



**UNESCO World Conference on Education for
Sustainable Development**, 31 March to 2 April 2009, Bonn

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**“Transmitting Knowledge: Linking
Intangible Cultural Heritage with
Education for Sustainable
Development”**

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Heritage/
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The National Agency for the Intangible Cultural Heritage



- Established at the Austrian Commission for UNESCO in January 2006
- Financed from funds made available by several Federal Ministries

Activites

- Interface for national and international cooperative activities
- platform for interdisciplinary dialogue
- networking agency for cultural policy, science, business and everyday culture
- awareness-raising and public relations work

Exploring Synergies

Linking **Intangible Cultural Heritage**
with **Education for Sustainable
Development**

Education for Sustainable Development in Austria

Governmental:

- Austrian Strategy on ESD
- Austrian Decade Office
- “Education Map”: Initiatives Civil Societies
- Sustainability Award for Universities

Austrian Commission for UNESCO:

- expert advisory board “Education for Sustainable Development and Global Learning”
- Award of Decade Status to projects

UNESCO-Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage

„This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.“

Article 2, Para. 1

Intangible Cultural Heritage – what is it?

- (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;**
- (b) performing arts**
- (c) social practices, rituals and festive events**
- (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe**
- (e) traditional craftsmanship**

Article 2, Para. 2

Austrian Focus Subjects

***(d) knowledge and practices
concerning nature and the universe***



Knowledge and Practices concerning Nature and the Universe

Culture & Sustainability

*Transmitting local, experience-based
knowledge in order to pursue
sustainable paths*

Knowledge of Past Generations ...

... as a solid foundation for

- environmental integrity**
- economic viability**
- a just society for present and future generations**



Austrian good practices

Austrian good practice I

I: Traditional Medicine

research project: “census of complementary healing methods in Austria”, on behalf of the Austrian Ministry of Health

expected results:

- ✓ documentation & evaluation
- ✓ financial savings for institutional Austrian health care
- ✓ creation of a legal framework for complementary healing methods
- ✓ reliable information for patients

Austrian good practices II and III

I: Disaster Prevention

Symposium and Publication “Cultural strategies for the prevention and management of natural disasters”

→ Launch of a research project as a result

II: Forestry and Cultural Practices

overcoming notions of the forest as mere economic factor

Lessons learned

- **Loss of local, experience-based knowledge**
- **Loss of appreciation for local, experience-based knowledge**
- ***simultaneously*: increasing demand for abandoned local knowledge**

Fostering individual and corporate social responsibility

Local, experience-based knowledge as ...

- ... an impetus for the role and responsibilities of individuals in a globalized world
- ... resource for strengthening self-competence



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization

Österreichische UNESCO-Kommission
Austrian Commission for UNESCO

Thank you for your attention!

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