



Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland

Research Project Compiled by ECO-UNESCO

26 Clare St,
Dublin 2
www.ecounesco.ie

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Research Team:

Chief Researcher – Elaine Nevin - MA, H.Dip.Ed
(National Director, ECO-UNESCO)

Assistant Researcher – Derek Ginnetty – MSc.

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1. About Comhar SDC (Sustainable Development Council)

Comhar SDC was established in 1999 as the forum for national consultation and dialogue on all issues relating to Sustainable Development. Comhar works in partnership to encourage Sustainable Development across Irish economy and society, and advises Government on policies which support and promote Sustainable Development.

Comhar works in three-year cycles and began its third term in January 2006. Comhar's 25 council members are drawn from five pillars: the State sector, the economic sector, environmental NGOs, social/community NGOs and the professional/academic sector. Comhar is supported by a full-time executive and secretariat based in St. Andrew Street, Dublin 2.

Further information on Comhar SDC is available at www.comhar-nsdp.ie

2. About ECO-UNESCO

Founded in 1986, ECO-UNESCO is Ireland's environmental education and youth organisation. ECO-UNESCO has extensive experience in the area of Education for Sustainable Development and has been involved in the development of various ESD projects. ECO UNESCO is affiliated to the World Federation of UNESCO clubs, centres and associations (WFUCA) and its patron is Mary Mc Aleese, President of Ireland.

ECO-UNESCO's aims are to raise awareness, understanding and knowledge of our environment among young people, promote the protection and conservation of our environment and promote the personal development of young people through practical environmental projects, programmes and initiatives.

ECO-UNESCO runs a variety of environmental education and ESD initiatives for young people, aged between 12 and 18, which are divided into the following areas:

- Environmental Youth Programmes including environmental workshops, a peer education programme, a programme of events and activities and also has a network of ECO-UNESCO clubs.
- Education and Training Programmes including training on environmental education and education for sustainable development. ECO-UNESCO is a FETAC accredited centre and runs a FETAC level 5 course on Sustainable Development.
- The Young Environmentalist Awards Programme, which is an all-island awards scheme open to young people aged between 12 and 18.
- Develops Education Resources including various resources on environmental and Sustainable Development issues.

Further information on ECO-UNESCO is available at www.ecounesco.ie

3. Summary

Key findings of the research

The purpose of this research was to provide an overview of good practice in Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Ireland, to provide samples of good practice programmes and projects, to draw conclusions on the policy frameworks and other mechanisms required to further develop Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland.

Our research showed that there is a growing interest in Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Ireland and that at present there are many examples of good practice programmes and initiatives. A majority of these initiatives are coming from the non-formal environmental sector. This is because Education for Sustainable Development is more often associated with Environmental Education and seen by some as an evolution of Environmental Education.

The research showed that there are opportunities for integration of ESD within formal education in existing subject areas. Some subjects support the inclusion of ESD. At a school's level there is wide support from NGOs who have developed innovative ESD programmes and initiatives. A whole schools approach is also being implemented by a large number of schools. Third level institutes are beginning to work in the area of Sustainable Development more and more and there are increasing numbers of courses within the third level sector.

There is also an increasing range of ESD activities taking place in life-long learning throughout the country with FETAC accredited courses being offered. Within the Youth Sector there is work underway on the development of ESD. However, there appears to be a lack of initiative in the business sector with little response.

The research also highlighted the issues arising from people involved in ESD. A fundamental problem is a lack of long-term structured support in terms of resources and funding for ESD programmes and initiatives. Some ESD programmes are being developed and run on small, short-term budgets by enthusiastic individuals.

In most government departments there is a lack of ESD focus within existing policies and strategies. However, there is a commitment to the growth of ESD with the development of the Interdepartmental Committee on the UN decade of ESD and the development of a National Strategy on ESD.

Recommendations based on these findings:

These are the main recommendations:

- ESD be given priority in all levels and forms of education – formal and non-formal.
- Open and effective consultation mechanisms be used in the development and implementation of ESD at all levels to include children, young people and the interests of future generations.

- A National Strategy on ESD be developed and implemented with consultation from all relevant stakeholders.
- A National ESD forum and network be established to assist in the development of partnerships and dialogue in Ireland.
- Appropriate and adequate funds be made available to implement the National Strategy in all areas.
- Education for Sustainable Development principles and approaches be embedded in the formal curriculum in a cross-cutting, holistic way.
- Promote and support ESD in teacher training and in all professional development.
- A 'Whole Schools Approach' to ESD be encouraged and that the learning community be engaged in planning and decision-making to achieve a sustainable educational environment. Schools should take part in the Green Schools programme and develop sustainable policies and practices.

4. Context

Outcomes from the World Summit on Sustainable Development (SD) in Johannesburg in 2002 recognised that life long learning and education is a driving force towards Sustainable Development. To promote this, the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), which will run from 2005 to 2014, provides a framework for global action. The goal of the UN Decade is to move society towards sustainable development, taking into account the complex interactions between the three pillars of Sustainable Development, namely environment, society and economics.

The European dimension is addressed in the UNECE Strategy for ESD¹ which was adopted in Vilnius in 2005 and in the revised EU Sustainable Development Strategy (EU SDS)² published in 2006; the revised EU SDS calls on member states to implement the UNECE Strategy for ESDS and bring forward national action programmes.

While the Department of Education and Science retains the overall coordinating role for policy development and implementation for ESD at national level, Comhar intends to bring a stakeholder perspective on ESD in the context of inputting to the review of Ireland's National Sustainable Development Strategy.

Ireland's first National Sustainable Development Strategy was agreed by Government in 1997 and reviewed in 2002 in the run-up to the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg. The partnership agreement, between Government and the social partners, *Towards 2016*, now commits the Government to a review of Ireland's National Sustainable Development Strategy in 2007.

The output from the study will inform Comhar's recommendations to Government on the development of the policy framework for Education for Sustainable Development in the context of the review Ireland's Sustainable Development Strategy in 2007.

Comhar's work programme for the period 2006-2008 has a commitment to provide an input to the review of the National Sustainable Development Strategy and Comhar sees ESD as being one of the key areas.

¹ <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/welcome.htm>

² http://ec.europa.eu/sustainable/welcome/index_en.htm

4.1 About Education for Sustainable Development

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), using a wide definition of education (both formal and non-formal), is both a part of Sustainable Development and a tool for achieving the Sustainable Development goals throughout the world and at all levels (national, regional, and local). It refers to a process of learning that allows making decisions that take into account long-term economic and ecological effects, as well as the equity of all communities. It also aims at building the capacity and commitment needed for building sustainable societies. The four main thrusts of ESD were defined by Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 of the 1992 Rio Earth Summit¹: promotion and improvement of basic education, reorientation of existing education programs, developing public understanding and awareness, and provision of training programmes for all sectors of private and civil society.

The UNECE Strategy² recognizes that education must support personal development, decision-making, and peoples involvement in social and community life. While the focus on the environment is essential, it is set within the broader context of development - social change, cultural factors and the socio-political issues of equity, poverty, democracy and quality of life.

Key themes in ESD include: poverty alleviation, citizenship, peace, ethics, responsibility in local and global contexts, democracy and governance, justice, security, human rights, health, gender equity, cultural diversity, production and consumption patterns, corporate responsibility, environmental protection, natural resource management and biological and landscape diversity.

For society to progress towards a more sustainable model of development, education must focus on the needs of a wide range of sectors. One of the most important aspects of the UN Decade is the recognition that ESD must engage a wide range of stakeholders, from government, private sector, civil society and non-governmental organizations, and education providers to the general public. The UNECE Strategy for ESD envisages national authorities reviewing current practices and developing a 'national implementation plan', using a participatory approach.

¹ Agenda 21, adopted at the 1992 Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro (1992)

² UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainability Development (2005)

5. Purpose and aims of research

The purpose of this research is to develop recommendations that can feed into the development of the review of the National Sustainable Development Strategy.

The aims of the research are:

- To provide an overview of current good practice on Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Ireland including identification of a broad representative sample of good practice programmes and projects in the formal and non-formal education and training sectors.
- To draw conclusions on the policy frameworks and supports, including institutional arrangements and funding, necessary to underpin the development of ESD in Ireland.
- To make recommendations on the future development of ESD in Ireland.

6. Our Approach – Methodology

In order to provide an overview of current good practice in Education and Training for Sustainable Development in Ireland we decided to:

1. Identify relevant stakeholders (See Appendix 1). This was done from our own database, our own contacts in the youth, education, environmental and development sectors and by using data from Cultivate's online ESD directory.
2. Provide stakeholders with an email survey using a questionnaire (see Appendix 2) to ascertain the level of activity in ESD in their work area. The questionnaire was adapted from UNECE guidelines³ on Good Practice initiatives.
3. Carry out internet and literary research.

In order to draw conclusions on the policy frameworks and supports, including institutional arrangements and funding, necessary to underpin the development of ESD in Ireland we decided to

1. Review existing policy frameworks, supports and funding arrangements in place.
2. Review results of questionnaire survey.
3. Review international models.

In order to make recommendations for the future developments of ESD in Ireland we

1. Review results of questionnaire survey.
2. Review international strategies and policy.
3. Review reports from the COMHAR Schools Pilot Project⁴ and the joint ECO-UNESCO and Cultivate events.⁵

³ http://www.unece.org/env/esd/inf.meeting_docs/Bureau/Good%20practices.templ.pdf (accessed Apr 2007)

⁴ COMHAR Schools Pilot Project - ECO-UNESCO 2005 – Report available from COMHAR

⁵ ESD Multi-stakeholder Conferences – ECO-UNESCO & CULTIVATE 2005 – Reports available from COMHAR

7. Overview of Good Practice of Education for Sustainable Development with selected examples

Introduction

The definition of Good Practice as defined by the UNECE is broad. It is often difficult for initiatives to cover all of the aspects of Good Practice as Education for Sustainable Development is relatively new, often difficult to define and requires a cross-sectoral approach which can be difficult to obtain.

The projects, programmes and initiatives featured in this section are a selection of questionnaire respondents and of other research carried out. It is important to stress here that this is **an overview** of Good Practice in Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland as per the scope and limitations of the Research Project. It is **not an exhaustive list** of programmes, projects or initiatives but a representative sample.

Results from survey:

Approximately 1200 emailed questionnaires were sent out to a wide variety of stakeholders. 45 completed questionnaires were received from a wide spectrum but with the majority from the environmental sector.

Table 1 provides an overview of the focus of the projects, programmes and initiatives. The focus on the programmes and initiatives received were concentrated on environmental themes.

While the response from the emailed questionnaire was limited, the majority of replies demonstrated a good understanding of ESD and good practice.

The returned questionnaires also provided us with information on the challenges that groups face when attempting to carry out Education for Sustainable Development, which include capacity issues and resources among others.

The selected initiatives under the following headings:

1. Formal – Primary
2. Formal – Secondary
3. Formal – Higher Education
4. Further Education and Training
5. Teacher Training
6. Non-Formal - Environment
7. Non-Formal - Youth
8. Professional & Business
9. Government & Local Government
10. Informal

TABLE 1 – Overview of Focus of Programmes and Initiatives

Project/Initiative	Education/Learning	Educators	Overcoming Poverty	Gender Equality	Health Promotion	HIV/AIDS	Sustainable Urbanisation	Corporate Responsibility	Research Development	Market Economy	Environment	Water	Climate Change	Biodiversity	Disaster Reduction	Rural Development	Sustainable Consumption	Regional/International Cooperation	Sustainable Tourism	Human Rights	Peace & Human Security	Policy, Regulation, Governance	Intercultural Understanding	Cultural Diversity	Indigenous Knowledge	Tools & materials (media&ICT)	Other
Formal (& Supports)																											
American College Dublin	x							x		x																	
CDU CCN Citizenship Studies	x	x							x																	x	x
ECO-UNESCO YEA	x	x			x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	
Green Schools An Taisce	x						x				x	x	x	x			x										
Further Education & Training																											
Clare Adult education	x							x			x	x	x				x										
ECO-UNESCO FETAC Course	x	x			x		x		x	x	x	x	x	x			x	x	x	x	x			x	x		
Kimmage Development Studies College	x										x						x										x
Teacher Training																											
CDU Teacher Training Seminar	x	x							x																		x
CDU Global SD E-Book	x	x							x																		
St Angela's College	x										x						x										
Ubuntu Network	x	x							x																		

Project/Initiative	Education/Learning	Educators	Overcoming Poverty	Gender Equality	Health Promotion	HIV/AIDS	Sustainable Urbanisation	Corporate Responsibility	Research Development	Market Economy	Environment	Water	Climate Change	Biodiversity	Disaster Reduction	Rural Development	Sustainable Consumption	Regional/International Cooperation	Sustainable Tourism	Human Rights	Peace & Human Security	Policy, Regulation, Governance	Intercultural Understanding	Cultural Diversity	Indigenous Knowledge	Tools & materials (mwdia&CT)	Other
Non-Formal Environment																											
Burrenbeo											X			X											X	X	
Blue Flag An Taisce	X				X			X		X	X			X	X	X	X		X			X			X		
CELT	X									X			X	X		X	X	X							X		
Cultivate - Powerdown Toolkit	X	X					X			X	X	X	X	X			X	X				X			X	X	
ECO-UNESCO 1 Day Courses	X	X			X		X			X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X			
GAP Cork Env. Forum	X	X			X		X		X	X	X	X	X				X										X
Good Wood Guide Just Forests	X	X	X					X		X	X		X	X			X	X		X	X				X		X
Groundswell	X				X								X	X		X	X	X	X								X
The Hollies	X				X		X			X			X	X		X		X			X		X		X		
Irish Peatland Conservation	X								X					X													X
Kerry Earth Education Project	X	X			X						X		X	X		X	X		X					X			
Salt & Light - Spirituality	X						X			X	X	X	X				X			X							
Sort it Out (NI)	X	X								X							X										X
Tidy Northern Ire.	X	X					X			X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X						X			X
Tipperary Energy Agency	X									X			X				X										
Wood of Life Just Forests	X	X	X					X		X			X	X			X	X		X	X				X		

Project/Initiative	Education/Learning	Educators	Overcoming Poverty	Gender Equality	Health Promotion	HIV/AIDS	Sustainable Urbanisation	Corporate Responsibility	Research Development	Market Economy	Environment	Water	Climate Change	Biodiversity	Disaster Reduction	Rural Development	Sustainable Consumption	Regional/International Cooperation	Sustainable Tourism	Human Rights	Peace & Human Security	Policy, Regulation, Governance	Intercultural Understanding	Cultural Diversity	Indigenous Knowledge	Tools & materials (mwdia&CT)	Other
Non-formal - Youth																											
ECO-UNESCO Youth for Sustainable Development	x		x								x	x	x	x									x			x	
NYCI - One World Week			x			x							x							x	x					x	
ECO-UNESCO Youth Workshop	x										x	x	x	x						x							x
Kilinarden Drug Prevention	x	x	x	x	x																						
Copping On	x																				x						x
Professional & Business																											
Royal Institute of Architects	x						x				x					x	x										
Chamber of Commerce	x																										x
Government																											
Coastwatch & Wexford Co Co	x	x									x	x	x	x								x			x	x	
Kildare Co Co composting	x						x				x			x													
Roscommon Co Co	x								x					x													x
South Tipp Co Co	x										x																
Wicklow Co Co	x	x									x		x														
Irish Aid	x	x	x	x	x	x	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x					x	x	x					

The following overview is taken from survey, internet and literary research.

Formal Education – Introduction and Overview

The formal education sector in Ireland constitutes the primary, secondary, third level and further education and training. Primary and Secondary education are guided by a formal national curriculum.

7.1 Primary education

The general aims of primary education are: to enable the child to live a full life as a child and to realise his or her potential as an individual, to develop social responsibility and to prepare the child for further education and lifelong learning. The primary school potentially provides the perfect opportunity to educate for Sustainable Development. The emphasis on the primary schools curriculum is for a child-centred active learning approach; this fits very well within the ethos of ESD. In addition, the nature of the curricula and the flexibility of class timetabling allows teachers to focus on interrelationship between subject areas making the integration of an ESD approach easier. Some of the initiatives highlighted are curriculum supports and not part of the official curriculum.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
Department of Education & Science Curriculum	Social, Environmental and Scientific Education	Social, environmental and scientific education (SESE) provides opportunities for the child to explore, investigate and develop an understanding of the natural, human, social and cultural dimensions of local and wider environments; to learn and practise a wide range of skills; and to acquire open, critical and responsible attitudes. SESE enables the child to live as an informed and caring member of local and wider communities . SESE takes place within, and contributes to, many areas of the curriculum. It thus contributes significantly to many aspects of the child's development. Within this curriculum, SESE is presented under three subject headings: history, geography and science.	<i>Encourages critical thinking and the development of responsible attitudes.</i> <i>Children are encouraged to become active citizens.</i> <i>It is a holistic in approach.</i>
Department of Education & Science Curriculum	Social, Personal and Health Education	Social Personal and Health Education is concerned with the personal development of the child and with his/her health and well-being. It helps children understand how to care for themselves and it fosters in them a sense of responsibility for their own actions. SPHE helps the child develop skills, attitudes and self-esteem. It promotes responsible social behaviour and helps the child relate to others. SPHE encourages children to explore	<i>Encourages critical thinking and the development of responsible attitudes.</i> <i>Children are encouraged to become active citizens.</i>

		<p>their own cultures and traditions and to develop a sense of respect for others and helps to develop a sense of belonging to a community.</p>	<p><i>It is holistic in approach.</i></p>
<p>An Taisce</p>	<p>Green Schools</p>	<p>'Green Schools' is an international programme that focuses on a 'whole schools approach' to environmental awareness. It promotes responsible behaviour among school children and the wider community towards the environment. It offers a well-defined, controllable way for schools to take environmental issues from the curriculum and apply them to the day-to-day running of the school. Over 2600 schools (primary, secondary and special) are registered and participating in the programme run by an Taisce. The programme is particularly successful at primary level where timetabling, class structure (i.e. one teacher to one class) and the size of schools makes it easier to achieve a whole-schools approach to ESD. A key to the success of the programme is the partnership between An Taisce and all of the Local Authorities who provide funding and also support through their Environmental Awareness Officers. The programme is part-funded by the Department of the Environment.</p>	<p><i>Focus on educational and learning dimensions.</i></p> <p><i>Endeavours to make environmental awareness an intrinsic part of the school ethos.</i></p> <p><i>Participation is encouraged from not just students, teachers and parents, but also from the Local Authority, the media, and local business.</i></p> <p><i>The programme is evaluated. The Green Flag award requires renewal every 2 years, thus promoting continued reduction of the school's environmental impact.</i></p>
<p>COMHAR & ECO-UNESCO</p>	<p>ESD Schools Toolkit</p>	<p>ECO-UNESCO undertook a Pilot project on Sustainable Development in Primary and Secondary School which explored curricula links to COMHAR's Principles of Sustainable Development and a whole schools approach to ESD. One outcome is the development of a Primary Schools Toolkit which helps teachers integrate ESD into their everyday classroom activities by providing them with the necessary materials to run various class sessions and outlines ideas for practical projects. It also provides information for a whole schools approach, offering information on other programmes.</p>	<p><i>Focus on educational and learning dimensions.</i></p> <p><i>Active learning, learner-centred approach.</i></p> <p><i>Curricular links.</i></p> <p><i>Practical Project element.</i></p> <p><i>Reflective learning.</i></p>

Dept. of Education and Science	Walk Tall	This programme is directed at the prevention of substance misuse through developing positive attitudes in children, aiming to give them the confidence and knowledge to make healthy choices.	<i>Curriculum links with health element central to SPHE programme.</i> <i>Uses active learning, role play, games etc.</i> <i>Covers topics such as facilitation and communications skills.</i>
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7.2 Formal – Second Level

The second-level education sector comprises secondary, vocational, community and comprehensive schools. Secondary schools are privately owned and managed. Second-level education consists of a three-year junior cycle followed by a two or three-year senior cycle. The Second Level system offers some opportunities for the integration of ESD at formal level, however, second level timetabling and structure does not easily allow for links to be made between subject areas, which is integral in ESD. The following subjects at present incorporate some of the elements of ESD. As is the case at primary level, some of the initiatives highlighted are curriculum supports and not part of the official curriculum.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
Department of Education & Science NCCA	Civic Social and Political Education – Junior cycle	Civic, Social and Political Education aims to prepare students for active participatory citizenship. This is achieved through the exploration of the civic, social and political dimensions of their lives. It allows students to explore, analyse and evaluate and be capable of making decisions and judgements through a reflective citizenship, based on human rights and social responsibilities. Covers 7 key concepts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • rights and responsibilities • stewardship • development • democracy • laws • interdependence • human dignity 	<p><i>Encourages critical thinking and the development of responsible attitudes.</i></p> <p><i>Children are encouraged to become active citizens.</i></p> <p><i>Active learning methods.</i></p> <p><i>It covers a broad range of ESD related areas.</i></p>
	Social, Personal & Health Education Junior cycle	Social, personal and health education supports the personal development, health and well-being of young people and helps them create and maintain supportive relationships. It enables students to develop skills for self-fulfilment and living in communities, to promote self-esteem and self-confidence, to enable the students to develop a framework for responsible decision-making, to provide opportunities for reflection and discussion.	<p><i>Provides opportunity for reflection and discussion.</i></p> <p><i>Self evaluating.</i></p>
	Geography	Geography explores human	<i>Integrates 3 pillars of</i>

	Junior and Senior cycle	relationship to the earth and human impact on the earth. It offers a perfect opportunity to explore issues of Sustainable Development as students learn about resources on a local and global level. Geography also introduces cultural and economic systems and examinations of the earth, its resources and its people from local to a global level, which highlights global inequalities of resource distribution. In addition to this, students develop practical skills of map reading, which strengthens the student's ability to engage and solve problems.	<p><i>Sustainable Development.</i></p> <p><i>Links the local to the global.</i></p> <p><i>Develops skills.</i></p>
	Science Junior and Senior Cycle	Science offers opportunities for teaching knowledge of scientific principles of environmental systems from energy to ecology, which underpin the concept of Sustainable Development. Science can be used to introduce systems thinking through exploration of natural cycles and the examination of human impact on these cycles from a scientific perspective. Practical skills learnt through science are also essential for education for sustainable development. Science also helps to highlight the interactions and interdependence between humans with their environment via scientific principles and skills.	<p><i>Development of systems thinking in students.</i></p> <p><i>Building of knowledge of the natural world.</i></p>
	Business & Enterprise	Ethical Investment is part of the Business and Enterprise subject at senior cycle.	
An Taisce	Green Schools'	'Green Schools' is an international programme which focuses on a whole schools approach to environmental awareness. It promotes responsible behaviour among school children and the wider community towards the environment. It offers a well-defined, controllable way for schools to take environmental issues from the curriculum and apply them to the	<p><i>Focus on educational and learning dimensions.</i></p> <p><i>Endeavours to make environmental awareness an intrinsic part of the school ethos.</i></p> <p><i>Participation is encouraged from not just students, teachers and</i></p>

		<p>day-to-day running of the school. Over 2600 schools (primary, secondary and special) are registered and participating in the programme run by an Taisce. (see Primary section for more information)</p>	<p>parents, but also from the Local Authority, the media, and local business.</p> <p>The programme is evaluated. The Green Flag award requires renewal every 2 years, thus promoting continued reduction of the school's environmental impact.</p>
<p>COMHAR & ECO-UNESCO</p>	<p>ESD Schools Toolkit</p>	<p>ECO-UNESCO, in conjunction with COMHAR, has developed a Secondary Schools Toolkit dealing with CSPE, Science and Geography and Junior Cycle. Teachers can integrate ESD into their everyday classroom activities by using the toolkit, which has the necessary materials to run various class sessions and outlines ideas for practical projects. It also provides information on the Wholes Schools Approach.</p>	<p>Focus on Educational and learning dimensions.</p> <p>Active learning, learner centred approach.</p> <p>Curricular links.</p> <p>Practical projects.</p> <p>Reflective learning.</p>
<p>ECO-UNESCO</p>	<p>Young Environmentalist Awards'</p>	<p>The 'Young Environmentalist Awards' run by ECO-UNESCO is a youth-focused programme provided within the second level schools system and the youth sector that aims to build environmental awareness among young people and to empower them to become active citizens by promoting simple action and lifestyle changes. It is an all-island environmental awards programme for young people between the ages of 12 and 18. The programme focuses on an action-based approach of learning by doing.</p>	<p>Values driven, encourages critical thinking and problem solving, and adopts a multi-method approach using word, art, drama, debate and experience.</p> <p>Complements a wide range of curricular subjects including Geography, Science, CSPE, Home Economics, Art and Design, Business Studies and also Transition Year studies.</p> <p>Makes a difference to the environment and to participants' confidence and skills.</p> <p>Is all-island and therefore helps to develop cross-border relations.</p>

<p>ECO-UNESCO with CSPE Support Service</p>	<p>Development of Module on Environmental Stewardship for CSPE</p>	<p>ECO-UNESCO with the CSPE support service is developing an environmental stewardship module for CSPE. This module will ask students to consider their lifestyles and habits and the consequences of their actions. It will explore with students the development of an Earth Charter to guide them through the environmental stewardship module.</p>	<p><i>Develops knowledge and skills of environmental stewardship.</i></p> <p><i>Curricular links.</i></p> <p><i>Active learning.</i></p> <p><i>Reflective learning.</i></p>
<p>Trócaire and CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit</p>	<p>Citizenship Studies Projects</p>	<p>The Citizenship Studies Projects purpose is to support and inform the development of a full Leaving Certificate subject in Citizenship Education (Politics and Society). The project has two strands: (1) research and (2) curriculum development. The research strand aims to elicit teacher views on the challenges and benefits. The curriculum development strand aims to collaborate with teachers on the development of appropriate curricular elements and is working closely with teachers on the writing and piloting of materials dealing with the concept and practice of Sustainable Development.</p>	<p><i>Partnership between NGO, Curriculum Development Unit/Department etc working in conjunction with practicing teachers.</i></p> <p><i>Appropriate research, facilitative and curriculum development experience.</i></p>
<p>Young Social Innovators</p>	<p>Young Social Innovators</p>	<p>Young Social Innovators is a social awareness education and action programme for 15-18 year olds. The programme raises awareness in young people on social issues and challenges and empowers young people to come up with innovative solutions to social problems and take action. The programme includes a showcase and 'speak-out' sessions throughout the country.</p>	<p><i>Encourages active citizenship.</i></p> <p><i>Develops skills of critical thinking.</i></p> <p><i>Active learning, learner centred approach.</i></p>

7.3 Formal – Higher Education

Traditionally the higher education system in Ireland has comprised the university sector, the technological sector and the colleges of education, all of which are autonomous and self-governing and are substantially funded by the State. In recent years, a number of independent private colleges have developed. The universities deal with undergraduate and post-graduate degree programmes together with basic and applied research. There has been some progress in some third level institutions in addressing the issue of a whole schools approach to ESD. The third level sector has various taught courses in Sustainable Development.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
American College	A module on 'Sustainable Business'	A module on 'Sustainable Business' is run by the American College, Dublin as a part of their BA degree programme in International Business. The course aims to give students an understanding of the issues and concerns at the interface of business and sustainable development, and the wide range of initiatives being used internationally. Topics include Environmental and Ecological Economics, Corporate Social Responsibility and Triple Bottom Line.	<p><i>The first third level course in Ireland to address business and sustainability, it adopts a trans-disciplinary approach.</i></p> <p><i>Critical thinking is encouraged along with discussion, opinion-forming and debate.</i></p> <p><i>Highlighting of positive focus initiatives by businesses to build enthusiasm, rather than negative focus.</i></p> <p><i>Module developed to HETAC standard with potential ease of replication.</i></p>
Dublin Institute of Technology	MSc on Sustainable Development	This course provides a broad knowledge and understanding of Sustainable Development including the issues, techniques, management and applications relevant to the living and working environment. The course is divided into four clusters of modules and offers foundation modules in economics, sociology, data collection and analysis, public administration and law and sustainable resource management. Other modules include understanding environmental sustainability, understanding social and economic sustainability and applying sustainability. The course also requires students	<p><i>Focus on Education and Learning dimensions.</i></p> <p><i>Offers an element of evaluation.</i></p> <p><i>Good links have been formed with private sector during work placements.</i></p>

<p>Tipperary Institute</p>	<p>BA programme in Rural Development</p>	<p>to carry out a work placement.</p> <p>Tipperary Institute has a special remit in promoting Sustainable Rural Development. This Degree programme incorporates a mixture of social, environmental and business subjects which aim to give a broad understanding of the complex area of rural development. The aim of the programme is to enable graduates to work in roles relevant to the development of rural areas and to provide them with an understanding of the environment and of the issues affecting the sustainability of the way we order the society of the future.</p>	<p><i>Integrates the economic, social and environmental components of sustainable development.</i></p> <p><i>Exposure to a wide variety of learning methodologies aimed at the development of intellectual inquiry, analytical ability, problem solving and group work skills.</i></p>
<p>University College Dublin</p>	<p>PhD programme in Sustainable Development</p>	<p>A new PhD programme in Sustainable Development was launched in February 2007 and is scheduled to begin in September 2007. The programme is a new initiative by UCD Urban Institute Ireland (UII) with support from three UCD schools – Architecture, Landscape and Civil Engineering, Geography, Planning and Environmental policy and Biology and Environmental Science. This is a four-year programme and includes various modules including environmental economics, policy and governance, introduction to environmental themes among others.</p>	<p><i>Integrates the economic, social and environmental components of sustainable development.</i></p>

7.4 Further Education and Training

The term "Further Education" embraces education and training which occurs after second-level schooling but which is not part of the third level system. The Department of Education and Science provides for programmes such as Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses, the Vocational Training Opportunities Scheme (VTOS) for the unemployed, Youthreach for early school leavers, Senior Traveller Training Centre (STTC) programmes for young and adult Travellers who have left school early, adult literacy and community education. A distinctive feature of further education generally, is its diversity and breadth of provision, and its links with other services, such as employment, training, area partnership, welfare, youth, school, juvenile liaison, justice and community and voluntary sector interests. Further education programmes are delivered locally by the Vocational Education Committees and by second level schools.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
Clare Adult Education Centre	Environmental Trends & Impacts	<p>Locally devised module which, as the name suggests, looks at the central role of the environment in life. Students seek to understand the causes of major global environmental degradation, and the remedies to prevent and correct them.</p> <p>Course Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ozone Depletion • Global Warming and Energy Generation • Desertification and Soil Erosion • Deforestation and Acid Rain • Water Shortages 	<p><i>Assignment and project of their choice (individual or team)</i></p> <p><i>Addresses local issues and links them to global</i></p>
	Waste Management and Recycling	<p>The potential solutions and change management are explored</p> <p>Course Structure</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waste Hierarchy and Management • Legal & Commercial Background • Solutions to Waste and Recycling 	<p><i>Forward-looking subject which explores rethinking of different wastes as different resource streams</i></p> <p><i>Engages students in problem-solving and seeking out answers to the puzzles presented by a throw away consumer society</i></p>
ECO-UNESCO	Introduction to Sustainable Development (FETAC accredited)	<p>A *FETAC accredited course, 'An Introduction to Sustainable Development' is run by ECO-UNESCO. Participants develop an understanding of Sustainable</p>	<p><i>Approach is learner-centred and project-oriented to encourage the application of the acquired knowledge</i></p>

	<p>accredited level 5.6)</p>	<p>Development issues and acquire critical thinking and analytical skills such as Environmental Auditing, and also workshop facilitation. The main focus of the course is Environmental Leadership Development.</p> <p>*FETAC is the Further Education and Training Accreditation and Certification Awarding body.</p>	<p>and skills to everyday life.</p> <p><i>Exploration by participants into the ESD theories and teaching methods employed by the course.</i></p> <p><i>The course is FETAC accredited with potential for replication and future plans for a 2-day version.</i></p> <p><i>Evaluation in the form of a formal exam and practical project work.</i></p>
<p>Kimmage Development Studies Centre</p>	<p>Economics of Sustainability</p>	<p>This is a 10 week evening course covering such topics as environmental and ecological theories and thinkers; debt-based money systems; consequences of climate change, peak oil for economics; sustainability indicators; international policy making on sustainable development; natural resource depletion; sustainable consumption; ecological footprints to deepen understanding among the participants of how and why conventional economic development is impacting negatively on people and the planet.</p>	<p><i>Innovative (first of its kind in Ireland) evening course examining key issues in relation to economic of sustainability.</i></p> <p><i>Links global to local.</i></p> <p><i>Develops skills of critical analysis.</i></p>
<p>Waterford Institute of Technology</p>	<p>Sustainability and Environmental Awareness For All (SEAA)</p>	<p>This course has been designed for anyone interested or involved in Community or Rural affairs, who is environmentally aware and wishes to both develop their own knowledge and pass it on to others.</p> <p>The overall aim of this course is to train potential Community Educators Leaders in sustainable development, and environmental education and awareness.</p>	<p><i>Covers all elements of SD.</i></p> <p><i>Uses field trips and practical examples.</i></p> <p><i>Training the trainer: multiplier effect with facilitation skills also covered for group and community work.</i></p>

West Cork Permaculture	Permaculture Design Course	Permaculture is a design method that uses natural systems as models for creating sustainable human settlements using a range of sustainable solutions for energy, buildings, food and the community.	<i>Innovative: uses a variety of creative learning methods.</i> <i>Experiential learning spread over three different permaculture project locations.</i> <i>All areas of SD covered including sustainable economics.</i>
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7.5 Teacher Training

Initial pre-service primary teacher training is provided in Colleges of Education, as is specialist secondary teacher training of home economics and religious education. Pre-service secondary teacher training takes place in various third level institutions including NUIG, UL and others. In-service training is carried out in Education Centres.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
Curriculum Development Unit (CDVEC)	The Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN)	The Consumer Citizenship Network (CCN) is an interdisciplinary network of educators from 123 institutions in 37 countries and includes UNESCO, UNEP and international citizenship and consumer organizations that recognize the pressing need for constructive action by individuals in order to achieve sustainable consumption and global solidarity. As a member of CCN the City of Dublin Vocational Education Committee Curriculum Development Unit (CDVEC CDU) is developing and carrying out teacher training seminars on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). This will culminate in a 1½ day seminar which will use appropriate teaching and learning methodologies to explore how the UN Decade can be translated into practice. A concluding research paper will discuss the challenges encountered in the development and planning of the seminar.	<p><i>Breadth of countries / organisations in the network.</i></p> <p><i>Materials and methodologies are contextualised to ensure relevance to Irish teachers.</i></p> <p><i>Methods are tested and piloted in pre- and in-service training days.</i></p> <p><i>There will be full documentation of the design, piloting and implementation phases</i></p>
Curriculum Development Unit (CDVEC)	e-book: 'Global Sustainable Development: A Challenge for Consumer Citizens'	<p>CD e-book with a collection of papers/contributions from around the world. Perspectives on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quality of life • Gender equality • Education • Past-present-future • Contrast between: • Rich/poor • Northern/southern hemispheres • Local/global • National/international <p>Etc.</p>	<p><i>Breadth of countries contributing : opportunity for global networking.</i></p> <p><i>Opportunity to provide global perspective on ESD themes.</i></p> <p><i>Not restricted to research papers : open to all, will include case studies, stories etc.</i></p>

<p>St. Angela's College</p>	<p>Ethical consumerism</p>	<p>Ethical consumerism is to be promoted among pre-service Home Economics teachers through the use of a cross curricular educational intervention. This aims to develop the attitudes, knowledge and intended behaviour ensuring students experience a holistic perspective on consumerism.</p>	<p><i>Transdisciplinary : bridging the gaps. engage students in critical thinking.</i></p>
<p>UBUNTU Network</p>	<p>UBUNTU Project</p>	<p>The Ubuntu Network supports 16 research projects in 8 colleges with the aim of integrating Development Education (DE) and Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) into second level teacher training in Ireland. Teacher educators are supported in their design, delivery and evaluation of DE/ESD based elements within their teaching and professional practice. The Ubuntu Network has 6 central themes – development and underdevelopment, environmental sustainability, human rights and responsibilities, equality and discrimination, similarity and difference, peace and conflict.</p>	<p><i>Uses an action research methodology – the educator becomes the researcher of their professional practice.</i></p> <p><i>Collaborative environment maintained – network members share knowledge and experience of DE/ESD issues and methodologies.</i></p> <p><i>Focus on documenting activities and outputs.</i></p> <p><i>Multiplier effect – DE/ESD ultimately reaching schools and students via teachers and their training.</i></p>

7.6 Non-Formal – Environment

The non-formal education and training sector, in particular environmental NGOs accounted for the best level of response to the questionnaire. The NGOs carry out a huge amount of work in ESD a part of which acts as a support to formal education and complements work underway in schools, in youth groups, in business, in universities and in communities.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
Cultivate Centre	Community Powerdown Toolkit'	The 'Community Powerdown Toolkit' is a 10-week course provided by Cultivate and aimed at community leaders who can then deliver the course in their own communities in Ireland and South Africa. The aim of the course is train trainers to take this learning into their own communities and develop a deeper awareness and understanding of environmental sustainability, reaching an informed, empowered position from which to initiate and effect meaningful long term change at local level. It uses climate change and energy crisis as the context. Participants are equipped to take a more active role in implementing an 'Energy Descent Plan' being used in the Transition Town process. It is delivered using a CD-ROM of resources including films, readings, audio files and course notes. Future developments include the Community Powerdown Handbook with articles, practical tips on being sustainable and also a directory for ESD.	<p><i>Use of action learning methodologies in a non-formal setting.</i></p> <p><i>Aim is to train trainers to ensure a wider take-up.</i></p> <p><i>Promotes lifestyle changes at an individual, community and global level.</i></p> <p><i>Assessment is through questionnaires and sample interviews involving the participants, the trainers and the users of an accompanying CD-ROM.</i></p> <p><i>An e-learning version of the toolkit and course is being developed to ensure a wider delivery.</i></p>

<p>CELT</p>		<p>Centre for Environmental Living and Training (CELT) offers a choice of a range of traditional and ecological skills at introductory/intermediate level with professional tutors. It is held in sheltered workshop areas in the setting of Beakelly Oak Wood beside Lough Derg, part of the Shannon waterway. They encourage local craftspersons to become involved and they assist the local community with woodland projects and wildlife conservation. This encourages indigenous knowledge, which plays an important role in ESD skills development.</p>	<p><i>Innovative – promotes local indigenous knowledge.</i></p> <p><i>Experiential learning.</i></p>
<p>Global Action Plan (Cork)</p>	<p>Ecosaver programme</p>	<p>The Ecosaver programme is a Global Action Plan run by Cork Environmental Forum to encourage householders to investigate and implement changes to their lives, thereby saving them money and reducing negative environmental impacts. Its aims include reduction in waste, water and energy consumption, promotion of Fairtrade and conscious consumerism, and raising awareness about peak oil and climate change.</p>	<p><i>Interactive, participant-lead, self-learning process.</i></p> <p><i>Information is easily understood, well presented and relevant.</i></p> <p><i>Actions are simple, sensible, easy to achieve with instant benefits.</i></p> <p><i>Motivation comes from tangible gains, positive feedback from group setting.</i></p> <p><i>Potential for replication is demonstrated by national UK delivery.</i></p>
<p>Irish Peatland Conservation Council</p>	<p>The Bog of Allen Nature Centre</p>	<p>The centre offers an exhibition centre that educates visitors on the wild boglands of Ireland. The exhibition centre also provides information on composting and wildlife gardening. Courses in composting are offered around the country each year and are available at the centre for group visits. An education officer offers visitors guided tours and educates on various issues affecting the peatlands of Ireland today.</p>	<p><i>Experiential learning</i></p> <p><i>Learning about systems i.e. ecological.</i></p>
<p>Just Forests</p>	<p>Wood of Life</p>	<p>'Wood of Life' is an interactive traveling exhibition that highlights the importance</p>	<p><i>Practical, hands-on, interactive approach</i></p>

		<p>of the global forest estate and encourages responsible timber sourcing and good forest management. It is run by Just Forests and aimed at the junior cycle Construction studies teachers and architects. It uses wood (a familiar raw material) to link important global issues such as forest decline and poverty. The programme links to Geography and Science in Junior cycle and to Business Studies, Science, and more in Leaving Certificate.</p>	<p><i>Graphic display of forestry in simple terms. Format produced in association with pupils and teachers.</i></p> <p><i>Follow-up material and website available.</i></p> <p><i>Links to formal curriculum.</i></p>
	<p>Good Wood Guide</p>	<p>The Good Wood Guide is a booklet to be distributed country wide aimed at Construction Studies teachers, people in the construction industry and procurement officers to encourage adoption of responsible timber policies.</p>	<p><i>Raising awareness in a wide target group.</i></p> <p><i>Links global to local.</i></p> <p><i>Encourages action.</i></p>
<p>The Hollies</p>	<p>Learning to Live with One Planet</p>	<p>This is a pilot school module about sustainable living and is being run by The Hollies. Students explore sustainability in a variety of interactive, child-centred, and experiential activities. They get hands-on experience of sustainable building techniques and sustainable land use (organic gardening and woodland management).</p>	<p><i>Experiential learning that encourages gradual changes in behaviour.</i></p> <p><i>Balance 'doom-and-gloom' dangers with positive solutions.</i></p> <p><i>Encourages follow-up activities such as use of natural building materials.</i></p>
<p>Tipperary Energy Agency</p>	<p>Energy Awareness Programme</p>	<p>The Tipperary Energy Agency run an Energy Awareness Programme aimed at primary school children using a short workshop format. This includes a 15 minute presentation followed by an interactive game to demonstrate issues of recycling, energy efficiency, renewable energy and energy in transport.</p>	<p><i>Innovation: learning through play.</i></p> <p><i>Complements curriculum work and the Green Schools programme where applicable.</i></p> <p><i>Information pack provided for further theme development.</i></p> <p><i>Evaluation of the learning outcomes carried out at the end of the session.</i></p>

7.7 Non-Formal – Youth

The Voluntary Youth Sector comprises approximately 45 national youth organizations whose main focus and aim is the development of young people. The National Youth Council of Ireland is the umbrella body for voluntary youth organisations.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
ECO-UNESCO	'Youth for Sustainable Development'	This a new programme developed by ECO-UNESCO, which has received multi-annual funding from Irish Aid until 2010. The programme aims to empower young people and raise awareness in them about Sustainable Development and related issues including climate change. The programme comprises a Youth peer education programme, a 3-day training programme to assist youth organizations incorporate ESD into their youth work. There is also a youth exchange programme, an accompanying ESD section to the ECO-UNESCO website, an online youth forum and a youth e-bulletin.	<p><i>Innovative – using peer education methods.</i></p> <p><i>Youth-led – encourages youth decision making.</i></p> <p><i>Introducing concepts of intergenerational justice.</i></p>
National Youth Development Education Programme (NYCI)	One World Week	'One World Week' is a week of youth-led awareness raising, education and action that takes place throughout Ireland annually. The theme for the week is chosen by youth organizations and young people in partnership with development agencies. In 2006 the theme was global health, in 2005 it was participation by young people to change the world and involved a national action focused on tackling climate change. This was linked to the UN Summit on Climate Change and was run in partnership with Friends of the Earth.	<p><i>The theme-choosing process ensures ownership of the theme by the stakeholders.</i></p> <p><i>Short accessible training for trainers is provided at a local level encouraging local groups to get involved.</i></p> <p><i>Groups take action in solidarity with other young people locally, nationally and internationally.</i></p> <p><i>Innovative use of art, drama and dance to raise awareness about the 'theme'.</i></p>

7.8 Government and Local Government

There are 29 Local Authorities in Ireland. Each Local Authority has an Environmental Awareness officer to deal with many of the aspects of environmental education within the local area.

Name of group	Name of initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
ENFO	Various Programmes	ENFO is a public service, which provides easy access to wide-ranging and authoritative information on the environment, including Sustainable Development. It was established in 1990 by the Department of the Environment Heritage, and Local Government. The aim is to foster increased environmental awareness and thereby facilitate a broad partnership in efforts to promote Sustainable Development including protection of the environment for the benefit of future generations.	<p><i>Provides facilities.</i></p> <p><i>Comprehensive range of up to date materials free to the general public.</i></p> <p><i>Runs ENFO on Tour – a direct programme for children and young people.</i></p> <p><i>Engages with NGOs.</i></p>
Coast Watch in conjunction with Wexford County Council	Wexford Wetlands Education	This programme is run in primary schools in the Wexford region. It aims to raise awareness of the ecosystem of wetlands to children, teachers and local communities. It tests new teaching ecology fieldwork methods with schools. The programme teaches active citizenship and how to monitor, protect, prevent or halt damage. The programme is based on discovery learning and on exploring the emotional, scientific and social aspects of our native habitats learning old uses, old songs, traditions and biodiversity,	<p><i>Encourages systems thinking.</i></p> <p><i>Encourages active citizenship.</i></p> <p><i>Uses discovery learning methods.</i></p>
Kildare County Council	Communal Composting	This is an example of informal experiential learning. The purpose of this project is to develop a sustainable solution to the problem of disposal of grass cuttings and hedge trimmings (green waste) from the communal areas of housing estates. A number of community groups were consulted and a purpose-built composting unit in which this green waste can be composted was designed that would meet the specific requirements of communities.	<p><i>Makes a difference.</i></p> <p><i>Has a sustainable effect.</i></p> <p><i>Has the potential for replication.</i></p>

<p>South Tipperary County Council</p>	<p>Talks on Waste</p>	<p>This is an ongoing awareness campaign targeting both primary and secondary students. The main objective of the project is to highlight how much waste we can generate and to encourage and promote recycling in school and at home. Most schools partake in the Green Schools Program and interactive talks are directed at Litter Awareness, Recycling and Water Conservation. There are also talks through community groups on home composting/recycling and sustainable living in the home.</p>	<p><i>Makes a difference.</i> <i>Has a sustainable effect.</i> <i>Has the potential for replication.</i></p>
<p>Wicklow County Council</p>	<p>Recycling centres</p>	<p>Wicklow County Council run two recycling centres which have been designed to incorporate education and awareness services. They are permanently staffed, offer information and guided tours, and demonstrate waste prevention projects in collaboration with Oxfam. The user-friendly facilities use a broad range of techniques, focusing on interactive methods.</p>	<p><i>Education facility explores waste prevention before examining recycling.</i> <i>'One stop' for services and information.</i> <i>Includes innovative projects demonstrating waste prevention: book exchange, school book and uniform shop.</i></p>

7.9 Professional & Business

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland	Continuing Professional Development programme	RIAI operates a Continuing Professional Development programme for Members, which includes seminars on sustainable design (primarily on the control of energy requirements in buildings) as well as the approval of short seminars by commercial providers which include a number on sustainable design. These latter seminars include: U value calculation; The Importance of Airtightness in Low Energy, Diffusion Open Construction; and Membranes and Insulation. All seminars by commercial providers are assessed and must contain information on the sustainability of the materials and methods involved. Because RIAI initiative on Sustainability is policy rather than project driven it is constantly evolving to respond to the very practical needs of members to achieve best practice in this area.	Constantly evaluated and evolving.

7.10 In-formal

Everyday experiences play an important role in our informal learning from advertising in various media to specific programmes on television, radio, magazine or news articles. The process of informal learning is a constant one.

Name of group	Name of Initiative	Description of Initiative	Good Practice elements
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Race Against Waste	This is a campaign to raise awareness of waste issues and change behaviour among people at home and at work.	<i>Good use of new technologies; internet, advertising and interactive media.</i>
Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Notice Nature	The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of the importance of biodiversity and to encourage everyone to play a part in its protection.	<i>Actively engaging with civil society.</i>
Department of Communications, Marine and Natural Resources	Power of One	The aim of the campaign is to raise awareness of the importance of reducing our energy usage and the simple lifestyle changes we as individuals can make.	<i>Good use of new technologies; internet, advertising and interactive media. Creates links between local and global issues. Engages and empowers young people in particular.</i>
Earth Horizon Productions	Eco-Eye	This is a television series which covers many environmental topics and issues from climate change to eco tourism. It aims to provide the viewer with information on various themes and to provide simple solutions.	<i>Integrates all pillars of Sustainable Development.</i>

7.11 Problems Identified by Respondents

Barriers and ongoing challenges identified by questionnaire respondents ranged from resources, both human and financial, to policy issues such as the need to create space and relevance in curricula. Some problems were sector specific while others were universal e.g. time restraints.

The Secondary Schools structure, timetabling and pressures on teachers due to exams can make it more difficult to integrate ESD at subject level. As subjects are taught separately and teachers are under pressure from exams there may be a reluctance to teach something that is not directly related to the curriculum.

Lack of integration of ESD into school curricula was highlighted by, not just teacher training groups but also by NGOs trying to raise interest in delivery of non-formal workshops in a formal setting. An absence of relevant links to examination subjects along with an already crowded curriculum is preventing many young people gaining any understanding of SD.

There is an element of perceived irrelevance by staff in the Third Level sector where ESD can be viewed as difficult to fit within many subject areas. Where modules in SD-related material have been introduced there are often time restraints in building sufficient appreciation and awareness. Even in the area of research into ESD, there can be difficulties in scheduling events within a rigid degree programme.

In the non-formal sector there are many projects and initiatives incorporating some or all of the elements of ESD. The most common problems lie in the areas of sourcing staff and funding. Many initiatives are dependent on enthusiastic volunteers, easily lost to full time employment in this age of the 'celtic tiger'. Without secure funding, some initiatives are in danger of ending completely while others have lost valuable, skilled trainers. Other challenges cited included difficulties in engaging the wider community due to apathy or cynicism.

In the area of non-formal training and adult education, some courses had no prospect of mainstreaming due to difficulties in gaining accreditation. Other difficulties cited include the enrolment of sufficient numbers for courses due to an absence or lack of marketing and exposure. On the other hand one respondent complained that participant numbers had to be limited due to the interactive, participant-lead nature of the methodology used.

8. Policy Frameworks & Supports (institutional arrangements and funding)

8.1 Existing Policy Frameworks and Supports

COMHAR Sustainable Development Commission:

COMHAR SDC recognizes the importance of Education for Sustainable Development and has a dedicated Education and Awareness Working Group. As well as examining and debating the issues, these groups prepare draft comments on, or responses to, particular issues, which are then considered by the Plenary. COMHAR has played a very important role in supporting ESD initiatives carried out to date and has provided funding for various education and awareness raising initiatives.

ENFO

As outlined earlier ENFO is a public service, which provides easy access to wide-ranging and authoritative information on the environment, including Sustainable Development. It was established in 1990 by the Department of the Environment Heritage, and Local Government. The aim is to foster increased environmental awareness and thereby facilitate a broad partnership in efforts to promote Sustainable Development including protection of the environment for the benefit of future generations. ENFO provides support to organisations participating in ESD in Ireland, it provides free facilities and some resources to organisations. It also involved in the Education and Awareness group of COMHAR and other fora.

Steering Committee as an interdepartmental group for UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

An interdepartmental Steering Committee to oversee the development of a National Strategy and implementation for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) was set up and first met in February 2007. The purpose and activities of the Steering Committee as an interdepartmental group under the auspices of the National Committee for UNESCO is charged with developing a National Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.

Department of Education and Science:

The Department of Education and Science is charged with the overall implementation and capital funding of primary, second level, higher education authorities.

The Department of Education and Science operates support services for teachers of various subjects at primary and secondary level. The Support Services include the Primary Curriculum Support Programme (PCSP), Civic Social and Political Education (CSPE), Transition Year, Leaving Cert. Applied and a number of others. At times the Support Services will work with a variety of agencies including NGOs to develop resources suitable for schools or in the provision of in-service training.

The Department of Education and Science supports education centres which are a network of learning communities where teachers are empowered to achieve their full potential as professional educators and where other partners in the local school community are facilitated in meeting their training needs so that they can perform their roles effectively.

The education centres support the in-service needs of local teachers, support locally identified needs and provide a range of activities for the educational community. There are

21 full time and 9 part time centres nationwide, supported principally by the Department of Education and Science. The Department supports the work of Youth Organisations in youth work provision in Ireland.

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment

The National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) is charged with leading developments in curriculum and assessment and supporting the implementation of changes resulting from this work. The NCCA, funded by Irish Aid, carried out a **Study of the Opportunities for Development Education at Senior Cycle**⁶. This review explored senior cycle education (*Transition Year to Leaving Certificate*) in the following subject areas Art, Agricultural Science, Biology, Construction Studies, Economics, English, Gaelge, Geography, History, Modern Languages, Music, Religious education, Transition Year and Leaving Cert Applied to find opportunities for teaching development education. The review provides a valuable resource for educators to help integrate development education into their subject areas. This study could also assist in integrating Education for Sustainable Development in senior cycle education, however, it lacks a strong environmental component which is a major element of Education for Sustainable Development.

A background paper on a new **Social and Political subject**⁷ at senior cycle has been produced and provides a good opportunity for the integration of Education for Sustainable Development.

Irish Aid

Irish Aid provides clear guidance and strategy for development education in Ireland by providing a clear strategic plan⁸ with accompanying funding and resourcing. The development education strategic plan ran from 2003 – 2006. The Development Education Unit is charged with carrying out Irish Aid's Strategy Plan for DE. In addition to other key principals underpinning the Irish Aid programme, it stated that *'It will aim for Sustainable Development; It will prioritise the objectives of gender equality and environmental protection'*. Owing to the success of this plan, the Development Education Strategy Plan for 2007 to 2011 is currently being revised and will be published later this year.

The Government White Paper on Irish Aid⁹ outlines some of the complexities that exist and the importance of the environment, recognising that poverty and the environment are inextricably linked in the developing world, where the poorest people rely heavily on their environment. It goes on to state that *'only with a balance between the social, economic and environmental aspects of development can long-term solutions to poverty be achieved.'* Irish Aid have a new policy on the environment that is one of four key priority or mainstreaming themes running through all of their work. The four are: Environment, HIV/AIDS, Governance and Gender. This approach means that these are being mainstreamed across all their work at national and international levels.

The Development Education Advisory Committee (DEAC) is made up of 16 individuals from a wide range of organizations and sectors interested in DE. The DEAC provides advice to the Minister of State for Irish Aid on DE and holds an annual Forum for the DE sector.

⁶ Annette Honan – A Study of the Opportunities for Development Education at Senior Cycle (2006)- NCCA

⁷ Roland Tormey - Social and Political Education in Senior Cycle – a background paper(2006) – NCCA

⁸ Deepening Public Understanding of International Development, Development Education Strategy Plan 2003-2005

⁹ Government White Paper on Irish Aid (2006)

The Development Education Unit (DEU) sits on a number of steering committees for certain projects. The DEU consults with relevant stakeholders in the education and DE sectors in the devising of its Strategic Plans.

Irish Aid disburses grants and partnership grant funding annually of approximately 2.6 million Euro, for Development Education projects and programmes. There is also a programme of Strategic Cooperation between Irish Aid and Higher Education and Research Institutes 2007-11.

8.2 Existing Funding

There has been a limited selection of funding lines providing funding for Education for Sustainable Development to date. Outlined below is an overview of these funding lines offered by various Government departments:

Name	Description of Existing Funding
Dept. of Environment, Heritage and Local Government	The Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government provides on-going support for some education programmes. This includes the Green Schools programme. Other funds are provided on an ad hoc basis for specific programmes.
ENFO	ENFO provides funding on an ad hoc basis to various groups involved in environmental education and awareness work. ENFO provides funding for the Young Environmentalist Awards programme run by ECO-UNESCO. It also assists with the development of exhibitions and publications.
Environmental Partnership Fund (co-funded with local authorities)	The Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government provided a grant assistance of €250,000 available for the 2006 Local Agenda 21 Environmental Partnership Fund to Local Authorities. Local Authorities matched this funding. The total fund is €500,000 which is available for local projects and initiatives on environmental issues such as waste.
NGO Developmental Funding	The Department provides NGO Developmental Funding which amounts to €300,000. This fund is available to Environmental NGOs for core activities, preparing consultation calls, attending governmental meetings etc. There is no specific fund for environmental education or for Education for Sustainable Development. This fund provides funding for 25 national environmental NGO's.
Department of Education and Science	The Department of Education and Science is charged with the overall implementation and capital funding of primary level, second level and higher education authorities.
	The Youth Affairs section of the Department of Education and Science provides funding through the <i>Youth Service Grant</i> to a wide variety of National Youth Organisations involved in the provision of youth programmes and services in Ireland. ECO-UNESCO is the only environmental youth organization in receipt of core funding from the Department of Education and Science for the provision of environmental and ESD youth work

<p>Department of Foreign Affairs – Irish Aid</p>	<p>to young people in Ireland.</p> <p>Some groups have accessed funds from the <i>Research & Development Committee of the Department of Education and Science</i>.</p>
<p><i>Irish Aid Development Education Grants Scheme 2007</i>¹⁰</p>	<p>Irish Aid provides substantial funding for its development education programme. The fund is €2.6 million per annum. This demonstrates a strong commitment by Irish Aid to developing and growing the development education sector in Ireland. Irish Aid has had a commitment to development education for many years with grants being made available to all aspects of education. This has helped grow the field of development education in Ireland. The grants are open to project or programme funding.</p> <p>This outlines four categories under which projects and programmes must fall. They are Strategic Priority Fund, Civil Society Development Education Fund, Capacity Building Fund and Challenge Fund.</p>
	<p>In the <i>Strategic Priority Fund</i>, projects or programmes must fall under the following areas: teacher education, curriculum support and development at primary and second level, youth work, community work, third level.</p> <p>Under the <i>Civil Society Development Education</i>, the following areas are included: skills training in development education issues and methodologies; advocacy and campaigning work; pilot initiatives or feasibility studies in new areas of development education; linking projects with communities/groups in the developing world exchange/study visits with the developing world; networking or linking initiatives amongst development practitioners in Ireland, e.g. schools networking; seminars, conferences, media events on relevant development education topics.</p> <p>The <i>Capacity Building Fund</i> is aimed at developing the development education sector as a whole or networks within it. The <i>Challenge Fund</i> is aimed at promoting innovation in a new or emerging area of development education and in the use of new technologies in development education.</p>

¹⁰ Irish Aid Development Education Grants Scheme 2007 Guidelines

**Department of
Community, Rural and
Gaeltacht Affairs**

LEADER Funds – Leader funds have provided funding to some initiatives, which are locally based and promote local community and rural development. LEADER+ funding ran to 2006.

Young Peoples Facilities and Services Fund – this fund is open to youth organisations. The YPFSS had funded innovative projects such as the Drugs Prevention and Awareness programmes in ECO-UNESCO.

8.3. Policy Frameworks and Supports required

Education for Sustainable Development can provide the tools, skills, and knowledge needed to understand Sustainable Development and nurture a sustainable society. It will help both the individual and the group to make responsible decisions that will benefit themselves and the local and wider community. But it also represents a major change in the education delivery process.

There is a need to put in place policy frameworks and supports for the development of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD). Outlined here are some suggested policy frameworks and mechanisms for the future development of ESD.

The UN Decade of ESD has played an important role in the development of Education for Sustainable Development and provides a useful framework in which to develop and grow ESD in Ireland. The interdepartmental committee on ESD must ensure the development and implementation of a National Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development. The successful development and implementation of any National Strategy depends on many issues but adequate resourcing and funding is a main issue. Therefore an adequate funding stream to implement the UNDESD needs to be put in place.

The review of the National Strategy of Sustainable Development is taking place currently. Education and communication are cross-cutting issues, however, there needs to be adequate reference and supports made available to ensure that education and training are given adequate and appropriate recognition and importance within the strategy.

The Department of the Environments has a part to play in advising other departments on Sustainable Development. It is therefore vital for the success of Sustainable Development and Education for Sustainable Development that an active leadership role is taken by Government. There is a need for all government departments including local government to provide adequate supports and measures to ensure the professional development of their staff in education and training for Sustainable Development within their place of work. It is also vital that education and training are included in internal and external policy on Sustainable Development.

The Department's own internal structure should reflect the importance of this area and a special ESD section, as part of the newly formed Environment Awareness and Heritage section, should be put in place.

Educational institutions are at the centre of learning, training and development. These institutions are heavily involved in peoples development of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. These institutions in their internal and external policies should prioritise Education for Sustainable Development in their course development and in the professional development of their staff. The same should apply to the private sector and professional bodies.

Primary and Secondary school teachers deal on a daily basis with education and are tasked with educating our children and young people. It is vital therefore that they are adequately trained and supported in their work. ESD should be included in pre-service and in-service

teacher training. Second level school structure does not facilitate ESD. There should be a review of second level schooling structure.

The Department of Education and Science is tasked with the development of all areas of education policy, from the curriculum to the building of schools. The Department should ensure that Education for Sustainable Development is given priority in the development of new education policy. The Department should also provide adequate supports and funding for the growth of ESD. It is also vital that state and professional education bodies include principles of ESD in their standards and guidelines of programme development.

Environmental NGOs carry out a large amount of work in the area of Education for Sustainable Development in Ireland. The NGO sector also complements work taking place in the formal sector, however, adequate support and resources is an issue. NGOs should be enabled and encouraged to work in ESD. An open and transparent funding mechanism in line with the development education fund run by Irish Aid should be put in place.

There is much expertise in the area of Education for Sustainable Development on both a national and international level. It is vital that we are informed of research, up to date information and material on ESD. A special website should be put in place to share information on ESD initiatives, research in place and share best practice on a local, national and international level.

Effective communication is vital within Education for Sustainable Development. There is a need to build trust and partnerships within the various stakeholder groups in Ireland. Dialogue and open communication is required. A National ESD forum should be set up to allow those working in the field to meet and discuss issues. This would include civil society, government, local authorities and education experts.

To ensure that the ESD work being carried out is of good standard it is important to ensure work is being evaluated. Quality Standards should be developed for ESD.

9. Recommendations

In developing the recommendations for the future of ESD in Ireland we have drawn on the questionnaires, research carried out in Ireland and research into international models.

There continues to be substantial work undertaken in the area of Education for Sustainable Development on an international level. In the development of these recommendations we have looked at the National Sustainable Development Strategies of two countries (Finland¹¹ and Australia¹²) and the emphasis placed on education and training. We then looked at two specific strategies (Finland¹³ and England¹⁴) on Education and Training for Sustainable Development (See Appendix 4). These have fed into the development of the following recommendations.

We recommend that:

- ESD be given priority in all levels and forms of education – formal and non-formal.
- Open and effective consultation mechanisms be used in the development and implementation of ESD at all levels to include children, young people and the interests of future generations.
- A National Strategy on ESD be developed and implemented with consultation from all relevant stakeholders.
- A National ESD forum and network be established to assist in the development of partnerships and dialogue in Ireland.
- Appropriate and adequate funds be made available to implement the National Strategy.
- Education for Sustainable Development principles and approaches be embedded in the formal curriculum in a cross-cutting, holistic way.
- A Whole Schools Approach to ESD be encouraged and that the learning community is engaged in planning and decision-making to achieve a sustainable educational environment. Schools should take part in the Green Schools programme and develop Sustainable Policies and practices.
- Schools and centres develop links on a local, national and international level so that experiences can be shared and good practices can be encouraged.

¹¹ Towards Sustainable Choices: The National Strategy for Sustainable Development (7/2006) – (Finland)

¹² Chapter 26, National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (Dec 1992)

¹³ Sustainable Development in Education: Finnish strategy for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2006:7)

¹⁴ Learning To Last, The Government's Sustainable Development Education Draft Strategy for England (2003)

- All pre-service and in-service teachers receive professional training and to support their and integrate Education for Sustainable Development into teaching and practices.
- Second level school structures be reviewed.
- Professional development and training in Sustainable Development in all places of work.
- ESD be integrated into non-formal education particularly in community, voluntary and youth work.
- Appropriate and adequate funds be made available for projects and programmes in ESD and a specific ESD fund be set up. *(see 8.3 Policy frameworks and Supports)*
- Cross-border relations and initiatives in ESD be encouraged and supported.
- Quality Standards be developed in ESD and effective evaluation mechanisms be put in place for all sectors.
- Partnerships be initiated to support ESD's integration into higher education
- 'Green campus' initiatives be supported in education centres, businesses, schools, youth and community centres, government bodies etc.
- Research in ESD be promoted and encouraged by institutions.
- Interdisciplinary cooperation at third level be encouraged.
- Further Education and Training programmes in SD issues be developed and supported.
- A public campaign be developed to raise public awareness of Sustainable Development.
- Support be provided to integrate the principles of ESD into existing incentive programmes such as national awards to highlight successful partnerships.
- Innovative technologies be encouraged and used in ESD. Encourage use of internet communications and interactive information exchange on ESD.
- Media be engaged in promoting and engaging the general public in ESD.

Appendix 1 – Selection of Groups Contacted as part of this Research (this is not the exhaustive list of all those contacted but is a representative sample of types of groups contacted)

Formal Education

- Second Level support services including transition year, CSPE.
- Subject associations e.g. Geography and science.
- ASTI, TUI and INTO
- Curriculum Development Unit.
- Citizenship Education Network as part of CDU.
- Third level sector including DIT, Trinity College, University College Galway.
- Lifelong Learning - FETAC accredited centres with knowledge of FETAC accreditation and HETAC accreditation.
- Professional development programmes in ESD.
- National Council for Curriculum and Assessment.
- Education Centres nationwide.
- Vocational Education Committees nationwide.

Non-formal Education

- Community and voluntary sector.
- The Wheel.
- The Youth sector including 43 voluntary youth organizations who are members of NYCI.
- Drugs prevention initiatives and programmes.
- National Association of Travellers' Centres (NATC), Catholic Youth Care.

Development Education

- Irish Development Education Association.
- Development Organisations.
- National Youth Development Education Advisory Committee.
- Irish Aid.

Environmental Sector and Environmental Education:

- EENGO Core funding group.
- The Tree Council.
- ENFO.
- Environmental Awareness Officers in Local Authorities.
- Sustainable Energy Ireland.
- Environmental Protection Agency.

Business Sector

- Small Firms Association.
- IBEC.
- Gum Litter Taskforce.
- Irish Small Firms Association.

Government:

- Department of Education and Science.
- Department of the Environment.
- Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs.
- Department of Justice, Equality and Law Reform.
- Local Authorities including the environmental awareness officers and community development officers.

Appendix 2 – Questionnaire



GOOD PRACTICE IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN IRELAND (adapted from UNECE questionnaire on Good Practice in ESD - for Good Practice Guidelines see below)

1.

NAME OF THE PROJECT / INITIATIVE CONSIDERED AS A GOOD PRACTICE	
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2.

NAME OF ORGANISATION:	
Address:	
Telephone:	
E-mail / Internet:	

3.

CONTACT PERSON NAME:	
CONTACT PERSON Title:	

4. FOCUS OF THE INITIATIVE (tick the appropriate box(es)):

Focus	Please tick	Focus	Please tick	Focus	Please tick	Focus	Please tick
Education/Learning		Market Economy		Sustainable Tourism		other (please specify)	
Educators		Environment		Human Rights			
Overcoming Poverty		Water		Peace & Human Security			
Gender Equality		Climate Change		Policy, Regulation, Governance			
Health Promotion		Biodiversity		Intercultural Understanding			
HIV/AIDS		Disaster Reduction		Cultural Diversity			
Sustainable Urbanization		Rural Development		Indigenous knowledge			
Corporate Responsibility		Sustainable Consumption		Tools and materials (e.g. Media & ICTs)			
Research / Development		Regional / international cooperation					

5. PROJECT / INITIATIVE DESCRIPTION (please complete table)

Type (governmental, non-governmental, local government, other)	
Setting / Target group(s)	
Number of persons involved	
Starting year and Duration	
Budget and Funding Sources	
Partner organisations involved in this project (if any):	
Location of project (please specify location and state if project is local, countrywide, nationwide or international)	

6. MAIN OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

7. SHORT DESCRIPTION OF THE PROJECT

Stakeholders involvement (Do you work closely with the stakeholders (e.g. local community)? Can you describe their participation and involvement in this initiative and the kind of relationship you have with them)

8. PROJECT EVALUATION

Briefly describe the strengths of the project	
Summary of progress and use of indicators	
Please assess the weaknesses and risks of	

the project	
Why do you consider this a good practice?	
Future developments	

9 . PRACTICAL ISSUES (please fill in if applicable)

e.g Problems encountered, Conditions for successful replication, Unresolved issues:

Problems encountered	
Conditions for successful replication	
Unresolved issues	

10. CONTACTS

You are invited to send us any additional information you might think useful, including references to documents, publications and/or articles describing the activity/initiative.

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Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.

Please forward the completed questionnaire to
director@ecunesco.ie or derekgin@gofree.indigo.ie

For further information please contact:

Elaine Nevin, National Director or Derek Ginnetty, ESD Researcher, ECO-UNESCO, 26 Clare St., Dublin 2 Tel: 01 6625491 or mobile: 087 9422432

ESD Good Practice Guidelines – as outlined by the UNECE

"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 demonstration activities:

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.

Appendix 3 – list of Respondents to Questionnaire

Project/Initiative

Government

Kildare County Council
Roscommon County Council
South Tipperary County Council
Wicklow County Council
Irish Aid

Formal

American College Dublin
CDU Citizenship Studies

Teacher Training

Ubuntu Network
CDU Global SD E-Book
CDU CCN Teacher Training Seminar
St Angela's College

Business

Royal Institute of Architects
Chamber of Commerce

Non-formal - Youth

Kilinarden Drug Prevention
Copping On
One World Week
ECO-UNESCO Youth for SD
ECO-UNESCO Youth Workshop

Non-Formal - Environment

Burrenbeo
Blue Flag - An Taisce
CELT
Cork Environmental Forum
Cultivate
Clare Adult Education Centre
ECO-UNESCO YEA
ECO-UNESCO FETAC Course
ECO-UNESCO 1 Day Course
Green Schools - An Taisce
Just Forests
Groundswell
The Hollies
Irish Peatland Conservation Council
Kimmage Dev Studies Centre
Kerry Earth Education Project
Salt & Light
Bryson Education (NI)
Tidy Northern Ireland
Tipperary Energy Agency
Coastwatch

Appendix 4 – Sample International Strategies in SD and ESD

Finland

The Finnish National Strategy on Sustainable Development¹¹

The characteristic feature of the Finnish national sustainable development policy is the far-reaching participation of the various stakeholders in both establishing its content and implementing its measures.

The Prime Minister-lead Finnish National Commission on Sustainable Development has been working continuously since 1993 and has highlighted for debate many important themes of Sustainable Development. During this time Sustainable Development has gradually become embedded in mainstream politics.

This broad-based, multi-stakeholder participation combined with core government leadership has become known internationally as the 'Finnish Model'. In this model, the government, civil society and industry are engaged in an open dialogue on Sustainable Development policy. This open forum for the stakeholders is seen as fundamentally important to build national integrity in the process. Also of considerable value is the high level political representation at the Commission's meetings to respond to questions presented by civil society.

The social, cultural and economic elements of Sustainable Development have increasingly gained foothold beside environmental considerations. The perspective of Sustainable Development has become an important part of every policy. Each administration is committed to promoting and implementing Sustainable Development. The principle of Sustainable Development is now reflected in a number of instruments, such as legislation, taxation or environmental impact assessments.

Finnish Strategy on Education for Sustainable Development

The Finnish Government has developed a Strategy and Implementation Plan for the UN Decade of ESD¹³.

The following are some of the key points outlined in the Strategy.

- Education for Sustainable Development, including sustainable consumption and production, is to be one of the main areas of focus in compulsory and vocational education at all levels.
- An institutional commitment to the principles and practices of Sustainable Development is required, both in the development and implementation of education.

¹¹ Towards Sustainable Choices: The National Strategy for Sustainable Development (7/2006) – (Finland)

¹³ Sustainable Development in Education: Finnish strategy for the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2006:7)

- An integrated approach: the ecological, economical and socio-cultural aspects must all be taken into consideration.
- Programmes, tools and methods for Sustainable Development must be developed at all educational levels.
- Staff training: Offer courses and training, and encourage staff in all schools and educational institutions on matters related to Sustainable Development so that they can then perform their jobs in an ecologically, economically, socially and culturally responsible way.
- Promote interdisciplinary education. Encourage schools and educational institutions to make common Sustainable Development education and research projects a priority. Make young people responsible citizens by explaining things in a holistic manner; use a variety of methodologies. Schools should also make good use of traditional knowledge and skills.
- Produce teaching material and education programmes that are widely accessible. Arrange public talks and engage the media. Internet services should be developed for efficient distribution of information and for use in virtual teaching and web courses. Participation and communication should be made easier for the whole community.
- Encourage an interdisciplinary network of ESD experts on a local, national, regional and international level and have these networks cooperate within the framework of teaching and research programmes. Have educational institutions develop their contacts with other relevant sectors of society so that they could plan and implement common strategies and action plans. Improve implementation and transparency with different professionals working in cooperation.
- Build possibilities for participation and encourage active citizenship for individuals, and non-governmental organizations. Expand learning opportunities to include the wider community and working life.
- Encourage research so as to drive Sustainable Development forward. Develop programmes for specific sectors: teachers, business, public sector, non-governmental organizations and the media.
- Encourage the use of innovation and technologies to supplement Sustainable Development in teaching.

Australia

National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development

The Un Decade of ESD 2005-2014, brings education to the fore as a tool in achieving environmentally, economically and socially Sustainable Development. In 2007, the Australian government is developing a new National Action Plan for Education for Sustainable Development.

Chapter 26 of the Australian National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development deals with the crosscutting issue of education and training¹². The generally stated challenge is to increase awareness and application of ESD principles and methods in education and training policy and programs. Chapter 32 deals with the implementation and further development of the Strategy. The challenge here is to ensure that the Strategy benefits from informed community participation and is supported by community understanding and action.

The Strategic Approach taken sees incorporating ESD principles into curriculum, assessment and teaching practices in the school, technical and further education (TAFE) and higher education sectors as the most effective strategy.

The Strategic Objectives are

- to incorporate ESD principles and approaches into the curriculum, assessment and teaching programs of schools and higher education. ESD principles will be incorporated into national curriculum statements, particularly in the learning areas of science, technology and studies of society and the environment. A multi-disciplinary and balanced approach to environmental education will be adopted with greater access by teaching staff and academics to information on ESD.
- to develop and improve vocational education and training programs which incorporate ESD principles and which will give practical skills in achieving ESD. Governments will encourage and support initiatives and projects associated with ESD in education and training and will encourage and support increased moves by National Training Boards to advocate implementation of ESD consistent principles, work towards inclusion of details on progress in developing training modules on ESD, and the practical implementation of ESD principles.
- to develop a high level of community awareness and understanding of the goal, objectives and principles of this ESD Strategy. Governments will maintain targeted public information and education programs, aimed at key community groups, such as farmers, industry sectors and consumers

¹² Chapter 26, National Strategy for Ecologically Sustainable Development (Dec 1992)

- to promote open and effective communication on ESD issues and policies between governments, industry, conservation groups, unions and community groups
- to ensure timely and informed contributions from stakeholders to the implementation of initiatives outlined in this Strategy and in its further development, monitoring and review. Consultation should become an integral part of all issue-specific and sectoral level decision making processes. All major stakeholders must be identified and their involvement in the consultative process encouraged.
- to ensure mechanisms for community awareness, education and participation are coordinated with Strategy monitoring and review process.
- to encourage business, industry and community groups to establish their own priorities and processes for embracing ESD as part of the nationally-coordinated effort.

United Kingdom

This UK government's Sustainable Development Education Draft Strategy for England¹⁴ sets out the government's long-term aims for Education for Sustainable Development, and in particular, for the United Nations *Decade of Education for Sustainable Development* which runs from 2005 to 2015.

The key focus for action is at local and community levels. Government's role is not to fill gaps but to set priorities and expectations, to facilitate and support. The challenge is to “*win hearts and minds and to motivate people to take personal action*”. The aim of this strategy is, therefore to ensure that all aspects of life long learning are fully engaged in the provision of effective Education for Sustainable Development.

Its key objectives are that:

- All parts of the statutory education system have the remit, the professional capacity and the resources to develop knowledge, skills that enable all citizens to engage in the achievement of the goals of Sustainable Development.
- All organisations and agencies responsible for vocational, professional and poststatutory education are fully engaged in developing a workforce able to participate in the achievement of the goals of Sustainable Development.
- All parts of the business sector are engaged in developing a workforce able to participate in the achievement of the goals of Sustainable Development, through production and consumption and are also keeping their customers fully aware of their policies and practices.
- All organisations involved in both local and regional governance have the professional capacity to engage in the achievement of Sustainable Development and actively involve in improving the capacity of their various stakeholders to engage.
- The many aspects of informal education, from mass media, through public places to the civil society organisations are fully engaged in increasing the public awareness and understanding of Sustainable Development.

The Government's strategy has seven major themes:

1) Integration: Formal education is being transformed. There is a widening understanding that Sustainable Development is about much more than concern for the environment. What is needed is for connections to be made between learning and regeneration initiatives, and the total integration of the understanding and knowledge that will lead to Sustainable Development.

2) Partnerships: A key focus of action must be at community level and the local strategic partnerships, urban or rural. Schools, colleges, informal education should be seen as part of those partnerships. So, too, should Learning and Skills Councils (professional development bodies) as they draw up and implement their local area plans. Learning for Sustainable

¹⁴ Learning To Last, The Government's Sustainable Development Education Draft Strategy for England (2003)

Development should not be a marginal after-thought but an integral part of those plans, threading through them and all activities within them.

3) Practical Business Solutions: Sector Skills Councils (professional training) have a key part to play as far as employers are concerned. They will be setting standards but they will also be formulating plans for their sector for the development of learning and skills. They need to develop the business case for sustainable development by focussing on a small number of core problems and issues that need to be tackled, and which decision makers in firms can acknowledge.

4) Training: In whatever context (formal education, organisations responsible for training, skills and regional development, the workplace, the youth service or the voluntary sector) those in a position to deliver ESD need to be trained and supported.

5) Government Responsibilities: Government's role is limited but of critical importance. It should not direct but facilitate. Government will enable and support. It must also establish priorities, for example through remit letters addressed to the bodies for which it is responsible.

6) Planning and Resources: The strategy does not call for additional financial resources. In England very large sums of money are now being allocated to reforms in formal education, neighbourhood and community development, workplace development and the national learning and skills strategy and its implementation. What the strategy does require is that education and learning for Sustainable Development must be an integral part of planning and delivering the results looked for in all those far-reaching programmes. "An investment in people has as big a return as any other".

7) Evaluation: Evaluation of what is happening and the success of approaches, projects and programmes is essential at all levels. Without evaluation there will be no learning.