

**The Interdisciplinary Conference on the Evolution of World Order - EWOC
and Science for Peace Round Table Video Conference on the
"Implementation of Global Sustainability Education"**

October 13th, 2004

ISLE : Informal Sustainability Learning Environments in Schools for Global Sustainability Education

Introduction:

This paper deals with the necessity for installing informal learning environments in schools, which enable youth for individual and lifelong "Global Sustainability Learning".

Why differentiate between Education and ISLEs for self-guided learning?

Successful social participation and introduction of change are rather a result of a lifelong process of learning than of formal education. This is definitely the fact for the outstanding young people making visible or invisible headlines in our times.

Biographies of successful, engaged young people, leaders and social entrepreneurs unveil a continuous process of self-guided interdisciplinary learning, projecteering and multiple encounters with other active, inspired people. From their example we can deduct, that the foundation of meaningful societal participation and a change of lifestyle are: a founded awareness of injustice and wrongness, a concrete vision of a better state of affairs (a utopia), hope, courage, experience of success, best practice models and strategies, contacts, mentors, community, communication structures, resources (www.Yesworld.org, www.Takingitglobal.org, www.ryanswell.org).

Fundamental aspects of youth participation in cocreating society - awareness, knowledge, knowhow, thinking different, introduction of change, interdisciplinary projecteering - are NOT forged in school, or by a closed, time-limited educational process. They grow and evolve more from a permanent process of self-guided learning and experience in interdisciplinary environments. However, they can be squashed, or inspired and kindled!

As a consequence, 21st Century schools must introduce, inspire and qualify the young generation to sustainability through GSE, and offer access to ISLEs in school, for nurturing self-guided learning, self-guided qualification, self-organised projecteering and social entrepreneurship.

PART 1: The Difference between GSE and ISLEs

AIM of GSE:

A holistic curriculum for teachers for introducing students to sustainability matters, to community-building and self-organisation of societal participation in advancing societies towards sustainability. Which means: qualification for the usage of ISLEs.

AIM of ISLEs:

Develop an omnidisciplinary general overview, orientation and understanding of oneself and societies before the background of sustainability and globalisation. Qualify oneself for effective, meaningful and significant participation in advancing societies towards global sustainability.

Definition of GSE & ISLEs:

GSE is a formal group-process inside the class-room, initiated by either educators or learners, as an introduction to interdisciplinary sustainability. It is closed in result-orientation and time-frame, has limits to creative and social evolvement. It is short term due to curriculum frameworks. It opens access to and inspires self-guided ISLE usage. GSE activities involve ISLE activities to a different degree.

ISLEs nurture and serve an informal, individual process outside the class-room, self-guided, at individual pace and interest, nurturing interdisciplinary overview and understanding, finally leading towards collaborative projecteering and effective social participation. ISLEs are open in (flexible) result-orientation and time-frame (lifelong). ISLEs have no limits to creative and social evolvement. ISLEs are for long-term, life-long learning.

PART 2: Examples of ISLE Informal Sustainability Learning Environments for Schools:

PNYV Positive News Board / Online Magazine for Youth Leadership and Changemakin

Highlights: INSPIRATION, HOPE, CONFIDENCE, YOUTH LEADERSHIP, GLOBAL COMMUNITY, GLOBAL UNITY IN DIVERSITY, INTERGENERATIONAL, PARTICIPATION, VIRTUAL SPACE

Outstanding characteristic: "Perfect for inducing the spirit of youth sustainability participation in schools, and opening access to global horizons."

GSE/ISLE:

Can be used for GSE class-room activities for media, sustainability, youth participation. Evolves its power in class-development of a local / regional online+print edition. Maximum power lies in continuous self-study of PNYV online, then contribution and participation as editor, finally, in self-organised development of a local / regional online+print edition as a long-term student led project, realised in close networking and content cooperation with regional positive sustainability actors.

Evolution stages: inspiration and information, contribution in research and editing, development of a local edition, networking with other schools and regional partners for a regional edition, featured as a regional subsection in PNYV global network, and publishable as a local print version.

Time for installation: 15 minutes PDF-Download bi-weekly

Information: www.pnyv.org

ISPG International School Peace Gardens

Highlights: PEACE, ECOLOGY, LOCAL PEACEMAKING, COMMUNITY-BUILDING, ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION, PRACTICAL PROJECTEERING, REAL SPACE

Outstanding characteristic: "Perfect for establishing a permanent space, atmosphere and awareness for GSE environment in schools, initiating local community-building and co-projecteering."

GSE/ISLE: Is best suited for whole-school introduction and inspiration for the universal theme of sustainability, for ensuing daily usage in self-guided class-involvement. Maximum power of this "breathing" space lies in long-term inspiration for school and interdisciplinary regional community-involvement, orchestrated in cooperation of teachers, learners, school boards and community. Unfolds additional powers in self-guided activities and projects by project groups or classes, like community-building and restoring the local "global" commons.

Evolution stages: Collective design of the Garden, ceremony, use for class-activities, environment for self-reflection, conflict-resolution, local sustainability projecteering,

Time for installation: several weeks to several years, involves the entire school community

Information: www.ihtec.org

WFS World Future School, a global virtual tidal wave sustainability campus

Highlights: GLOBAL, OMNIDISCIPLINARY, FULL SPECTRUM OF SUSTAINABILITY, THEORY AND PRACTICE, HOLISTIC SCIENCES, OVERVIEW, PORTAL, PARTICIPATION

Outstanding characteristics: "Is the Missing Link between learners and the pacemaking structures of the worldwide sustainability movement, offering access to tidal wave theoretical knowledge and innumerable bridges for joining it for practical changemaking."

GSE/ISLE: Can be used in GSE class-room activities. Evolves its GSE power as a global, public stage for class-contributions: project display, research and publication of items (best practices in technology etc.). Evolves its ISLE power in self-guided study and participation as co-editors, finally as a global bridge towards detecting one's individual area of social engagement.

Evolution stages: Use in GSE as an introduction to the global movement for sustainability. Study in class at individual pace (on-line or off-line), then share the findings. Apply lesson plans, contribute own project results to different thematic areas (LearnScapes), which will then serve as student-created learning resource for other WFS visitors. Unfolds maximum power as a self-guided ISLE, youth exploring the multifaceted LearnScapes for developing interdisciplinary overview and understanding, finally making their individual choice for personal involvement or specialisation.

Time for installation: Imagine visiting a real exposition for changemaking. A preliminary exploration by the responsible (teacher) for a general WFS overview is recommended (1-4 hours). Access for students is easiest via the Youth Camp or Exposition Ground. Students' minimum exploration time of the WFS should come up to a day-excursion (4 to 8 hours) - just like in normal class-room.

Information: www.worldfutureschool.org