The educational response to climate change:
Changing scale in ESD

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Challenge

- Education is the ultimate long-term solution to CC
- Urgency: elevate the educational response worldwide at the real scale of the CC challenge
- Large-scale investments into a transformative education: not just learning knowledge & facts but also skills to transform our societies towards sustainability
- Immediate priority: include education in climate negotiations at the same level as mitigation & adaptation
Bonn CC workshop at WESD, April 2009

• Rationale: we will achieve all this not just by asking but by offering a strong, concrete strategy
  - > Workshop goals: gain arguments, elaborate steps, identify contributors towards design & implementation of a large-scale UN-based action plan

• 90 participants / senior representatives from government ministries of education, environment and development, universities, intergovernmental organizations and civil society from all over the world

• 5-hours i.e. induction only! - but 28 pages full report
Key messages

• CC calls for a radical acceleration of ESD in all sectors of education worldwide.

• "CCE" : not a new field but a demultiplication of ESD due to the scale and time pressure of CC.

• As CC now reaches the top of the political agenda, the educational response to CC should elevate ESD among key political priorities.

• Workshop participants urge Unesco to drive a thorough design phase leading to full-scale implementation during the second half of the UN Decade on ESD
Bonn declaration

• "WESD participants request Unesco to (…)"
  - Highlight the relevance and importance of education and training at COP 15
  - Intensify efforts and initiatives to put climate change education higher on the international agenda, in the framework of the DESD, in the context of UNESCO’s strategy for action on climate change, and as a component of UN-wide action"
Further statements from Bonn

• The conceptual framework for ESD is mature and "we now need to put this knowledge into action"
• Despite huge progress in many countries ESD is still in its infancy
• ESD often confronts pupils with contradictions between values & knowledge and the daily school reality
• Mainstreaming ESD requires massive investments into human resources and buildings for which no large-scale funding instrument is existing so far
Vision

We need a global instrument to accelerate the training of future citizens to sustainability all over the world

(= The educational counterpart of IPCC !)
Big problem, huge investments

- **At the country/local level:**
  - buildings, local transport, food, waste etc. *(Ljubljana OECD conference 1-2 october)*
  - curriculum change: knowledge + skills, values, ethics
  - Teacher training *in all aspects of sustainability: climate/environment + global citizenship, health, peace, development etc.* *(needs & contexts highly variable from a country to another)*

- **At the global level:** network of high-level ESD training/r&d centers in all regions of the world, with the best minds and resources for developing tools, curriculua, training, networking etc.
A carbon tax for ESD?

- Emissions continue to rise... imagine a carbon tax where part of the income benefits education through direct CO2 offsetting in school communities + long-term society change by mainstreaming ESD

- The parties could:
  - create the national legal basis for directing a fixed percentage of a carbon tax toward education
  - share this tax income between (i) investments in national ESD plans and (ii) a contribution to a global ESD fund managed by Unesco
  - a long-term UN-based instrument to fuel the mutation of educational systems & practices
Next steps?

1) Formally and publicly engaging Unesco in changing the scale of ESD in response to the CC pressure

2) Design phase: strong leadership, strong methodology, daring and creative brains

3) Education at COP not as a "side event" but a core component!

4) Fixing in treaties: "Article 6" of Kyoto-2 + Copenhagen work programme for ESD?
The European scientific community is deeply concerned and ready to contribute. CarboSchools & the European Geosciences Union are ready to support - including with finances

Thank you for your attention  - philippe@carboschools.org