



**Economic and Social
Council**

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ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

Bureau

Fifth meeting

Geneva, 7 December 2007

Item 4 of the provisional agenda

**NOTE FOR PANEL DISCUSSION ON
COMPETENCE IN ESD IN THE EDUCATION SECTOR¹**

Proposed draft outline

The Bureau is invited to consider this draft outline of a note to facilitate the panel discussion on developing the competence in ESD in the education sector during the third meeting of the Steering Committee. The note – up to 4-6 pages - would be prepared on the basis of the available relevant documents and reports developed thus far within the ESD process and will aim at identifying pertinent questions and raising issues for discussion during the panel. On the basis of the panel discussion, the Steering Committee might then consider how the ESD process could best contribute to improve the situation within this area.

The Bureau will be invited to comment on the draft note prepared by the secretariat.

The proposed deadline for finalising the document is 10 February 2008 with a view to translate it into French and Russian in time for the meeting of the Steering Committee. Due to the short time available to provide an UNOG translation, assistance would be needed from the French and Russian speaking countries in translating it (e.g. from France and from the Russian Federation).

The note could comprise the following general component parts:

INTRODUCTION (WHY do we need competence in ESD?!)

This part would address the issue of competence in ESD within the education sector by providing some brief background information about this matter and give a short overview of the state of art within this topic.

¹ This document was not formally edited.

The issue of “whole institution approach”² would also be addressed, as a complementary component to support the building of competences in ESD.

The introductory part will also refer to the relevant conclusions made and decisions taken by the joint session on ESD at the Belgrade Ministerial Conference.

II. CHALLENGES AND NEEDS (WHAT are the major problems?!)

This part would summarise the challenges and needs related to the competence in ESD in the education sector identified in relevant documents such as the pilot *national implementation reports*³ (NIRs), the *progress report on implementation of the Strategy*⁴ and the document with *needs for the implementation of the Strategy*⁵.

For instance, the progress report on implementation of the Strategy identifies the following challenges in building the competence in ESD:

- (a) there is no agreed definition of ESD-related competencies (the major challenge);
- (b) ESD is not part of the educators’ initial training;
- (c) the in-service training mainly or exclusively focuses on topics related to environment;
- (d) low salaries of teachers: lack of economic incentives to tackle this problem.

III. THE WAY FORWARD (HOW to improve the situation?!)

The main purpose of the panel discussion should be to identify the way forward. This part will include a set of questions for the panel discussion based on the challenges in needs with a view to trigger the debate on possible option to tackle the issue of competence in ESD in a comprehensive way, including (1) the possible mechanisms at the policy level and those to support the implementation through concrete actions; (2) the possible capacity building and awareness raising activities; and (3) the possible economic incentives and options to support the activities at the national and local levels.

Annex

The annex would include a selection of good practices in UNECE region related to building of competence in ESD from the available collection of good practices in ESD undertaken for the joint session on ESD.

² A “whole institution approach” means that all aspects of an institution's internal operations and external relationships are reviewed and revised in light of SD/ESD principles. Within such an approach, each institution would decide on its own actions, addressing the three overlapping spheres of Campus (management operations), Curriculum, and Community (external relationships).

³ <<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/Implement.Gov.htm>>.

⁴ Learning from each other: achievements, challenges and the way forward. Report on progress in implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/2007/INF/3)

⁵ Needs for the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2008/11).