

UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development
Third meeting
Geneva, 31 March – 1 April 2008

INTERVENTION BY GERMANY

The implementation of the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development remains a high priority in Germany within the framework of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The German National Committee for the Decade and the Decade Round Table continue to base their work on an integrative vision of education for sustainable development that goes well beyond the environmental dimension. An updated version of the National Plan of Action for the Decade will be published shortly; it again will contain around 60 far-ranging measures for mainstreaming ESD into all areas of education. Moreover, the National Committee has certified over 500 individual projects as ESD good practice projects so far. These official German Decade Projects successfully carry out innovative work in ESD.

Present work focuses on preparations for the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, which will be held in Bonn from 31 March to 2 April 2009. Under the title “World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development: Moving Into the Second Half of the UN Decade”, the Conference will bring together 700 representatives from governments and civil society as well as individual experts to discuss progress achieved in the Decade so far, share good practice examples, and discuss strategic orientations for the second half of the Decade. Above all, the Conference will aim at sending out a strong signal that ESD needs to be raised still further up the international agenda. The Conference is being organized by UNESCO and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research, which leads on the Decade in Germany and will finance the Conference, in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO. For the programme development, the organizers work together with a high-level international Advisory Committee.

Let me finally highlight a few further highlights: In June 2007, the Standing Conference of Culture and Education Ministers of the German Federal States and the German Commission for UNESCO issued a joint recommendation for ESD in schools, aiming at establishing ESD as a cross-cutting concern in all German schools. Similarly, in March 2008, the Standing Conference of Culture and Education Ministers and the Federal Ministry for Development Cooperation issued a model curriculum on global development.

Regarding our work to strengthen ESD internationally, Germany and Japan submitted a resolution on the further implementation of the UN Decade to the 34th General Conference of UNESCO in October 2007. The resolution, which calls upon UNESCO and all Member States to continue to actively implement the UN Decade in the light of the drastic global challenges we all face, was cosponsored by some 50 other States and unanimously adopted.