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### **Short Message from Nicola Bedlington**

Dear Friends,

For those of you who did not attend the AGM I would like to let you know that I will be leaving ENSI as Head of Secretariat in June to work for the European Patients' Forum in Brussels. Further details are outlined in the AGM overview. I would like to thank you all for your wonderful cooperation and support. I have learned a great deal from working with the ENSI 'family' and culture, and am proud to have been involved in your network.

I would also like to ask you for your continued support for my work and that of our executive committee during an important transitional phase over the summer to ensure that appropriate structures are set up to take ENSI and its work forward,

My warmest thanks and greetings  
Nicola

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### **1. Report back on the Annual General Meeting in Vienna, [Info](#) and [Action](#)**

A highly productive and lively ENSI AGM took place in Vienna last week. A full report will be annexed to an Internal Mailing in the near future but below you will find an overview of the highlights and main decisions. If you have any questions on these, please do not hesitate to contact the secretariat.

- Two new ENSI members were welcomed: Ton Remmers, representing the Netherlands, and Michel Ricard representing France. A special welcome was

given to Sun Kyung Lee from Korea who attended as an observer, and to Cam McKenzie and Daniella Tilbury who travelled from Australia to participate.

- Günther Pfaffenwimmer and Reiner Mathar were re-elected President and Treasurer respectively. In accordance with the Constitution, Christine Affolter will continue in her role as Vice President as Switzerland is hosting the secretariat.

- It was explained that Nicola Bedlington will leave ENSI at the beginning of June to become executive director of the European Patients' Forum but will continue to work on a 20% basis over the summer to the end of September. A strategy was agreed with regarding to the management of the secretariat beyond June, and the division of tasks across the membership. The executive committee were given a mandate to take this forward.

- The Annual Report and Financial Statement for 2005 were adopted. Please see annex I for a copy of the annual report, that will be made into an ENSI publication, that will annex the country reports.

- Each representative gave a summary of their written report and a brief overview of ESD developments in their respective countries.

A discussion took place on the EU Presidency Conference and it was agreed that the outcomes should be summarised and sent to Günther to feed in to the reporting back process.

It was agreed that Norway will coordinate a COMENIUS III project, and a 'canvas' for this work will be an interactive web base tool called sustain.no. Although it was stressed that the project would not be about ICT per se, it was agreed that in order to focus on COMENIUS III, the ENSI ICT-ESD project would be put on hold.

The planning process from now until the submission of the project application was agreed – please see annex II for further information.

Michel Ricard was thanked for his initiative in the framework of Grundwig, to provide opportunities for ENSI members to attend a major conference in Paris in June ( see point 3 of this internal mailing) . For those members wishing to utilise this opportunity, please contact your national LEONARDO / SOCRATES office.

Michela Mayer reported back on the progress made in the UNECE Indicators working group in which she represents Italy and informally ENSI.

Follow up work relating to the SEED ENSI transition was agreed, including further printing requirements.

The ENSI strategic plan, now available in DTP version was welcomed and Cam McKenzie thanked for his contribution. Any final amendments or comments on the design should be sent to Cam and the Secretariat by end of March.

On the issue of potential new ENSI members it was highlighted that the Czech Republic, the French Speaking Community in Belgium and Lithuania all expressed a strong interest in joining ENSI. The secretariat will follow up these contacts.

Daniella Tilbury gave an over-view of a new funding programme called FEAST, to enhance cooperation between Australian and European research, structured through the Seventh Framework Programme on Research and Development. For more information please contact the secretariat for a detailed paper on the initiative.

The ESD QC project group met and gave feedback on the two strands of the project (Analysis of articles on ESD as a concept, and shadowing the way that the Quality Criteria publication has been used in various countries). A project meeting will take place in Denmark in June to advance on this work.

Feedback was given on the CSCT project led by Willy Sleurs and the chronology of the project from now until its completion in September 2007. The importance of synergy between this project and the overall research objectives on ENSI was stressed.

A working group was set up to address the issue of ENSI acquiring a status that will enable the network to receive funding directly. This will be led by Michel Ricard and the construct of the interest group set up around the Mountains Convention will be explored

Cam McKenzie described the progress to date regarding ENSI regionalization and highlighted that a meeting involving Asian Pacific ESD representatives will take place just after the Perth Conference on ESD in Australia, to which the ENSI executive will also attend. Cam was requested to pass on ENSI greetings and thanks to Peter Woods for his commitment to this work.

A working group was set up on ' intercultural learning', acknowledging the work that has already been undertaken to date by Daniella Tilbury, and by Joahannes Tschapka in this area. It was highlighted that the conference in Australia would be a very good opportunity to nurture this work.

It was agreed that an ENSI 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary publication would be produced as an anthology of contributions from current and former members and friends of ENSI. Christine Affolter will lead on this work and further information on this will appear in the next internal mailing.

Lea Houtsonen described initiatives in Finland during the EU Finnish Presidency and welcomed ENSI's possible involvement in a conference on biodiversity with an ESD component. Lea will contact the secretariat in due course with more details.

A discussion took place on ENSI offering services, drawing on the current example of the reference list drawn up for the Swiss UNESCO Commission's website on ESD. It was agreed that this should be explored further in the working group on the status of ENSI.

Outside the formal meeting session, ENSI representatives had the opportunity to celebrate 20 years of ENSI at a traditional Viennese 'Heurigen', where Peter Posch said a few words on the origins of ENSI and anecdotes from the earlier years.

## **2. Report back on the EU Presidency Conference on ESD in Vienna, Info**

This three-day meeting convened 180 ministerial representatives from 37 countries (European Union, and neighbouring countries and some representatives from other UNECE countries). The Conference also welcomed ENSI representatives from Australia (Cam McKenzie and Daniella Tilbury) as observers. Ms Heidrun Strohmeier from the Austria Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Culture opened the meeting.

Key note speakers included EU representative Roger O'Keeffe, UNESCO ESD chair, Charles Hopkins, Karsten Schnack from the University of Copenhagen, and the plenary sessions also provided an overview of policy on ESD and key challenges from the current European Union Troika (UK, Austria and Finland as past, current and future EU presidencies)

The second day was devoted primarily to 6 different working groups addressing the contribution of global education to ESD, the contribution of Social Capital to Sustainable Development, Quality Criteria for ESD, skills and competencies for active participation in a sustainable economy, the possibilities and limits of formal and non-formal education to stimulate a critical look at life styles in relation to environmental education and health education and in relation to consumer education and media competencies.

The reports from these working groups will be fed into to a general report to be prepared by Kerstin Mayr and Michael Schratz. An initial overview of this report was given during the closing session, as well as reflections from the key note speakers.

The closing session was also an important opportunity for the EU Commission, represented by Odile Quintin, Director General of DG Education and Culture to outline the Commission's commitment to education for sustainable development and possible future actions in this area. An inspiring presentation was also given by Anton Dobart, Director General of the Austrian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture. A declaration was adopted by the meeting

inviting the European Union to play a central role in the implementation of the UNECE strategy of ESD.

The meeting was recognised as a significant milestone in the journey towards Education for Sustainable Development. From ENSI's perspective, there was strong representation of ENSI leaders during the meeting, and important dialogue took place regarding ENSI's continuing contribution to the Decade, and ESD policy development in its member countries. A key challenge will be to continue the momentum created by the conference- to ensure appropriate references in the conclusions of the Austrian Presidency to provide the impetus for advancing this work through subsequent EU Presidencies and through the European Commission. Our next focal point will be Finland where a major meeting on biodiversity will take place, in which ESD will be an important strand. ENSI will also have a presence at another key event under the Finnish Presidency on Equity in Education.

Particular thanks should be given to Günther Pfaffenwimmer, ENSI president who played a key role in the organisation of the meeting and facilitated the space and opportunity for ENSI to contribute in a meaningful way.

For a copy of the individual presentations made during the conference and working groups please visit the conference website [www.bmbwk.gv.at/bine-edd-esd](http://www.bmbwk.gv.at/bine-edd-esd) Relevant documents will be uploaded by the end of March. The final report will be completed during the early part of the summer.

### **3. Conference on ESD in France Info and Action**

A major UN DESD Conference will take place in Paris France in UNECO Headquarters from Wednesday 14 June - Friday 16 June 2006 on the theme ' Achievements and Proposals in the field of ESD'. It is organised by the French Committee on the Decade. Interpretation will be available into English. For more information, please go [www.decennie-france.org](http://www.decennie-france.org)

Michel Ricard, ENSI national coordinator who presides this Committee ,has made arrangements through Grundwig to cover the costs of ENSI participation. Please contact the secretariat if you would like further details of this opportunity.

### **4. Planet 2025 Learning Conference, Info**

The Planet 2025 learning conference, September 27 to 30,2006,Amsteram the Netherlands is a planned international conference that will bring together some 150 experts to examining how at the start of the UN DESD both informal and informal learning initiatives are preparing humanity for a successful transition to sustainability. Future scenarios of the world in 2025 will serve as a framework for the conference.

For further information, please contact Steven Lovink at  
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