

How to Get Involved

By recognizing "Official German Projects" or "Official City"/"Official Local Authority" of the UN Decade, the National Committee aims to increase the visibility of exemplary good practice and to promote the concerns of sustainability education at local and regional levels. Until 2011, more than 1.300 successful and innovative projects and towns have been awarded these titles. Here are some examples:

• Climate Breakfast

At the climate breakfast of KATE e.V. in Berlin, primary school students learn how our food influences the climate. After having breakfast together, they explore whether the eggs, cheese and tomatoes eaten were climate friendly. One of the major lessons is that food production consumes as much energy as heating and driving a car.

• Green Campus

The student initiative "Greening the University" at Tübingen University actively supports embedding the guiding principle of sustainable development in research, teaching and administration. Its study programme "Oecologicum" links scientific findings from individual disciplines. The introduction of an environmental management system obliges the university to use water, paper and energy more efficiently.

• Sustainable Cities and Local Authorities

The title sustainable "City/Local Authority" is awarded to towns, which are particularly involved in the field of ESD. In Freiburg, for example, one of the projects is encouraging schools to start student companies in the context of sustainable forestry and at the same time to include this topic in several subjects. Up to the end of 2011 Freiburg is the most recent town to carry the title, joining Frankfurt am Main, Hellenthal, Hamburg, Aalen, Heidelberg, Erfurt, Alheim, Bonn, Gelsenkirchen, Bad Honnef, Minden and Neumarkt in the effort to implement ESD.

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United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

German Commission
for UNESCO



SUPPORTED BY



Federal Ministry
of Education
and Research



Imprint:
Publisher/Editor: German Commission for UNESCO
Graphic Design: MediaCompany GmbH
Photos: Jani Bryson/istockphoto (Title), Christopher Fletcher/istockphoto (P. 2),
twing/istockphoto (P. 3), Abel Mitja Varela/istockphoto (P. 4)
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EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (ESD)

Implementing the United
Nations World Decade
(2005-2014) in Germany



Preserving the Future

Sustainability – an ecologically, economically, socially balanced and future-oriented development – is one of the big challenges of our time. The United Nations has proclaimed the years from 2005 to 2014 the **World Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)**. The UN Member States have thus committed themselves to integrate the principles, values and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning during this ten-year period.

Developing a National Plan of Action

In Germany, the German Commission for UNESCO coordinates the implementation of the Decade. The National Commission is supported in this task by the Federal Ministry for Education and Research. In order to achieve the integration of ESD into all areas of education, **four strategic goals** were defined in the National Plan of Action:

- to develop further the concept of ESD and spread good practices,
- to forge stronger links between individual players and stakeholders,
- to increase public visibility,
- to strengthen international cooperation.

Drawing Together Expertise

The National Committee, set up by the German Commission for UNESCO, is the central supervising and coordinating body for the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development in Germany. It consists of 30 experts and institutions, including representatives from Federal Ministries, the Parliament, the Federal Länder (the German States), NGOs, the media, the private sector and academia as well as school students.

Involving All Stakeholders

About 120 key stakeholders in the field of Education for Sustainable Development have been invited by the National Committee to contribute directly to the implementation of the UN Decade in Germany. They come together once a year on the occasion of the **Round Table** meeting. This mechanism generates content-related and strategic suggestions and ideas for the UN Decade and makes the concerns of Education for Sustainable Development more visible.

ESD Goes Online

The website bne-portal.de provides information on ESD including news, events, competitions, learning materials and a database of “Official German Projects” of the UN Decade. The portal explains and further disseminates the concept of ESD and shows best-practice examples of ESD in action. In doing so, the website facilitates networking between stakeholders and increases public awareness.



The World Meets in Germany

From 31 March to 2 April 2009, the first UNESCO World Conference on ESD was held in Bonn. It brought together 900 participants from 147 countries. The main goal was to take stock of achievements in the first half of the Decade and to develop strategies for the second half. UNESCO and the German Federal Ministry for Education and Research organized the conference, in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO.

Working with Private Partners

Since 2008, the German Commission for UNESCO and the retail company dm-drogerie markt have been working together to implement the UN Decade in Germany. In 2010, they launched the competition “Ideen Initiative Zukunft” to support and encourage people who are committed to sustainability. The initiative instigated involvement of more than 1.200 dm branches throughout Germany making Education for Sustainable Development easily accessible to the general public. Long-term cooperation emerged among numerous projects and branches and more than 2.800 projects receive financial support to implement their ideas.