

Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development Secretariat

Organization: UNECE

Title:

Promoting the extension of education for sustainable development in technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy in UNECE member States

Focus area 9: Promote public participation and education for sustainable development

Description of the action: Technical and vocational education and training provides promising opportunities to initiate and to foster the transition to a green, entrepreneurial and sustainable economy. In this respect, several concrete steps to prioritize could include: educating students about the importance of moving to a green economy and becoming ecologically literate; understanding the needs of industry to transition to a green economy, with an emphasis on sustainable production and consumption; and ensuring that policymakers' support for educators is sufficient to enable them to provide the requisite training for new skills.

One of the priority action areas for implementing the objectives of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) outlined in the *Framework for the future implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development* is focused on 'Strengthening technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy'.

UNECE is committed to continue supporting its member States and in particular the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia in their efforts to strengthening technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and transition to a green economy by integrating education for sustainable development into national technical and vocational education and training policy.

Action's time frame/milestones, as appropriate: This is on-going initiative with concrete capacity building activities already undertaken in the Kyrgyz Republic and Belarus which will continue and last at least until 2019, that is the end of the first phase of the next post-2015 implementation period of the UNECE Strategy for ESD, and beyond, depending on the requests by the countries.

Type of action: These actions are related to legal, regulatory and policy instruments as well as to information, education-based, capacity-building and voluntary instruments.

Economic sectors: All economic sectors are relevant ("(a) – economy wide").

Reference instruments and sources, as appropriate: UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2005/cep/ac.13/cep.ac.13.2005.3.rev.1.e.pdf>)

Framework for the future implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

(<http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/documents/2016/ece/ece.batumi.conf.2016.11.e.pdf>)

Empowering educators for a sustainable future: Tools for policy and practice workshops on competences in education for sustainable development
(http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/env/esd/ESD_Publications/Empowering_Educators_for_a_Sustainable_Future_ENG.pdf)

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome:

- Reorienting the TVET system in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy in consultation and partnership with industry sectors and TVET institutions;
- Shifting economic thinking and promoting sustainable consumption and green skills;
- Raised awareness, public participation and sustainable consumption, as well as reskilling the labour force for green jobs;
- Building knowledge and awareness of sustainable development decision makers and all professionals, especially those with a role in planning and management;
- Promoting coordination between relevant stakeholders, including different governmental departments, in fostering the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD;
- Strengthened national capacities for implementing UNECE Strategy for ESD as one of the tools for greening economies.

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement: The implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD will contribute directly to the achievement of Goal 4, but also to the attainment of all SDGs. The Strategy is a practical instrument to incorporate key themes of sustainable development into the region's education systems. It is a cross-cutting process that allows for a better understanding of and enhanced competences related to all aspects of sustainable development.

Implementation of Environmental Performance Review (EPR) recommendations, as appropriate: Helps implementing EPR recommendations on integrating environmental education and education for sustainable development elements in national education system.

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate:

- National reports on implementing the UNECE Strategy for ESD;
- Capacity-building workshop reports;
- Guidance documents, training and awareness raising material.

Partners: Ministries responsible for education and environment; partner inter-governmental organizations (UNESCO, OSCE, UNEP, OECD), IFIs, European Commission; regional environmental centres and other relevant networks, including those of civil society, academia and science, non-governmental organizations, business and enterprises.

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Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the UNECE Secretariat to the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA

Organization: UNECE

Title:

Promoting strategic environmental assessment as a tool for greening the economy in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia; (Overarching actions)

Description of the action: (Within the limits of the available resources), UNECE is committed to continue supporting Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Ukraine in their efforts to effectively implement their new legislation on SEA that UNECE has assisted them to develop in the past 4 years under a EU funded project. Based on the requests from the concerned countries, this involves:

Advice for complementing the legal and institutional reforms to ensure full alignment with the Protocol on SEA; Assisting countries in the practical implementation of the legislation through pilot projects; Development of good practice and guidance documentation (“soft law”) for the implementation of the Protocol; Training workshops; Regional conferences; as well as Promoting continued exchange of information among Government officials and other experts in the region through reporting and during meetings of the treaty bodies,

In a similar way, UNECE is also committed to continue assisting the Central Asian countries in the implementation of transboundary environmental impact assessment and in the development of SEA systems, building on the ongoing and past support (e.g. Legislative assistance to Kyrgyzstan and Kazakhstan; and development and the update of the Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for Central Asian Countries).

Action’s time frame/milestones, as appropriate: As of present and at least until 2020, and beyond, depending on the requests by the countries. Some of the activities are continuous e.g. exchange of information and experience during the intergovernmental meetings of the treaty bodies.

Type of action: These actions are related to legal, regulatory and policy instruments as well as to information, education-based, capacity-building and voluntary instruments.

Economic sectors: The Espoo Convention and, in particular, its Protocol on SEA provide a framework for the comprehensive integration of environmental and health concerns into programmes and plans, policies and legislation and development activities, in all economic sectors including: agriculture, forestry and fishing; energy; mining; manufacturing; transport; water; waste; tourism; and housing, buildings and construction, as well as to regional and urban development.

Reference instruments and sources, as appropriate: UNECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (the Espoo Convention)

UNECE Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo Convention (the Protocol on SEA)

2014-2017 and draft 2017-2020 Workplans under the two treaties

EC Project 'Greening Economies in the Eastern Neighbourhood'

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome: Integration of environment and green economy considerations into sectoral development plans, programmes and policies, as well as to projects. Improved governance and inter-ministerial collaboration at the national and sub-national levels and coordination for promotion of green economy; Strengthened national capacities for the systematic application of SEA and EIA as tools for greening economies.

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement: As cross-cutting legal instruments, the Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and, in particular, its Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment (Protocol on SEA) provide a framework for a comprehensive integration of environmental and health concerns into development planning in all the economic sectors, thus helping countries to assure alignment of development with a broad range of SDGs. e.g. 2.4; 3.9; 3.d; 6.3; 6.5; 6.6.;6(a); 6(b);7.2; 7(a); 8.4; 9.1; 9.4; 11.3; 11.4; 11.6; 11(a); 11(b); 12.2; 12.4; 12.5; 13.1-13.3; 14.1; 15.1; 15.4; 16.6, 16.7; 16.10; 17.13, 17.16; 17.17 (see also informal document ECE/MP.EIA/WG.2/2016/5/INF.16)

Implementation of Environmental Performance Review (EPR) recommendations, as appropriate: Helps implementing EPR recommendations on aligning the national environmental assessment systems with the Espoo Convention and its Protocol on SEA

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate: Draft laws on SEA (and EIA) developed under the technical assistance programme; and adopted or presented for adoption by the beneficiary governments; Draft national guidance documents on practical application of SEA in the beneficiary countries are available at the UNECE website for reference; Workshop reports and tailored (country-specific) training materials; Number of officials trained in application of SEA and EIA. Guidance documents and awareness raising material: e.g. Brochure on facts and benefits of the Protocol on SEA; introductory video on the Protocol on SEA and its benefits; Good practice recommendations on public participation in SEA; Guidelines on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context for Central Asian Countries

Partners: Ministries responsible for environment in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and in other UNECE member States; NGOs and Regional Environmental Centres, European Commission; partner organizations (UNDP, OSCE, UNEP, OECD), IFIs

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Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the UNECE Secretariat to the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

Organization: UNECE Secretariat to the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (PRTRs)

Title:

Promoting effective and inclusive public participation as a key tool for greening the economy

Focus area 9: Promote public participation and education for sustainable development

Description of the action: Under the frameworks of the UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention) and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (the Protocol on PRTRs), and within the available resources, UNECE is committed to advise on legal issues and practices with regard to access to information and public participation in decision-making on different plans, policies, projects and programmes related to the greening of economy. It will also facilitate consensus building among countries and a wide range of stakeholders and will continue providing advisory services to Governments and international organizations on these issues. Furthermore, it will continue supporting: (a) multilateral decision-making processes to take joint commitments; (b) regional multi-stakeholder platforms to share challenges and good practices in access to information and effective public participation; and (c) development of recommendations, guidance material and electronic information tools. Specific activities include sessions of the respective meetings of the Parties and subsidiary bodies, round tables and workshops and coordination mechanisms.

Time frame/milestones, as appropriate: As of present and as planned until 2021 and beyond, depending on the decisions by the countries as well as the availability of resources. Some of the activities are continuous e.g. exchange of information and experience during the intergovernmental and expert meetings of the treaty bodies.

Type of action: These actions are related to legal, regulatory and policy instruments as well as to information, education-based, capacity-building and voluntary instruments.

Economic sectors: Through the promotion of effective access to information and public participation in environmental matters, the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs provide solid frameworks for engaging public and bringing its perspective with regard to environmental and health concerns into programmes, plans, policies, projects and legislation economy-wide as well as specific economic sectors including: agriculture, forestry and fishing; energy; mining; manufacturing ; transport; water; waste; tourism; and housing, buildings and construction, as well as to regional and urban development.

Reference instruments and sources, as appropriate: UNECE Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (the Aarhus Convention); UNECE Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (the Protocol on PRTRs) 2014-2017 and draft 2018-2021 work programmes under the two treaties

Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters; Recommendations on the more effective use of electronic information tools to provide public access to environmental information; The Aarhus Convention: An Implementation Guide; Guidance to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome: Effective public participation in decision-making ensures that the activity on the greening the economy (the related plan, programme or project) is more acceptable to population and less harmful to the environment.

Hidden/unexpected aspects of the proposed activity can be uncovered early, helping to avoid costly mistakes, public unrest and the required remedy actions

Integration of environment and health considerations into sectoral development plans, programmes and policies, as well as to projects, through raising public awareness and promoting effective public participation in decision-making related to greening the economy;

Improved governance, inter-ministerial and multi-stakeholder coordination at the national and sub-national levels and coordination for promotion of green economy;

Strengthened national capacities for providing effective access to information and for engaging different stakeholders through application of the Aarhus Convention and its Protocol on PRTRs as tools for greening economies;

Promotion of PRTR data as a major driving force for pollution reduction throughout different sectors of the economy; it will lead to competition among generators of pollutants to reduce their releases;

Promotion of PRTR data to policymakers as the key indicator for measuring progress in reducing pollutants, advancing sustainability and the success of a green economy.

Governments, academia, research institutions, the public, and businesses driving eco-innovation can utilize the PRTR as a common indicator.

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement: As cross-cutting legal instruments, the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters and its Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers provide solid frameworks to assist countries in achieving the SDGs by implementing commitments on access to information, public participation and access to justice regarding a wide range of issues that affect environment and human health, e.g. 1.4; 1.5; 2; 3.d; 4; 6; 7; 9.4; 11; 12.4; 12.6; 12.8; 13; 15.6; 16.3; 16.6; 16.7; 16.10; 16.b; 17.6 (see also informal document ECE/BATUMI.CONF/2016/INF/1)

Implementation of Environmental Performance Review (EPR) recommendations, as appropriate: Helps implementing EPR recommendations through assisting to improve national legislation and practice in the area of access information, public participation in decision-making and access to justice in environmental matters.

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate: Laws and practice are improved in the area of access to information and public participation; Clear evidence of effective engagement of the public

in different laws, policies, programmes and projects related to green economy; Number of officials trained on how to provide effective access to information and to effectively engage the public. Guidance documents and awareness raising material: e.g. Protecting your environment: The power is in your hands - Quick guide to the Aarhus Convention; The Aarhus Convention: An Implementation Guide; Maastricht Recommendations on Promoting Effective Public Participation in Decision-making in Environmental Matters; A simplified guide to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers; Guidance to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers.

Partners: Partners include Ministries responsible for environmental matters in Parties and other interested Member States; NGOs; Regional Environmental Centres and Aarhus Centres; OSCE, UNEP, OECD, CBD/Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, UNITAR, UNFCCC, OHCHR, IFIs.

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Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Title:

Increasing access to water and sanitation services to low-income and vulnerable groups in the pan-European region by supporting assessment of the equity of access and the development of action plans

Focus area 8: Improve access to services, healthy living and well-being

Description:

In the framework of the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health:

1. Support giving priority attention to equity aspects in policymaking processes related to the provision of water and sanitation services;
2. Contribute to the development of baseline studies on the situation of equitable access to water and sanitation to inform policy development and improvement actions in countries;
3. Strengthen capacity in addressing challenges and adopting possible solutions to ensure equitable access in the pan-European region.

Timeframe/milestones:

Activities will be developed in the framework of the Protocol's programme of work for 2017-2019 and beyond. Results will be reviewed at the fifth session of the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties in 2019.

Type of action: capacity-building, assessment and monitoring, policy development

Economic sectors: water supply and sanitation.

Reference instruments and sources:

Website of the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health:

http://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_text/text_protocol.html

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome:

Reduced social and economic inequalities, positive health impacts and education outcome, poverty reduction

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement

1.4, 4 a, 6.1, 6.2, 11.1

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate:

Access to water supply and sanitation and in particular disaggregated data for rural areas, income and for specific vulnerable groups.

Partners:

Lead Party(ies) for this area of work and WHO/Europe co-secretariat

Subsidiary bodies under the Protocol on Water and Health

National and local administrations

Private companies, in particular water supply and sanitation providers

NGOs

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Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Title:

Promotion of water recycling and safe reuse by fostering the exchange of experiences in the pan-European region and identifying policy and technical measures

Focus areas 5 and 2: Develop clean physical capital for sustainable production patterns;
Promote the internalization of negative externalities and the sustainable use of natural capital.

Description of the action: In the framework of the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health:

1. reviewing existing practices on water reuse throughout the pan-European region, looking at policy, technical and financial dimensions, the potential health risks and the challenges deriving from global pressures, such as climate change and water scarcity, urbanization, migration and increasing inequalities;
2. organizing a regional workshop discuss priority needs and action and promote the sharing of knowledge and experiences.
3. Developing, as appropriate, further policy and/or technical guidance and practical tools under the Protocol.

Action's timeframe/milestones appropriate: Activities will be developed in the framework of the Protocol's programme of work for 2017-2019 and beyond. Results will be reviewed at the fifth session of the Protocol's Meeting of the Parties in 2019.

Type of action: information, capacity-building and policy development

Economic sectors: water supply and sanitation, agriculture, energy, manufacture, waste, etc.

Reference instruments and sources: Website of the UNECE-WHO/Europe Protocol on Water and Health: http://www.unece.org/env/water/pwh_text/text_protocol.html

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome: Reduced negative impact on health and environment as a result of implementation of best practices and strengthening of the policy framework

Significant co-benefits for climate change actions and fight against water scarcity

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement:

3.3, 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, 11.5, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate: Percentage of water safely reused.

Partners: Lead Party(ies) for this area of work and WHO/Europe co-secretariat
Subsidiary bodies under the Protocol on Water and Health
National and local administrations
European Commission
Private companies, in particular water supply and sanitation providers

Research centers
NGOs

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Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Title:

Foster resource efficiency and reduce trade-offs by supporting assessments of the water-food-energy-ecosystem nexus in transboundary basins

Focus area 2: Promote the internalization of negative externalities and the sustainable use of natural capital.

Description of the action: In the framework of the UNECE Convention on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention):

1. identifying synergies between the water, food, energy and ecosystem sectors in transboundary basins, on the basis of the methodology developed under the Convention;
2. determining policy measures and actions that could alleviate negative consequences related to the multiple needs of the riparian countries for common resources and help to optimize the use of available resources, thereby fostering transboundary cooperation;
3. helping to move towards increased efficiency in resource use, greater policy coherence and intersectoral co-management;
4. developing capacity in addressing intersectoral impacts, including by disseminating the lessons from the nexus basin assessments.

Action's timeframe/milestones, as appropriate: Activities will be developed in the framework of the Water Convention's programme of work for 2016-2018 and beyond. Results will be reviewed at the eight session of the Convention's Meeting of the Parties in 2018.

A global stock-taking workshop will be organized in December 2016 to review progress and to exchange experience.

Type of action: information, joint assessment, capacity-building, fit-for-purpose analytical tools, measures

Economic sectors: water management and services, energy, agriculture, industry, navigation, tourism etc.

Reference instruments and sources: UNECE Nexus assessment methodology and case studies:

<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=41427>

Website of the UNECE Water Convention: <http://www.unece.org/env/water.html>

Nexus assessments under the Water Convention: <http://www.unece.org/env/water/nexus.html>

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome: Reduced negative impact on transboundary waters, reduced trade-offs and conflict potential, more efficient resource use, improved policy coherence.

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement: 2.3, 2.4, 6.4, 6.5, 6.6, 7.1, 7.2, 7.3, 12.2, 13.1, 13.2, 13.3, 15.1

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate: Number of assessments carried out, intersectoral solutions identified

Partners: Finland as lead Party for this area of work
Subsidiary bodies under the Water Convention
UNECE Sustainable Energy and Trade Programmes:
Member States and river basin organizations
FAO
European Commission
Research institutes and academia
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Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Title:

Dissemination of information and promotion of the use of guidance documents on best available techniques to ensure the implementation of clean technologies in various economic activity sectors

Focus areas 5 and 2:

Develop clean physical capital for sustainable production patterns;

Promote the internalization of negative externalities and the sustainable use of natural capital.

Description:

Providing web-access via UNECE Green Economy Toolbox to the texts of guidance documents in English, Russian and French developed and adopted under the UNECE Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention) identifying best abatement options for various air pollutants and economic activity sectors, as well as economic instruments to reduce their emissions. Spreading related information through press-releases, seminars, advisory missions and meetings with UNECE member States representatives, national stakeholders and experts.

Timeframe/milestones:

The guidance documents are expected, among others, to support Parties to the Air Convention's protocols in meeting their emission reduction obligations by 2020 and beyond.

Type of action: information, education-based, capacity-building and voluntary instruments

Economic sectors: agriculture, transport, mining, energy, manufacture, waste, etc.

Reference instruments and sources:

UNECE Green Economy Toolbox: <http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/GET/>

Website of the UNECE Air Convention: <http://www.unece.org/env/lrtap/welcome.html>

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome:

Reduced negative impact on health and environment as a result of implementation of best available techniques and subsequent reduction of air pollutant emissions

Significant co-benefits for climate change actions

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement

2.4, 3.4, 3.9, 7a, 9.4, 11.4, 11.6, 12.2, 12.4, 13.2, 14.1, 15.4, 15.5, 17.16

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate:

National emission totals for following pollutants: sulphur and nitrogen oxides, volatile organic compounds, ammonia, particulate matter (PM_{2.5}), mercury, cadmium, lead, persistent organic pollutants.

Partners:

Subsidiary bodies under the Air Convention

Private companies
Scientific institutes
NGOs

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Batumi Initiative on Green Economy (BIG-E)
Actions by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)

Title:

Promote the use of tools for the internalization of negative externalities

Focus area 2:

Promote the internalization of negative externalities and the sustainable use of natural capital.

Description:

In at least one EPR per year, in the chapter on “Economic Instruments, Environmental Expenditures and Investments for Greening the Economy” of the Environmental Performance Reviews (EPR), include a subsection on internalization of negative externalities and the sustainable use of natural capital.

Timeframe/milestones:

One EPR per year starting in 2017 until 2020 for a total of three.

Type of action: information, education-based, capacity-building and voluntary instruments (To review the use of (b) economy and fiscal instruments).

Economic sectors: economy-wide

Reference instruments and sources: national and sectoral policies and strategies of the reviewed countries

Expected co-benefits and impact of the outcome: to raise awareness of the existence of economic instruments, such as Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES) that could reduce the loss of natural capital as well as raise funds for environmental activities.

SDGs target(s) that the action may contribute to implement

SDGs 14; 15

Objectively verifiable indicators, as appropriate: The final publication of the Environmental Performance Review for at least three reviewed countries.

Partners: UNEP/OECD

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