stakeholders in activities such as curriculum development for training courses in sustainable industrial design; whole system engineering design training modules; an international river health programme; a research programme embedding education for sustainability into university curricula; support to establish a secretariat for the Australian Association for Environmental Education; and community environmental education using health messages.

Initiatives

A situational analysis of education for sustainable development in Australia was prepared as part of the process to develop the Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy. This report highlighted national and state/territory policies, action plans and programmes that support education for sustainable development in Australia. At the national level, for example, these include a National Action Plan (to guide government institutions), a National Environmental Education Council (to provide cross-sectoral advice), a National Environmental Education Network (to coordinate national and state/territory government programmes across education and conservation government departments), the Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative, and support for the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES). The situational analysis also reported on the wide range of education for sustainable development programmes that are being conducted by schools, vocational education institutes, universities, community groups, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the media, and business interests throughout the country. Prominent among these was the release in 2005 of the first-ever national environmental education statement for Australian schools. Endorsed by all State and Territory education ministers, the statement supports the adoption of whole of school approaches to education for sustainability.

Following the publication of the situational analysis, a national symposium was organized to raise awareness about the Decade in Australia among different sectors and to identify potential partnerships and collaborative activities to promote the DESD. The symposium, held in July 2005, was attended by invited representatives of seventy national organizations. These included industry groups, industry training councils, NGOs, trade unions, professional associations, local government, state/territory governments and agencies, and higher education practitioners. The symposium's opening programme incorporated ESD perspectives from the Asia-Pacific region, as well as from the Australian Government, in particular.

Fifteen diverse case studies were presented at the symposium to showcase the range of initiatives that some institutions had already planned, organized and aligned to the DESD agenda. The case studies

¹ Australian Government (2006) *Caring For Our Future: The Australian Government Strategy For The United Nations Decade Of Education For Sustainable Development, 2005-2014*. Department for the Environment and Heritage.

were selected to reflect the broad and diverse opportunities for ESD across Australian society. The case studies included the a report on a bicycle expedition to take ESD to remote areas during the Decade; the Victorian State Strategy for Living Sustainably as an example of how a state strategy for ESD generally can use the 10-year focus of the Decade as a planning framework for ESD; the South Australia State Strategy for DESD as an example of a coordinated strategy for the Decade and how it can build strong partnerships between all stakeholders; the sustainable consumption activities of International Young Professionals Foundation (IYPF) as an example of what youth groups can do during the Decade; and architectural studies as an example of how the Decade may be used to leverage the integration of ESD into university and professional training activities for a particular profession. These case studies also served to: i) build enthusiasm for the DESD; ii) encourage organizations to network with each other to adapt and replicate such initiatives in different sectors; and iii) facilitate the formation of partnerships for new DESD projects.

The second part of the symposium involved a series of workshops at which participants discussed the need for, and possible structure and contents of, a national framework for the DESD in Australia. Reports from workshop groups were synthesized and then circulated by e-mail for discussion within local groups and the committees of those organizations which attended the symposium. The responses from such consultations were then used to develop draft advice for the development of a framework that was recommended to the Australian Government and to the Australian National Commission for UNESCO to inform the development of the national DESD strategy.

The subsequent Australian DESD Strategy² was based on advice and input from the national Environmental Education Council and a range of Australian Government ministries. It sets out a vision, goal and approaches to foster sustainable development through education and learning over the years 2005-2014. It provides a framework for all partners to contribute to the Decade in Australia. The vision articulated in the Strategy is that:

At the end of the Decade, the Australian community will have the understanding, knowledge, skills and capacity to contribute to sustainable development, and will embrace the intrinsic value of sustainability as a national aspiration. Our ultimate vision is a sustainable Australia (p.1).

The goal is:

To mainstream sustainability across the community through education and lifelong learning.

The six broad approaches to achieve this goal are:

- Communicating the concepts
- Using sound research
- Maintaining momentum
- Promoting a whole-of-government approach
- Building partnerships
- Monitoring and evaluation

Since then, the Australian Government has commenced work on the development of a new National Action Plan for Education for Sustainable Development to supersede the first plan released in 2000. It has also commissioned a project to develop a national framework of ESD indicators. The project is to support 'Caring for the Future' and assess progress in ESD during the Decade. Stage 1 of this project, which has recently been completed³, reviews previous experiences in ESD indicators and provides advice on how to develop a framework suitable to the Australian context. Stage 2 began in early 2007 and will involve key stakeholders in identifying relevant and realistic indicators in ESD.

2 Australian Government (2006) Caring For Our Future: The Australian Government Strategy For The United Nations Decade Of Education For Sustainable Development, 2005-2014. Department for the Environment and Heritage.

3 Tilbury, D. and Janousek (2006) 'Monitoring Progress and Achievements in Australia During the ESD Decade: Developing a National Framework of ESD Indicators- Stage 1' report prepared by the Australian Research Institute in Education for Sustainability (ARIES) for the Australian Government Department of the Environment and Heritage.

Looking Ahead

In parallel with the development of the national framework and subsequent National DESD Strategy, grassroots action to build a wide and diverse range of DESD activities is growing. Several state and local governments are developing ten-year strategies in ESD. The Australian Sustainable Schools Initiative is being implemented in all states and territories under the auspices of the National Environmental Education Network, comprising representatives from both education and environmental agencies. More than 2,000 Australian schools are participating and achieving significant environmental, social, financial and educational benefits. One Australian state has adopted sustainability as a guiding principle for its whole school education system.

All these initiatives are based upon the partnership approach to implementing the DESD that is being used in Australia. Australia has recognized that planning for the DESD should not be imposed from above. Rather, it should begin with and build upon local understanding of, and practices in, ESD. Another important lesson has been the recognition that there are many stakeholder organizations involved in ESD which have a history of working in isolation, but which actually greatly value opportunities to meet, to share experiences, and to plan collaborative activities. These organizations play a key role in future partnerships.

The Australian Government and community have additionally recognized the need for ESD to reach beyond the very important concern of ecologically sustainable development to also ensure that concern for cultural sustainability, economic vitality, social equity/well-being, and active citizenship are integrated into education at all levels and in all sectors. This broad concept of ESD, which encompasses ecological, socio-cultural, political and economic pillars, lays a good foundation for the development of partnerships that can ensure sustainability.

2. CHINA*

BUILDING ON ENVIRONMENT, POPULATION AND DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Introduction

China has a landmass of 9,600,000 square kilometers and is the world's most populous country, with a population estimated at about 1.3 billion by the end of 2004. The State Council, which is the top administrative body of the People's Republic of China, includes the heads of all governmental agencies. China is administratively made up of 23 provinces, five autonomous regions, four municipalities directly under the Central Government, and two special administrative regions: Hong Kong and Macao. Under the provincial, autonomous region and municipal governments, there are generally two other levels of government. The Chinese National Commission for UNESCO is an agency under the State Council, housed in the Ministry of Education and made up of about 20 central government departments, national agencies and institutions relating to education, science and culture. The Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and Technology, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, China Academy of Sciences and China Academy of Social Sciences encompass the core membership.

* Written by Du Yue, Deputy Secretary-General, Chinese National Commission for UNESCO; Zhang Tiedao, Vice President, Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences; and Qian Lixia, Director, Education for Sustainable Development Research Centre, Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences

Commitment to the Decade

The Chinese National Commission for UNESCO entrusted the Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences with the implementation of environment, population and development (EPD) programming for primary and secondary schools programme in 1998. The programme, which was initiated by UNESCO in the early 1990s, programme has proven successful. The number of schools that participate in the EPD programme is on the increase, and this participation has had a marked impact across the country. In 2003, the head of the Central Government, the Premier Wen Jiabao, wrote directives to encourage the programme's continuation programme among young people. Once the UN DESD was launched in China, the EPD programme then naturally changed to ESD programming.

National Steering Committee

The Chinese National Commission for UNESCO coordinates the ESD programme in China, and a special body, the China Programme Committee of Education for Sustainable Development (CPCESD), was established to oversee national ESD programme implementation. Its secretariat is housed in the Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences.

At the national level, the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Science and Technology and State Environmental Protection Administration are providing guidance for the programme implementation. A network of universities and research institutions has been established to provide academic support for the programme. At the local level, local government departments dealing with education and environmental protection and NGOs help to guide programme implementation.

Initiatives

Between 1998 and the launch of the UN DESD in 2005, a number of initiatives under the EPD programme had been conducted in primary and secondary schools in order to: enhance awareness and the ability of school principals to develop school policy to support the EPD programme; to enhance teachers' awareness and ability to integrate sustainable development into their subject teaching; to strengthen student awareness about sustainable development; and to promote educational quality.

The initiatives enjoyed strong support through links with universities and research institutions. The Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences used its wide connections with institutions of higher learning and research to great advantage. It has mobilized and strengthened research work on EPD, and the findings of this research have been used to contribute to programme implementation by assisting school principals and teachers to develop a better understanding of the necessity and significance of EPD.

By 2005, over 1,000 primary and secondary schools from 11 provinces, regions and municipalities in China had participated in the programme, with approximately 10,000 teachers involved in the programme carrying out activities on EPD in a variety of school-based ways. The activities for EPD within schools are mainly funded by the schools, themselves, with some support from governmental departments and other organizations, including NGOs.

Other initiatives include the publication and dissemination of information relating to experiences and findings in the area of EPD. A journal devoted to ESD has been published since 2001. Originally entitled *Education for EPD in China*, it has now been renamed *Education for Sustainable Development in China* and is being published bi-monthly. Both Chinese- and English-language websites for ESD have been established, and a series of books entitled *Education for Sustainable Development* was published in 2004. The books bear titles such as: *Outlines of Education for EPD in China*; *Collections of Education and Teaching Cases for Secondary Education*; and *Collections of Education and Teaching Cases for Primary Education*.

Another important development for EPD in China has been the development of guiding principles for implementing education for EPD. These guiding principles recognize the need for "student-centred methodology, integrating education for EPD within subject teaching, cooperation and innovation" whereby students have the opportunity to learn by doing, rather than merely relying on knowledge transmission. After the launch of the UN DESD, the programme was renamed ESD and extended to more areas in China. The contents of the programme have been maintained, but implementation was

strengthened. In addition, a project to promote ESD in rural primary and secondary schools was initiated in 2006.

Looking Ahead

While China's economy has maintained fast growth in the past 30 years, this growth has increased pressure on the country's environment and natural resources. The damage caused by pollution of the air, forest, water and land (caused by industrial pollution, improper application of the technology for agriculture and unsustainable lifestyle practices) are receiving more attention. The Chinese Government started implementing a plan to address rural social development in 2006. The plan stipulates the need for improvements in agricultural recycling, natural habitat preservation and ecological practices. Towards these aims, the ESD project currently underway in rural primary and secondary schools will be further strengthened and widened.

3. INDIA*

DEVELOPING INNOVATIVE INITIATIVES

Introduction

India is a sovereign, socialist, and democratic republic with a parliamentary system of government. It has 28 states and 7 union territories. The Constitution provides for a Parliamentary form of government, which is federal in structure with certain unitary features.

The Government of India in the Ministry of Education established the Indian National Commission for UNESCO in 1949. The Minister of Human Resource Development is the President of the Commission, while the Secretary to the Government of India in the Department of Higher Education, Ministry of Human Resource Development, is the Secretary-General of the Commission. The Secretary-General takes overall responsibility for the Commission's work.

* Written by Shailendra K. Sharma, Secretary, Indian National Commission for Co-operation with UNESCO

National Commitment

The Indian National Commission for UNESCO views ESD as the fifth pillar of Education, that is, “learning to transform”. India committed itself to the Decade when it hosted the first International Conference on Education for a Sustainable Future in Ahmedabad in January 2005. Well before this, however, the country had already shown commitment to the concept of ESD through a number of initiatives discussed below.

Coordinating Committee

A National Committee has been established to oversee implementation of the Decade. The committee consists of experts in education, environment, culture, social sciences, science, communication, media and other related fields. Government, civil society, academics and NGOs are represented on the committee, which is chaired by the Secretary, Department of Higher Education. The main tasks of the Committee are to *monitor the implementation of the National DESD Action Plan by recommending and formulating ESD policy options which reflect local-level experience and challenges, setting national ESD priorities, integrating the international priorities of EFA, ESD, MDG, UNLD, etc into country programmes and identifying capacity building needs and expertise.*

The Deputy Secretary General of the Indian National Commission for UNESCO has been nominated as the focal point for DESD implementation. The focal point acts as a one-stop point for dissemination and coordination of all information and activities relating to ESD.

In addition, the Centre for Environment Education (CEE), based in Ahmedabad, in association with the Ministry of Environment & Forest, serves as the nodal institution for implementation of DESD in consultation with the Indian National Commission for UNESCO. Due to its ongoing work in the field of DESD, the CEE has also been nominated as the country’s Centre of Excellence for ESD. The role of this Nodal Agency is: (i) facilitate ESD initiatives nationally (ii) facilitate implementation of a national plan (iii) facilitate networking and linkages among stakeholders (iv) provide a forum for exchange and consultations (v) address capacity building needs through training, material development and sharing of best practices and expertise and (vi) facilitate and advocate national campaigns, events and conferences in support of ESD. The CEE will also act as the Secretariat for all DESD related activities, with the major part of the cost of this Secretariat to be borne by the Indian National Commission.

Initiatives

India formally launched the DESD in the country during the first meeting of the National Committee on DESD in May 2006.

The country has several ongoing initiatives aimed at incorporating social, economic and environmental issues in the country’s development process. These include: the inclusion and integration of environmental education into all levels of formal education; the establishment of national centres for education in human values in different institutions at different levels of education; teacher training for capacity building; distance education through EDUSAT; HIV/Aids Education at the school level; integration of education with the plans for poverty alleviation; and the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan and National Literacy Mission, which address the Education for All and the Millennium Development Goals.

Looking Ahead

To oversee the implementation of DESD in the country, a National Committee consisting of experts and officials from government, civil society, academics and NGOs has been constituted under the chairmanship of the Secretary, Department of Higher Education.

In the second meeting of this Committee, a suggestion came up that the formulation of the Planning Commission’s 11th (five-year) Plan, which is under progress in the country, provides a good opportunity to include various provisions of ESD. As a follow up to this suggestion, a proposal was sent to various commission working groups. It is hoped that the suggestions and action plans contained within the proposal will be considered and included in the Plan.

The National Commission - together with CEE, Ahmedabad and UNESCO - is organizing the Fourth Inter-Governmental Conference on environment education at CEE, Ahmedabad, in the context of the DESD. UNESCO's Executive Board has approved the conference date and lieu, which is set to take place from 26 to 28 November 2007 in Ahmedabad, India.

Other planned activities include: a series of multi-stakeholder consultations at sub-national and national levels to develop the National Action Plan; the launch of the National Action Plan; development of relevant material for ESD such as an adapted tool kit; an electronic forum such as a National DESD website for information sharing and access; and the development of public-private partnerships for funding and better implementation.

The Centre for Environment Education, Ahmedabad (CEE), which is the nodal agency for implementation of DESD in the country, has adopted a three-pronged strategy, which consists of education, demonstration and field trials, and policy level inputs for better implementation of the DESD objectives in the country.

Some selected experiences and case studies reported by CEE are as follows:

Samvaad – A Dialogue on Rural Sustainable Development:

This event, held during December 2004 brought together more than 1200 community representatives, including women and children representatives, from nearly 200 project villages to discuss experiences in sustainable rural development in these communities and plan for the future. Government personnel, NGOs, academics, and other experts also took part in the discussion. Thematic working groups discussed issues of agriculture and livestock, formal education, water and sanitation, governance, joint forest management, wasteland development, and women and health. The exhibitions included panels on village achievements, NGO projects and ICT in the rural sector.

ESD in Formal Education: Capacity-building of Teachers through In-service Teacher Training in Distance Learning Mode – The Green Teacher Programme in India

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CEE, with support from, and in partnership with the Commonwealth of Learning, Vancouver Canada, undertook an experiment in the form of an ODL teacher-training programme in ESD, called The Green Teacher.

Green Teacher is designed as an in-service training programme with the objective to enable teacher-learners to effectively take up environment and sustainable developmental concerns and issues in the classroom, and engages their students in practical, action-oriented activities and projects.

Engaging Communities as Stakeholders in DESD – Jal Sankalp (Pledge for Water) Project in Gujarat

Sustained access to water and sanitation is essential to ensure a better quality of life and enhanced productivity. Local technical interventions are often used to increase access, but these are prone to neglect and misuse due to lack of community understanding and empowerment. The Jal Sankalp (Pledge for Water) initiative carried out by Centre for Environment Education in 28 villages in Gujarat, engages communities in a continuous dialogue that helps sustain water and sanitation systems.

Jal Sankalp uses innovative communication and education approaches like focus group meetings, demonstration and street theatre and mobile kiosks to create awareness and build capacity within the villages. The project has been able to successfully engage the communities in the capacity-building process, encouraging them to take continuous action to improve their water and sanitation systems.

Engaging Stakeholders in ESD – Mission 2007 Scheme of M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation

'Mission 2007' is an innovative Indian initiative that empowers village communities by making information technology accessible to all. Via governmental, civic and corporate partnerships, M.S. Swaminathan Research Foundation has formed a consortium of over 100 volunteer agencies, 22 government

departments, 34 private sector players and 18 academic institutions. The aim is to network 1.2 million Indians (one man and one woman in every village by the year 2007), who will then act as conduits for IT-driven services and knowledge-sharing. Prof. M.S.Swaminathan, renowned agricultural scientist, has been one of the prime movers of the Mission. The programme seeks to include the excluded by providing access to technology.

'One World South Asia' has been the operational secretariat of this programme, which has been supported by the UNDP and SDC and the International Telecommunication Union. This programme has motivated India's neighbouring countries, Nepal to launch its own 'Swabhiman' programme (to create over 1,000 tele-centres) and Bhutan is also about to launch a Mission-2007 style initiative of its own.

4. INDONESIA*

ADDRESSING DISASTER PREPAREDNESS THROUGH THE DECADE

Introduction

Indonesia is the largest island country in the world, with 17,508 islands.⁴ Indonesia has a democratic governance and a presidential system based on the philosophical foundation of “Pancasila.”⁵ Since its recovery from the 1997 economic crisis, Indonesia has experienced a series of natural disasters, notably the tsunami in December 2004 in Aceh, the earthquake in Nias in March 2005, the earthquake in Yogyakarta and Central Java in May 2006, and the earthquake and tsunami in West Java in July 2006.

UNESCO’s Jakarta office has been operating since 1951 under the name of the UNESCO Field Office for Southeast Asian Science Cooperation (SEASCO). Currently, it is also the Regional Bureau for Science for Asia and the Pacific and the UNESCO Representative to Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Timor Leste and Brunei Darussalam. The office works in close collaboration with the Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO.

* Written by Alisher Umarov, Education Officer, UNESCO Jakarta, Usman Syihab, ESD Project Assistant, and Himalchuli Gurung, Programme Specialist for Culture, UNESCO Jakarta

4 www.indonesia.go.id

5 Five interrelated and inseparable principles that guide the state: belief in the one and only God, a just and civilised humanity, the unity of Indonesia, democracy led by wise guidance through consultation/representation, and social justice for the whole Indonesian people.

Commitment to the Decade

Indonesia initially viewed the Decade as an approach to improve environmental protection and conservation measures in the nation. As a result, the Decade was launched nationally in conjunction with the country's World Environment Day observations in 2005. Issues such as saving the environment by reducing pollution, cleaning up the rivers, greening the cities and recycling and reusing garbage were highlighted. A memorandum of understanding was also signed between the Education and Environment ministries in order to develop cooperation in improving environmental understanding amongst communities and preparing human resources to better address environment and conservation issues.

As understanding of the Decade has progressed, Indonesia has made moves to include a wider range of stakeholders and to focus action in other areas of importance to sustainable development. As a result, the country, which suffered greatly during the tsunami of December 2004, has chosen to use disaster reduction as one of its themes for ESD and to use the Decade as an opportunity to strengthen national policies on education for disaster management and preparedness.

National Steering Committee

A specific national steering committee for the DESD has not been established in Indonesia, and coordination has thus far been the responsibility of the Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO. The Commission has worked in close collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Ministry of National Education. It is, however, recognized that a national ESD committee will be required if a national strategy is to be formulated and the DESD implemented effectively across the country. Furthermore, the organizers and coordinators believe there is a need to have a nationwide launch of the DESD in Indonesia, separate from the World Environment Day launch in 2005. Such a launch is viewed as an opportunity to secure interest in and increase momentum for implementing ESD-relevant programmes in the country through a range of advocacy activities and the involvement of mass-media. A national steering committee for the DESD will be well placed to address these needs.

Initiatives

UNESCO Jakarta and the Institute of Technology of Bandung (ITB) conducted a National Workshop on Education for Natural Disaster Preparedness (ENDP) in Asia-Pacific within the context of the UN DESD on 15-16 September 2005. The workshop brought together government agencies, NGOs, international organizations and national and international experts. The key aim of the one-day workshop was to increase awareness of participants of the need for national policies on education for disaster prevention, recognition and preparedness. The workshop also served to identify existing ENDP materials in the country and to highlight the need for producing practical and user-friendly ENDP materials in a more integrated curriculum for school children, communities and those involved in policy-making processes. Though the country has experienced severe natural disasters, informational materials on preparedness and mitigation are very much lacking in schools and communities. Therefore, a Folding Pictures Information Kit and a Simulation Game of Natural Disaster Preparedness called "Disaster Master" have now been produced primarily for junior and senior secondary school students. These two educational materials will soon be translated and printed.

Two officials at Indonesia's Ministry of National Education received training during their participation in the 10th APEID International Conference "Learning Together for Tomorrow: Education for Sustainable Development," held in Bangkok on 6-8 December 2006. Following the Conference, regular meetings have been organized under the coordination of the Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Environment to prepare Indonesia's Strategic Plan of educational programmes that will be conducted during the Decade, and in planning for the DESD's launch. The Ministry of National Education will complement the Strategic Plan of the Ministry of Environment that has already been written and published.

Within the framework of the UN DESD and as part of the UNESCO-UNICEF-Government of Indonesia Creating Learning Communities for Children (CLCC) programme, two training-of-trainers (TOT) modules have been developed based on the principles of "Active, Joyful and Effective Learning" in the areas of primary Social Science. The modules integrate FRESH principles (Focusing Resources on Effective School

Health). Specific emphases have been given to water and sanitation, human rights and peace education. Currently, these modules have been used as CLCC materials for TOT in Makassar (South Sulawesi), and feedback has been received from the participants to further improve the modules.

As an intersectoral UNESCO Education and Culture activity, future programmes will endeavor to raise public awareness and advocacy for World Heritage sites through school education. Major efforts have been taken by UNESCO to protect the Borobudur World Heritage site since 1972. The long-term sustainability of this important monument does not only address the preservation and conservation of the monument, but also addresses public education and awareness-raising about the monument's value and importance. Among the local stakeholders, the younger generation needs to be targeted because they are the future caretakers of this heritage. Therefore, UNESCO will focus its public awareness programming on schools. Due to the Jogjakarta earthquake in May 2006, this activity will be conducted in early 2007 in line with the restoration plans of the demolished Hindu temple Prambanan and Water Palace of Yogyakarta. Currently, consultations have been held with the Department of Culture and Tourism and the Indonesian National Commission for UNESCO.

Looking Ahead

UNESCO Jakarta will play a significant role in continually assisting the Ministry of National Education and other national counterparts in developing and implementing their Strategic Plan of programmes for DESD. In further preparing Indonesia's Strategic Plan, a 2-3-day Stakeholders' Meeting will be held in May 2007, and a national DESD launch will be organized in mid-2007. Endeavors are being made by government officials to have the President of the Republic of Indonesia to officially launch DESD. Through these processes, existing programmes related to ESD implemented by various directorates in the Ministry of National Education and Ministry of Environment, as well as by other parties, will be identified. This "catalogue" of existing programmes will allow better coordination of ESD in the country. In the future, it is hoped that other government and non-government stakeholders will join implementation of DESD by developing their own strategic plans that will complement the endeavors of the Ministry of National Education and the Ministry of Environment.

The CLCC Modules integrating FRESH will be improved based on the input received. Advocacy will be conducted in the use of the modules, especially in the CLCC schools, in 2007. In order to strengthen teachers' capacities on FRESH and ESD, further socialization of the modules and training on the use of the modules within the framework of ESD will also be conducted. Linkages between CLCC and FRESH principles will continually be strengthened within the expansion of the CLCC programme.

In implementing the intersectoral UNESCO Education and Culture activity to raise public awareness and advocacy for World Heritage sites through school education, the Ministry of National Education of Indonesia will produce and disseminate an additional number of copies of the *World Heritage Toolkit* for a number of schools in Indonesia. They will also produce a number copies of a multi-media version (CD-ROM) of the Toolkit; pilot usage of the Toolkit in several schools in Jakarta; and organize a round-table discussion to derive recommendations for further actions needed. The Department of Culture and Tourism will train Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) coordinators, school principals and teachers in the Toolkit's usage.

5. IRAN*

EMPHASIZING THE ROLE OF UNIVERSITIES

Introduction

Iran has a population of approximately 70 million people spread over an area of 1,648,000 square kilometers. The country comprises thirty provinces (*ostanha*), each governed by an appointed governor (*ostāndār*)⁶. The UNESCO Cluster Office for Iran, Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkmenistan is based in Tehran. Iran's UNESCO National Commission comprises around 20 national committees, each of which is composed of between 12 and 20 members. Members of the committees are executives, at the Vice-Minister or Director-General level, from ministries and other governmental organizations. They are highly qualified academics, researchers and experts.

* Written by Reza Samarbakhsh, Programme Officer for Education, UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office.

⁶ Source: Wikipedia - <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Iran>

Commitment to the Decade

ESD in Iran was officially introduced at the national level by the UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office (UTCO) through a national workshop attended by university academics and senior government personnel, including the Minister of Education and several Deputy Ministers. The workshop focused on developing specific actions during the Decade to reinforce commitment to the Education for All (EFA) goals, the United Nations Literacy Decade (UNLD) and cross-cutting issues such as environment, poverty alleviation, gender and human rights. One hundred sixty-one research and discussion papers were presented on these subjects by the main national universities.

Prior to the workshop, the UTCO carried out a number of preparatory activities to introduce ESD to government officials. These included: meetings and discussions with different officials; translation of the Asia-Pacific Situational Analysis and Regional Strategy Working Paper into Farsi; and dissemination of this material to universities and research centres. These proactive preliminary activities helped build a receptive environment which, in turn, elicited enthusiastic national commitment and action.

National Steering Committee

The National Workshop on ESD resulted in a decision, supported by government counterparts, to establish a National Secretariat for ESD. To create this committee, the UTCO worked closely with the workshop organizers, who formed a temporary coordinating secretariat immediately after the workshop to introduce ESD to all relevant ministries. As a result of persistent follow-up and the alignment of DESD with the 5-year national development programme, 20 representatives from different ministries and governmental organizations met to form the technical committee of the secretariat with full authority on behalf of their ministry or organization.

In early June 2005, the Iran National ESD Secretariat (INES) was formed under the direction of the Minister of Education. INES membership reflects the broad, all-encompassing nature of ESD and includes representatives from the tourism, culture, education, media, environment, science and research, health, women, social welfare and planning sectors. All members were nominated by their ministries or organizations to serve on the committee.

The INES has responsibility for ensuring the realization of DESD goals in Iran and also acts as the national focal point for ESD. Representatives are tasked with holding regular meetings to assess the current situation of ESD and to identify/develop projects that are based on DESD goals and in line with Iran's sustainable development priorities. The committee plans to publish regular informative publications, exchange experts at both cluster and regional levels, provide study visits for academics and decision-makers, and hold meetings at both national and provincial levels.

Initiatives

In 2005, the INES actively worked with the UTCO education section to translate several ESD documents, namely the latest ESD package presented during a regional Education staff meeting at UNESCO's Bangkok office in August of that year. The subsequent translated ESD package introduced high-ranking governmental officials to ESD programming goals, projects and resources. Other specific ESD projects and activities are yet to be developed in Iran; however, it is expected that the momentum gained at this early stage will continue into the Decade.

The INES has both official authority and academic capacities. It is therefore well-placed to develop, introduce and implement projects. This partnership approach between university and government representatives should ensure a smoother approval process for projects within the government system.

Another UTCO activity in the field of DESD was assisting the Iran National Commission for UNESCO in the joint activity, "6th Teacher Training Workshop in Central and South-West Asia on Social Justice and Sustainable Development in Education." This workshop took place in Tehran in June 2006, and involved the participation of trainers from Afghanistan, Pakistan and Turkmenistan.

Finally, in a demonstration of effective cooperation between UTCO and UNESCO's Regional Bureau for Education, Iran received Japanese Funds-in-Trust (JFIT) financing in 2006. This funding was allocated

for translating and launching ESD documents in Farsi, which in turn promises to assist future UTCO ESD activities in Iran. A national launch for this project was held with 100 selected participants from ministries, universities, non-governmental organizations and United Nations agencies to contribute their technical expertise to the undertaking. The launch introduced the translated ESD package/documents for top officials of the new government and familiarize the participants with ESD global initiative and targets, IENS goals and the roles of UNESCO and other UN Agencies.

Looking Ahead

The Iranian Government has expressed its willingness to push ESD forward, and closer cooperation is expected between the Ministries of Education (MoE) and Science, Research & Technology (MSRT) in this area. The MoE has placed ESD among its responsibilities, and has made an effort to promote ESD at the Deputy Minister level. As a result, there has already been expanded cooperation and better coordination of sustainable development efforts, which has significantly also involved the participation of Iran's National Commission for UNESCO. UTCO also hopes to further incorporate other UN agencies into its DESD efforts.

6. JAPAN*

A COMPREHENSIVE RESPONSE TO CHANGING VALUES AND LIFESTYLES

Introduction

Having experienced serious problems with environmental pollution during the rapid industrialization of the 1960's, Japan has made a concerted effort to achieve economic development in harmony with the environment. During this period of rapid economic growth, the practice of mass production, mass consumption and mass disposal had become commonplace. Japan found the need for changes in values and lifestyles essential, especially for developed countries. Education was considered an essential element in bringing about this transformation.

* Written by Mayumi Ogawa, Japanese National Commission for UNESCO

Commitment to the Decade

With this background, Japan already possessed the basic elements to propel ESD. Furthermore, Junichiro Koizumi, the Prime Minister at that time, submitted proposals related to ESD at the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in 2002. Japan also presented the draft resolution on DESD at the General Assembly of the United Nations, and it was adopted in cooperation with other Member States. This resolution served as the starting point for Japan's engagement in the DESD.

National Steering Committee

There are two major national steering bodies in Japan: the "Inter-ministerial Meeting on DESD" and the "Round Table." The Inter-ministerial Meeting on DESD is actively leading the implementation of DESD with its mandate to draw a close partnership between government agencies and to promote comprehensive and effective action plans in relation to DESD. At another level, the Round Table established under the Inter-ministerial Meeting aims to exchange opinions on a strategy to promote ESD. It comprises government officials, academic experts, educators, and representatives from non-profit organizations, industries and the mass media who support national DESD activities. Experts are selected based on their knowledge and experience, which are measured by depth and diversity.

Initiatives

The most recent contribution made by these bodies is the National Action Plan for DESD, which was discussed, drafted and elaborated after receiving comments from the public. The National Action Plan aims to help coordinate DESD activities based on UNESCO's International Implementation Scheme for the DESD and the Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy prepared by UNESCO Bangkok. The National Action Plan was launched at the 3rd Asia Cooperation Dialogue on Environmental Education (June 2006) in front of an audience of Japanese and other Asian country government representatives, NGOs, various media representatives and members of the general public. UNESCO Bangkok and United Nations University (UNU) also participated.

Within government agencies, efforts have been made to disseminate the concept of ESD and the National Action Plan through various symposiums, brochures and website postings. Moreover, the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) assists in establishing Centres of Excellence (COEs) and implementing innovation programmes related to ESD in developing countries of the Asia-Pacific region. In addition to government agencies and NGOs, various institutions and organizations (including schools, local communities, media, teacher training and vocational centres, social education centres, and public facilities) have been engaged in ESD.

Looking Ahead

While Japan promotes awareness of ESD throughout various channels, it faces several challenges. For example, even though linkages between various stakeholders from different domains have been established, the actual participation from these groups is highly variable. It has been recognized that this is largely due to the multi-focal nature of ESD and the diverse understandings of the concept. To address this, consideration is being given to the development of an ESD slogan which is more appealing to citizens.

For successful rollout of ESD, Japan considers that it is necessary to accumulate good practices and deepen public understanding of the concept. Other key challenges include teacher training, building of local linkages and networks, and the identification of triggers for action in ESD throughout the Decade.

Japan expects UNESCO to enhance its role as a clearinghouse by collecting and disseminating examples of good practice. This would include improving UNESCO's website by translating key material into Japanese and other Asian languages; placing the International Implementation Scheme for DESD in a more visible part of the website; and providing easily searchable information on the efforts of each nation in ESD.

Japan also expects that UNESCO will continue to take actions such as promoting UN organizations and

inter-regional networking; holding intellectual fora to develop and clarify ESD concepts; disseminating these concepts in a way that is easily understandable for all; and providing teaching materials, visual images and resources that are helpful for enlightening activities.

7. REPUBLIC OF KOREA*

BUILDING ESD INTO NATIONAL SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMMES

Introduction

The Republic of Korea covers the southern part of the Korean Peninsula, which is surrounded by China, Russia, Japan and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea. The Republic of Korea has a population of approximately 48 million people spread over an area of 99,600 square kilometers, which comprises 9 provinces and 7 metropolitan cities. The Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) is composed of 60 members, and includes the General Assembly, the Executive Committee and the Secretariat. The Secretariat, headed by the Secretary-General, consists of three divisions: Division of Strategic Programmes, Division of Administration and Management, Division of Partnership Projects and the Bureau of Planning and External Relations.

* Written by Soonho Choi, Korean National Commission for UNESCO and Sun-Kyung Lee, Cheongju National University of Education, Republic of Korea

Commitment to the Decade

The Korean National Commission for UNESCO has shown commitment to the DESD since 2005. It has focused its efforts on distributing and promoting the concept of ESD among policy makers, researchers and teachers. The KNCU has also participated in a research project to establish the national ESD strategy, which was initiated and supported by the Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development (PCSD).

National Steering Committee

The PCSD has taken responsibility for DESD activities through its Committee for the Implementation of Sustainable Development in its 4th Term (2006-2008) and its Committee of International Cooperation and Education in its 3rd Term (2003-2005). The function of the PCSD is to deliberate the direction of national plans for sustainable national development and issues concerning the establishment and implementation of policies on water, energy, local Agenda 21, major international environmental conventions and follow-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). It also deals with conflicts relating to sustainable development with a special Committee for Conflict Management Policy established under the Commission. The Commission conducts research in ESD-relevant areas and provides a forum for dialogue between government, private sector and civic society in an effort to establish a national consensus on ESD. The Commission has also helped to improve public participation in ESD, improving representation of NGOs, teachers and religious organizations.

Initiatives

Within the PCSD, discussion about implementation of the DESD began in the Committee for the Implementation of Sustainable Development in February 2004, and was later carried over to the research project for developing the National Strategy for DESD in 2005. The main researchers comprised experts from universities, schools, environmental NGOs and KNCU. Consultations were made with other national NGOs, government officials and experts from Australia, Austria, France, Japan, South Africa, Sweden and the United Kingdom. The research report highlighted the current state of ESD in Korea - in schools, the society, the private sector and higher education institutions. Recommendations for implementation of ESD at the national level included:

- Establishing the legal and administrative base for ESD
- Constructing the national ESD implementation system, including a national ESD agency and local ESD centres
- Establishing a comprehensive implementation plan for ESD
- Expanding the educational and training opportunities for building ESD capacity
- Establishing a research and development system for supporting ESD
- Strengthening solidarity and communication among ESD stakeholders
- Promoting the integration of education into practical action for ESD
- Establishing a system for monitoring and evaluation of ESD implementation

The draft of national strategy for the DESD has been shared during numerous meetings with various stakeholders, including government officials, local Agenda 21 representatives, teachers, NGO representatives and researchers. Such a process contributed to information sharing and triggered discussions and debates on ESD among stakeholders involved. Based on this consultation process, which lasted a total of 14 months, the implementation plan for the DESD was established and announced by PCSD in 2006.

In 2006, attempts to integrate ESD into the national curriculum revision process were carried out by PCSD in cooperation with educational experts. Revisions concerning integration of ESD into the curriculum involved various elements, such as integrating ESD into subjects and extracurricular activities.

The establishment of a United Nations University (UNU) Regional Centre of Expertise for ESD (RCE) was also an innovative initiative for ESD in Korea. Tong Yeong, a harbour city at the southern end of the country, was designated as an RCE by UNU in 2006, and has established an RCE Commission responsible for planning and implementing SD/ESD activities in close cooperation with universities. Many of the

planned programmes are related to the preservation of the city's maritime heritage. One elementary and one secondary school each have been designated as ESD research schools. KNCU, in cooperation with Tong Yeong RCE, is conducting a project to develop a teacher's manual on ESD with researchers and teachers from and ASPnet schools. A number of other planned programmes will begin over the next few years. Also, Incheon (another harbour city on the western coast of the country) was designated as a UNU RCE in 2006.

The UNESCO ASPnet has been a useful tool in strengthening the implementation of ESD activities at the national level. Educational resources on ESD have been distributed mainly through ASPnet schools.

Korea is also participating in UNESCO's activities for the promotion of ESD among ASPnet and the development of trainer's guide at the regional level. A sub-regional training workshop on "World Heritage Education (WHE) for Education for Sustainable Development" for ASPnet teachers in East Asia was held in Seoul in 2006, under the framework of a Mobile Training Team (MTT) project. This workshop was co-hosted by UNESCO Bangkok, UNESCO Beijing and KNCU, in cooperation with the Cultural Heritage Administration and Suwon City, in order to provide ASPnet teachers from East Asian countries with information about world heritage education and ESD, assist in learning how to infuse ESD in WHE, and share their experiences. A teacher trainers' guide on WHE/ESD will be developed and distributed by UNESCO Bangkok and UNESCO Beijing among East Asian Member States in early 2007 for in-country training workshops in respective countries.

Looking Ahead

Korea views as critical the need to raise public awareness about ESD and to gain the political will of governmental bodies, particularly those of the Korean legislature. While a lot of effort has gone into awareness-raising through forums and the publication of brochures on ESD/SD, the majority of the Korean public still does not have a good understanding of ESD. Research conducted by the PCSD national strategy research team found that a majority of teachers said they had never heard the term before. Furthermore, many teachers view sustainable development as "continuing development," while there is no agreed consensus among scholars and experts about the definition of ESD. As part of an attempt to address this issue, a new brochure is being developed by local Agenda 21 with ESD experts. A Task Force for ESD, which will deal with training programmes for government officials and the development of a comprehensive ESD plan, has been formed within the PCSD. PCSD has also recognized the need for a national ESD committee to discuss the overall picture of ESD in Korea on a regular basis.

The role of local governments is considered essential for the success of ESD because sustainable development is an issue so closely related to community members' daily lives. Local governments can provide the necessary links to the community in receiving and developing ESD-related ideas.

Another area of action is that of improving coordination between PCSD and the ministries. It has become evident that the public is not aware of what the PCSD is doing, and that promotion of activities and achievements should be further strengthened.

8. MONGOLIA*

BUILDING ESD THROUGH FORMAL AND NON-FORMAL EDUCATION

Introduction

Mongolia represents a vast territory (1,564,116 square kilometers) featuring a wide range of topographical diversity, such as deserts, steppes, plains and mountains and has four seasons with a relatively long and cold winter with 2.8 million population.

Mongolia's political system is parliamentary democracy. It is divided for administrative purposes into 21 provinces ("aimags"), grouped into five geographical regions, and the capital city district of Ulaanbaatar.

The Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO is headed by the Minister of Education Culture and Science, and comprises of the Secretary-General, 17 members, five full time secretariats and three of them are Programme Officers.

The Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO cooperates with the Ministry of Education Culture and Science, the Ministry of Nature and Environment, other relevant governmental and nongovernmental organizations.

* Adyasuren Tsokhio, Environmental Education and Research Institute ECO Asia, Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia.

Commitment to the Decade

In response to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD), the Government of Mongolia has developed the policy document, entitled “Sustainable Development Programme for the XXI century in Mongolia” to set up the Ecology education system and deliver the Education for Sustainable Development accordingly, where the following objectives have been set forward:

- To establish a system to provide life-skills education through the formal and non-formal education means.
- To establish an effective information, evaluation and monitoring system for the implementation of educational standards at all levels and to ensure the public participation
- To set up new system of technical and vocational education in order to supply sufficient human resource to cope with the sustainable development strategy, regional development, labor market and employment strategy as well
- To create a favorable environment for providing the ecology education at all levels of schooling

National Steering Committee

The Mongolian National Commission for UNESCO is implementing the DESD in collaboration with Governmental and Non-governmental ESD related Organizations and Institutions in Mongolia.

The Government of Mongolia has established a National Council for Sustainable Development in 1996 to oversee the development and implementation of Mongolia’s sustainable development strategies. The current main tasks of the Council are to manage and coordinate the implementation of Mongolian Action Plan for the 21st Century (MAP-21) that has been created through on-going process of consultation among a wide spectrum of stakeholders at both national and local level.

The National Council for Sustainable Development of Mongolia, in collaboration with the Environmental Education & Research Institute ECO ASIA, has been implementing various activities on Education on Sustainable Development in Universities of Mongolia during 2002-2006.

Looking Ahead

Building a national plan is an important initial step in creating a national response to the DESD. The time has come for Mongolia to elaborate national DESD strategies in close cooperation with relevant governmental organizations, NGOs and interested partners. The country must also develop and disseminate guidelines and training materials. Although it is essential that these strategies be closely connected with general worldwide DESD concepts, Mongolia’s unique natural, climatic, ecological and cultural features as well as its indigenous tradition, customs and values, should be taken into consideration. It is important to unite the efforts of governmental organizations, NGOs, private sector partners, and the general population in order to achieve popular support for sustaining Mongolia’s ESD efforts.

9. NEW ZEALAND^{*}

ESTABLISHING A COMMON VISION

Introduction

New Zealand is an island in the Pacific Ocean with a total area of 268,680 square kilometers and a population of 4,076,140. The country's government is a parliamentary democracy, which administers 16 regions and one territory.⁷ The New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO comprises a chair and five specialists appointed by the Minister for Education in the areas of UNESCO's mandate. The secretariat for New Zealand's National Commission for UNESCO is based at the Ministry of Education and consists of the Secretary General, two full time equivalent Programme Officers, and an Executive Officer.

* Written by Hayden Montgomerie, Education Programme Officer, New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO

⁷ Source: CIA Facts - <http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/nz.html>

Commitment to the Decade

The New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO decided early in 2004 that the UN DESD was an important initiative that aligned well with national policies. The impetus for action was provided by a group of non-governmental organizations, which, in collaboration with the National Commission, organized a stakeholder workshop comprising around 90 key stakeholder groups, including government agencies. Limited funding assistance was made available by the National Commission to support groups to travel to the event from outside of Wellington. This workshop demonstrated that the DESD was an initiative that must become a high priority for the National Commission. A government agency meeting was convened in 2004 to assist with the development of a government position on DESD. Recently, the Government has committed NZD13 million of new funding towards existing education for sustainable development initiatives over the next four years.

Steering Committee

The New Zealand Coordinating Committee for the DESD was appointed in December 2004 to plan and lead the New Zealand response to the Decade. An important feature of this group is the diverse range of backgrounds from which members hail. Members do not merely represent education interests, but have been selected for their public profile and standing in the business community, commitment to and understanding of sustainable development and for their understanding of New Zealand's diverse cultural environment. The initial Chair of the Committee was a well-known and respected member of the New Zealand business community and Chairperson of the New Zealand Business Council for Sustainable Development. The Coordinating Committee is united by an appreciation that education is critical to the achievement of broader sustainable development goals.

Initiatives

A national launch for the UN DESD in New Zealand was held in conjunction with Eco-Show, a national trade fair focused on sustainable development. The launch, held on 5 March 2005, was considered essential for building public and private sector interest in the Decade. The launch occasion was marked by dance, drama and enthusiastic words from a range of speakers, including a representative of UNESCO Bangkok. Students from a UNESCO Associated Project Network (ASPnet) School, as well as government representatives and members of the media and private sectors, attended the event. A special fashion show, "From Trash to Fashion," concluded the launch event.

The National Coordinating Committee for the DESD met for the first time on the day of the launch. The challenge for the Committee members was to establish a way to foster a collective understanding and process to develop a New Zealand response. The first meeting canvassed the Committee members' views and identified some of the issues that would need to be tackled. One such issue was the language surrounding sustainable development which, it was noted, must be made accessible to a wide audience in order to promote the ESD concept. The need to support and complement existing work in the ESD arena, rather than duplicating effort, was seen as essential. The Committee rose to its first challenge by agreeing to a facilitated session to clarify its own ESD vision, and to develop processes for implementation of this vision. At a subsequent meeting, the Committee undertook a rapid planning process to develop a 'vision' of New Zealand in 10 years time following implementation of successful ESD projects as imagined by the Committee. From this, priority elements were identified and strategies to achieve them developed. This process was challenging for all participants and allowed a collective vision to be created that was stronger than any individuals thinking alone. The process took participants outside their comfort zones and forced Committee members to identify some key building blocks to realize their ESD aims. This intense period of planning and development culminated in decisions for action being taken at subsequent meetings.

Looking Ahead

The key conclusions that emerged from the facilitated planning session were that: 1) there is a need to focus on 'branding' and other communication tools for ESD, and 2) significant resourcing would be imperative to implement the projects. The Coordinating Committee has developed the phrase "making the good things last" into a by-line for its work to help translate the concepts of the DESD into a meaningful catch-phrase for the public.

Members also felt that they needed to develop a strong team with clear direction and effective internal processes, but that they must also have fun in order for the process to sustain itself. Smaller working groups have since been established to work on specific projects and report back to the regular Committee teleconferences. The Committee is also working with education providers to develop options for addressing specific issues relevant to individual stakeholder groups.

One of the constraints that the Committee must face concerns human resources. Members are all voluntary and all engaged in full-time employment. Therefore, not only financial constraints exist, but perhaps more importantly, there are time constraints. This is balanced by a lot of enthusiasm and a strong diverse base of member expertise. The National Commission funds and hosts within its Secretariat a part-time coordinator position that is crucial to achieving progress with this work. Committed individuals are essential to maintaining momentum in work for sustainable development. Indeed, keys to the country's success will be clear identification of required actions and the development of strong partnerships that will allow the Committee to mobilize other key individuals, agencies and organizations.

The New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO convened a second Stakeholder Workshop for the DESD in Auckland in October 2006. The objectives of this meeting were to review progress towards the implementation of the DESD in New Zealand, to renew a collective vision for the DESD in New Zealand, and to strengthen and build new partnerships to provide a vehicle for other organizations to implement the aims of the DESD within their organizations and their work. The Coordinating Committee worked closely with Sustainable Aotearoa New Zealand (SANZ) to facilitate this workshop, which is being funded by the National Commission. It is envisaged that the National Commission will continue to convene these biennial stakeholder workshops (as well as others) in order to play a much greater role in the monitoring and evaluation of New Zealand's DESD's implementation.

The major lesson learned to date is the important roles that a cohesive group approach (facilitated in this case by a planning process) plays. While it is acknowledged that this approach may not have delivered the 'perfect' solution for ESD in New Zealand, it has provided a process to quickly focus a large group of diverse individuals and organizations. The plan provides some manageable steps with which busy people can cope, as well as a clear direction. Of course, the need for at least one person to manage an overall coordination role remains as important for this project as for other sustainable development projects. Most importantly, however, the preparation work undertaken over the first two years of the UN DESD has allowed the New Zealand Coordinating Committee to build a 'sustainable' process that has focused energy and efforts on empowering the Coordinating Committee to deliver tangible results.

10. PAKISTAN*

NATIONAL EMPOWERMENT THROUGH INDIVIDUAL COMMITMENT

Introduction

Pakistan is bordered by Iran, Afghanistan, China, India and the Arabian Sea. It has an area of 790,096 square kilometers and a population of approximately 150 million people.⁸ The country has a federal government system made up of four provinces and two territories. UNESCO Islamabad's main programmes include EFA coordination & monitoring, literacy and teacher education. In addition, since October 2005, the office has been actively contributing to earthquake recovery efforts through capacity-building programmes targeted at education managers and teachers and through various activities to support secondary, vocational, and non-formal education.

* Written by UNESCO Islamabad.

⁸ Source: <http://www.infopak.gov.pk/profile.aspx>

National Commitment to the Decade

A number of factors have contributed to inform and underpin efforts aimed at promoting the DESD in Pakistan. These include: strong advocacy for the DESD; the availability of information on ESD and DESD; a good understanding by key stakeholders of ESD's meaning; the involvement of influential groups such as the Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Education, UNESCO and the World Conservation Union (IUCN) Pakistan; and the appeal, potential and promise embodied by the idea of ESD. These factors have helped create an enabling environment that has facilitated communication, interaction, dialogue, cooperation and creation of relevant synergies and partnerships in support of the Decade.

The UNESCO Islamabad office conducted a focused advocacy and information programme aimed at developing understanding of ESD and the Decade amongst key stakeholders through an interactive and cooperative process. A series of one-on-one meetings and explanatory sessions were held to provide these groups with comprehensive information about ESD and the Decade. The Asia-Pacific Situational Analysis and the Working Paper for a Regional Strategy for ESD served as the key documents for this work. A major outcome of this effort was the much-needed involvement and commitment of the Ministries of Education and Environment. This effort was further supported by the consultative workshops on ESD organized by IUCN Pakistan in 2005-6, which focused on awareness-raising for ESD among key stakeholders in the education and communication sectors. One of the workshops also advocated for integration of ESD into the national curriculums at school and college levels through an environmental education project which is already underway at the Ministry of Education.

National Steering Committee

Pakistan does not yet have a formal national lead agency for the Decade; however efforts are now taking place to create a broad-based "National ESD Forum" tasked with the development of a strategic framework for the implementation of the Decade in Pakistan. The National Forum will lay the foundation for building and mobilizing effective and sustainable partnerships for ESD. UNESCO and IUCN, together with the Ministries of the Environment and Education, have formed an informal but operational core group that has spearheaded the introduction and continuous promotion of ESD in Pakistan.

Initiatives

In anticipation of the DESD's official national launch in September 2005, UNESCO and IUCN Pakistan cooperated in the adaptation and translation into Urdu of the *Education for Sustainable Development Toolkit* by Rosalyn McKeown. The launch, itself, was a joint effort between the IUCN, UNESCO and other UN agencies. Key stakeholders and partners – governmental, civil society organization, bilateral and multilateral donors, researchers and academics – were invited. Speakers included the Minister of Environment, Federal Education Secretary, Director of UNESCO Islamabad and the Head of IUCN Pakistan. Issues highlighted in the speeches included: the importance of quality education in meeting the challenges of sustainable development in Pakistan; the need to "unlearn" those things that currently impede sustainable development; the importance of locally relevant teaching and learning processes; and the need to build good partnerships to make ESD a reality. In addition, IUCN Pakistan and one of the district governments together developed a local level education plan that integrated ESD concerns. Significantly, it was the first such effort in the country to demonstrate ESD linkages in local-level educational planning.

Looking Ahead

Based on the overall vision of the Decade, the findings and recommendations of the Situational Analysis of ESD in the Asia-Pacific Region and the core ESD issues outlined in the Asia-Pacific Regional Strategy for ESD, the following priority areas will be addressed in Pakistan:

- i. development and dissemination of advocacy material on ESD
- ii. re-orientation of the education system to support ESD
- iii. integration of the media and the private sector into ESD efforts

A number of challenges for ESD have been identified by current actors and partners. Chief among these is the Decade's broad and ambitious agenda. Many key stakeholders and partners have expressed the

view that the ESD agenda is too big and overwhelming. A second challenge relates to the resistance coming from old, rigidly organized institutions and mindsets that do not easily entertain new ideas and new ways of doing things. A third difficulty concerns constraints related to the availability and allocation of resources and, finally, there are limitations on the capacities required for the implementation and institutionalization of ESD in Pakistan.

11. THAILAND*

ADVANCING THE KING'S NEW THEORY OF DEVELOPMENT THROUGH THE DECADE

National Commitment to the Decade

The DESD was considered by Thailand to align well with His Majesty the King of Thailand's "Sufficiency Economy Theory" on development for a more sustainable Thailand. The Sufficiency Economy aims to enable Thailand to pursue a balanced and sustainable development in the globalizing world. The philosophy encourages people to achieve a sustainable way of life that is in harmony with existing domestic resources and local knowledge. People are, thus, at the centre of development. His Majesty King Bhumibol Adulyadej has called for instigated approaches to self-sufficiency in farming and managing the economy in the country, with poverty alleviation and land management being important goals. The Decade provides further impetus for such approaches, and many government agencies as well as other public and private sector organizations have initiated separate projects to this end.

The Government of Thailand is also committed to educational reforms in order to develop Thailand into a knowledge-based society, which is considered a pre-requisite for developing a knowledge-based economy. The reforms will provide the Thai public with equal access to life-long education and training, enabling them to acquire knowledge and capital to generate income and to address economic and social issues. To this end, the Government has pledged to abide by the theme, "Education Builds the Nation, Empowers the Individual and Generates Employment."⁹

* Written by Kanittha Hanirattisai, Bureau of International Cooperation, Ministry of Education, Thailand

9 Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website: <http://www.mfa.go.th/web/17.php>

National Steering Committee

Thailand has not yet established a coordination mechanism to manage the many different groups involved in DESD and related activities. There is, however, a growing recognition of the need for a more systematic and coordinated approach to sustainable development education. A recent survey by the Bureau of International Cooperation showed that over 1,000 education-related activities have been undertaken under the Ministry of Education, Ministry of Public Health, Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security in recent years. There is an obvious need to determine what has been done, identify actual outcomes of these projects and look at ways of ensuring that limited human and financial resources are used efficiently in order to achieve maximum benefit for the people.

Initiatives

Despite the lack of a coordinating body, a number of initiatives have been successfully undertaken in line with government education policy to address a variety of issues, including poverty alleviation; information technology and the digital divide; environmental protection and management; preventative health education; and cultural diversity and intercultural understanding.

Literacy, for example, is considered by the Government as essential in addressing the poverty issue, which is further regarded as the first step to achieving sustainable development. To this end, several projects have been implemented to help ensure that all children have access to and receive education of good quality. One example of the Government's push to activate concerns for quality secondary education in Thailand is its project to provide scholarships to study abroad to one student from every district of the country. Students chosen for this project must have a strong academic record and come from a poor family. These students are able to choose whether to continue their studies at higher education institutes in Thailand or overseas. This project has resulted in unprecedented access to quality education for students from remote areas throughout Thailand.

Through formal, non-formal and informal education, Thailand has implemented several projects and activities for the poor and disadvantaged. The provision of education has been expanded to include those living in remote rural areas, the handicapped, ethnic groups, children from construction sites, street children, child laborers, women, and children without birth certificates.

In transforming Thailand towards a modernized and wisdom-based society, the Government aims to maximize the competitive advantage of human capital and narrow the knowledge and digital gaps nationally and globally. To achieve this aim, the country's education system is being reformed to ensure access to quality education for all. All classrooms have been equipped with modern technology - computers and access to the Internet - so that students can access their education beyond textbooks and classrooms. Virtual libraries have been developed and serve as a gateway to knowledge for people of all ages. Information technology is used in various types of education. Distance education programmes at all levels are also becoming an increasingly important element of education strategy. Videoconferences are encouraged for sharing information and knowledge among people.

Religion, culture and sports have been integrated into the education and training curriculum offered to children and youth with a view to promoting harmony and peace in Thai society. Curriculum and teaching materials for peace and values education, film presentations, debates and workshops have been widely developed for students and teachers in Thailand.

Major Steps

To help further in its commitment to implementing the DESD, Thailand proposes to host a National Seminar and Workshop on Education for Sustainable Development in mid-2006. Educators, teachers and officials who are involved in Education for Sustainable Development will be invited to participate. The outcome of the National Seminar and Workshop will provide an input for a study to launch medium- and long-term strategies for ESD, and a national committee will be set up to ensure that concerned activities will be implemented. To complement this work, the Ministry of Education also plans to produce a report of the ESD situation in Thailand. This report will serve as a guideline for government agencies, education institutions and other partners in promoting ESD in Thailand.

12. UZBEKISTAN*

PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE THROUGH A FOCUS ON LIFELONG LEARNING

Introduction

Uzbekistan is situated in Central Asia and has the largest population in the sub-region (approximately 26 million people). The territory of Uzbekistan is 447,000 square kilometers. About 60 percent of the population lives in rural areas, and almost 99 percent of the population are literate. Although Uzbekistan has already achieved universal primary education - the goal stipulated in the Millennium Declaration - there is evidence that the access, content, processes, and organization of Uzbekistan's education system should be re-organized to better serve the needs of changing economic, social and political conditions.

* Written by Alisher Ikramov, Secretary General of the National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO

National Commitment

In response to the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, Uzbekistan's Ministry of Higher and Specialized Education, Ministry of Public Education and the State Committee for Nature Protection elaborated a national programme on "Development of Environmental Education and Perspectives of Improvement of Preparing and Retraining Ecologist Personnel in Uzbekistan for 2006-2010." A national policy on ESD will be developed based on this programme. The programme, itself, aims to improve the quality of all forms of education and address various components of ESD, with particular focus on the preservation and better management of the natural environment. Another component of the programme is the development of museums that feature local culture in the different regions of Uzbekistan.

Coordinating Committee

The Coordination Council of Environmental Education and Education for Sustainable Development consists of representatives from the Ministry of Public Education, Ministry of Higher and Specialized Education, State Committee for Nature Protection, National Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan for UNESCO, UNESCO Office in Tashkent, universities and NGOs. The Council has responsibility for coordinating the DESD in Uzbekistan; organizing national, regional and international conferences on ESD; integrating ESD into all levels of society; organizing ESD training for government leaders, key decision-makers and implementers; and developing monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for ESD implementation efforts in Uzbekistan.

Initiatives

A national launch of the UN DESD was organized in May 2006 by the UNESCO Office in Tashkent, the National Commission of the Republic of Uzbekistan for UNESCO and the National University of Uzbekistan.

An important ESD-related initiative is the establishment and development of Community Learning Centres (CLC) in Uzbekistan. CLCs promote the concept of lifelong learning, which was introduced here in 1999. The project was supported by UNESCO within the framework of the Asia-Pacific Programme for Education for All (APPEAL). Ten CLCs and one CLC Resource Centre have since been created through the National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO. Several additional CLCs that focus on handicraft skills development were established by the UNESCO Office Tashkent (such as carpet weaving, traditional paper making, ceramics, traditional music instruments, etc.). Due to the fact that the majority of the population lives in a rural social environment and possesses a strong sense of community, CLCs provide an opportunity for individuals to acquire knowledge and life skills through structured activities and non-formal learning. The CLC environment also encourages people from within a community to make and follow their own educational plans and programmes. Over the past five years, the CLC programmes in Uzbekistan have developed and evolved in accordance with the changing needs of the society.

In order to contribute to the society's lifelong learning process, the National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO initiated several projects during 2005-2006, including: the Adult Learning Centre at the Academy for State and Society Construction (ESD training programmes for policy makers, community leaders, mass media experts), the Centre for Peace Education and Intercultural Understanding at the University of World Economy and Diplomacy (networking among universities and NGOs in elaboration of new type training manuals on peace and tolerance values) and the UNESCO Chair on Knowledge Economy at the Westminster International University in Tashkent (cross-disciplinary research and training programmes on ESD).

Another initiative has been a waste management project. The National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO has adapted and published an educational kit on PLANET 3 "Waste Management" (facilitator guide, booklet, poster and video-cartoon) with the financial support of the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU). The educational kits were distributed among UNESCO Associated Project Network (ASPnet) schools, CLCs, provincial educational branches of the Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan and among educators of the Avloni National Teacher Training Institute. This kit has now been duplicated and distributed by UNDP Tashkent and the European Union/UNDP project on "Enhancement of Living Standards in Karakalpakstan and Namangan Region of Uzbekistan." Various grassroots seminars, training

programmes and regular on-line Internet forums are also being organized by the National Commission, in collaboration with the Ministry of Public Education, the State Committee for Nature Protection and the UNDP Office in Uzbekistan.

UNESCO's Tashkent office has also been working in close cooperation with Uzbekistan National University and the Ministry of Public Education to carry out local language adaptation and publication of the UNESCO training manuals, *Education for Sustainable Development* and *Earthquake Preparedness*, respectively.

Looking Ahead

The UNESCO National Commission works in collaboration with UN Agencies and local partners to organize an annual educational youth camp, entitled "Youth and Sustainable Development: Environment for Healthy Life." This project targets 200 young people between 14-16 years of age from UNESCO ASPnet members in Uzbekistan and UNDP-funded "Internet Schools in Uzbekistan". The programme for the camp is designed to provide considerable opportunity for group and plenary discussions and activities on a wide range of themes beyond environmental issues, including healthy lifestyle, cultural and natural heritage, tolerance and youth values, and ICT applications. The programme also includes various sports and cultural activities. These activities were highly recognized by UNESCO. In December 2001, the Director-General of UNESCO presented the Peace in Our Hands Prize to the National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO in recognition of contributions made to promote education in favor of a culture of peace, non-violence and international understanding.

A three-year cooperation project with the Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU, Republic of Korea, Seoul/Inchon) on "Education for International Understanding" was initiated in September 2006 by holding the first Consultative Meeting for Central Asia. The project will establish networking among scholars and educators in the field of developing policy relating to education for international understanding.

The National Commission of Uzbekistan for UNESCO in close collaboration with the Ministry of Public Education of Uzbekistan and the financial support of the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre of UNESCO (ACCU, Japan, Tokyo) have initiated a one-year project on inclusive education for disabled children. The project was launched during the International Forum on Reforms of the System for Social Protection of Children (Tashkent, November 2006).

Based on UNESCO's Director-General's Initiative on Innovative and Interdisciplinary Approaches to the Aral Sea Basin, UNESCO Tashkent has started two long-term projects in close collaboration with the Ministry of Higher and Secondary Specialized Education, Ministry of Agriculture and Water Resources, Academy of Sciences, "Uzbektourism" Company, NGOs, private companies and local municipalities:

- a UNDES project on "Economic and Ecological Restructuring of Land and Water Use in the Khorezm Region," with financial and intellectual support from the Centre for Development Research (ZEF, Bonn, Germany), which was started in 2001;
- and a "Golden Ring of Ancient Khorezm" project for development of sustainable tourism infrastructure, which was started in 2006.

These joint initiatives include the successful planting and processing of some alternative crops to cotton, including indigo, which is being grown in Central Asia for the first time. This new dye is now being successfully used for silk weaving in the Khiva textile workshop.

Future ESD programmes will be based on the development of social partnerships and networking among all local and international stakeholders.

13. VIET NAM*

DEVELOPING A COMMON UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

The Socialist Republic of Viet Nam occupies 331,114 square kilometers and borders with China to the north, Laos to the west and Cambodia to the south-west. The country is marked by two delta regions at either end of the country (the Red River - in the north and, the Mekong in the south) that which are separated by the narrow region of the Central Highlands. Around 16 per cent of Viet Nam's land mass is under cultivation, with the remaining areas either mountainous or forested. Its capital, Hanoi, lies on the Red River.

Around 80 per cent of Viet Nam's population of 84 million are ethnic Vietnamese, with a total of 53 ethnic minority groups. Vietnam is a member of the UN, ASEAN, ARF, ASEM, APEC and the Non-Aligned Movement. Vietnam formally acceded to the WTO on 11 January 2007, becoming the body's 150th member.

The country Viet Nam became a Member State of UNESCO in 1976. UNESCO has worked very closely with Viet Nam since this time, and has had a full-time presence in the country since the country already before the establishment of its country office in September 1999. The country programming focuses on promoting culture and education for all, but particularly giving priority to disadvantaged population groups including such as women, youth and ethnic minorities.

* Written by Eisuke Tajima, Education Specialist, UNESCO Hanoi

Commitment to the DESD

Viet Nam's decision to be involved in the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) reflects the Government's desire to be a part of international efforts to increase the momentum towards a sustainable world. Viet Nam views the Decade as an opportunity to expand the concept of sustainability beyond environmental education to include social and economic measures.

Steering Committee

The Viet Nam National Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM) is the lead agency for implementing the DESD, and works in collaboration with UNESCO Hanoi and the Ministries of Education and Training; Science and Technology; Natural Resources and Environment; and Culture and Information.

A National DESD Committee, chaired by the Deputy Prime Minister, has also been established with the approval of the Prime Minister. Members of the committee were selected by the chair based on nominations from the relevant ministries. The Committee is composed of high-ranking government leaders and ministers, including those from the Viet Nam NATCOM. The Committee will assist the Prime Minister in directing all ESD activities in Viet Nam under the framework of the DESD. The central duties of the Committee are to:

1. Act as the advising and research agency for ESD strategies, policies and projects.
2. Promote the partnership programme between Viet Nam and UNESCO, and coordinate ESD-related activities within Eof the sectors of education, Culture, Science, Information and Environment sectors.
3. Cooperate with the relevant ministries and institutions in ESD advocacy, research, training and information sharing.
4. Collate information and regularly report to the Prime Minister about the ESD partnership programmes and activities under the DESD framework of DESD.

The establishment of this committee demonstrates the high level of commitment by the Government of Viet Nam to the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. This guarantees the political will and support required to maintain momentum throughout the DESD in Vietnam.

Initiatives

Viet Nam's national launch of the DESD took place on 15 February 2006 in Hanoi. Around 300 persons attended the launch, including high-level officials from the Office of the Government and relevant ministries, experts in various ESD-related fields, representatives from agencies and institutes, international partners and the media. Students from UNESCO's Associated Schools Project Network (ASPnet) were also present and gave a number of entertainment performances at the ceremony.

The National DESD Committee held its inaugural meeting in March 2006. The main outcome of the meeting was the establishment of ESD priorities for Viet Nam and the creation of a national action plan framework to orient the country's education towards the concepts of sustainable development. The framework is currently in its early development stages and will be elaborated through further consultation and identification of stakeholders and their specific roles in ESD. The action plan framework refers to the Government's "Strategic Orientation for Sustainable Development in Viet Nam – Viet Nam Agenda 21" document, which provides a framework of broad strategies for ministries, sectors, localities, organizations and other stakeholders to build on pre-existing policies pertaining to sustainable development. Nineteen social and environmental priorities were identified in the Viet Nam Agenda 21. The Ministry of Planning and Investment is responsible for the implementation of these through the specially created Vietnamese Agenda 21 Office. The Government recognizes the need to establish a coordination mechanism between the Agenda 21 Office and the Viet Nam National DESD Committee to avoid unnecessary overlap in the implementation process throughout the Decade.

As part of the Decade activities, Viet Nam is ensuring linkages to existing initiatives such as the "Environmental Education in Viet Nam Schools Initiative" and the International Decade of Water for Life Campaign. An ESD web page has been launched on the UNESCO Hanoi web site in English and Vietnamese. The web page will be used to highlight all ESD developments in Viet Nam. The site will serve as a vehicle for coordination amongst the many groups involved in ESD throughout the country in the country.

A new pilot project is also underway between the Associated Schools Project Network (ASPNet) and Community Learning Centres (CLCs). The project is being implemented under the framework of cooperation between the Vietnamese National Commission for UNESCO (NATCOM), UNESCO Bangkok and UNESCO Hanoi with participation from national specialists. Lower-secondary students will establish links with CLCs as an extra-curricular activity in the provinces of Ha Tay and Hoa Binh on key topics for ESD in Viet Nam, including biosphere conservation, poverty reduction and HIV/AIDs/drug prevention. The preparations for practical exchanges between the ASPNet schools and CLCs suggest exciting future developments for the integration of sustainability into formal and non-formal education systems.

Looking Ahead

Although Viet Nam has made a very high level and strong political commitment to DESD, success in achieving the objectives of the DESD in the country will be highly dependent on the level of information-sharing and collaboration between stakeholders at all levels. At the government level, the system of policies and legal frameworks across ministries must become standardized to ensure effective coordination of the three facets of sustainable development: society, economy and the environment. This is a common challenge for governments around the world during the Decade.

Viet Nam recognizes that a successful transition to a sustainable society cannot be centrally mandated in a top-down style alone and requires a cohesive collaboration between governmental ministries, non-government organizations and the private sector. If citizens are required to play an active role in the shaping of their future, appropriate reform will be required to include the values, perspectives and knowledge of sustainable development in formal and non-formal education systems. A current limitation to the successful implementation of ESD is the lack of representation on the National DESD Committee from non-government groups and the private sector. Another major challenge will be to shift values and perspectives to those that enable sustainable development during a time of rapid economic growth and international integration.

UNESCO will undertake activities such as advocacy, vision-building and communication for ESD in Viet Nam. NATCOM and UNESCO Hanoi will work together to assist the National DESD Committee to further develop the ESD action plan for Viet Nam. UNESCO Hanoi will support the implementation process at the national level by using already established education networks such as the Education for All Network (EFANet) and the Education Sector Donor Group, and build on ESD-related projects. Information-sharing with other UN organizations and NGOs provides opportunities for possible future collaboration within the ESD framework. With regional and international expertise, UNESCO Hanoi will assist the National DESD Committee to undertake monitoring and evaluation of ESD progress throughout the country. Networks will also be established with civil society organizations, the private sector and the media to help them communicate the requirements and challenges of sustainable development to the largest possible audience.

14. CENTRAL ASIA*

BUILDING ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

Introduction

The Cluster Office for UNESCO's Central Asia sub-region is located in Almaty, Kazakhstan. UNESCO Almaty covers four countries – Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan. These countries are united by a common natural environment, shared cultural roots and deep links at the ethnic and political levels. Following the break-up of the Soviet Union in 1991 and subsequent independence, Central Asian countries have faced the challenges of political transition coupled with the transition to market-based economies. This has impacted greatly on the ability of the countries to tackle sustainable development issues.¹⁰

* Written by Tatiana Shakirova, Manager of EE Programme, Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC)

¹⁰ UNESCO (2005). *A Situational Analysis of Education for Sustainable Development in the Asia-Pacific Region*. Bangkok: UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau for Education.

Commitment to the Decade

Central Asia's commitment to ESD and to the Decade was reflected in Central Asian Environmental Education (EE) Programme activities, which were launched at the Second Sub-regional Consultative Meeting, "Environmental Education for Sustainable Development in Central Asia." This meeting was conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture, Ministry of Environment and Emergencies of the Kyrgyz Republic and Regional Environment Centre for Central Asia (CAREC). Since this time, a number of meetings and conferences have taken place to establish further commitment and coordination of activities across the Central Asian sub-region. At the national level, each country has committed to taking specific actions for ESD, which include translation of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) Strategy into national languages, establishment of national coordination facilities and focal points as required, and development of national action plans for the Strategy, taking into account national and sub-regional priorities for sustainable development.

Regular sub-regional conferences and meetings for the Central Asian countries have made a considerable contribution to improvement of mutual understanding on environmental education (EE) and ESD in the sub-region, as well as to strengthening inter-departmental, interstate and inter-sector collaboration on EE and ESD issues. These annual meetings also help to ensure continued interest in EE and ESD.

The ESD programme is a component of the Central Asian agenda, "Sustainable Development in the 21st Century," which is accepted in all Central Asian countries to tackle sub-regional priorities.

Education for sustainable development (and environmental education as its key component in Central Asia) is a crucial awareness-raising mechanism to change the 'predatory' approach so often taken to the environment and natural resources, particularly because ESD can play an important role in affecting the conscience of future generations. Environmental education for sustainable development is, thus, in high demand within the Central Asian region. Numerous enthusiasts at the national and local levels support this noble process.

Steering Committees

The EE programme has learnt good lessons for the past four years and, given global and regional trends, is being gradually transformed into ESD programming. EE and ESD are coordinated by the Central Asian Working Group (CAWG) in close cooperation with the environment and education ministries, scientists and NGOs, teachers and an expert network from the countries in the sub-region. A Joint Central Asian Working Group on the Implementation of EE and ESD, established in 2003, is responsible for all EE/ESD activities in the Central Asian sub-region. The Working Group has ensured strengthened cooperation between the education and environment ministries, the science sector and NGOs.

At the country level, the lead agencies for implementing the DESD are both the ministries of environmental protection and the ministries of education. Currently, however, a more active role and interest has been taken by the environmental protection ministries, although the ministries of education tend to be better resourced. For example, focal points for implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD are all representatives of environmental protection ministries.

Sub-regional cooperation among the Central Asian countries in the field of EE and ESD has been initiated and supported by CAREC, the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, the UNESCO Bangkok Regional Office for Education, the European Commission, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), and the Government of the United Kingdom. These efforts have been acknowledged in Europe and Asia as an important model of cooperation, and have received the full involvement of representatives from the Central Asian region, both in implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD and in the Asia-Pacific ESD process.

Hundreds of organizations, schools, experts and volunteers have contributed to the development of a Central Asian sub-regional EE programme for sustainable development that involves all the stakeholders: ministries of education and environment, scientists, international organizations, learning institutions and the civil sector.

There are also specific results achieved in the EE and ESD fields. Educational ESD materials have been developed and applied in hundreds of Central Asian schools. These materials include: overviews, reports,

textbooks, posters, CDs, and videos. Regular trainings for Central Asian secondary school teachers have also taken place. In 2005, the EE textbook, *Environment for Future Generations*, was developed in Russian and Kazakh. Since then, the Republic of Kazakhstan's Ministry of Education and Science has approved of its use in that country's secondary schools.

During 2004-2005, CAREC (in cooperation with the UK Embassy and CAWG) implemented a new project, entitled "Posters and Video on Climate Change." The project aimed to distribute an EE textbook in Central Asian secondary schools through seminars, trainings for the project working groups, teachers, climate change posters and video. In 2005-2006, all education materials were translated into national languages and disseminated with the support of UNESCO Almaty at the fourth and fifth annual ESD conferences in Almaty and Bishkek.

Participation in the UNECE ESD Process

Central Asia's commitment to ESD and to the UN DESD is also reflected in its commitment to the UNECE Strategy for ESD and the Vilnius Framework for the Implementation of the Strategy. A number of meetings and conferences have taken place to establish further commitment and coordination of activities across the Central Asian sub-region. At the national level, each country has committed to taking specific actions for ESD, which include translation of the UNECE Strategy into national languages, establishment of national coordination bodies and focal points on ESD as required and the development of National Action Plans on ESD.

A Steering Committee on UNECE ESD Strategy implementation has also been established with specific responsibility to evaluate the implementation process of the UNECE Strategy on ESD. The Committee has annual meetings each December in Geneva, where the Central Asian countries present their joint sub-regional position on ESD. At the Fourth Sub-regional Conference in September 2005, which took place in Almaty, CAWG activities were approved, authorities were extended up to the Belgrade Ministerial Conference to be held in 2007, and CAWG members received a mandate to report on their ESD progress at the next Steering Committee meeting.

In terms of strategy implementation, the Central Asian countries are at various stages in achieving this requirement. Both Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan have established coordinating bodies for ESD issues and are implementing the UNECE Strategy, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have held initial meetings, and Kazakhstan has a National Council on Sustainable Development and an Expert Group on ESD. Kazakhstan, Tajikistan and Turkmenistan have already translated the text of the UNECE ESD Strategy into their national languages, and the Kazakh and Tajik versions have been printed..

Participation in the Asia-Pacific Region ESD Process

Following the ESD strategy framework for the Asia-Pacific region, the Central Asian sub-region has participated in a series of seminars and workshops: preparation of the Situation Analysis on ESD (Bangkok, Thailand, August, 2004); development of EE training courses (Tokyo, Japan, September, 2004); the Asia-Pacific ESD Strategy Planning Workshop, which was jointly organized by APCEIU and UNESCO (Seoul, South Korea, November 2004); and the Strategic Workshop on ESD Strategy in the Asia-Pacific Region (UNESCO, Bangkok, February 2005). Central Asia prepared of its section of the *Situational Analysis on ESD in Asian-Pacific Region*, which was published by UNESCO Bangkok in 2005. Central Asian authorities continue to participate in ESD regional strategy development in close cooperation with UNESCO Bangkok, UNESCO Almaty, UNU/IAS, and other partners.

Initiatives

Annual EE and ESD sub-regional conferences (Dushanbe 2002; Bishkek 2003, Almaty 2004-2005; Bishkek 2006) regularly assess the efficiency of the past year's activities and set new objectives. These meetings are conducted in cooperation with our partners and donors (UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office, UNESCO Bangkok Regional Office for Education, European Commission, OSCE centres, etc.), and have made a considerable contribution to the improvement of mutual understanding about EE and ESD in the sub-region. They have also strengthened inter-departmental, interstate and inter-sector collaboration on EE and ESD issues, and have helped to sustain the sub-region's EE and ESD development.

Annual meetings also help to ensure continued interest in EE and ESD. In 2005, the Fourth Conference on ESD in Almaty served as the platform from which to launch the DESD in Central Asia. Participants at the meeting included representatives of environmental protection and education ministries from Central Asian countries, coordinators of associated UNESCO schools in Central Asian countries, various project coordinators, educational specialists of high schools and universities, NGOs, international organizations, embassies and the mass media.

As part of the preparation for the Fourth Conference on ESD, a collection of the participants' reports was published together with a CD-ROM containing educational materials on EE/ESD from the sub-region. The materials ranged from theoretical (international strategies, state concepts, programmes and reviews) to practical (author programmes, lessons, lectures, educational modules, manuals, posters). In addition to that, the *Situational Analysis on ESD in Central Asia* was presented. New ideas about establishing a network of regional ESD centres of expertise were presented by a UNU/IAS representative and found interest among the conference participants.

In October 2006, the 5th Anniversary Central Asian International Conference on ESD was conducted under the organizational support of the Environment Education Programme of the CAREC, in cooperation with the Government of the Kyrgyz Republic, UNESCO's Almaty and Bangkok offices, Japanese Funds-in-Trust, the European Commission, and OSCE centres in Almaty and Bishkek. The goal of this conference was to strengthen interstate and inter-sectoral cooperation, as well as coordination and integration of national programmes with global and regional initiatives.

Progress reports on the UN DESD's implementation were presented at the Conference, as well as presentations about implementation of the UNECE Strategy on ESD and the establishment of Regional Centres of Expertise (RCE) under the United Nations University RCE Programme (UN University, Japan – UNU/IAS). Participants also received information about international ESD initiatives, presented their reports and achievements on ESD, shared experiences, developed practical tools for interaction in Central Asia, and gained new analytical and educational materials for their work. In addition, reports from Central Asian countries, which were prepared based on ESD indicators that were developed by the UNECE Expert Group, were presented in the publication, *Progress Report on ESD in Central Asia*. This report was the first from the sub-region to document the implementation of the UNECE Strategy on ESD

A variety of regional and national projects on ESD are ongoing. For example, in 2006 CAREC, in cooperation and with the support of the OSCE, began implementing the project, "Promotion of Education for Sustainable Development in Formal and Informal Education of Kazakhstan." The project is designed to ensure that Kazakhstan achieves its ESD commitments according to its adopted UNECE Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development.

Information and educational materials have also been produced as part of the ESD process.

Looking Ahead

Central Asia's geographical location puts it in the unique position of being a member of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe as well as being a member of UNESCO's Asia-Pacific region. Due to this, Central Asia has an opportunity to participate in the ESD processes of both the UNECE region and the Asia-Pacific region. This gives rise to additional possibilities for exchange of experiences in ESD between the two regions, and to apply best practices in ESD within Central Asia.

Central Asian countries will make the most of these opportunities by ensuring that the ESD focal points are common to each region, and by participating actively in both ESD processes. A significant factor of success in Central Asia's ESD work has been the development of an effective mechanism for coordination between major stakeholders, including education and environment ministries, institutions of science and education, the community and international organizations.

The annual conferences on EE and ESD that have been supported by the UNESCO Almaty Cluster Office will continue to serve as a useful way of sharing information and maintaining regional interest in ESD programming. Central Asia recognizes the importance of its strong sub-regional processes as a basis for ensuring ongoing national commitment and strengthened national capacity to implement ESD.

The main difficulty lies within the novelty of the process, lack of special funds at the international level, and the fact that donors and international organizations have, as a rule, limited resources to provide their support to EE and ESD. But, despite the above, thanks to negotiations with its partners, CAREC has managed to raise funds to further develop the environmental education system in Central Asia. CAREC hopes to continue its activities to support the implementation of the UN Decade on ESD on both European and Asian fronts in cooperation with its partners and associates.

15. PACIFIC ISLANDS*

BUILDING REGIONAL APPROACHES

Introduction

The Pacific region is vast, comprising Australia, New Zealand and 21 island countries and territories. While only 15 of the island countries and territories are currently served by the UNESCO Office of the Pacific States, most are members or observers of the Pacific's regional organizations, such as Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), the Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). The Pacific countries face several challenges to regional coordination that are related to the vast geographical distances between countries and the high costs of communication and travel. Different government styles also contribute to the challenges of regional coordination. Despite this, the region has a history of developing and implementing mechanisms to work together and share ideas, experiences and skills in various areas of development.

* Written by UNESCO Apia office.

Commitment to the Decade

The concept of ESD was embraced early on by various regional organizations and non-governmental groups in the region. In 2003, the SPREP began efforts in conjunction with UNESCO and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to re-orient its Regional Environmental Education Framework towards education for sustainable development. In August 2005, the Pacific national commissions for UNESCO expressed their interest in and support for ESD and the Decade, and requested guidance and assistance from the Pacific Cluster Office for UNESCO (UNESCO Apia) to commence implementation. This was followed by the development of a concept paper that was endorsed by UNESCO's Pacific national commissions in June 2006, and a "Pacific Framework for ESD" endorsed by Pacific ministers of education in September 2006. However, specific national level activity for the Decade is yet to begin.

Steering Committee

An official steering committee for the Decade has not been formed, either regionally or at the national level. Initial efforts for the Decade were championed by a small group of interested individuals from various regional and international organizations, including UNESCO, UNEP, the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), the University of the South Pacific (USP), SPREP and the Live and Learn Environmental Education Programme. These individuals met by teleconference and influenced action within their organizations towards ESD. This has resulted in a number of ESD projects and activities being developed at different levels. These organizations formed the basis of an ESD Working Group that developed the Pacific ESD Framework. Following the endorsement of the Framework by Pacific Education Ministers, a working group will be established under the auspices of the Council of Regional Organizations of the Pacific. This working group will develop specific action plans for the implementation of ESD and further consultation, particularly at the national level. The Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) at the University of the South Pacific will play a coordination role in the implementation of the Pacific Framework.

Initiatives

A Situational Analysis of ESD in the Pacific was carried out in 2004 as part of UNESCO's preparation for the Decade. The Situational Analysis has been widely distributed within the region and serves as a baseline from which to initiate activities. In March 2006, a Pacific regional meeting was convened in Apia, Samoa. Key regional institutions met in order to develop a framework regional partnership approach to ESD. Participants at the meeting were either heads of the regional institutions or their representatives. A crucial aspect of the meeting involved participants highlighting their current activities and projects for consideration by other members. It was agreed that almost every group represented is already conducting activities or had programmes that are relevant to ESD. The challenge was to develop a method by which these programmes could contribute further to the goals of ESD.

A series of brainstorming sessions was conducted to develop a set of key objectives for the Decade. These objectives led to the development of a basis for a strategic framework for implementing ESD in the region. Participants also proposed a process to progress activities for the Decade. This led to the development of a Pacific goal for ESD endorsed by the 2006 Education Ministers Meeting: "To empower Pacific peoples through all forms of locally relevant and culturally appropriate education and learning to make decisions and take actions to meet current and future social, cultural, environmental and economic needs and aspirations.

Specific on-going initiatives include SPREP efforts to re-orient the Action Strategy for Environmental Education and Training in the Pacific Islands Region toward education for sustainable development and the development of the SPREP "Guiding Framework for Education and Communication for a Sustainable Pacific." The SPREP Framework was recently endorsed by SPREP member governments. The Live and Learn Education Programme conducts a number of projects in Fiji, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands, which involve ESD-specific issues such as governance, community empowerment, critical thinking and solutions-based approaches to working with communities. The University of the South Pacific has developed a proposal for mainstreaming ESD throughout their programmes and curricula, and the Centre PACE-SD has sought accreditation as an ESD Centre of Excellence under the Asia-Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU) ESD programme.

The UNESCO Apia office is undertaking a review of its programme areas to develop clear ways of working that will address the interdisciplinary and intersectoral nature of ESD. This initiative, called "Our Pacific Heritage," will be launched in 2007. It may serve as a model for intersectoral coordination within UNESCO and beyond.

Looking Ahead

Human and financial resource issues have been the key limitations in the early establishment of a coordinating mechanism for the UN DESD in the Pacific. UNESCO Apia's physical distance from the Asia and Pacific Regional Office for Education in Bangkok has also been a significant constraining factor. Both offices have utilized opportunities at various meetings to discuss a collaborative mechanism by which to progress the Decade in the sub-region. The endorsement of the Pacific ESD Framework by education ministers has helped cement partnerships and determine a coordination mechanism for the region. This has resulted in commitment from a range of regional inter-governmental and civil society organizations working together to implement the Pacific vision for ESD. The region expects to move ahead with implementation of regional projects and further dialogue with the individual countries in the region during 2007 to achieve its common vision for sustainability.



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