



## China

The Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) in China, was seen as a natural progression of its national flagship project, "Environment, Population and Development" (EPD) program, which commenced in 1998. The **Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences** has been entrusted by the Chinese National Commission for UNESCO with this project. A **National Working Committee for EPD** was established with its Secretariat within the Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences. Local working committees for EPD are established according to local needs of the programme. The National Working Committee for EPD is now also responsible for DESD-related activities.

### Projects/Initiatives

The Beijing Academy of Educational Sciences takes advantage of being a research institution with wide connections with institutions of higher learning and research. It has mobilized and strengthened research work on EPD and research outcomes have been used to contribute to program implementation by assisting school principals and teachers to develop a better understanding of the necessity and significance of EPD.

### Objectives of EPD in China

1. Enhance awareness and capability of educators in primary, secondary schools and colleges to promote education initiatives for environment, population and sustainable development
2. Help teenagers to acquire knowledge and skills about environment, population and sustainable development, and cultivate awareness and readiness to act positively in support of ESD
3. Prepare a new generation of citizens with creativity and consciousness of sustainable development and relevant capability
4. Work together with partners among the Member states to integrate sustainable development with education of environment and population to improve the living environment so as to promote the sustainable development of human beings

Guiding principles for implementing education for EPD have been developed. These principles recognize the need for "student-centered methodology, integrating education for EPD within subject teaching, cooperation and innovation" whereby students have the opportunity to learn by doing rather than merely relying on knowledge transmission. The EPD project is being implemented in over 1000 schools in nine provinces involving 10,000 teachers and 500,000 students.

The EPD initiative has helped influence national policy makers' understanding of EPD and the importance of education in achieving sustainable development. Using the practical experience received from participating in the EPD programme, the Beijing Education Commission has supported the development of textbooks for a course on "Environment and Education on Sustainable Development." This subject will be launched in primary and secondary schools in 2005. By successfully demonstrating EPD in pilot schools, the project has also helped change educators' viewpoints and has promoted educational innovation to support ESD. Teachers have undertaken pedagogical innovations, such as the use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and experiential learning. The EPD project has guided students towards learning to care for society, cherish life and protect the environment. Many students who have attended EPD project schools feel more empowered to strive for sustainable development and actively participate in public service

activities in their communities.

## **Consultations**

Three national training workshops were organized respectively in April 2005 and April and December 2006, to introduce the background and content of International Implementation Scheme (IIS) of DESD and strategies for promoting DESD in Asia-Pacific Region and share successful experience on promoting ESD implementation strategies. Moreover, the second international forum on ESD was held in Beijing in October 2005 with the participation of around 300 people from China and abroad. As a result, the ESD experiences in China are further shared with other countries and network among schools and research institutes on ESD is further expanded.

## **Resources**

Websites for Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in both Chinese and English have been established and a series of books entitled “Education for Sustainable Development” was published in 2004. The books bear titles such as: “Outlines of Education for EPD in China”; “Collections of Education and Teaching Cases for Secondary Education”; and “Collections of Education and Teaching Cases for Primary Education”.

## **Projects/Initiatives**

United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and Tongji University signed an agreement on May 9, 2002 to jointly set up UNEP-Tongji Institute for Environment and Sustainable Development for the purpose of strengthening scientific research and providing educational programmes in environment and sustainable development. The Institute aims to strengthen international environmental education and scientific research and design its educational programmes for undergraduate and postgraduate students with support from the College of Environmental Science and Engineering and other related colleges of Tongji University. In the Institute, importance is attached to the teaching of planning, management and development against the background of environmental science and technology. Specialties in water resource reservation, industrial ecology and environment management, eco-city planning and management, energy and environment, economic development and ecological protection, environmental informatics, environmental monitoring and remote control, environmental value analysis, regional and global environmental studies have been developed for the cultivation of senior technical and managerial personnel of sustainable development.