



## Workshop 1

### Education for water sustainability: where Decades meet

**Time:** 31 March: 15.00 - 18.00h (first part), 1 April: 11.00 - 13.00h (second part)

**Organizers:** Miguel Doria, UNESCO; Almut Nagel, German Federal Environment Ministry; Charlotte van der Schaaf, UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development

#### 1. Background

Lack of appropriate institutional and human capacities, including education and training, have been systematically identified as one of the main barriers for the sustainable management of freshwater resources and for the achievement of the water-related Millennium Development Goals. To strengthen the capacities of Member States in water and education, the international community has designated two time periods focusing specifically on these issues, namely the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UN DESD, 2005-2014) and the International Decade for Action „Water for Life“ (2005-2015). Having as a main objective assessing the current status of water education and identifying the way forward as part of the process initiated during the 6th phase of the International Hydrological Programme (IHP), the workshop on „Education for Water Sustainability: Where Decades meet“ during the UNESCO World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, ESD 2009 in Bonn, Germany, will also demonstrate and strengthen the links between UN and International decades working on water education.

Many United Nations bodies and Member States, including Germany, have substantially contributed to the ongoing UN DESD and to the International Decade for Action „Water for Life“, as well as to the programmes of the inter-agency mechanism UN-Water, including the UN-Water Decade on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) and its water-related capacity development carried out to support the water decade. The background includes, among others:

- The International Conference on Freshwater, organised in Bonn in 2001 ([www.water-2001.de](http://www.water-2001.de)) as part of the preparations for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD). The findings of the conference are summarised in the five so-called Bonn Keys:
  - 1 - meeting the water security needs of the poor,
  - 2 - decentralisation: the local level is where national policy meets community needs,
  - 3 - better water outreach through new partnerships,
  - 4 - long-term harmony with nature and neighbour through cooperative arrangements at the water basin level,
  - 5 - stronger, better performing governance arrangements.

Of the 27 recommendations for action agreed on, four explicitly concerned capacity development:

18 - Focus education and training on water wisdom, 19 - Focus research and information management on problem solving, 20 - Make water institutions more effective, 21 - Share knowledge and innovative technologies.

Also at the Bonn conference water was acknowledged as a key to sustainable development.

- The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) held in 2002 in Johannesburg, South Africa, which also focused on the targets of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) specifically addressing water and sanitation issues. The

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31 March – 2 April 2009  
Bonn, Germany

outcome of the 2001 Bonn Freshwater Conference had helped to strengthen this link between the MDGs and water.

In Johannesburg also a basis was laid for the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The Johannesburg Plan of Implementation underpinned the overall importance of water for sustainable development, and asked the member states to prepare national plans for the implementation of Integrated Water Resources Management by the end of 2005.

- In 2002 the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution proclaiming the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (UN DESD), 2005-2014. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization is the lead agency for the promotion of the Decade; the thematic programme on education for sustainable water management is led by UNESCO's International Hydrological Programme. Moreover, the UN General Assembly, in 2003, proclaimed the years 2005 to 2015 as the International Decade for Action „Water for Life“. Also in 2003, UN-Water was endorsed as the official UN mechanism for the follow-up of the water-related decisions reached at the 2002 WSSD and the MDGs. UN-Water is also coordinating the International Decade for Action „Water for Life“. In 2006 Germany offered to financially support the efforts of UN-Water by hosting one of the UN-Water Programme offices, the UN-Water Decade Programme on Capacity Development (UNW-DPC) in Bonn, Germany.

## 2. Workshop

### 2.1 Objective

This water and education related workshop will contribute to the overall objectives of the conference, particularly by:

- Highlighting the essential contributions of education for water sustainability to all education and to achieving quality education. („Why are water and education relevant for sustainable development?“).

- Carrying out a stock-taking of DESD implementation („What have we achieved so far, what are the lessons learnt?“).

In preparation of the workshop existing water education approaches developed under the auspices of the two decades were identified (stock-taking e.g. via the regional workshops on water education organized by UNESCO-IHP and partners and by a short scrutiny of UN and national focal points). The workshop will include reports on outcomes from regional workshops, national programmes of Member States, examples from NGO programmes, among others.

- Promoting international exchange between water and education stakeholders, and in particular between the UN DESD and the International Decade for Action „Water for Life“ („What can we learn from each other?“).

The workshop will also demonstrate and strengthen the links between the two decades; i.e. the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the International Decade for Action „Water for Life“ as regards their contribution to achieving quality education for sustainable development.

The workshop will facilitate the exchange of ideas and of education approaches aimed at improving different levels of education.

The specific focus of the workshop on „Education for Water Sustainability“ is to identify opportunities and develop new concepts for the way ahead for water and education, including for the national, regional and international bodies in charge of the water and education decades („Where do we want to go from here?“).

This includes developing strategies for promoting capacity development in different levels and mediums of education, e.g. OpenCourseWare exchange, exchanges between the water and education sectors, facilitating the transfer of ideas from research



into education and training, or possible policies that allow curricula and materials to be co-developed and shared by groups of university/school lecturers.

The workshop will be based on experiences from many fields of education around the world, especially from:

- School education;
- Vocational education and training;
- Higher education; and
- Community and stakeholder education (including the media).

## 2.2 Expected outcome

Focusing on best practices and teaching approaches from around the world will allow discussing and defining global and regionally adapted education approaches to water issues, use and management in K-12/school education, vocational education and training, higher education, and community and stakeholder education. Discussions around the four conference objectives specified above will take place to overview current status. Recommendations for action on global, regional and national level will be reinforced as input into the closing plenary and the Bonn Declaration, to be adopted in the closing plenary session. These recommendations, that will follow-up on the recommendations of previous international conferences and of the UNESCO Regional Workshops on Water Education. The recommendations of these Regional Workshops will be further strengthened after the UNESCO World ESD Conference via consultations with Member States via UNESCO National Commissions (particularly IHP National Committees), with the UNESCO Intersectoral Platform on Education for Sustainable Development, with UN Agencies (via UN-Water) and other intergovernmental bodies.

The water and education related workshop will also strengthen the linkages between the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development and the International Decade for Action „Water for Life“, by developing a consolidated approach to strengthen training and education.

## 2.3 Support materials

Background support materials and inputs include:

### For all levels of education:

- Outcomes of the UNESCO Regional Water and Education Workshops (UNESCO IHP, in partnership with UNESCO-IHE, UNW-DPC, UNESCO-UNEVOC, ASPNet, UNITWIN, Itaipu Binacional and other partners)

### School education:

- Great Volga River Route (UNESCO ASPNet)
- WASH in Schools (UNICEF/IRC): <http://www.schools.watsan.net>
- Living on the Edge (UNEP/GEMS): [http://unep.org/tunza/youth/Publications/wesc\\_brochure%5B1%5D.pdf](http://unep.org/tunza/youth/Publications/wesc_brochure%5B1%5D.pdf)
- World Water Monitoring Day (WEF/IWA): <http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org>
- Water Education for Teachers (WET): <http://www.projectwet.org>, including its activities in developing countries (e.g. UNESCO IHP LAC / Project WET Water and Education Programme)
- The Blue Planet initiative (UNESCO / Weizmann Institute)
- Voices of Youth (UNICEF): [http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/wes/explore\\_1818.html](http://www.unicef.org/voy/explore/wes/explore_1818.html)
- Water in DESD in Sweden: Side Event 2008 Stockholm World Water Week „What Did You Learn in School Today?“ <http://www.worldwaterweek.org/programme/monday/mon05-whatlearnschool-today.asp>
- Water in DESD in Germany: Annual Theme 2008 „Water“ (GUK): <http://www.bne-portal.de/wasser>
- Water in DESD in Germany: Symposium „Water - Education - Future“: <http://www.bne-portal.de/wassertagung>

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## Vocational education and training:

- TVET (UNESCO-UNEVOC):  
<http://www.unevoc.unesco.org>
- VET (BIBB/BMU): <http://www.bibb.de>

## Higher education:

- Sets of materials developed by UNESCO-IHE Institute for Higher Education ([www.unesco-ihe.org](http://www.unesco-ihe.org)), the water-related centres operating under the auspices of UNESCO, and the water related UNESCO Chairs.
- E-learning / Blended Learning (German UNESCO-IHP/WMO-HWRP National Committee):  
<http://www.lfi.rwth-aachen.de> and <http://totwat.lfi.rwth-aachen.de>
- Bi-cultural MSc Courses:
  - IWRM (BMZ, DAAD, Cologne University of Applied Sciences / Amman University):  
<http://www.iwrm-master.info>
  - Environment and Resources Management (DAAD, Cologne University of Applied Sciences / Universidad Autonoma de San Luis Potosi):  
[http://www.tt.fh-koeln.de/forms/Application%20form\\_ENREM%20Master\\_2008.doc](http://www.tt.fh-koeln.de/forms/Application%20form_ENREM%20Master_2008.doc)
- NeWater OpenCourseWare Curriculum on Adaptive River Basin Management:  
<http://wiki.gwsp.org/moodle>

## Community and stakeholder education:

- Integrated Water Resources Management TOOL-BOX (Global Water Partnership)
- We All Use Water (Australian Water Association)
- US EPA Education Resources
- Sustainable Wastewater Management for smaller communities (New Zealand)