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RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE

The French National Committee of the United Nations Decade
of Education for Sustainable Development

May 27, 2008

“International Conference on Education for Sustainable Development” (Bordeaux, 27 au 29 octobre 2008)

First announcement

Under the high patronage of UNESCO responsible of the implementation of the 2005-2014 United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) and in the context of the French presidency of the European Union, France intends to hold in Bordeaux, in October 2008, a conference gathering the French, European, Mediterranean and Francophone actors on themes relating to education, training, information and awareness rising in the field of environment and sustainable development.

OBJECTIVES

“Gathering the main actors in the field of education for environment and sustainable development (ESD) to contribute to the change of everyone’s behaviour and to promote from a perspective of sustainable development a solidarity-based society more concerned about the environment”.

Before the half-term conference of the Decade in Bonn, Germany (March 2009), the Bordeaux event aims to draw the first assessment of the progresses achieved during the 2005-2008 period.

PARTICIPANTS

This three days event will gather the different actors of the ESD with a special reference to the French, European, Mediterranean and Francophone countries.

- **The national committees of the United Nations Decade for ESD**

The United Nations has launched in 2005 the Decade of Education for Sustainable development and has delegated its implementation to the UNESCO. In 2005, Europe has adopted, in Vilnius, a specific strategy within the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and according to that process, each countries have implemented a national committee. The French committee has been implemented in October 2005.

- **The Francophonie**

The international Organisation of the Francophonie (OIF), the Institute of Energy and Environment of the Francophonie (IEPF) and the University Agency for Francophonie (AUF) are working actively in the field of environment and sustainable development: they will therefore have an important function in the accompaniment and animation and will also act as a relay for the various francophone countries. The actors of Planet’ERE are also prominent participants to the process of ESD.

- **The UNESCO chairs**

The UNESCO has numerous national chairs and 67 UNITWIN international networks belonging to 125 countries. There are approximately 40 chairs working on environment and sustainable development in the European and Mediterranean countries.

- **The United Nations agencies**

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (UNESCO BRESCE) and the other United Nations agencies (UNEP, UNDP,...) will also participate actively to the conference.

- **The local authorities**

Local authorities play a major role in the field of ESD because they address a large and varied public according to appropriate processes. During the conference, the French and foreign local authorities will be able to report the concrete progresses made in that field and the approaches taken to achieve and evaluate these progresses and also to share topics of partnerships and their achievement.

The city of Bordeaux, the urban community of Bordeaux, the department of Gironde and the Aquitaine region are developing either separately or together multiple and praised activities participating to worthy progresses in the field of sustainable development and education for sustainable development.

- **Private sector**

Members of the French committee, where they represent through their directors of sustainable development the main lines of business of our society, the companies play an important and concrete role in the implementation of approaches of sustainable development, on a regional, national and international scale.

- **Associations and NGOs**

Various associations, NGOs and other actors representing the civil society will also participate to the conference. These entities are strengthening the dialogue, encouraging gatherings and fostering the exchanges on the national scale and also among the diverse European and Mediterranean countries. There are therefore promoting solidarity and development.

- **Other actors represented**

- The European Youth Eco-Parliament (EYEP)
- The Environment and School Initiatives network (ENSI)

FORMAT OF THE CONFERENCE

- ❖ **Dates of the conference :**

3 days, from the 27 to the 29 October 2008.

- ❖ **Venue of the conference :**

Convention centre of Bordeaux (Bordeaux Lac), France.

- ❖ **Registration fees :**

The registration is free.

- ❖ **Number and origin of participants :**

800 participants. The participation will be balanced between French and foreign representatives, French and non-French speaking countries.

- ❖ **Language of the conference**

French is the official language of the conference but all the plenary sessions and most of the workshops will benefit from a simultaneous translation in French and English.

- ❖ **Planning of the conference**

The conference will include four types of manifestations: planetary sessions, thematic workshops, talks and stand presentations.

- **Plenary sessions :**

- The morning of the 27 October : official speeches, talks and introductive presentations.

- The afternoon of the 29 October : conclusions, recommendations and closing speech.

• **thematic workshops :**

Thematic workshops resting on preparatory documents will be held during the other half-days. These documents will be available one month before the conference.

• **Talks and forums :**

The conference will be punctuated by talks and forums followed by discussions on the themes addressed.

• **presentations on stands :**

The participants to the conference will be able to use a dedicated space to implement stands to present their activities during the three days of the conference.

❖ **Carbon Compensation**

The committee will compensate the emission of carbon resulting from the preparation and holding of the conference.

Following the previous event organised by the French committee of the Decade in June 2006, the travel of the 800 participants and the holding of the conference will generate a carbon emission rate of about 250 tonnes with an approximate cost of 7500 euros, which will be compensated by the trade of carbon emission credits at a rate of 15 euros per participants. The fees will be donated to an organism specialised in "carbon compensation".

❖ **The scientific and organising committees:**

The conference is organised by the French committee of the Decade regrouping all the national actors of the ESD. Some of its members, responsible for the thematic evaluations, will form a scientific committee which will also include representatives from the UNESCO (Paris and Venice), UNEP, Francophonie and Mediterranean countries and also the Bonn 2009 advisory committee.

THEMATIC ADDRESSED

The conference will present, on the one hand, an evaluation of the actions taken in the field of education, training, information and awareness rising concerning sustainable development made in the course of the last four years, since the launching of the Decade in January 2005 and on the other hand to define the diverse strategies of ESD to implement during the second part of the Decade, from 2009 to 2014.

The evaluation and the propositions should be formulated in reference to the frame defined by the Nation States and the UNESCO, especially concerning the implementation of national action plans defining the global approach to education, training and information for all citizens, and life-long, in a formal, non-formal and informal way.

❖ **The actions achieved by France on a regional, national and international scale :**

- **The actions achieved on a national scale** with the implementation of diverse initiatives from the States and other actors such as local authorities, companies and the civil society (associations, NGOs, consular chambers, ...).

- **The actions achieved on the regional scale** with the example of the local authority of Aquitaine (the region of Aquitaine, the department of Gironde, the city of Bordeaux, the urban community of Bordeaux) hosting the conference and whose actions in ESD are particularly representative.

- **The actions achieved on the international scale** in the context of the diverse bi and multi lateral cooperation developed by France and relating to the Decade.

These actions will take into account the law relating to the implementation of the Grenelle of Environment with its six titles referring explicitly or implicitly to the ESD.

❖ **The actions achieved by the other countries :**

- The **European component** involves both, the countries of the European Union (UE) and the countries of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) whose members belong to the Vilnius strategy.
- The **Euro-Mediterranean component**, in reference to the French initiative of the Union for the Mediterranean, concerns all the EU, Maghreb and Mashrek countries.
- The **Francophone component** refers to the French speaking countries, from Europe, Africa, Asia or the American continent.
- The **international component** as a whole to improve the debates and thoughts by the contributions of various countries in the field of sustainable development.

PREPARATION

Workshops have been implemented in order to take all parameters into account. They will draw the evaluation of the actions undertaken during the last four years and bring about suggestions for the second term of the Decade. These evaluations are mainly focus on France, the European Union and Francophonie but will nevertheless be completed by the divers contributions from the countries that are not part of these categories.

At the same time, various forums might be implemented to discuss background problems linked to the themes of education, training, information and awareness rising: tools for the ESD, thematic portals, solidarity and exclusion, EESD, ESD, ...

4.1. Workshops

4.1.1. Evaluation of the French action

Four groups of actors are taking part in the implementation of sustainable development through approaches of education, training, information and awareness rising: the State, the local authorities, the companies, and the civil society. These actors will draw an evaluation, which will consider the actions relevant to their missions, on the local, national and international scale but also those developed with the cooperation of other actors.

This evaluation, with few exceptions, will be presented at the world conference in Bonn in March 2009 to illustrate the French actions relating to ESD.

4.1.2. Evaluation of the European countries in the field of ESD

The Bordeaux conference will be held five months before the half-term world conference in Bonn. During that conference, all countries members of the United Nations will present the progresses in the field of ESD that have been achieved within the Decade. It is important to stress the achievements made by these countries but the European Union should also present the common and synergic approaches in the field. The Bordeaux conference held in the context of the French presidency of the European Union is a unique way to think about a shared evaluation of the EU countries that will be presented in Bonn.

In line with Germany, the organizer of the Bonn conference, and the UNESCO authorities, it has been decided to create a workshop led by the French committee to draw an evaluation of the European countries in the field of ESD. This evaluation will be firstly presented at the Bordeaux conference.

This evaluation, France included, is not an exhaustive evaluation of the overall actions in education, training, information and awareness rising of the 17 EU countries, which would be difficult to realise, but will be focused on specific themes which are to be defined.

4.1.3. ESD and Mediterranean

The "Union for the Mediterranean" project, referring to the Mediterranean basin, source of ancient and shared roots, is a strong French initiative which gives the opportunity to associate, in an

single thought, countries with different environmental and socio-economic characteristics sharing closely related futures. These countries, including some francophone countries, belong to the European Union, Maghreb and Middle East; several countries are French-speaking countries.

A workshop is being implemented in reference to the "Union for the Mediterranean" project, in liaison with the structures of the State in charge of the project, supported by the Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE) of the UNESCO Venice with the participation of Greece (MOI-ECSDE). This workshop has to define a number of specific projects relating to education or referring more largely to sustainable development within the euro-Mediterranean complex (culture, people's solidarity, migration, technology transfer, ...)

4.1.4. The French speaking actors

The French speaking countries are developing fruitful cooperation. The reference of this francophone dimension during the conference will allow to reinforce them through the gathering of the main francophone actors around shared problematic concerning ESD and to inspire new cooperative actions.

The evaluation of the diverse themes of ESD will be prepared in liaison with the International Organisation of Francophonie (IOF), the institute of energy and environment of the Francophonie (IEEF), the *Agence Universitaire de la Francophonie* (AUF). This evaluation will identify a number of shared projects, which would be developed in cooperation during the second term of the Decade : among these projects, the creation of a French speaking committee of the Decade .

4.1.5. thematic evaluations and forums

Thematic evaluations and forums refer to specific and daily problematic faced by our society concerning consumption, solidarity, exclusion and the role of the media.

- Education to consumption:

The Marrakech process on the sustainable modes of consumption and production has been launched in 2003 for a period of 10 years. In the context of that process, various task forces have been dedicated to sustainable consumption and buying practices (presided by Italy) and sustainable tourism (presided by France).

Evaluations and propositions concerning education to consumption will be realised in liaison with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and with the Institute of energy and environment of the Francophonie. The task force on sustainable way of life (presided by Sweden) might also be associated together with the committee relating to the OECD policies of consumption.

- The role of the media:

Following the example of the main themes mentioned, the role of the media has been discussed during the conference of June 2006. Since that, little progresses have been made concerning the role of media, their mode of action and the training of the main actors. The conference might be an opportunity to make concrete propositions to improve the situation.

- Solidarity and exclusion:

People's solidarity is an integrated dimension of sustainable development, which is implying that everyone should have the necessary resources to enjoy proper and durable life conditions, without the omission of the development of the current and forthcoming generations. At this time, an important part of population is facing various problems contributing to its exclusion. Under such conditions, it is difficult to speak about sustainable development and change in behaviours to citizens who are not able to access basic knowledge concerning sustainable development, while facing basic problems such as illiteracy and general precariousness.

The conference will approach these questions concerning solidarity and exclusion, notably with the collection of accounts from the field actors (the State, local authorities, associations and NGOs) on the way the excluded part of the consumption society understand and apply sustainable development and on their understanding of the meaning of concepts such as inter- and intragenerational solidarity.

- Education to environment and education for a sustainable development:

The question relating to the difference between education to environment and education to sustainable development is recurrent in the national and international meetings but is not subjected to debate. Therefore the conference will launch a round-table to tackle this question.

- Tools and web portal:

The implementation of the support multimedia for ESD (pedagogic tools, updated and confirmed databases, articulation of knowledge according to the audiences, virtual universities) rests on the creation, management and realisation of networks of the divers elements via electronic portals. It is important to identify these divers portals, to draw an evaluation of the existing elements and to formulate propositions on the reinforcement of cooperation in that field, referring to linguistic (French-, English speaking...) or geographical (Europe, euro-Mediterranean,...).

Whatever the thematic addressed by the various working group, the overall participants, French or foreigners, will have a considerable degree of latitude to present their actions in the field of education, training, and information and contributing to the realisation of trans national forums allowing to tackle the varied actions of the countries with specific environmental, political, socio-economical and cultural characteristics, reflecting the diversity of our planet actors, who are all inscribed in the logic of sustainable development, in reference to the Rio and Johannesburg summit.

SCHEDULE

The second announcement of the Bordeaux conference will be available from the 1st of July 2008 on the website of the French committee of the Decade :

<http://www.decennie-France.fr>

This announcement will precise the registration process and the participation modalities to the various events of the conference.

Pr. Michel RICARD

*President of the French national Committee of the United Nations Decade
of education for sustainable development*

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