

INFORMAL COUNTRY REPORT
(Sweden)

Questionnaire for 2014 informal country reporting on the implementation of the priority action areas (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2014/3)

I. Priority action area (a) to promote the introduction of ESD into teacher education: Advances made and challenges encountered since the eighth Steering Committee meeting in March 2013

1. Has there been any significant advancement made with regard introducing/ extending ESD as a part of educators' initial training?

No In the regulation of the new teacher training education since 2011, the students "shall demonstrate the capacity to make assessments in educational processes on the basis of relevant scientific, social and ethical aspects with particular respect for human rights, especially children's rights according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and sustainable development". This is a clear difference compared with the previous regulation on teacher training education.

Earlier we have noticed problems of systematically including ESD in teacher education. In order to ensure that teachers will be capable of teaching about the multi-dimensional character of sustainable development issues, they need not only to learn about sustainable issues within a specific discipline, they also need to develop an understanding of the inter-disciplinary character of these issues. Moreover, teacher trainees need to learn the basic teaching methods unique to ESD and to learn how to evaluate, prioritise and decide on local and global sustainable development issues. At some HEI:s the new teacher education decided 2010 seems to have led to changes where earlier courses in ESD are replaced by more subject oriented courses. In order to make a change, teacher training needs to develop a relevant and effective educational structure where ESD is one important aspect.

2. Have there been any significant advances made with regard to introducing/ extending ESD as a part of educators' in-service training?

No There is no specific governmental in-service training for teachers and supervisors on ESD. At the same time as the Government has made the biggest effort in decades to improve in-service teacher training, there have been some serious attempts at some higher education institutions, to start such training courses. However they have an interdisciplinary character and thereby do not correspond to the Government's supplementary educational programmes for teachers that focus on subject training courses. There is though, a demand for in-service training in ESD, as can be seen from the large participation in activities organized, for example, by the Global School and WWF (Sweden).

3. Are there any recently produced materials/resources that are accessible to a wider audience (e.g., online)?

Yes WWF Sweden is very active in the field of ESD. They has recently produced a report on education for sustainable development. The booklet is on 116 pages and highlights innovative models, strategies for developing a sustainable school and contains also practical examples from East Africa, Mongolia and Indonesia.
<http://www.wwf.se/source.php?id=1538707>

In the handbook "How to design a seminar - a successful implementation of ESD", WWF Sweden presents what to think of when planning and designing a workshop on ESD.
<http://www.wwf.se/source.php?id=1564352>

II. Priority action area (b) to ensure that there is an ESD school plan in every school by 2015: Advances made and challenges encountered since the eighth Steering Committee meeting in March 2013

1. Has the number of schools adopting a "whole-institution approach" to sustainable development (SD)/ESD increased?

Yes No We have no information on this.

2. Have any (additional) incentives and assistance measures (guidelines, award scheme, funding, training, technical support) been made available that support ESD school plans?

No Since 2011 the Swedish school system has undergone major reforms. A new Education Act, new curriculums for pre-school and elementary school have been introduced and the upper-secondary school has been divided into 18 different programs, some of them vocational. Working towards a safe environment and with democratic working methods is mentioned in the new Education Act. More specific questions and objectives that concern ESD are further addressed in the school curriculum and syllabuses. As these are all steering documents, they do not comprehend any specific action plans for how schools should work with ESD. In the Swedish school system, the schools themselves are responsible for addressing the issues pointed out in the steering documents. The compliance of this is followed by the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. No specific assessment of how the schools work with ESD has been made since the Inspectorate was inaugurated in 2008.

The Higher Education Act was changed in 2006 with new wording stating that higher education bodies should promote sustainable development to assure for present and future generations a sound and healthy environment, economic and social welfare, and justice. The same principles are valid for the higher education as the schools regarding responsibilities and follow up, in this case carried out by the Swedish Higher Education Authority. No assessments have been made regarding ESD since 2008.

3. Are there any recently produced materials/resources that are accessible to a wider audience (e.g., online)?

No *Please specify and, if applicable, indicate the language and website address*

III. Priority action area (c) to reorient technical and vocational education and training in support of sustainable development and the transition to a green economy: Advances made and challenges encountered since the eighth Steering Committee meeting in March 2013

1. Has there been advancement towards a structural reorientation of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) towards ESD?

No

2. Have any incentives and assistance measures been made available that support the reorientation of TVET towards SD?

No

3. Are there any recently produced materials/resources that are accessible to a wider audience (e.g., online)?

No

IV. Implementing education for sustainable development beyond the United Nations Decade of ESD

1. Is there already a political commitment/indication that ESD implementation will continue to be supported after the United Nations Decade of ESD?

Yes Sweden was, together with Germany and Japan, one of the initiators to a proposal to the UNESCO General Conference in 2011 that the UN Decade for ESD should have a structural continuation after 2015. In the last UNESCO General Conference in 2013 Sweden naturally supported the proposal for the Global Action Programme on ESD.

The Swedish government has recently decided on a new Swedish strategy for UNESCO 2014–2017. Education for Sustainable Development is one of four priority areas for Sweden in the strategy. According to the strategy Sweden will “actively work to increase knowledge, broaden support and strengthen the implementation of UNESCO’s work in education for sustainable development - nationally and globally”.

2. Is there an indication of what will (continue to) be the priorities of your country for future ESD implementation?

Yes Sweden will continue to work for increased implementation of ESD, and that the knowledge regarding ESD is used within different parts of the activities of UNESCO and other relevant UN processes such as the global 10 year framework for sustainable consumption and production and its program on sustainable lifestyles and education.

It is important to evaluate the work carried out during the decade to learn more what does work and what doesn’t. We have to move in a direction where we go from steering documents to scale up implementation and practice.