



Republic of Korea

In the Republic of Korea (ROK) the general population seems to have a high level of consciousness regarding environmental, peace and equity issues due to the democratization processes and citizens' movements that have occurred in the country. Achieving a more sustainable society in ROK, and throughout the Asia-Pacific region, requires a similar large-scale societal shift in consciousness. Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) will play a key role in facilitating these changes.

The Asia Pacific Situational Analysis by UNESCO Bangkok in 2005, found that there is some understanding of EE and sustainable development in ROK. The connection between education in general and sustainable development has not been as easily made, especially in terms of the connections between values education and sustainable development. Even experienced professionals in the sustainable development field tend to restrict their focus to policy aspects of sustainable development and largely overlook the values and attitudinal aspects of education that are critical to ESD's success.

Due to the level of awareness of environmental issues, the Government has actively promoted EE through increased financial support and legislation. It has also been equally active in promoting values education in areas such as Education for International Understanding (EIU). Initiatives have included the provision of government funding for teacher training in EIU and the expansion of institutional capacity through the creation of institutions such as The Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding (APCEIU). Similarly, institutional capacity for sustainable development has been expanded through the creation of institutions such as the Presidential Commission on Sustainable Development. Within this Commission, there is an active Education Committee that has the potential to play a catalytic role in promoting ESD.

Projects/Initiatives

To implement ESD activities in ROK, the Korean National Commission for UNESCO (KNCU) had planned the following activities for 2007 (<http://www.unesco.or.kr/eng/eactivity/edu.html>): In conjunction with the Tongyong Regional Center of Expertise (RCE), KNCU developed a teacher's guideline for ESD. KNCU planned to hold a training workshop for teachers during April in Tongyong City, to introduce the guideline and train teachers on how to utilize it in the classroom. In addition, KNCU is planned to introduce a series of materials released by the UNESCO Headquarters that will help promote understanding of the ESD concept in Korea and spread practical examples for its implementation in each educational field. *Teacher Training Workshop on Cultural Heritage Education*: In order to promote understanding of cultural heritage and implement cultural heritage education in schools, KNCU planned to release a Korean version of "World Heritage in Young Hands," which was originally published by the UNESCO World Heritage Center in 2002. The Korean Cultural Heritage Administration (CHA) supports the translation and publication of the tool kit. The Korean version of the tool kit was planned to be introduced at the in-country teacher training workshop of the Mobile Training Team project on ESD and WHE which is organized by KNCU and CHA in cooperation with UNESCO Bangkok and Beijing.