

**FOURTH UNECE REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION MEETING ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

GENEVA, 1-2 December 2009

Agenda item 10. Cross-cutting issues, interlinkages and implementation of CSD-17 decisions

Intervention by Italy¹

Italy associates and aligns itself with the statement made by Sweden on behalf of the European Union and would like to further highlight some specific issues.

In particular, I would like to focus my speech on the fundamental tool of education.

The new global challenges are interlinked, and their resolution requires stronger political commitment and decisive action. On the other hand the progress of ESD remains unevenly distributed and requires different approaches in different contexts. In the coming years, there is a clear need for both developed and developing countries, civil society and international organisations to make significant efforts in the implementation and development of specific policies on ESD.

Since 2005, Italy was actively involved in the implementation process of the UNECE Strategy on Education for Sustainable development and, through the support of the Steering Committee, I believe that we achieved relevant results, as for example, the Ministerial Belgrade Declaration on ESD, approved in 2007 during the Environment for Europe Conference.

The Belgrade Declaration offered us new inputs and was a relevant political signal on which we should have focused our efforts, in particular for the implementation process of the UNECE Strategy on ESD. I believe that, during these two years, we could have worked together in a more effective way, promoting the inclusion of ESD agenda in all major forums and international conferences and negotiations such as the UN Summit on Climate Change that will held in Copenhagen.

The priority issues of the next CSD session, and in particular the SCP issue, are strongly linked to education which represents a critical instrument in empowering societies also for the development of new economic thinking. ESD contributes to creating resilient, healthy and sustainable societies through a systemic and integrated approach.

Within the Marrakech process, Italy is chairing a TF on "Education for Sustainable Consumption", focused on the role of formal learning processes in providing knowledge, awareness and competences aimed at enabling individuals and social groups to be the key actors of change towards more sustainable consumption behaviors.

The Task Force focuses on introducing sustainable consumption and production issues into formal curricula through the identification of formal education tools and strategies, the identification of competences and skills at all levels (education, training process, decision making), and by encouraging measures to ensure the effectiveness of national/regional policies.

¹ The text is presented as received from the author.

In view of the CSD and as a contribution to the 10YFP, the main outcome of the TF is the document “Here and Now! Education for Sustainable Consumption”, a collection of guidelines and recommendation to introduce sustainable consumption into formal learning processes.

“Here and Now!” urgently calls upon policy makers and educational authorities around the world to honor the commitments already made during the series of United Nations conferences and declarations, and to give education the necessary means to fulfill its role in achieving a sustainable future.

Italy is strongly convinced that any investment in education for sustainable development (ESD) is an investment in the future and for this reason we will continue to support the UNECE Secretariat for the implementation process of the ESD Strategy on ESD.