



## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

### The Decade of Education for Sustainable Development commences

From the outset of discussions on the environmental crisis; from Stockholm (1972) to the present time, environmental education has played a predominant role in environmental policies and agendas for sustainable development. Although the topic was the last to be included for the Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, it was installed in the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation when approval was given to launching the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014, which will renew the environmental education crusade launched in Tbilisi in 1977 (See p. 3).

This decision and appeal call on the globalized world to base the fate of humanity and the construction of a sustainable future on a new concept and a new ethic of development; on the forming of new visions, new mentalities, new skills and new sensitivities. Although UNESCO is entrusted with convening the governments and peoples of the world to achieve the objectives of this Decade and collaborate with the organizations in the United Nations system in coordinating the concerted activities, the greatest successes will not depend on the dissemination of a methodology and the application of a budget from these organizations. In contrast with the process launched in Tbilisi in 1977, environmental education over these years has developed a variety of initiatives, experiences and programmes that have been gaining ground in the formal and non-formal education systems of the countries. The results of this Decade will depend on the efforts, strategies and actions undertaken by the actors in this social movement in favour of environmental education and the sustainable development of different regions of the world, of their governments and their citizens. More than a model to be followed, the Decade will be formed by the agendas that are designed and put into operation by the countries, the cities, the municipalities, the universities, the schools and the communities in each region.

In this context and pursuant to the decisions adopted by the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean to develop a Regional Programme of Environmental Education for Sustainable Development in the framework of the UNEP Environmental Training Network for Latin America and the Caribbean, a Working Meeting of Specialists in Public Management

of Environmental Education in Latin America and the Caribbean was held from 22 to 26 November 2004 on the island of Margarita, under the auspices of the Environment Ministry of Venezuela.

At this Meeting, which included the national focal points and those responsible for environmental education in the countries of the region, guidelines and actions to be taken to implement this Regional Programme within the Latin American and Caribbean Initiative for Sustainable Development (ILAC), which sets forth the need to "improve and strengthen the incorporation of the environmental dimension in formal and non-formal education, and in society". This Programme also seeks to "establish a permanent regional mechanism to promote the coordination of policies, stimulate the development of programmes and projects, and advocate communication, exchange and mutual support between the governments and the social actors involved in the development of environmental education programmes". In this way, the Programme will be able to bring together many of the efforts and activities that are being carried out in our region and use their initiatives to form an agenda of cooperation for the implementation of the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) in this region.

One of the decisions adopted was to incorporate the Ibero-American Congresses of Environmental Education in this framework of consensus and, in accordance with the principles regarding the participation of all the countries of Latin America and the Caribbean in the Environmental Training Network, to open it up to include the non-Spanish-speaking Caribbean countries. From this perspective, numerous environmental education activities will be held this year. And the Fifth Ibero-American and Caribbean Congress on Environmental Education will be in Brazil in the year 2006.

### In this issue

Activities in the Region .....	2
Activities Outside the Region .....	2
United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development .....	3



# Activities in the region

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## Doctorate Programme in Environment and Society Campinas, S.P., Brazil

This is an interdisciplinary programme of the Universidad Provincial de Campinas, the Institute of Philosophy and Human Sciences and the Centre for Environmental Studies and Research.

The doctorate degree programme seeks to attract students in different areas: biologists, ecologists, demographers, geographers, sociologists, health

professionals, geologists and physicists, among others, who will be selected on the basis of their projects and the teaching body's capacity to help in constructing their study objectives. More than "molding" their spirit, the programmes seek to provide the conditions for developing a variety of questions within each of its interfaces.

Information: CE: leilacf@unicamp.br

## Master's Degree Programme in Natural Resources Management Santo Domingo, the Dominican Republic

This master's degree programme offers specialized professional training in the School of Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources of the Universidad Nacional Pedro Enríquez Ureña (UNPHU) and the graduate school of the University of the West Indies (UWI) in Cave Hill.

The programme is aimed at professionals in different

areas who are planning to carry out graduate studies and can, at the same time, develop themselves as specialists in natural resources management.

Information:  
<http://www.unphu.edu.do/unphu/academico/agro/mrn1.html>

# Activities Outside the region

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## Third Global Congress on Environmental Education Torino, Italy. 2-6 October 2005

The third of these congresses is of particular importance because it coincides with the inaugural year of the global Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (DESD) convened by the United Nations.

Its main objectives include analysing the role of environmental education, training and research for the development of an environmentally sustainable

democratic society; establishing a direct and continuous exchange among all countries that allow participatory democracy, egalitarian education and sustainable management of natural resources; and contributing to the world Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

Information: CE: info@3weec.org <http://www.3weec.org>

## Globalization, New Economy and Environment. Business and Social Challenges for Sustainable Development Saint Petersburg, Russia, 23-25 June 2005

The Seventh International Conference of the Russian Society for Ecological Economics, to be held in Saint Petersburg, Russia, will offer an opportunity to discuss economic and ecological advances that have generated environmentally sustainable policies. The interdisciplinary, international and intercultural nature of the conference will help to create links among the scientists of the world and across geographical and disciplinary borders. The

conference will place particular emphasis on environmental problems at the international and regional levels; the importance of protecting the Baltic region, the use of new methodological approaches of ecological economics, and the role of information sciences.

Information:  
<http://www.rsee.org>



# United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development

## Joint Statement by Heads of UNEP and UNESCO

We the Executive Heads of UNESCO and UNEP, Recognizing the important role played by education in poverty reduction, economic growth, improving the capacity of people to address environmental challenges and upholding social and cultural values in a diversified but global world;

Being challenged, and inspired, by the UN General Assembly's Resolution 57/254 declaring 2005 – 2014 as the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development;

Recognising that education for sustainable development is essential to achieving internationally agreed development goals such as the UN Millennium Development Goals, and the WSSD - Plan of Implementation;

Noting that the Decade is a unique avenue for stakeholders to make differentiated but concerted contributions to sustainable development by investing in future generations;

Welcoming the opportunities to further revitalize efforts to develop and strengthen public-private partnerships at the global, regional and national levels, as well as country-level inter-ministerial/ cross-sector collaboration;

Being desirous to ensure the success of the impact of the DESD as intended by the UN General Assembly; we hereby declare the commitment of our organisations to support and play their respective roles in the Decade;

Committed to implementing the strategies and activities outlined in the International Implementation Scheme,

taking into due consideration each other's respective mandates, resources and roles;

Hereby undertake to further catalyse stakeholder participation in supporting the development and implementation of ways and means of:

- Addressing the various needs and priorities of the different countries for education for sustainable development at all levels of formal and non-formal education;
- Fostering concrete activities and partnerships in promoting the ideals of education for sustainable development, by drawing upon initiatives and strategies operational at the regional and sub-regional levels;
- Nurturing sustainable lifestyles flexible to continuous learning with abilities to participate in policy and decision making at the country level;
- Increasing the dissemination and use of up-to-date authoritative scientific and technological knowledge including the use of information and communication technologies for the greater gain of the nations and reduce the digital divide;
- Promoting approaches that harmonise economic prosperity, environmental consciousness and social well-being including promoting gender equity in addressing national priorities and needs and international obligations;
- Equipping peoples and individuals with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes necessary to become productive, responsible citizens and active contributors to sustainable development citizenship in the ever-increasingly global world.

Don't forget to look at our bulletin on Recent News of the Environmental Training Network  
<http://www.pnuma.org/educamb/esp/noticias.htm>



## New Public Virtual Library of the Environmental Training Network

The Environmental Training Network (ETN) of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) has put into operation its new VIRTUAL LIBRARY where more than 30 titles published by the Network publishing programme can be found, in addition to some documents that are indispensable for environmental education.

THE ETN Virtual Library seeks to offer to a vast public of readers main published series, such as the series of basic textbooks for environmental training, its community capacity-building manuals and the books in the series on Latin American environmental thought; all of which are aimed at helping to build capacities and awareness that will mobilize the action of peoples and governments

of the region in constructing sustainable societies.

The use of this Virtual Library is completely free of charge. If you wish to enter you only have to fill out the online registration form and then type in your user name and password whenever you want to use it.

The books can be found by series, title or author and can be downloaded to a personal computer. The Virtual Library has also made a number of software programmes available to its users to make their consultations more efficient and dynamic.

Visit the site now:

<http://www.pnuma.org/educamb/esp/catalogo.htm>



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The logotype of *Environmental Training* combines two prehispanic Mexican seals and a character from the post-Conquers Codex Mendoza. The logotype embodies a meaning of communication and environment, based on the following symbols: the flower seal signifies vegetation and crops and is related to water as shown by the presence of wavy lines. The bird is associated with life in the air and finally, the character with the glyphs represents the communication of thought, traditions and teaching.

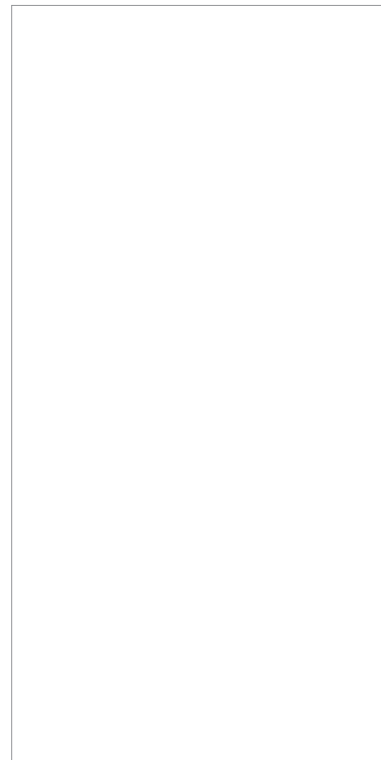


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