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**DRAFT STATEMENT BY THE MINISTERS OF THE ENVIRONMENT
FROM THE UNECE REGION ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE
DEVELOPMENT**

Addendum 2

**Draft proposal for implementation
(basic Elements for the UNECE Strategy
for Education for Sustainable Development; part II)**

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I. A UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development

1.1 Introduction

1.   Emphasizing that education is a powerful instrument needed in order to reach sustainable development.

2.   Recognising that Education for Sustainable Development is taking up the important achievements of Environmental Education.

3. Welcoming the provisions of the UNECE Ministerial Statement for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, particularly the chapter "Education, science and technology for decision-making" and recognizing the major role UNECE can play in regional efforts to achieve sustainable development.

4.   Undertaking the commitments for effective implementation of the Rio principles, Agenda 21, the Millennium Development Goals and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation.

5. Reaffirming the necessity of commitment to the goals contained in the declaration of the World Education Forum in Dakar (2000).

6. Welcoming the outcome of cooperation within the Baltic Sea Region regarding an Agenda 21 for the Baltic Sea Region – Baltic 21 and an Agenda for Education for Sustainable Development in the Baltic Sea Region, Baltic 21E.

7. Reaffirming that education, training and public awareness are critical for promoting sustainable development and increasing the capacity to address economic, environmental and social issues, and that the further implementation of Chapter 36 of Agenda 21 will influence progress in implementing all other chapters of Agenda 21.

8. Recognizing that economic, environmental and social issues are included in the concept of sustainable development and also recognizing the importance of cultural and ethical issues as reflected in decisions taken by the UN Commission on sustainable development.

9. Also recognizing that education and training for sustainable development (ESD) is about the learning needed to maintain and improve our quality of life and the quality of life for generations to come.

10.   Emphasizing that good governance within each country and that the regional and international level is essential for sustainable development. At the domestic level, sound environmental, social and economic policies, democratic institutions responsive to the needs of the people, the rule of law, anti-corruption measures, gender equality and an enabling environment for investments form the basis for sustainable development.

11.   Recalling that peace, security, stability, respect for life and rights of present and coming generations, cultural diversity and tolerance are essential for achieving sustainable development and ensuring that sustainable development benefits all.

12.   Recognizing the need for broad co-operation at the international, regional, sub-regional and national/state level and the involvement of important players in the field such as decision-makers, educational community, business and industry, international organizations, non-governmental organizations and mass media as well as other major groups.

13.   Taking up all the above-mentioned principles and provisions we accordingly developed the UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development.

1.2   Overall goal for Education for sustainable development

14.   All individuals should have competence to contribute to sustainable development that meets the needs of the present without compromising on the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Education for sustainable development should be based on an integrated approach to economic, societal and environmental development. Information must be seen as complementary to education.

This will require:
a)   All levels of education are given a legal framework (incl. curricula) where sustainability aspects are clearly incorporated.
b)   Educators have relevant competence to include SD in their teaching.
c)   Learners are given the opportunity to influence and take responsibility for their own learning.
d)   All members of society have access to education where SD aspects are in the mainstream.

1.3   Impact on the education system

15.   Implementing education for sustainable development focuses on enabling learning experiences that engender a sense of meaning and on fostering sustainable behaviour in educational institutions, families and communities. This involves a shift in the approach taken by education – away from providing knowledge in systematic ways and towards dealing with problems and developing possible solutions. In addition, education must retain its traditional focus on individual subjects and open the door to the multi-disciplinary examination of complex, real-life situations. Teaching that is geared simply to passing on knowledge must be recast into an approach in which teachers and students work together to acquire knowledge and play a role in shaping the environment of their respective educational institutions. Furthermore, rather than having communication follow a top-down pattern, it should be replaced by allowing students to participate in decisions on how they are to learn. This means making greater use of classroom projects and experimental learning methods, focusing on the broad spectrum of themes that are part of sustainable development and drawing on new venues for learning.

16.   Implementing education for sustainable development involves initiatives for developing and cultivating a culture of communication and decision-making and a social climate that is imbued by mutual respect. Focus must be shifted away from educators being the transmitter and learners as recipients toward team structures and social continuity. Further, the practice of prescribing organizational rules from above should be reconsidered. Instead, ways to negotiate binding rules with students and assign responsibility to them should be found. Education must also overcome its isolation vis-à-vis society and, in exchange, take action to shape its relations with the outside world with the aim of opening up educational facilities to society.

17.   In technical and economic aspects, education for sustainable development focuses on the ecologically tenable and economically efficient use of resources. This includes energy conservation initiatives and measures and the avoidance of pollution caused by e.g. emissions, waste and traffic, both inside and outside educational facilities.

18.   Political demand for and support at national/state and local level are decisive for success in the pursuit of sustainable development. The democratic process that underpins sustainable development needs to be further strengthened. Politicians at all levels should be encouraged to give strong and clear expressions of the importance of education for sustainable development with reference to the following:

Objective 1: Those responsible for regular education in each nation/state should take the lead in intergovernmental co-operation with other ministers for the national development and implementation of the UNECE strategy for ESD.

Governing documents

19.   All levels of education need an enhanced legal framework where sustainability aspects are clearly incorporated e.g. education laws, ordinances, educational programmes, curricula/standards, and syllabuses.

Objective 2: Necessary steps to form a system covering ESD should be taken by each country starting the year 2005 and be finalized by the end of December 2010 (a transition period).

Approaches

20.   Strengthening the connection between the natural, economic and social sciences is important both in interdisciplinary and in specialised studies. In these studies interdisciplinary approaches and specialization must be properly balanced.

21.   Further initiatives must be taken in school (incl. pre-school) and IHE development regarding content and methods. Learners should be given greater opportunity to influence and take responsibility for their own learning. It is important that the role of learners should be changed into active participants and that the role of the educator be further transformed into that of a facilitator and active co-learner. Other important approaches are critical reflection and discussion.

22.   Practical cooperation in different forms and in democratic decision-making should be part of the curriculum and implemented in practice. Such participation should also be seen as an opportunity for learners to influence work in the school/IHE covering study contents and methods.

Objective 3: An active participatory, cooperative and holistic approach should be taken when developing ESD

Continuing education

23.   Continuing education and training should be offered to all professionals with the aim of building knowledge, understanding and improving skills on sustainable development, capacity building, raising awareness. Education and training should be organized for those professional groups, including decision-makers, who have both an important impact on environment and who work on improving the environment.

Objective 4: Relevant actors in each country should take necessary steps with the aim of bringing about considerable improvement in continuing education by December 2008.

Teacher education and in-service training

24.   Aspects of sustainability should be incorporated in teacher education and training programmes while considering the evolving nature of ESD. Increasing efforts should be made for in-service training with regard to sustainability. Such in-service training programmes/courses are important and should be promoted to educators at all levels of education including teacher trainers at IHEs. Provision of in-service training and consultancy – including training programmes should be offered for non-formal educators with regard to SD. As sharing and exchanging experience among educators is very important, encouragement should be given to participation/organizing conferences, workshops within countries as well as at regional and international levels.

25.   IHEs should be encouraged and supported to provide opportunities for academic staff to enhance their knowledge in sustainable development concepts and appropriate teaching methods and to incorporate SD in as many courses and programmes as possible.

26.   Universities should be encouraged to collaborate on developing masters, postgraduate and Ph.D. courses in ESD. These courses should involve collaboration between universities within and between countries in UNECE.

Objective 5: By the end of 2008 ESD perspectives should be included in all teacher education and in-service training for teachers, as well as for other professionals. Relevant actors should be responsible for doing this.

Teaching materials and research with regard to ESD

27.   Attention and support should be given to preparation, publication and dissemination of textbooks, learning and teaching materials. Encouragement should be given to research regarding content and methods in education for sustainable development, in particular development of active methods of learning and simulation games, as well as for the integration of sustainability aspects in different academic disciplines.

Objective 6: Relevant actors in the respective country should aim at improving teaching materials and research with regard to ESD.

Awareness raising

28. Support should be given to the media in their important role in providing new knowledge on sustainability to all sectors of society.

29. Increased efforts should be made to raise public awareness of SD leading to necessary changes in lifestyle e.g. more sustainable consumption patterns by e.g. supporting non-formal modes of learning.

Objective 7: Relevant actors in respective countries should promote awareness raising.

Cooperation

30.   Strengthening co-operation with different actors (e.g. municipalities) and disseminating examples of good practice (projects for twinning cities).

31. Local adaptation and cooperation between the local community and schools is a tool that should be used for municipal work on ESD in schools.

32. Strengthening cooperation within the UNECE-region with regard to ESD

Objective 8: The important role of NGOs, mass media, parents and the private sector in all kinds of ESD should be emphasized at all levels. Possible actions with involvement of different sectors should be included in National Plans.

33. Including ESD in the National/State Councils on SD, which should be set up according to WSSD plan of implementation.

1.4   Implementation

1.4.   Objectives
34. Short-term objectives (5 year)
- Decisions should have been taken by each country to shift their education policy into ESD.
- Implementation should have started and be well under way.

35. Long-term objectives (10 year)
- Considerable improvement with regard to ESD in all countries in the region should be achieved. To that end a continuous follow up should be organized within the nation/state and evaluation be performed by the end of 2014.
- Based on this evaluation redrafting of the implementation and action plan should be ready and decided by the end of 2015 and put into practice.

1.4.1   National/State level
36. Each respective country is responsible for implementing the strategy. To that end it is recommended that each country translate the Strategy into its respective native languages, distribute it to relevant bodies, designate a responsible focal point, identifies national/state priorities and draws up and decides on an implementation plan. Governments should play a proactive role in their respective countries as regards promoting and facilitating the work of implementation. The legal, economic and communicative instruments to be used must be in accordance with national circumstances. Multilateral agreements addressing educational aspects should be taken into consideration in the national/state strategy. Successful implementation also requires co-operation between governmental and NGO programmes.

37. Ministers of Education in each country should be responsible for drafting the national implementation plan. Prior to the development of the implementation plan, a review of the legal framework, financial mechanisms, educational activities as well as identification of obstacles and gaps with regard to education for sustainable development should be achieved by December 2005. The national implementation plan should be decided no later than by the end of December 2010.

38. All ministries and other relevant actors and stakeholders, including IGOs and NGOs, should be invited to participate in the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD.

39. The *national implementation plan* should include elements covering:

- An action programme for education as a part of achieving sustainable development, including targets, actors, actions, time frames, financial mechanisms, budget and monitoring methods.
- A reporting mechanism and schedule (within the country, and to international bodies).
- How legislation and guiding decisions are improved in accordance with national circumstances.
- How economic instruments and budgets are used for ESD.
- How communication on ESD can be improved.

1.4.2 UNECE regional level

40.   Cooperation on ESD can contribute to mutual understanding, strengthen trust between nations, share cultural values, develop friendly relations and tolerance between nations and contribute to peace and security.

41.   Regional alliances, associations, networks among educational and training institutions and professional bodies and existing regional mechanisms and programmes should be strengthened and a system for exchange of best practices, innovations and information be established. It is recommended that ESD issues be incorporated into bi- and multi-lateral agreements.

42.   Existing structures should provide the basis for the work on a sustainable region. UNECE should therefore be entrusted with the responsibility to closely follow the progress of and to facilitate implementing the UNECE strategy.

- UNECE should every second year receive a report on progress in national implementation.
- Regular environmental performance reviews should include an assessment as regards ESD.
- UNECE should encourage the implementation at national level e.g. through facilitating sub-regional cooperation.

43.   There is a need for sub-regional cooperation and alliances in order to attain best results.

1.4.3   Time frame

- The national/state implementation plan should be decided no later than by the end of December 2010.
- A set of best practices should be presented and disseminated by the end of December 2008 and should be continuously up-dated.
- A monitoring system with relevant indicators should be developed by the end of December 2010.
- The possibility of organizing Joint meetings of senior officials from both Ministries of Education and Ministries of Environment after the Kiev conference should be explored.

1.4.4   Financing

44.   To properly judge the significance of costs and revenues for carrying out the actions that are necessary to achieve the goals of the strategy, it is necessary to understand the value of education in introducing sustainable strategies in society. Education should be seen as an investment that will subsequently be paid back in terms of better returns.

45.   In general, financing of the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD should lie with each respective country. Governments should thus monitor that appropriate resources are

available. The use of budgets and economic instruments to support ESD at national/state levels should be explored, and bilateral and multilateral donors be addressed.

1.4.5　Indicators and monitoring

46.　ESD is a qualitative aspect of education. Efforts to develop indicators for the quality of education are under way in many different national bodies and international organizations such as OECD, EU and UNESCO. ESD should be part of such indicators. Introducing SD aspects into all levels of education and necessary actions closely connected to this will take time. The outcome can only be measured over a long-time perspective. Indicators for ESD should during the implementation phase be formulated in the following areas:

  a) Sustainability be included in all policy documents for education at different levels (laws, ordinances, state/federal curricula or equivalent documents, core curricula and syllabi)
  b) Learners and educators possess action competence in SD
  c) SD aspects be included in initial teacher training and in-service training for educators
  d) Research and development activities on ESD be carried out
  e) Schools/IHE/associations interact with society.

47.　As for the social aspects of sustainable development, indicators such as health, employment rate, and population density could be of some relevance.

II.　Elements for a joint action programme

48.　The emphasis of this programme is on strengthening the capacity of knowledge building in the region as a solid foundation for the common long-term transition to sustainable development in the UNECE. The education sector consists of a broad field of actors with different regulatory management systems in different countries. They are also geared to people of different ages and in different positions in life. For this reason the UNECE Action Programme is divided into a framework of action areas, which are common to the whole sector. Within these areas joint action headings have been created. Each part that is schools, higher education and non-formal education fields has then to create specific projects (sub-actions) in accordance with their role in the education system.

49.　Effective implementation of the Action Programme will require that its priorities be integrated into the planning processes used by the co-operating countries, regional governments as well as by local governments, schools, institutions of higher education and associations. They should also be made a key element of the investment and management strategies of the actors involved in education and awareness activities. The diversity contained in the Action Programme implies that project financing will need to be addressed on a case-by-case basis.

2.1　Joint action areas

2.1.1　Policies and strategies

50.　The creation of knowledge about and awareness of sustainable development should be seen as a lifelong process for individuals and thus cover all levels of education from pre-school to higher education and adult education, awareness-raising measures through actions by non-governmental organizations as well as through continuing education. It is necessary to have strong and clear political signals at all levels in the country in order to achieve broad implementation of the ideas underlying sustainable development in education. All managerial

documents., whether they are laws, ordinances, national curricula or equivalent documents, core curricula or syllabuses must cover basic elements of ESD and are prerequisites for the realization of ESD. There is also a need to invite politicians and civil servants to become actively involved in the development of local supportive structures for teaching in schools. Efforts to incorporate ESD into regular school activities should be encouraged.

51.   The support of school management, educators' knowledge of their subject and the ability to use an interdisciplinary approach and motivate learners' participation in the process are considered to be essential to the quality of education for sustainable development. IHEs should be encouraged to include sustainable development issues in programmes for undergraduates and postgraduates, as well as for professional education and learners in continuing education. Non-governmental organisations have an important role to play in broadening their activities to embrace environmental, economic, social and cultural aspects in an integrated approach.

ACTIONS
a) Adoption of a national framework for ESD in schools and higher education
b) Development of national guidelines regarding ESD in the field of non-formal education.
c) Stimulate the development of co-operation, especially international co-operation, for curricula, program and course development at all levels of education.

2.1.2   Competence development within the education sector

52.   The potential for education in the development of a sustainable UNECE region is high. Already a number of good initiatives have been taken. However in order to exert a significant impact more competence-building efforts are necessary at all levels in the education system, in the formal as well as the non-formal sectors. To begin with, leaders and decision-makers at all levels of education need to increase their knowledge about education for sustainable development in order to provide appropriate guidance and support in development work ahead. Introducing management systems for SD at educational institutions has great potential for improving such knowledge. Similarly, providing opportunities for educators to enhance their awareness and knowledge of sustainable development, of sustainability aspects in their subject areas and appropriate teaching methods is a necessary prerequisite for change. With this increased competence, educators can better work with and support learners to take responsibility for their own learning and their acquisition of knowledge, values and skills regarding sustainable development. When learners leave education settings, the aim should be that they have acquired knowledge and tools to act for sustainable development in their personal as well as their professional life. In this context lifelong learning plays an important role.

Actions
a) Stimulate competence development for personnel in the educational system, including actions to increase the awareness of SD issues among officials, headmasters/principals, teachers and other staff.
b) Support cooperation in UNECE between educators, researchers and practitioners to promote knowledge in SD and skills in ESD, exchange of experience, good practices, learning and teaching methods.
c) Introduce and develop management systems for SD in educational institutions, including schools, and IHEs, as well as non-formal education actors.

2.1.3   Continuing education

53.   The development of new knowledge and the need for introducing new skills in order to give more specific substance to the concept of SD will remain a constant need for years to come, as many areas of expertise are constantly developing. Continuing education has a very important role to play in this development. It has two main activity areas: upgrading knowledge and skills, and the provision of new competencies needed in different professions. It is thus essential that continuing education also involves knowledge-building with the aim of inter alia attaining better understanding of relevant sustainability issues, improved skills on sustainable strategies and a sharing of new research and techniques and that this is introduced into all professions, especially those with a role in planning and management. Sectors such as industry, transport, commerce, mass media, public administrations, and agriculture are all relevant. Enhancement of professionally related skills and knowledge of sustainable development should preferably take place on a continuing basis and consequently should be part of the lifelong learning of individuals. Continuing education is one of the areas, which would benefit from cooperation between the education sector, stakeholders (including learners, employers, professional organizations) and the community. The actions below include furthering initial vocational training, continuing education/training at all levels where appropriate.

Actions

a) Promote continuing education for professionals, which should cover sustainability related knowledge and skills.

b) Introduce sustainability related knowledge and skills in the fields of planning and management in all parts of society.

c) Promote international cooperation to improve and support the implementation of sustainability related professional knowledge and skills in the entire region.

2.1.4   Teaching and learning resources

54.   Learning and teaching sustainable development at all levels will require access to resources. These include basic texts as well as cases studies, good examples of all kinds such as the Baltic Sea Project and Baltic University Programme, media or web-resources. The quality of an educational program for sustainability will be critically dependent on the quality of the material. Such material is, however, not available in many fields and considerable efforts should be devoted to their development. The actions include joint actions such as the development of a website providing access to information and resources on sustainability, production of school books, films and other teaching materials. Material for IHEs both for general courses and specialist education in professions of key importance as well as teaching material and material for self-studies in non-formal education are needed.

Actions

a) Stimulate the production of printed materials, internet-based material and other ESD material for schools

b) Stimulate the production of printed materials, films, internet-based material for ESD for higher education and training, as well as methodological, pedagogic and didactic material to support ESD

c) Create an internet portal to give easy access to information and resources on sustainability, production of schoolbooks, films and other teaching materials for educators, learners and researchers

d) Promote opportunities for media in all countries to inform about and debate issues for SD to reach the general public.

2.1.5. *Research on and development of education for sustainable development*

55   Realization of the goal of a sustainable UINECE region requires more research and development activities in such areas as e.g. effective learning and teaching approaches for ESD with regard to different levels of education, suitable self-evaluation instruments, formation of attitudes and values, school/institutional development and implementation of ICT to support ESD and the development of a sustainable society.

56.   For education to become a part of an agenda of change towards a more sustainable society, education itself must be subject to change. ESD approaches should, like all good learning processes, construct meaning through involvement in participative learning processes and encourage curiosity, creativity and a wish to take responsibility for one's own learning throughout life. ESD approaches must be focused, in an integrated way, on social development, human and natural ecology, equity and practical skills for sustainable living. This covers development of approaches to teaching sustainability aspects as an integral part of academic disciplines as well as efforts to increase inter-disciplinary in higher and school education. Support for school/institutional development is needed to improve learning and teaching approaches in ESD.

56.   Similarly there is a need for increased co-operation and partnerships between stakeholders in the processes involving these research and development activities, ranging from identifying issues to working with and making new knowledge known and used in the sector. Naturally, the results of research and development efforts should be shared with actors locally, regionally and globally, and be incorporated into different parts of the education system.

57.   Of equal importance is experience-based development and development initiated out of a desire for change or improvement in education e.g. introducing systems of working such as ECO schools and the Green School Award. This should naturally be done in cooperation with stakeholders and the results should be disseminated to those concerned.

58.   In addition, more examples of best practice in ESD, as well as education efforts involving the general public need to be identified and analyzed to support development.

Actions
a) Initiate and promote research and development on contents and methods for ESD, as well as stimulate the dissemination of results of research on issues concerning SD with priority for research that brings together the different dimensions of SD, as well as focuses on issues of local development
b) Stimulate international co-operation regarding research and development of ESD, and support and initiate networks for experience-sharing and joint activities at all levels
c) Stimulate and support different approaches in education covering an interdisciplinary approach, ways of including aspects of SD in different subjects, involving education in a local context, as well as collecting and disseminating examples of good practice
d) Stimulate the development of management systems for SD in educational institutions, including schools, and institutions of higher education, as well as non-formal education institutions.