

How you can help

These blue boxes identify places for your input or assistance.

Please feel free to act on these suggestions or to step forward with your own offers of support or ideas for the OESDWG.

Forward ALL information to: Merebeth Switzer
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OESDWG

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fax: (705) 721-4999
(include: ATTN M. Switzer
fax cover page)

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THANK YOU!

Recently representatives from Ontario NGOs and government organizations started the process of creating a working group for Education for Sustainable Development. They took part in conference calls and provided input into the initial proposal to Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF) to obtain seed funding (see page 4).

In addition, they provided 15 letters of support from:

- ACER—Association for Canadian Educational Resources
- Bruce Murphy (teacher and COEO representative)
- CIELEP – Canadian Institute for Environmental Law and Policy
- Canadian Museum of Nature, Canadian Centre for Biodiversity
- Clean Air Champions
- Conservation Ontario

- Ducks Unlimited Canada
- Eastern Ontario Model Forests (EOMF)
- EEON – Environmental Education Ontario
- GAEL—Gesner & Associates Environmental Learning
- Ministry of Education
- Ministry of Natural Resources
- Ontario Nature
- Toronto Zoo
- Upper Canada College

We thank them for their support and look forward to everyone's continued efforts to expand this network and to implement the numerous tasks that will make this a successful undertaking.

CONTACT:
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“We look forward . . . to working with the Ontario ESDWG to educate all students and the population in general about concepts and issues related to the environment and sustainability.”

- Ministry of Education

COMMUNICATIONS

Effective communications are essential to ensure the active participation of the many groups interested in Education for Sustainable Development.

Over time we will develop a communications plan (and hopefully obtain support for doing so in both languages). The following are the steps that we have undertaken, so far:

- A volunteer is maintaining contact information and an

email list of interested participants. If you or others want to be added to this list, please contact m_switzer@ducks.ca

- LSF is revising their website to include “hot buttons” linking to the ESD Working Groups. Soon their site will include an Ontario section which will allow us to post current information about our efforts.
- We are developing other communications products, such as this update, which can be used to explain this

project and enlist the support and involvement of others.

- In future we will look into the need and feasibility of a listserv, e-newsletter or other communication tools .

How you can help

- Share information about the OESDWG with others.
- Communication ideas and offers of help are welcome! However this project is still in its early stages and we ask for your patience as we become operational.

DECADE OF EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (2005 –2014)

The United Nations [Decade of Education for Sustainable Development](#) is a complex and far-reaching undertaking. The environmental, social, and economic implications are enormous. The overall goal of the DESD is to integrate the principles, values, and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning. This will, in turn, encourage changes in behaviour leading to a more sustainable future in terms of environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society for present and future generations.

The U.N. General Assembly established broad goals for the decade, as well as important national level sub-goals which are to:

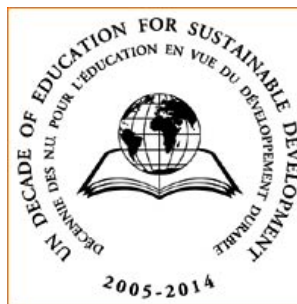
- Provide an opportunity for refining and promot-

ing the vision of and transition to sustainable development – through all forms of education, public awareness and training.

- Give an enhanced profile to the important role of education and learning in sustainable development.

The worldwide objectives for the DESD are to:

- facilitate networking, linkages, exchange and interaction among stakeholders in ESD;
- foster an increased quality of teaching and learning in education for sustainable development;
- help countries make progress towards and attain the millennium development goals through ESD efforts;



- provide countries with new opportunities to incorporate ESD into education reform efforts.

Further information on the decade and updates on progress from around the world can be found on the UNESCO website at:

<http://portal.unesco.org/education/en>

“... overall goal of the Decade for Education for Sustainable Development is to integrate the principles, values, and practices of sustainable development into all aspects of education and learning.”

- UNESCO website

REGIONAL CENTRES OF EXPERTISE IN ESD

The promotion of Regional Centres Of Expertise (RCE) as one of UNESCO's key activities to promote ESD globally. In May 2005, the United Nations University selected Toronto as the first North American Regional Centre, to provide expertise in support of education on issues of sustainable development.

The development of the Regional Centres of Excellence is in its early stages worldwide. However, the RCE are perceived as institutional spaces designed to strengthen the collaboration between educational, research institutions and other regional actors. While

the RCE might vary in size, function and focus, they are anticipated to satisfy four major gaps:

- between the challenges facing region and science and education;
- between the science, in a broadest sense of a word, and education;
- between formal and non-formal education;
- between different levels of education, ie. primary, secondary, and higher education.

RCE are intended to serve as a basis for curriculum development, educational capacity development and support for curriculum coor-

dination at different levels and facilitate links between science, research, educational institutions, policy makers, industrial organizations and other groups.

The City of Toronto is coordinating the Toronto RCE with the help of a network of sustainable development education partners. For details about the centre, visit www.toronto.ca/environment or call Environmental Services at 416-338-2857.

“In May 2005, the United Nations University selected Toronto as the first North American Regional Centre of Expertise in Education for Sustainable Development.”

ONTARIO ESD WORKING GROUP—GOALS AND VISION

PURPOSE:

To provide a focal point for all interested parties to become involved and work together collaboratively to create a culture of education for sustainable development in Ontario and to have a cumulative impact to create a similar culture nationwide.

The (OESDWG) will bring together leaders in formal, informal and non-formal education to support the coordination, development and implementation of ESD policies, curricula, materials/resources and teacher education.

This will be an integrated effort involving the many aspects of ESD (see sidebar). It will include a full range of On-

tario organizations involved in these activities including all levels of government (municipal, provincial and federal), non-government organizations, academia, business and so on. (See page 5 for a preliminary suggestions and for a request for input.)

- Build ESD within the formal school system as well as key publics including OESDWG working group and subcommittee members, municipal and business sector leaders and so on.
- Establish leadership and strategic collaborations among governments, education sector leaders, business, and community NGOs

in order to increase cohesion and leverage in creating a culture for ESD.

- Relay a sense of urgency and the latest science on critical sustainability issues such, climate change, HIV/Aids, poverty reduction, energy, sustainable cities, health and so on.
- Coordinate, facilitate connections and bring together stakeholders from the formal, non-formal and informal education sector for policy input, debate and planning to enhance delivery of ESD activities in support of the UN's Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT & EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

Sustainable development is subject to much discussion and there is considerable debate and a range of opinions over its actual application. Closely linked are similar discussions related to Education for Sustainable Development.

For the purposes of the OESDWG we will focus on three key areas: society, environment and economy, and select our priorities from those identified in the *United Nations Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) Framework*.

Socio-Cultural

- human rights
- peace & human security
- justice
- gender equality
- cultural diversity & intercultural understanding
- community and culture
- health
- HIV/AIDS
- governance
- demographics
- equity and rights

Environmental

- natural resources (water, energy, agriculture, biodiversity and habitat conservation, fish, forests, air)
- climate change
- rural transformation
- sustainable urbanization
- disaster prevention and mitigation

Economic

- poverty reduction
- corporate responsibility & accountability
- market economy
- energy efficiency & conservation
- consumption & waste management
- economic performance
- agricultural viability
- resource - mining, forestry, hydro, fisheries
- employment
- education

PUTTING ONTARIO . . . AND THE NEED FOR AN ESD WORKING GROUP INTO PERSPECTIVE

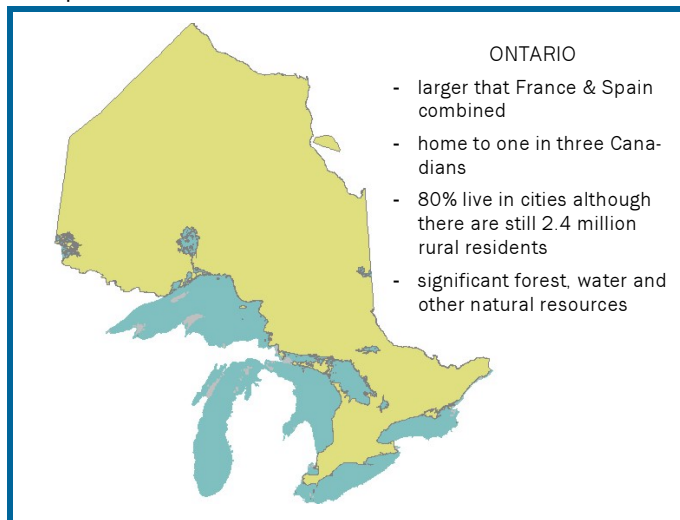
Ontario is challenged by its relatively large population (over 12 million people representing 1/3 of Canada's population) and its geographic size (covering more than one million square kilometres - an area larger than France and Spain combined.)

With over 80% of its population living in cities, there is a significant need to address urban issues relating to ESD as well as to recognize the huge cultural diversity of these populations.

Balancing this is the recognition of the size of province's rural population of more 2.4 million people, and the significance of Ontario's rural lands and natural resources. Ontario contains over half of Canada's highest quality (Class 1) agricultural land and its 56,000 farms account for almost one-quarter of all farm

revenue in Canada. Similarly, Ontario contains 17% of Canada's forests which represents 2% of the world's forests and its over one-quarter million lakes and countless rivers and streams hold a significant amount of the world's freshwater. These very factors and their accompanying challenges, also point to the incredible

need to continue to support the development of a culture of education for sustainable development across all sectors within the province and the significant impact that the creation of an Education for Sustainable Development Working Group would play, not only in Ontario but in Canada as a whole.



Year 1 Deliverables

After meeting with LSF we have suggested the following Year 1 deliverables:

- establishment of the Ontario ESD Working Group
- inventory of ESD activities and groups in Ontario
- identification of appropriate indicators (based on those identified by UNESCO Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.)
- creation of a vision of where we want to be including a gap analysis—what's happening? what needs to be done? what support is needed?
- creation of a plan and structure for the operation of the OESDWG including the creation of subcommittees (these subcommittees are seen as the place

where much of the “work” and action takes place

- identify representative for the National Expert Council.)

It is important to recognize that the OESDWG is a coordinating and networking body designed to help create a “whole that is greater than its parts.”

There are hundreds of groups working on important activities which relate to ESD and their efforts are essential for moving ESD ahead in Ontario.

How you can help

- Are these the right deliverables for Year One? Are there others we should consider?

Deadline: March 31, 2006

- **ONTARIO ESD ACTIVITIES.** There are many groups and inventories already in existence but we will need to identify these, and ESD groups and activities as part of our ESD inventory. We will not be able to do the intake on this information until we are fully operational. However please start to identify these and be prepared to forward this when requested.
- LSF is creating a national, peer-reviewed inventory of quality ESD classroom resources. This will be limited to the formal education system. Please visit their website for details and to add additional resources: www.lsf-lst.ca

“... OESDWG is a coordinating and networking body designed to help create a “whole that is greater than its parts.”

LEARNING FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Founded in 1991 by a diverse group of youth, educators, business leaders, government and community members, Learning for a Sustainable Future (LSF)/ L'éducation au service de la Terre (LST) is a non-profit Canadian organization that was created to implement sustainable development education (SDE) into Canada's education system.

LSF's goal is to work together with educators, students, parents, government, community and business to integrate the concepts and principles of sustainable development into education policy, school curricula, teacher education and lifelong learning across Canada!

Through education, LSF envisions citizens acquiring the knowledge, skills and values needed to contribute to the development of a socially, environmentally, and economically sustainable society. Not only for today, but for fu-

ture generations to come.

Since its inception LSF has been involved in many cutting edge initiatives relating to ESD. Some of our current activities include:

- Championing activities in support of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.
- Establishing Provincial/Territorial Working Groups as well as a National Education for Sustainable Development Expert Council.
- Undertaking a Canadian Sustainability Curriculum Review Initiative
- Creating a database for Canadian teachers to access reviewed, curriculum-aligned supplementary resources, that are tied to ESD themes.
- Undertaking Canadian research to investigate the impact of sustainable development education on student learning.
- Providing Sustainable Development Education policy input to the Council of Ministers of Education, Ministries/Departments of Education, District Education Authorities/District Education Councils/School Boards, Western Canadian Protocol, Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation, Canadian Teachers' Federation, regional teachers' federations, Provincial Specialists Associations, Faculties of Education, and teachers' colleges.
- LSF, the Schulich School of Business, the Sustainable Enterprise Academy and York University—Faculty of Education are partnering with the Institute for Research and Innovation in Sustainability (IRIS) to delivery the Sustainable Education Academy Summit for senior education administrators.

For further information visit our website at: www.lsf-lst.ca

Core Working Group

The initial core OESDWG will be limited to 20–25 participants who in turn will be responsible for outreach, not only within their own organizations but within their networks. Most of these individuals will likely have a role on one or more Subcommittees where much of the actual work will be taking place.

OESDWG members will identify these networks and establish who will be the key contact with each, in order to avoid duplication and to maximize the number of organizations involved and aware of the OESDWG initiative.

The following are some of the groups identified in our original proposal and are similar to those taking part in the pilot project Manitoba ESD Working Group:

Steering Committee – 3 ex officio members

Provincial Government (6 representatives ?)

There is a need for a broad understanding of ESD across many ministries. Of particular initial interest will be ministries and staff who are already involved in the development of learning resources or other forms of public education, for example with the following Ministries:

- Education (including staff responsible for curriculum and for ESD activities (K-12))
- Training, Colleges and Universities
- Research and Innovation
- Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs
- Natural Resources
- Environment
- Health
- Economic Development and Trade
- Public Infrastructure Renewal
- Municipal Affairs and Housing
- Ontario Woman’s Directorate
- Youth and Children’s Services

Other Governments (2 representatives?)

- Municipal Government - civic

- environmental committee
- Association of Municipalities of Ontario
- First Nation Partnership
- Environmental Commissioner

Local Federal government or International representatives

- Environment Canada and other departments

Formal education sector (K-12 and post-secondary) – (6 representatives?)

- K-12
- School division administrators, principals, trustees
- Teaching Associations
- Parent advisory groups, school council representatives
- Youth representatives, adult learning representatives
- Post-secondary
- Staff from within Faculties of Education, Agriculture, Environment, Forestry and Economic

Non-formal and informal education sector (6 representatives?)

- NGOs
- Industry
- Faith-based organizations
- Media
- Public / youth group organizations
- Multicultural/new Canadian
- Cultural or related institutions including museums, zoos, aquariums and so on.
- Traditional knowledge

Subcommittees

Subcommittees are an important opportunity to take action and to create impacts in specific areas or around certain aspects of ESD.

Groups with similar interests may suggest the formation of a subcommittee to address their own priorities or the OESDWG may identify a specific need for a subcommittee.

A member of the core Ontario ESD Working Group will normally be the Chair of any sub-

committee, although the membership will be drawn from outside groups and will help to expand participation in ESD in general and in the OESDWG specifically.

THE NEXT STEPS

- Compile list of potential participants for core OESDWG
- Create criteria for membership in the OESDWG
- Establish a small expert committee to review list of potential partners
- Identify members to be invited to join the OESDWG and issue invitations.
- Establish date for first meeting of Working Group.

How you can help

DEADLINE: March 31, 2006

- Identify groups or individuals that might be key players in the OESDWG.
- Recommend individuals for the Expert Committee who will review these suggestions and recommend the final composition of the OESDWG.
- If you have a specific interest (education policy, biodiversity, youth involvement, etc.) that you think should be the focus of a subcommittee, please identify this. Feel free to suggest individuals and groups that would work in this subcommittee, draft key points for a Terms of Reference and suggest a representative from this group to be on the Core Working Group or outline how it would relate to the Core group.

ROLES and RESPONSIBILITIES

The proposal to LSF contains preliminary details around the roles and responsibilities of the members of the core OESDWG and the subcommittees. This information will be posted on the Ontario section of their website.

The roles and responsibilities will be refined and presented to invited committee members.

How you can help

Please provide related comments or feedback.

DEADLINE: April 21, 2006

“Members must come with a desire and ability to influence change. The core working group is limited in size so participants should be able to speak for more than themselves and they must be willing to network and to act as an information conduit to other interested groups.”

April 2006						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					March 31	1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	Identify OESDWG members; hire coordinator			22	
23	24					29
30						

May 2006						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
	1	Issue invitations to OESDWG			5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31			

June 2006						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	Planning meeting OESDWG			17	
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

July 2006						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	Coordinator - preparation for fall meetings and startup of committees; begin work re: ESD inventory; communications and other plans		
16	17	18	19	23	24	25
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					

August 2006						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31		

September 2006						
SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	First regular meeting of OSEWG; subcommittees startup			16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

WORK PLAN

- Current and on-going activities include fundraising, enlisting support for project
- Week of March 13 - Submission of Work Plan, signing of agreement with LSF
- March 31—Deadline for submitting suggestions for members of core Ontario ESD Working Group and expert Selection Committee to review these suggestions.
- April
 - meeting of Selection Committee to review submissions and select members for core Ontario ESD Working Group
 - recruiting and hiring of OESDWG coordinator
- May—issue invitations to join OESDWG
- June— First meeting of the core OESDWG; approval of Terms of Reference; planning for the creation of initial subcommittees
- Summer - coordinator will organize and schedule meetings of core group and subcommittees; begin work to create intake and database systems for ESD Inventory; begin development of communications and other plans
- September 2006—2007—Regular meetings of core OESDWG and subcommittees
- September 2007 - Review of progress; revise priorities and goals; provide opportunity or forum to showcase “best practices” (I.e. a plan for a province wide consultation based on priorities and goals set out by the OESDWG.)
- October 2007—June 2008—Regular meetings of OESDWG including determining the best method to show “best practices” and enlist public involvement.
- Continuation of OESDWG dependent on funding and support.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Merebeth Switzer has agreed to continue to act as a temporary coordinator until a coordinator takes over and the project moves into a more operational phase.

Please forward all information and responses to our requests to:

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Learning for a Sustainable Future

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YOUR SUPPORT . . . This success of this initiative will come from the commitment and work of many individuals and organizations who are already making excellent strides in educating in the diverse areas that fall under the umbrella of Education for Sustainable Development. We have asked for your help in several places within this document and appreciate your feedback. However, we also welcome all forms of support and look forward to hearing from you c/o m_switzer@ducks.ca - Thank you!