

**Economic and Social
Council**Distr.
GENERALCEP/2003/22
11 August 2003

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY

Tenth session

(Geneva, 20-22 October 2003)

(Item 6 (d) of the provisional agenda)

**FRAMEWORK FOR THE POST-KIEV WORK ON
EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**Note by the secretariat**I. BACKGROUND**

1. Recognizing that education is a fundamental tool for environmental protection and sustainable development and that environmental education has increasingly addressed a wide range of issues included in Agenda 21, UNECE Environment Ministers endorsed the Statement on Education for Sustainable Development (ECE/CEP/102/Rev.1) by acclamation at their Conference in Kiev (21-23 May 2003). They invited all countries to integrate sustainable development into their education systems at all levels from pre-school to higher education and in non-formal as well as in informal education, in order to promote education as a key agent for change. They also welcomed the proclamation by the United Nations General Assembly, at its fifty-seventh session (December 2002), of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development starting in 2005, and agreed to take the lead in promoting it regionally.
2. The Statement foresees that UNECE will develop a UNECE strategy for education for sustainable development in close cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the Council of Europe and other relevant actors.
3. This initiative should take into account that education is cross-sectoral and requires the involvement of different ministries or other equivalent national bodies.
4. Education for sustainable development should address environmental protection, social development and economic development. It therefore requires close cooperation on a regional level among different international actors:

- (a) UNESCO, with expertise in diverse education issues;
- (b) UNECE and other international actors, with environmental expertise;
- (c) The Council of Europe, the World Health Organization (WHO) and other international actors, with expertise in education on sustainable social development (gender, human rights, democracy, health);
- (d) The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and other international actors, with expertise in education on sustainable economic development;
- (e) NGOs, regional environmental centres (RECs) and other international actors, with expertise in informal education and in environmental education.

5. UNECE will serve as the secretariat to the process. It has written to UNESCO and the Council of Europe informing them of the outcome of the Kiev Conference with regard to education for sustainable development and asking them to nominate focal points (experts). Other interested and relevant international organizations may also participate.

6. The development of a UNECE strategy on education for sustainable development should uphold the Environment Strategy for the Countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, as appropriate, and the initiative should be included in the work programme of the Committee on Environmental Policy.

7. The process requires funding (see chap. III below).

II. THE PROCESS

A. Phase 1. Establishment of a task force on education for sustainable development

1. Meeting of the Bureau of the Committee on Environmental Policy (4 July 2003)

8. The Committee's Bureau commented on the proposal for post-Kiev work on education for sustainable development and asked the UNECE secretariat to submit a revised document for discussion at the Committee's tenth session.

9. The delegations of Sweden and the Russian Federation confirmed their readiness to continue leading this initiative. The delegation of Sweden informed the Bureau that it could provide some funding and invited other countries to do likewise.

2. Tenth session of the Committee (20-22 October 2003)

10. Following the Bureau's discussion, the Committee may wish to establish an open-ended task force to develop the strategy. In addition to the member States, relevant international organizations, NGOs and other major groups could be invited as observers. The Committee may

also wish to comment on the Basic elements for the strategy for education for sustainable development (ECE/CEP/102/Add.1) and make recommendations with regard to its contents.

3. Nominations to the task force (November 2003 – January 2004)

11. Based on the decision of the Committee at its tenth session, UNECE will organize a nomination procedure for the task force on education for sustainable development.

12. It will write to the Ministries of Foreign Affairs through the United Nations missions (with a copy to the Environment and Education Ministries) to inform them about the process and request them to nominate either a senior official in the Education Ministry or other equivalent national body responsible for education (or a senior official in the national authority for sustainable development) and/or a senior official in the Environment Ministry (perhaps the delegate to the Committee or the Working Group of Senior Officials) as their national focal points. The national focal points are responsible for representing the consolidated national position in the work of the task force.

13. UNECE will keep UNESCO and the Council of Europe up to date on the process and ask them to confirm their focal points. Other interested international organizations may volunteer to participate actively in the work.

14. UNECE will post information on the process on its web site to reach NGOs and other major groups. Interested regional NGOs and other major groups with experience in education and sustainable development may participate in the work.

B. Phase 2. First meeting of the task force on education for sustainable development (February 2004)

15. Once the task force has been set up, UNECE will organize its first, two-day meeting in February 2004. At this first meeting, the task force should elect its chairperson and decide on its work plan and procedures. It should also provide comments on the first draft strategy drawn up by the secretariat.

16. When establishing its work plan and procedures, the task force may wish to set up a small drafting group to help draw up the strategy. Its members should have extensive experience in education policies and in sustainable development, as well as excellent English writing skills.

C. Phase 3. Drafting of the strategy

17. The strategy will be based on the above-mentioned Basic elements (ECE/CEP/102/Add.1) prepared for the Kiev Conference and reflect the Statement (ECE/CEP/102/Rev.1) that the Ministers adopted. The bulk of the drafting work will be done during the meetings of the drafting group, whose members will also communicate by e-mail.

18. The drafting group is expected to meet three times: in April, July and November 2004.

D. Phase 4. International Conference on Education – segment for UNECE Education Ministers (UNESCO; Geneva, September 2004)

19. At the request of the delegation of Sweden, the UNECE secretariat is exploring possibilities with UNESCO for organizing a regional segment during the International Conference on Education in 2004. During the International Conference on Education the draft strategy could be submitted to the UNECE Education Ministers for comment.

E. Phase 5. Joint high-level meeting to adopt the strategy (Geneva, February 2005): regional launching of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

20. In the first part of 2005, UNESCO plans to launch the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development worldwide. A joint high-level meeting of Environment Ministers and Education Ministers or heads of equivalent State bodies responsible for education in UNECE member States could be convened to adopt the UNECE strategy for education for sustainable development. The meeting would last one day.

F. Phase 6. Beginning of the strategy's national implementation (March 2005-May 2007)

21. Member States should start implementing the strategy in March 2005. The UNECE secretariat could provide assistance and facilitate implementation by organizing subregional meetings (workshops). It could also develop an outline to help States report on progress.

G. Phase 7. Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (2007-2008)

22. Ministers may wish to discuss progress in the strategy's implementation based on national and other relevant reports (e.g. NGO reports).

III. BUDGET

A. Meetings

23. According to the criteria set by the Committee on Environmental Policy, 18 countries with economies in transition are eligible for funding. Fourteen (Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Serbia and Montenegro, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan) are eligible for funding to cover subsistence and travel, and four (Bulgaria, Romania, Russian Federation and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia) are eligible for funding to cover subsistence only, subject always to the availability of funds for this purpose.

First meeting of the task force on education for sustainable development

24. Funding will be provided to one person per eligible country for a two-day meeting. Total cost: \$35,000.

Three meetings of the drafting group

25. Funding will be provided to one person from up to five eligible countries. Total cost: \$30,000. Member States may wish to host the meetings.

Joint high-level meeting to adopt the strategy

26. Funding will be provided to one person per eligible country for a one-day meeting. Total cost: \$30,000.

27. The total cost for all meetings would be \$95,000.

B. Support to the secretariat

28. The appointment of a Professional at P3 level for two years from February 2004 to January 2006 requires \$210,000, plus \$8,000 travel expenses. (During the last six months, the assignment will also cover the preparations for the sixth Ministerial Conference.)

29. The overall cost is therefore \$313,000.