



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/2  
8 May 2008

Original: ENGLISH

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**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY**

UNECE Steering Committee on Education for Sustainable Development

Fourth meeting

Geneva, 19–20 February 2009

**REPORT OF THE UNECE STEERING COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION FOR  
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ON ITS FOURTH MEETING**

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

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## INTRODUCTION

1. The fourth meeting of the UNECE Steering Committee of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) took place on 19 and 20 February 2009 in Geneva.
2. The meeting was attended by delegates (representing the education and the environment sectors) from Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Canada, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovakia, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Turkey, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.
3. Representatives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNI-IAS) participated.
4. The following Regional Environmental Centres were represented: the Regional Environmental Centre for Central Asia (CAREC) and the Regional Environmental Centre for Moldova (REC-Moldova).
5. The following non-governmental organizations (NGOs) attended: the coalition of environmental citizens' organizations European ECO-Forum, and the World Wildlife Fund in the Russian Federation (WWF-Russia).
6. The list of participants is available at (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.Meet.htm#4thMtg>).
7. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Andreas Karamanos (Greece).
8. Following the decisions by the third meeting of the Steering Committee on ESD and by its Bureau, the secretariat, in consultation with the Chairperson and the Bureau, had prepared several documents for the Steering Committee meeting. All documents for the meeting are available on the UNECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.Meet.htm#4thMtg>).

### I. OPENING OF THE MEETING AND ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

9. The Chairperson opened the meeting. He welcomed delegates and highlighted the meeting's main objectives, namely to consider: (a) progress made by countries in the implementation of the Strategy for ESD since the Committee's last meeting, including with regard to the current situation with the development and implementation of the national action plans for ESD; (b) progress in the work of the Expert Group on Indicators for ESD, including its proposal to establish an expert group on competence in ESD; (c) the current situation with respect to addressing sustainable consumption and production (SCP) through ESD; (d) the input from the UNECE region to the upcoming UNESCO World Conference on ESD; (e) a proposed mechanism to strengthen the coordination of activities among ESD partners in the region; and (f)

the current status of the trust fund and resources required for the implementation of the work plan.

10. Ms. Monika Linn, Team Leader and the Secretary to the “Environment for Europe” process welcomed the Steering Committee on behalf of the Director of the Environment, Housing and Land Management Division of UNECE and briefed the meeting on the outcomes of the reform of the “Environment for Europe” process. She emphasized the purpose of the reform that was to strengthen the effectiveness of the process and to ensure that it remained appropriate for, and fully aligned with, the changing needs of the UNECE region, the evolving political and economic landscape and the environmental priorities of the region. Following up on the request made by ministers at the Sixth Ministerial Conference “Environment for Europe” (Belgrade, 10–12 October 2007) the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy had developed, in consultation with “Environment for Europe” partners, a reform plan for the process. The plan had been developed through a series of dedicated meetings of the Committee during 2008 and 2009. At its special session (Geneva, 27–29 January 2009), the Committee had finalized and approved a reform plan for the “Environment for Europe” process. The reform plan would be transmitted to the Economic Commission for Europe at its sixty-third session.<sup>3</sup>

11. According to the adopted reform plan, the “Environment for Europe” process would continue to serve as a mechanism: (a) to improve the environment throughout the region; (b) to enhance the implementation of national environmental policies; (c) to support convergence of environmental policies and approaches and the prioritization of environmental objectives; (d) to encourage the participation of civil society; and (e) to promote broad horizontal environmental cooperation. The reform plan is contained in document ECE/CEP/S/152, paragraph 7 and annex I, and is available online (<http://www.unece.org/env/efe/EfEreform/DocumentsReformEfE.htm>).

12. Some of the new features contained in the plan were as follows:

- (a) The Committee on Environmental Policy would act as the convening body for the preparatory process;
- (b) Not later than 18 months before the Ministerial Conference, the Committee would decide on not more than two themes and discuss the outline of the Conference agenda;
- (c) Only one official document per selected theme would be prepared;
- (d) Discussions would be arranged in an interactive manner, e.g. plenary sessions, round tables and moderated panel discussions;
- (e) A session of environmental NGOs and ministers and a session of private sector representatives and ministers would be organized among the Conference’s main clusters;
- (f) The Conference’s outcomes might include:
  - (i) Statements, initiatives, agreements, pledges;
  - (ii) An agreed outcome of two pages;

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<sup>3</sup> The sixty-third session of the Economic Commission for Europe (Geneva, 30 March–1 April 2009) endorsed the reform plan.

(iii) Policy tools;

(iv) Assessment reports;

(g) A mid-term review between two Ministerial Conferences would assess progress of the implementation of the Conference outcomes and provide renewed impetus to the process.

13. In line with the adopted plan, the next Ministerial Conference will be organized in 2011 in Astana. With regard to organizing a high-level segment on ESD at the next Conference and given the reform plan's provisions, it was unlikely that such a segment would be organized as integral part of the Conference. ESD could rather be integrated into the identified two themes for the Conference. The first meeting of the Committee on Environmental Policy to discuss the next Conference would be held from 20 to 23 October 2009. At its next meeting, the Bureau of the Steering Committee on ESD could start to consider options for promoting ESD at the Conference, as well as for a high-level event to mark the accomplishment of phase II of the Strategy's implementation.

14. The Steering Committee adopted the meeting agenda as set out in document ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/1.

## **II. PROGRESS BY UNECE MEMBER STATES IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE STRATEGY FOR EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

15. The Steering Committee heard reports by Governments on activities undertaken to implement the Strategy since the Committee's last meeting. To facilitate the exchange of experience in implementing ESD among Governments and stakeholders, a questionnaire was sent out and the answers received had been compiled into a document (information paper no. 1). The questionnaire also aimed, inter alia, at identifying how the issue of SCP— one of the key themes of sustainable development — was addressed through education, with a view to contributing to the discussion under agenda item 5. In addition, the secretariat had prepared an overview of national action plans for ESD in the region, in line with the information made available (information paper no. 2).

16. Since the beginning of phase II, considerable progress had been achieved in advancing ESD in the region. In many countries, Governments had established the necessary policies and institutional arrangements and mechanisms to implement the Strategy. Implementation of the initial measures (e.g. translating the Strategy into the official national languages and establishing national focal points and consultative mechanisms) had been completed in most countries. Most had also taken steps to introduce ESD into their policy and legislative documents, and many had started drafting national action plans for ESD. Quite a few countries had already completed the national action plans and were working to implement them. Some of these countries were in the process of assessing their national strategies and national plans, with a view to revising them where needed.

17. Coordination as well as awareness-raising and capacity-building activities were being pursued at the national level through the organization of ESD meetings, workshops, conferences and a variety of other events, as well as through the mass media promoting and supporting ESD.

Many countries were promoting the Strategy in diverse international forums. Capacity-building activities were being carried out through various projects on ESD targeting not only educators and administrators of educational institutions but also policymakers and decision makers. More and more, ESD informational and teaching materials were being developed to support the education sector's efforts to integrate ESD into the curriculum. Many countries had established websites with information relevant to ESD, and diverse ESD-related electronic tools (e.g. Internet-based ESD tools for teachers and students, interactive activities and games) were increasingly being developed.

18. In some countries, specific budgets were being allocated for ESD activities and specific ESD awards had been established; these had proven to be incentives encouraging educational institutions and other stakeholders to embrace ESD. However, a number of countries (mostly those with economies in transition) stressed that financial constraints and the lack of resources remained a challenge to the further implementation. Another challenge hindering good progress was the lack of efficient coordination between the numerous actors involved. In many countries, developing competences in ESD among educators remained a persistent bottleneck.

19. The Committee noted that progress in ESD was well on track and in line with the provisions for phase II, including with regard to coordination of ESD activities at the national level and the development of ESD-related policies and materials and tools to support teachers' work in ESD. However, more work was needed in terms of putting these policies and tools into practice, and countries that did not yet have in place national action plans for ESD were urged to develop such plans. Countries were invited to submit to the secretariat their national strategies and action plans for ESD as well as other ESD policy documents for posting on the website (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/NAP.htm>), with a view to sharing them with other countries.

20. The compilation of answers to the questionnaire served as a valuable input to the discussions at the meeting. Twenty-two countries had submitted their answers to the questionnaire. All those that had not yet submitted them were invited to send the answers to the secretariat by 23 March 2009. Countries that would like to update their previous answers could do so also by 23 March; thereafter, the secretariat would revise the answers. The compiled answers could serve as a valuable contribution to upcoming international events related to SCP and in particular to future work on ESD competences. The revised compilations of answers and the interventions would be made available online (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.Meet.htm#4thMtg>).

21. In addition, delegations were invited to submit to the secretariat information on different ESD-related events, tools and materials as well as other relevant information for posting on the website (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/events.htm> and <http://www.unece.org/env/esd/Useful.info.html>).

### **III. REPORT ON THE PROGRESS MADE BY THE UNECE EXPERT GROUP ON INDICATORS FOR EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

22. The Chairperson introduced the documents prepared for this agenda item and invited Mr. Roel van Raaij (Netherlands), Chairperson of the Expert Group on Indicators for ESD, to report on progress achieved in its work (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/4), which he did with a PowerPoint presentation<sup>4</sup>. Following Mr. van Raaij's presentation and the ensuing discussions outlined in sections A to C below, the Steering Committee acknowledged the completion of its mandate and thanked the Expert Group and its Chair for the excellent work accomplished.

#### **A. Guidance for reporting**

23. Innovative work related to indicators for ESD had been successfully accomplished. In accordance with its extended mandate, the Expert Group had finalized a guidance for reporting at its seventh and eighth meetings. The guidance complemented the reporting format and would serve as a tool to support monitoring and assessment of the Strategy's implementation (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/5). It also aimed to facilitate reporting exercises in 2010, 2015 and beyond. These tools could make a valuable contribution to advancing ESD not only in this region but also globally.

24. The Steering Committee welcomed the guidance for reporting and thanked the Expert Group on Indicators for ESD for the excellent work done. It also thanked the Government of the Netherlands for its leadership, the Government of Austria for hosting several meetings and all Governments and organizations for supporting the participation and work of their experts in these activities. The next reporting exercise would take place in 2010 in order to assess the progress achieved in phase II. The reporting format (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/10) was available on the UNECE website. Relevant information and the timeline were included in the work plan of implementation for the Strategy's phase II (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2008/5).

25. With respect to the upcoming reporting exercise in 2010, the Expert Group recommended organizing a workshop for the national focal points with the objective of building capacity in reporting on ESD, including in the use of the reporting format. The organization of such a workshop for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) had also been recommended by the participants of the first workshop on the implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD for the subregion of EECCA (Moscow, 8–9 November 2006). A greater need for such a workshop for the entire UNECE region, or a series of subregional workshops, had emerged as a result of the pilot reporting exercise that had taken place in 2006–2007. The Steering Committee had supported the recommendation, while at the same time expressing its concern that too many meetings were planned for 2009. The secretariat would begin by exploring the possibilities of organizing a second workshop for EECCA in autumn 2009.

26. The Expert Group also considered the draft table of contents for a publication (Learning from each other – UNECE Strategy for Education for Sustainable Development) that aimed to

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<sup>4</sup> The presentation is available online (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.Meet.htm#4thMtg>).

provide user-friendly access to various materials related to the implementation and monitoring of the Strategy. In addition to the available material on the Strategy's implementation, the Expert Group had proposed adding a reflective chapter on learning through developing indicators for ESD. This chapter, which would address issues such as the working approach and methodology, challenges and lessons learned, would be prepared by Mr. Paul Vare, ESD expert and member of the Expert Group, in cooperation with the Chairperson and the secretariat, and with participation of interested experts from the Expert Group. Financial support for the chapter would be provided by the University of Gloucestershire, United Kingdom. The publication would be prepared by the UNECE secretariat. The Steering Committee welcomed the forthcoming publication as a useful tool to enhance ESD in the region as well as a way to share good practices with other regions.

## **B. Good practices in education for sustainable development**

27. As good practices were a key tool for promoting ESD, and teachers and researchers were discovering a wealth of innovative approaches on the ground, UNESCO and UNECE had jointly compiled a major collection in 2007. This had resulted in a publication of a compendium of good practices in formal, non-formal and informal education. Since the successful outcome of this joint endeavour, the collection of good practices had continued through a dedicated website (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/GoodPractices/index.html>). A selection of these good practices had been used in preparing the first regional progress report<sup>5</sup> on the implementation of the Strategy. During the revision of the reporting format and the set of indicators, the Expert Group on Indicators for ESD had recommended that the template for good practices be revised, with a view to adapting it to the reporting format. This would allow for better use of the ongoing and future collections of good practices, so as to illustrate the advances made in ESD during the preparation of the second and third regional progress reports, in 2010 and 2015, respectively.

28. The Expert Group on Indicators, jointly with UNESCO, had revised the template (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/6, annex). This revision would also make possible the development of a database and a more user-friendly interface to disseminate the collected good practices through the Internet. The interface would allow for searches not only by country and organization, but also by objective of the Strategy. These additional features could be developed, provided that funds are made available for this purpose.

29. The Steering Committee considered the revised template and agreed to insert the question "Why?" before point 4 of the template so as to complement the "Who?", "When?", "Where?", "What" and "How?" questions. To continue the effective promotion of ESD, the Committee agreed to carry out a new collection of good practices focusing on addressing, through ESD, the issues of SCP, including sustainable transportation, in the framework of climate change, in an integrative manner rather than by separate collections on each topic. The use of indigenous, traditional and local knowledge would be a valuable component of this collection. Such a collection would also serve as an important input to related international events, e.g. selected good practices would be compiled into a background document for the fourth UNECE regional

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<sup>5</sup> Learning from each other: achievement, challenges and the way forward. Report on progress in implementation of the UNECE Strategy for ESD (ECE/BELGRADE.CONF/INF/3 - ECE/CEP/AC.13/2007/2).



implementation meeting on sustainable development, scheduled to be held on 1 and 2 December 2009 in Geneva.

30. The Committee thanked the Expert Group for its work and requested the secretariat to revise the template to reflect the comments received. The revised template would be circulated to the Committee as well as posted on the UNECE website. The deadline for submitting the good practices was 30 June 2009 with the view to include them in the background document for the RIM. Thereafter, the collection of good practices would continue online through the website.

### **C. Competence in education for sustainable development**

31. To orient education towards ESD, a corresponding shift in the competences of educators themselves was needed. Some of these competences had already been recognized, while the development of others would require an innovative approach. It was expected that this new combination of competences would provide the necessary educational setting for effective ESD to emerge. The Strategy called specifically<sup>6</sup> for the development of educators' competences to engage in ESD. The joint session on ESD held at the Sixth "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference in Belgrade had recognized educators' competence as a frequent bottleneck vis-à-vis improving the quality of education. The ministers had agreed that developing competences in ESD should be a priority. The first reporting exercise clearly identified the need to further define the nature of ESD competences and the ways these might be developed. Furthermore, an enabling policy environment for the work needed to be supported and applied in each member State, as well as made a priority in the region's ESD activities.

32. In response to a request made by the Steering Committee, the Expert Group on Indicators for ESD had prepared a document with the proposal for the establishment of an expert group on competences in ESD (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/7). The proposal included: (a) terms of reference; (b) working arrangements and time frame; and (c) resources. It also included, in three annexes: (a) open questions in relation to competences in ESD; (b) estimated costs for supporting participation of eligible experts in meetings; and (c) background documents and materials. The proposal reflected comments by the Bureau.

33. The Steering Committee considered the proposal and expressed its appreciation to the Expert Group on Indicators for ESD for the development of a comprehensive document addressing this challenging issue. The Committee adopted the proposal, thereby establishing the UNECE Expert Group on Competences in ESD. The Committee requested the secretariat to follow-up on the decision and to proceed with the required actions for the establishment of the new Expert Group in accordance with the procedures included in the terms of reference. The Committee also asked that the gender issue be considered in the selection of experts. The Expert Group on Competences would work on preparing (a) general recommendations for policymakers and (b) a range of core competences in ESD for educators; it would commence its two-year work programme this autumn.

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<sup>6</sup> CEP/AC.13/2005/3/Rev.1, paras. 54–55.

34. Many delegations expressed their interest in participating in the newly established Expert Group and/or contributing to its work with information resources. UNESCO restated its appreciation and full support for the initiation of this activity in the region.

35. Concerning the lead country in this area and in view of the excellent leadership provided by the Netherlands and by Mr. Van Raaij as a Chairperson of the UNECE Expert Group on Indicators for ESD, the Steering Committee expressed the wish that the Netherlands continue the leadership in this new challenging endeavour of developing the ESD competences and also explore the possibility of Mr. Raaij serving as Chairperson of the newly established Expert Group on Competences. The Committee asked its Chairperson and the secretariat to send a letter to the Netherlands to this effect.

36. In line with the criteria contained in the terms of reference, members of and observers to the Steering Committee were invited to submit candidatures of experts (by submitting their extended CVs with brief motivational letters) to the secretariat by e-mail ([esd@unece.org](mailto:esd@unece.org)) by 31 March 2009.

#### **IV. CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNESCO WORLD CONFERENCE ON EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

37. The UNESCO World Conference on ESD (Bonn, Germany, 31 March–2 April 2009) was being organized by UNESCO and the German Federal Ministry of Education and Research in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO. The Conference would focus on four objectives: (a) highlighting the relevance of ESD to the Education for All movement and to achieving quality education; (b) promoting international exchange on ESD; (c) reviewing the implementation of the United Nations Decade of ESD; and (d) agreeing on strategic directions for the way ahead. More information on the Conference and its outcomes was available on the Conference website (<http://www.esd-world-conference-2009.org/>).

38. The Chairperson of the Steering Committee informed the meeting that he had been invited, in his capacity as the Chairperson, to participate in the Conference as well as to make a presentation, highlighting the developments in the UNECE region, during the second plenary session of the Conference (on the morning of 1 April). The session would be dedicated to reviewing progress achieved in the implementation of the United Nations Decade of ESD.

39. The delegations of Germany and UNESCO informed the meeting about progress in preparations for the Conference. The Committee agreed that the work under the Strategy should play a significant role in the Conference. As the UNECE Strategy for ESD was the regional implementation pillar of the United Nations Decade of ESD, progress in its implementation was the exemplar of progress in implementing the Decade in the UNECE region. The Committee also considered and approved the document with a proposed contribution to the Conference (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/9). The secretariat was requested to revise the document in the light of comments made and to transmit it to the UNESCO secretariat for its use.

40. The meeting then discussed ways to promote ESD at the Conference. The UNECE region's progress in ESD would be shared as a valuable regional good practice. Countries were invited to actively participate in the Conference by sharing their successful experiences with ESD and ensuring that activities under the Strategy were well reflected in the Conference.

41. Participation in the exhibition area, jointly with UNEP and other partners, was being prepared. In this regard, the secretariat had prepared a poster about the UNECE Strategy, as well as other information materials for display.

## **V. ADDRESSING SUSTAINABLE CONSUMPTION THROUGH EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

42. In view of the next cycle of the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (2010–2011) and the increasing urgency of dealing with the issue of SCP, the Committee discussed how this complex and challenging issue should be addressed through ESD. Education was a cross-cutting issue playing a crucial role in addressing production and consumption patterns. In the context of the Marrakech process, a Task Force on Education for Sustainable Consumption had been established under the chairmanship of Italy. This Task Force, with support from UNEP and in collaboration with the United Nations Decade on ESD and Hedmark University College, had developed a set of draft Recommendations and Guidelines (“Here and now: education for sustainable consumption”). This comprehensive document served as the basis for a discussion by the meeting of how sustainable consumption could be addressed through ESD in various countries. In addition, relevant feedback from the compilation of answers to the questionnaire (information paper no.1), which included questions related to ESD and SCP, helped facilitate an interactive discussion.

43. Representatives of Italy (Mr. Andrea Innamorati) and of UNEP (Ms. Isabella Marras) presented the draft Recommendations and Guidelines on Education for Sustainable Consumption. In developing the Recommendations and Guidelines, the Task Force had defined education for sustainable consumption as consisting of “the acquisition of knowledge, attitudes and skills necessary for functioning in today’s society. Incorporating the concept of responsible consumption into daily actions is a process and must be developed and modified over time”. The document consisted of three parts. The first, “addressing the challenges”, targeted policymakers by providing (a) an instrument to understand the importance of education for sustainable consumption in supporting other policy goals (citizenship and democratic participation, environmental protection, energy and climate change policies, etc.) and (b) guidance on how to integrate education for sustainable consumption into existing educational and SD strategies. The second, “optimizing opportunities”, targeted educators by providing them with tools and instruments to include education for sustainable consumption in curricula, teaching practices and activities. The third, “relevant resources”, comprised an overview of resources and teaching materials, references to theoretical research and practical materials, and web links. Both the presentations and the Recommendations and Guidelines (parts one and two) were available on the UNECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.Meet.htm#4thMtg>). The entire document could be found at: <http://www.unep.fr/scp/marrakech/taskforces/education.htm>.

44. The Committee focused the interactive discussion on:

- (a) Progress made vis-à-vis this issue – i.e. whether and how is sustainable consumption addressed through education systems at the national level? (based on general approaches, methodology and contents);
- (b) Challenges encountered and lessons learned;
- (c) The way forward with this issue (e.g. to consider using the already developed Recommendations and Guidelines to address this issue at the national level);
- (d) The possible contribution to the fourth regional implementation meeting on sustainable development.

45. Ms. Linn briefed the meeting about the preparation for the fourth regional implementation meeting on sustainable development. The two-day meeting would review the implementation of Agenda 21 and of the Johannesburg Summit<sup>7</sup> outcomes in specific clusters of sustainable development. The thematic cluster for the regional implementation meeting comprised the following issues: transport, chemicals, waste management, mining and a 10-year framework of programmes on SCP patterns. Education was a cross-cutting issue; therefore, the results from this meeting, including the answers to the questionnaire and the envisaged collection of good practices, would serve as a valuable input into the regional implementation meeting. The regional implementation meeting would be prepared by the UNECE in cooperation with relevant partners. The provisional agenda and other documents would be considered and approved by the UNECE Executive Committee.

46. During the interactive discussion, participants stressed that SCP issues varied considerably from country to country. Despite the urgency of dealing with SCP, the issue was insufficiently addressed; therefore, more efforts should be made to find efficient means to address it. Some countries had developed national strategies for SCP or had incorporated SCP in existing strategies such as on sustainable development and/or on ESD. Some had developed specific teaching tools to help educators integrate SCP into their teaching. In a few countries, projects on SCP were being carried out. However, a number of challenges remain ahead. The biggest was to identify appropriate and find feasible ways to reorient individual and societal attitudes and values towards sustainable lifestyles. In addition, nowadays emphasis was mostly put on the individual consumer choice and responsibility, while public, community or collective choice and responsibility was underestimated. The roles of the public sector and of Government vis-à-vis SCP needed to be identified, in particular the role of Government in terms of investment (e.g. sustainable transportation), regulation (e.g. on usage of plastics) and taxation (e.g. a tax on carbon emissions). At the policy level, other relevant ministries (e.g. those dealing with social affairs, labour and consumer protection) should be involved in the work of addressing SCP through ESD. Adequate resources, both financial and human, were lacking to enhance the development of SCP and ESD. In the education sector, the low salaries of teachers in many countries constituted a further problem hindering good progress in ESD.

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<sup>7</sup> World Summit on Sustainable Development, Johannesburg, South Africa (2002).

47. The meeting also discussed possible approaches to addressing SCP. Fair trade, both on the regional and global levels, was one tool that could lead to a more balanced approach to consumption. Another important aspect was that many countries were still struggling with the eradication of poverty and social imbalance; therefore different perspectives from different parts of the world should be taken into account. SCP offered an excellent opportunity to bridge these gaps, as it focused on the economic and social dimensions of sustainable development. ESD was crucial to addressing SCP, as SCP, peacebuilding, sustainable transportation, water and climate change were among the issues it encompassed. Besides developing the theoretical background and policy instruments for SCP, work should focus to a large extent on the concrete implementation of SCP provisions. The best way to highlight the importance of SCP was to provide relevant tools to address all these issues (e.g. SCP, peacebuilding, climate change, water) through ESD and the UNECE Strategy for ESD. NGOs had much experience in promoting SCP, in particular in organizing activities and developing awareness-raising materials and methodological tools that could reorient people towards sustainable consumption. Targeting young people was an efficient approach, as they were typically ahead of adults in their learning/assimilation of such issues. For instance, teaching about the consequences of unsustainable consumption had resulted in children beginning to act in sustainable ways. Teachers should be encouraged to talk about SCP in their classes and to address it with parents. The school environment was very important for promoting the need for sustainable lifestyles and minimizing the ecological footprint. A further aspect to consider was payments for ecosystems services.

48. The Committee agreed that while more efforts were needed to integrate SCP into ESD, with a particular emphasis on teaching approaches and methodology, the draft Recommendations and Guidelines on education for sustainable consumption developed under the Marrakech process were a useful tool to facilitate countries' activities in this regard. The Committee recommended revising the title of the draft Recommendations and Guidelines to reflect that SCP was a component of ESD. It also recommended avoiding the tendency to develop sectoral education initiatives – e.g. education for climate change, education for water, education for SCP – but to channel all efforts, resources and activities, with a view to addressing these issues in an integrative way through ESD. The meeting also agreed that sharing good practices for addressing SCP through ESD was a very efficient means to promote SCP.

## **VI. INTERLINKAGES AND POSSIBLE MUTUAL BENEFITS OF THE UNECE PROCESS AND OTHER EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROCESSES AND ACTIVITIES**

49. ESD had gained prominence in recent years and many organizations and institutions were carrying out ESD-related activities. Since the Steering Committee's last meeting, a number of international events on ESD had been held in the UNECE region. Each of these events had its own added value. However, communication and cooperation among partners was a prerequisite to the overall success of ESD.

50. Delegates supported strengthening synergies between the UNECE Strategy on ESD and the ESD-related activities taking place in the framework on the United Nations Decade of ESD, the Commission on Sustainable Development, the European Union and the Mediterranean

Strategy for Sustainable Development. Many activities had been reported by stakeholders connected with implementing ESD, including promoting ESD and the Strategy in relevant international forums.

51. The representative of Austria, on behalf of Environment and School Initiatives (ENSI), informed the meeting about the recent ESD-related activities, including the ENSI Conference, “Creating learning environments for the future. Sharing knowledge on research and practice” (Leuven, Belgium, 26–28 March 2009, <http://conference.ensi.org/>). The representative of ENSI also brought the meeting’s attention to the “Move4Nature” Initiative, a joint undertaking of ENSI and UNEP. This initiative also included secretariat of the Convention on the Protection and Sustainable Development of the Carpathians (Carpathian Convention) and was supported by the Austrian company OMV through its corporate social responsibility programme (OMV Move & Help). It aimed at mainstreaming environmental education into schools curricula in the Carpathian and Caucasus regions through (a) transnational cooperation; (b) developing tools and educational materials for distribution in schools; (c) establishing environmental awareness; and (d) encouraging and facilitating regional cooperation between schools. One of the initiative’s main outputs was the Carpathian/Caucasus Mountain ESD Training Tool Kit, which was being developed by the Carpathian Sustainable Learning Network (CASALEN) with support from ENSI.

52. The representative of CAREC informed the meeting about ESD activities being carried out in the Central Asian subregion. These activities aimed at enhancing international cooperation in ESD between Central Asian countries. Some of the main activities were: (a) the preparation of joint subregional analytic reviews focusing on environmental education and ESD (five such reviews had been prepared from 2003 to 2009); (b) the preparation of a review of good practices in ESD in Central Asia in the context of the UNECE Strategy (2008–2009); (c) projects promoting ESD in legislation and the educational systems of Central Asian countries; and (d) carrying out an assessment of the implementation of the UNECE Strategy in Central Asian countries at the Seventh Central Asian International Conference on ESD. Key future activities would include: (a) the forthcoming project, Capacity building on sustainable development for High-level Governmental Officials of Central Asian Countries (based a pilot project implemented in Kazakhstan in 2008–2009); and (b) the Regional Green Pack for Central Asia, which would be implemented in cooperation with the Regional Environmental Centre for Central and Eastern Europe as well as other partners.

53. The representative of European ECO-Forum informed participants about the establishment of the Copernicus Alliance (2009), the successor of the Copernicus Campus (a network of universities cooperating on environmental education established in 1993). The role of the newly established alliance was to promote sustainable development in European higher education institutions, with a view to improving education and research on sustainable development in partnership with society.

54. UNI-IAS informed the meeting about its key activities on ESD<sup>8</sup> which included:

- (a) The establishment of 22 Regional Centres for Expertise (RCE) in the UNECE region – RCEs being networks of organizations involved in formal, non-formal and informal education aiming at influencing learning towards on sustainable development;
- (b) Initiating work on core competences in ESD, particularly in higher education;
- (c) Leadership programmes on promoting SCP, for the private sector and Governments;
- (d) Initiation of research and establishment of interlinkages between ESD and other educational movements, e.g. peace and education, gender and education and Education for All, aiming to build synergies and foster dialogue between all these constituencies;
- (e) ProSPER.Net, a network of higher education institutions in the Asia Pacific region promoting post graduate programmes for ESD and on sustainable development, which was currently focusing on reorienting business schools, faculty training and training for policymakers.

55. MIO-ECSDE<sup>9</sup> presented the activities under the Mediterranean Education Initiative for Environment and Sustainability (MEDIES). These focused on promoting ESD in the Mediterranean region through: (a) organizing conferences, seminars and youth residential workshops; (b) developing educational and training materials; and (c) maintaining a network of educators for environmental education and ESD (<http://medies.net>). One valuable output was a publication on addressing water-related issues through ESD; this has been translated into nine languages of the Mediterranean region and had proven to be very popular among educators. Another successful publication examined addressing food-related issues through ESD. The latter had been translated into six languages and comprised parts on cultural dialogue, on environment and production of food, and on food and health. Training courses had been conducted in various Mediterranean countries, several of which had been co-organized with the Baltic University Programme and with support from the Leonardo da Vinci Programme. A major activity was the establishment of a network of Mediterranean universities providing a master course on ESD with support from the UNESCO Regional Bureau for Science and Culture in Europe (BRESCE). In the framework of the UNEP YouthXchange Programme, a revised version of a magazine for youth, which had proved very popular in Greece, was under consideration. Addressing emerging issues through ESD, e.g. nanotechnologies and chemicals, was also an item on the MEDIES agenda. Finally, the Circle of Mediterranean Parliamentarians for Sustainable Development (COMPSUD) had been created to ensure a permanent dialogue between parliamentarians and educators. Another similar activity, the Circle of Mediterranean Journalists for Sustainable Development (COMJ SUD), had been established to improve communications between journalists, educators and policymakers. A new circle, bringing together diverse women's organizations and educators, was currently under consideration.

56. UNESCO briefed the meeting on its upcoming major events on ESD in 2009. These included the World Conference on Higher Education (Paris, 6–8 July), the International Seminar

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<sup>8</sup> See also the UNI-IAS website (<http://www.ias.unu.edu>).

<sup>9</sup> Mediterranean Information Office for Environment, Culture and Sustainable Development (<http://www.mio-ecsde.org/>). Serves as secretariat to MEDIES.

on Climate Change and Education (Paris, 27–29 July) and the UNESCO Youth Forum (Paris, 1–3 October).

57. With the considerable increase in ESD activities, communication and coordination among partners was a prerequisite. The Committee agreed on the establishment of a coordination mechanism consisting of annual meetings bringing together main ESD partners<sup>10</sup> in the region, preferably organized back-to-back to the Steering Committee meetings and, where feasible, other international events (ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/8). Such a mechanism would not only enable the sharing and coordination of ongoing and planned ESD-related activities, but would also offer a way to promote synergies and to avoid overlap and duplication.

58. The secretariat explored the possibility of organizing the first meeting back-to-back to the UNESCO Conference in Bonn; however, due to the very busy schedule before, during and after the Conference involving the main ESD partners, such organization was not possible. The first meeting would thus be organized back-to-back with another event or with the Committee's next meeting.

## **VII. STATUS OF THE TRUST FUND AND RESOURCES REQUIREMENTS FOR THE PERIOD 2009–2010**

59. A further key issue for enabling ESD activities under the Strategy was the availability of financial and human resources. With regard to the financial matters relating to the implementation of the work plan, the Chairperson reiterated the scheme of voluntary contributions agreed by the Vilnius High-level Meeting of Environment and Education Ministries (Vilnius, 17–18 March 2005). The financial issues were reflected in the work plan's annex III; updated information were provided in information paper no. 4.

60. Efforts undertaken by UNECE member States to develop the Strategy and successfully implement its phase I (2005–2007) had been remarkable, as was their continuous commitment to the process. In 2008, however, the funds received by the ESD trust fund had fallen significantly below the amounts required to effectively implement and manage the Strategy at the regional level. Given the very limited funds currently available in the trust fund, continued voluntary contributions from member States were crucial to enabling the implementation of the activities agreed in the work plan.

61. The Committee recalled that at the Sixth Ministerial Conference "Environment for Europe" (Belgrade, 2007), the ministers of education and the environment had requested that United Nations regular budget resources be allocated for the further work on the Strategy, and had asked the secretariat to explore these possibilities. Governments had recognized that more efforts should be made to promote this decision at UNECE and the General Assembly.

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<sup>10</sup> On the proposed coordination mechanism for ESD partners in the UNECE region, please see document ECE/CEP/AC.13/2009/8, paragraph 3 and footnote 2.



62. In the meantime, member States, international organizations and the private sector members were invited to make voluntary contributions to support the ongoing and planned work. The secretariat would follow up with official letters soliciting financial support from the member States.

63. The overview of expected follow-up actions and deadlines, as well as the revised format of resource requirements, is annexed to this report (see annexes I and II).

### **VIII. CALENDAR OF MEETINGS**

64. The Steering Committee decided that its next meeting would be held in March 2010. Following the confirmation of the availability of a meeting room with interpretation, the next meeting of the Steering Committee is scheduled to be held on Thursday and Friday, 18 and 19 March 2010.

### **IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

65. No other business was brought to the attention of the Steering Committee.

### **X. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING**

66. The Chairperson informed the Steering Committee that the summary of the meeting would be circulated by e-mail. The Bureau and the secretariat were requested to follow up on the Committee's decisions. The secretariat was asked to finalize the report and the list of participants for circulation to delegates after the meeting. These would also be posted on the UNECE website (<http://www.unece.org/env/esd/SC.Meet.htm#4thMtg>). The Chairperson concluded that it had been a successful and fruitful meeting, with very good outcomes, and thanked the Committee for its constructive and efficient work. He then closed the meeting.

67. The Bureau met after the Steering Committee meeting to agree on its own next meeting, with a view to preparing the fifth meeting of the Committee. The Bureau agreed that, depending on the outcomes of the October meeting of the Committee on Environmental Policy that related to preparing the next "Environment for Europe" Ministerial Conference, as well as on the draft provisional agenda for the Steering Committee's fifth meeting, it would decide whether to convene a meeting in Geneva or to hold consultations by e-mail. In the case that the Bureau met in Geneva, the preferred dates for such a meeting would be 17 or 19 November 2009.

## Annex I

## OVERVIEW OF EXPECTED FOLLOW-UP ACTION BY MEMBER STATES AND STAKEHOLDERS

Activity	Deadline	Comment	Actor
Submit/update answers to the questionnaire	23 March 2009	The compilation of answers would be revised to include new submissions; refer to paragraph 20	Member States
Nominate candidatures for the Expert Group on Competences in ESD	31 March 2009	Refer to paragraph 36	Member States and stakeholders
Submit good practices in ESD	30 June 2009 / ongoing	As contribution to the upcoming relevant meetings and for sharing them through the website; refer to paragraph 30	Member States and stakeholders
Submit national strategies and action plans for ESD, as well as other policy documents on ESD	Ongoing	For sharing them through the website; refer to paragraph 19	Member States
Submit events and materials on ESD	Ongoing	For sharing them through the website; refer to paragraph 21	Member States and stakeholders
Contribution to the trust fund	Ongoing	Refer to the paragraphs 59–62	Member States and stakeholders

## Annex II

**STATUS OF THE TRUST FUND AND RESOURCE REQUIREMENTS FOR  
THE PERIOD 2009–2010**

UNECE EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Contributions, incurred expenses and estimated resource requirements

*(in United States dollars; calculations are based on the United Nations scale of assessments<sup>11</sup>)*

**I. REPORT ON THE USE OF FUNDS**

**1.1. Contributions received in 2008 as of 31 December 2008**

Country	Date	Amount	
A.	Starting balance as of 1 January 2008	181,651	
	<b>Received in 2008</b>		
	Lithuania	January	2,915
	Ireland	April	31,546
	Austria	April	3,155
	Greece	May	3,065
	Slovakia	June	3,110
	Croatia	June	3,110
B.	Canada	August	14,221
	Lithuania	October	2,695
	Hungary	November	3,881
	Netherlands	November	12,937
	Sweden	December	23,326
	Czech Republic	December	6,477
	Austria	December	2,786
	Norway	December	13,091
	<i>Subtotal contributions (A + B)</i>		<i>307,966</i>
C.	Interest income		4,307
	<b>Total income (A + B + C)</b>		<b>312,273</b>

<sup>11</sup> Figures are rounded up. They might change in accordance with the United Nations administrative regulation.

**1.2 Expenditures in 2008**

Activity		Costs
A.	Participation of eligible delegates in: one meeting of the Steering Committee, one meeting of the Bureau and two meetings of the Expert Group on Indicators (2008)	38,118
B.	Staff travel to the relevant meetings	3,073
C.	1 P3 staff salary (part-time: January–December 2008, inclusive)	129,861
D.	General operating expenses	137
<i>Subtotal (A + B + C + D):</i>		<i>171,052</i>
E.	Programme support costs: 13 per cent of \$171,052	22,267
<b>Total expenditures (A + B + C + D + E)</b>		<b>193,289</b>

**1.3. Balance** (balance forward, as of 1 January 2009)**+118,984****II. ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR THE PHASE II (2009)**

Activity		Costs
A.	Participation of eligible delegates in: One meeting of the Steering Committee One meeting of the Bureau Two meetings of the Expert Group on Competences in ESD	30,000 12,500 17,500
B.	Workshop (EECCA)	70,000
C.	Staff travel to the relevant meetings	20,000
D.	1 P3 staff salary <sup>12</sup> (full-time: January–December 2009, inclusive)	136,800
E.	1 P2 IT staff salary (full-time: September 2009–December 2009, inclusive)	34,000
<i>Subtotal (A + B + C + D + E):</i>		<i>320,800</i>
F.	Programme support costs: 13 per cent of \$320,800	41,704
<b>Total expenditures (A + B + C + D + E + F)</b>		<b>362,504</b>

*Notes:* (a) Expenditures for the case studies would be estimated by interested Governments and organizations involved in the exercise; (b) expenditures for the workshops could be alternatively covered directly by host Governments and/or interested organizations; (c) expenditures for consultancy could be provided in kind by Governments and/or interested organizations.

**Estimated resources required for 2009** (\$362,504 – \$118,984)**\$243,520**

<sup>12</sup> Including separation costs.

**III. ESTIMATED EXPENDITURES FOR THE PHASE II (2010):**

Activity		Costs
A.	Participation of eligible delegates in:	
	One meeting of the Steering Committee	30,000
	One meeting of the Bureau	12,500
	Three meetings of the Expert Group/Task Force on Competences in ESD	35,000
B.	Workshop (SEE)	30,000
C.	Consultancy for specific documentation for the ESD process, e.g. progress report for implementation of phase II	35,000
D.	Staff travel to the relevant meetings	20,000
E.	1 P3 staff salary <sup>3</sup> (full-time: January–December 2010, inclusive)	136,800
F.	1 P2 IT staff salary (full-time: January–June 2010, inclusive)	68,000
<i>Subtotal (A + B + C + D + E + F):</i>		<i>367,300</i>
G.	Programme support costs: 13 per cent of \$367,300	47,749
<b>Total expenditures (A + B + C + D + E + F + G)</b>		<b>415,049</b>

**Estimated resources required for 2010****\$415,049****IV. PLEDGES MADE**

Country	Amount	Comments
Canada	30,000 CAD	Will contribute 15,000 for each 2009 and 2010
Italy		At the third meeting of the Committee, expressed interest in contributing
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