

Abstract

L'essentiel

L'intégrale

## Education for Sustainable Development

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Since the seventies, the French curriculum has gone through three stages in environmental education: Environmental education (EE), the pioneer, [Environmental education for sustainable development](#) (EESD) in 2004, then in 2007 [Education for Sustainable Development](#) (ESD). The texts encourage us "to include education for sustainable development more broadly in teaching curricula, to multiply the number of global ESD initiatives in schools; to train teachers and all staff involved in this form of education".

The polysemy of the vocabulary relating to environmental education shows the variety of the values at stake. Giving up the idea of a single definition makes it possible to teach the three most current stances "Green Growth", "sustainable society" and "sobriety". Schools favour frameworks for action: School Agenda 21, which implements sustainable development at regional level, the [Eco-Schools](#) programme and the global project Sustainable Schools. Agricultural education, a pioneer of sustainable development in France, is particularly committed. The success of ESD involves the convergence between formal education and non-formal education.

To make sure that ESD becomes more widespread, teacher training is paramount. Training must take account of the complexity of ESD: the variety of approaches and the values at stake require appropriate training (history of science, philosophy, etc.). Some restructuring of disciplines must also be planned to help with the change of professional identity required from teachers.

It is necessary to learn how to teach complex thought and to train people in thinking about controversial issues. The reform of science teaching must also be pursued, because scientific and technological education provides a relevant entry point for ESD and the educational trend Science and technology studies is very closely related to the concerns of ESD. The latter would do well to open up to all the disciplines, to make over existing practices and to invent new co-disciplinary approaches.

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This document is a brief abstract of the Dossier d'actualité.

You can find the French unabridged version on our website:

<http://www.inrp.fr/vst>, under the item "Dossiers d'actualité".

### Some benchmarks

- In France, 600 elementary schools, nearly 250 *collèges* and 150 *lycées* have engaged in an Eco-Schools initiative since autumn 2009;
- 6 disciplines are effectively involved in ESD: life and earth science; technology; economic and social sciences; geography; civic education; civic, legal and social education;
- 2 disciplines provide methods: mathematics and French;
- The other disciplines "could contribute to ESD, but are only slightly involved" (Vergnolle Mainar, 2009).

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