

“GOOD PRACTICE” IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN THE UNECE REGION

"Good practices in ESD" are initiatives closely related to Education for Sustainable Development, that demonstrate good practice, generate ideas and contribute to policy development. These good practices:

1. focus on the educational and learning dimensions of sustainable development.
2. are innovative. They develop new and creative solutions to common problems, such as:
 - ❖ ways to discover what the key local issues of sustainable development are
 - ❖ ways to adapt processes to relevant teaching and learning strategies
 - ❖ ways of fostering links between learning situations and the community
 - ❖ ways of integrating local knowledge and culture
 - ❖ curriculum development processes enabling content to be decided as locally relevant
 - ❖ starting points on how Education for Sustainable Development can best be put into effect.
3. make a difference. They demonstrate a positive and tangible impact on the living conditions, quality of life of the individuals, groups or communities concerned. They seek to bridge gaps between different societal actors/sectors and are inclusive, in order to allow new partners to join the implementing agents/bodies.
4. have a sustainable effect. They contribute to sustained improvement of living conditions. They must integrate economic, social, cultural and environmental components of sustainable development and reflect their interaction/interdependency in their design and implementation.
5. have the potential for replication. They provide effective methodologies for transdisciplinary and multi-sectoral co-operation. They serve as models for generating policies and initiatives elsewhere.
6. offer some elements of evaluation. They have been and can be evaluated in terms of the criteria of innovation, success and sustainability by both experts and the people concerned.

If you submit more than one "good practice", please indicate the priority 1, 2 or 3.

1. NAME OF THE INITIATIVE CONSIDERED AS A GOOD PRACTICE¹:

The Austrian initiative to develop a National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

2. RESPONSIBLE COUNTRY/ORGANIZATION:

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3. CONTACT PERSON (name and title):

See above

4. FOCUS OF THE INITIATIVE (check one or more box(es)):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Education/Learning | <input type="checkbox"/> Environment | <input type="checkbox"/> Peace, Human Rights & Security |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educators | <input type="checkbox"/> Water | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Policy, Regulation, Governance |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overcoming Poverty | <input type="checkbox"/> Climate Change | <input type="checkbox"/> Intercultural Understanding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gender Equality | <input type="checkbox"/> Biodiversity | <input type="checkbox"/> Cultural Diversity |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Health Promotion | <input type="checkbox"/> Disaster Reduction | <input type="checkbox"/> Indigenous knowledge |

¹ Your response to this questionnaire should not exceed 2 pages. Font: Arial, size - 9; margins - 2 centimeters.

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> HIV/AIDS | <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Development | <input type="checkbox"/> Tools and materials (e.g. Media & ICTs) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Urbanization | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Consumption | <input type="checkbox"/> Research / Development |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Corporate Responsibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Sustainable Tourism | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional / international cooperation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Economy | <input type="checkbox"/> Citizenship | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Participative process for the development of a national strategy for ESD</i> |

5. INITIATIVE DESCRIPTION *(provide brief description)*

- Type (governmental, non-governmental, municipal, other):

The process was initiated, financed and contracted both by the Federal Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Environment and Water Management and the Federal Minister for Education, Science and Culture. Its organising was supported by FORUM Umweltbildung, Agentur Steinbach, by regional governments and NGO's.

- Working language(s):
German

- Setting / Target group(s) / Number of persons involved:

The core team of the process consisted of fifteen people. However, the process as such targeted a large number of stakeholders in the formal, non-formal and informal educational sector. Overall some 350 to 400 people participated mainly in the 10 events that were taking place during the process.

- Starting year and Duration:
2004, three years

- Budget and Funding Sources:
110.000 €, funding by the initiating ministries (see above)

- Partner organisations involved *(if any)*:

University of Klagenfurt, University of Linz, University of Vienna, University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences, Vienna

- Stakeholders involved (e.g. local community). *Describe their involvement in this initiative and the kind of relationship you have with them.*

As mentioned above, a large number of stakeholders were involved. These stakeholders had in common, that they were leading representatives of organizations active in formal, non-formal and informal education. The stakeholders were present in various events, were actively informed of results of the process and had the chance to participate in a feedback-process via a website. The resulting paper was developed by representatives of the partner organizations and educational-experts of the FORUM Umweltbildung.

6. MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE INITIATIVE *(provide brief description)*

The initiative had the objective to develop a national strategy for education for sustainable development. It was the intention to develop this strategy via an open participative process.

7. METHODOLOGY *(provide brief description)*

Methods/approach for this initiative *(list key background materials that were used; If necessary, use a separate sheet)*

The process involved a number of methods:

- The primary approach was the development of an expert paper that included the results of the participative process.
- The participative process involved two major tools. On the one hand expert round tables were installed on formal, non-formal and informal education. On the other hand a number of regional workshops were held.
- The fourth tool was a number of workshops held with the working-group on education of the Austrian committee for sustainable development.

Background material that was used included a wide range of scientific papers on ESD as well as a number of political papers on ESD, which were available at this time. These included papers of the UN on the implementation of the UN-decade of ESD and other national strategies.

Further more the UNECE-strategy on ESD – of which the translation was funded by Austria – was an important background material.

8. RESULTS AND EVALUATION OF THE INITIATIVE *(provide brief description and assessment)*

- Results

The primary result was a draft of an Austrian Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development which at the moment is in the process of approval by the Austrian Government. The second result was that the process greatly improved the awareness of the UN-decade as well as of ESD.

- Strengths

It was possible to combine the expertise of a core group of educational experts with a broad participative process.

- Weaknesses and risks

The participation process provided information and contributions to the expert paper and thus to the draft strategy. Although it was intended to have an ongoing participative involvement some of the participants felt under informed at some points in time. Another risk is that the participative and the political process were somewhat independent. The participative process came up with issues and aspects which could not fully be included in the final political paper what was always clearly stated.

- Problems encountered: *(fill in if applicable)*

- Conditions for successful replication *(fill in if applicable)*

In general such a process needs strong leadership, intensive expert involvement and broad participation as well as an open information policy.

- Unresolved issues *(fill in if applicable)*

- Why do you consider this a good practice?

The process lead to a broadly accepted national strategy for ESD. (Governmental approval pending)

Please attach one relevant picture, as a separate file *(max 1024 x 768 px /72 dpi/ jpg-format 80% quality/ up to 300KB)*

Please submit your "Good practice" (up to 3 "Good practices" per country/organisation) electronically by e-mail to: esd@unece.org. In addition, you are invited to send us any relevant information you might think useful, including references to documents, publications and/or articles describing the initiative, as well as relevant links to websites.

For further information, please send request to the same e-mail address or contact: Environment, Human Settlements and Land Management Division, Economic Commission for Europe Palais des Nations, 8-14 avenue de la Paix, 1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland. fax: 00 41 22 9170107 - web : <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/welcome.htm>