INTRODUCTION

This is a summary report for the organizers and participants of the ESD-NET Training Workshop, held under the auspices of APEID-UNESCO and Chulalongkorn University, Bangkok Thailand from August 21 – 25th 2007. It was my task to analyse the responses given by the participants to the workshop, who came from thirteen countries in the Asian region. The participants filled in a detailed set of Guide Questions(see Appendix ?), sent out by APEID-UNESCO approximately a month before the workshop starting date.

The participants represented thirteen countries, of which eleven represented TEIs from eleven National Teacher Education Training Institutes. The remaining two institutions represented two SEAMEO Regional Bodies engaged in furthering Teacher Development. These were INNOTECH sited in Manila, and RECSAM in Penang, Malaysia. Some countries were able to send more than one participant, and in the case of Malaysia, two National TEIs were present at the workshop (See Appendix ? for the list of Institutions and participants etc)

PREPARATION FOR THE CURRICULUM ANALYSIS

The Guide Questions were drawn up by two members from the Resource Team, and the Workshop Coordinator Professor Molly Lee. It went through several drafts before a final copy was sent to each participant, as well as members of the Resource Team. The main objective of the Guide Questions was to establish the present status of ESD within the Training Curriculum of the TEIs and Regional Institutes. It also explored issues and problems related to the teaching and learning of ESD for staff, and students in training. All institutions submitted their responses to the Guide Questions before the start of the workshop. Each institution then verbally reported their reactions to Three Summary Guiding Questions(See Appendix ?) on the first day of the Workshop. The three questions were extracted from the main body of Guide Questions. The summary questions were drawn up to enable the institutional representatives to deliver a brief report to a plenary session.
The Guide Questions consisted of eight sections, (i) An Introduction, (ii) Background Information about the researchers and institution together with their perception of ESD. (iii) Aims and Objectives (iv) Approach (v) Content (vi) Pedagogy and Assessment (vii) Resources (viii) Outcomes. The account that follows; is a **selective analysis** of the more pressing and relevant issues surrounding the perceptions and concerns of the respondents.

**THE ANALYSIS**

Where respondents were asked to answer yes or no to questions, a % analysis was possible, (although the number of submissions by respondents is small at 14). Where questions required more detailed and qualitative attitudinal responses, simple rating scales were devised for those items, ranging from 1-3, 1-4, 1-5. What follows will be a mainly verbal analysis with some empirical data interpolated where necessary.

**Understanding ESD**

The question relating to this question was answered by all respondents and varied from a few words to a paragraph on what they thought ESD was all about. The role of education in taking action to make people aware of climate change, future of the planet, conserving natural resources, reducing pollution, were the most quoted references to the meaning and urgency of ESD. Awareness followed by appropriate action was expressed by a few participants.

**Policy/ national and institutional programmes for ESD**

Just over half of the respondents reported they had some form of ESD in their existing training curricula, but only one institution had a “stand alone” course on ESD. Few respondents were aware of any national policy on ESD in their countries. Just over a quarter of respondents stated there were plans afoot for infusing ESD topics into existing courses.
Aims and Objectives

Over half the respondents tended to give the Aims and Objectives of their Training Curriculum per se and ignore the ESD context in which the questions was phrased. However, those that did state the ESD related context to their Aims, emphasized the awareness and implementation of applying ESD ideas and practice into teacher training.

Approach

Few institutions either were aware of what a “Whole School Approach was, or if they knew about it, did not use it. Over a quarter of respondents mentioned there was some form of extra school/college liaison with community and parents, but in the main this was not a feature of their institutions’ mission. Most institutions did not have mission statements relating to ESD.

The opportunities for research and ESD related topics varied considerably from simple classroom “finding out” exercises to more substantial inquiries as part of a final award in the form of a degree/Diploma etc. Staff research into ESD was at a minimum from what the respondents reported.

Most institutions had opportunities for staff development as part of in service education, the Regional Institutions were clearly mostly concerned with this area, but it seems ESD was not as yet a priority for the staff who were running current course. In all, the picture is mixed with few institutions offering either ESD as an infusion and none offering teacher educator training in ESD.

Content

There was only one institution that offered ESD as “stand alone” courses as part of their Teacher Education Curriculum. The other institutions offered a variety of options ranging from a few topics such as pollution, population, aspects of global and climate change; to integrated courses which had a loose form of integration, in which areas such biodiversity, water usage, energy conservation and health problems eg HIV Aids, nutrition were
included. Under a quarter of institutions reported they had some form of a deeper infused ESD into their training curricula.

Over half (58%) of the respondents reported that cross disciplinary approaches involving biological sciences, environmental science, geography, social sciences and physical sciences were in operation. However, the impression received was that this was not a normative situation, due the difficulties arising from organizing such cross disciplinary teaching and organisational barriers, especially the pre-dominance of a mono disciplinary culture which is strongly rooted in most TEIs. The issue of lack of staff expertise in teaching and even “know how” about ESD was also a factor that was mentioned under this section.

It appears that only science and some social science subjects taught at the various TEIs represented at the workshop addressed ESD notions and practices. These are biology, forestry, geography, pollution studies, genetics, biotechnology, environmental science, history and philosophy of science, eco-philosophy and some education courses. There was clearly a yawning gap in the absence from the humanities and art/design courses.

**Pedagogy and Assessment**

The responses from the various TEIs and regional Institutes fell into two categories, those which used between 1-5 different modes of delivery, and those which employed more than 5 forms. Lecture, lecture/discussion methods were the most widely used, but small group work, field studies, simulation, role play and other more heuristic forms were also used in some institutions. The use of audio visual aids, tapes, computer assisted leaning as well as in some cases, the use of the internet were also mentioned.

The forms of assessment also followed a similar trend to that of pedagogy in that two categories emerged. The first category reported they used from 1-5 forms of assessment, and the second category employed over 5. The maximum being 8 forms. Most respondents reported the use of pencil-paper tests, final written examinations, some portfolio work, practical files, diaries, personal journals and class quizzes. In some instances, the practicum also included classroom observation and discussion about ESD topic which appeared in particular lessons. Most respondents reported they used a mix of
assessments (78%), in the course of training vis a vis ESD and other subjects areas.

Resources

There appeared to be a wide array of resources used in the teaching of ESD, ranging from texts, posters, film, video and audio materials, models and home made kits (in a few instances only). However, there was an overall demand for more access to better quality teaching and learning materials which addressed ESD topics. Few institutions seemed to actually develop their own ESD resources, and mention was made that this was also a need for the future. Presumably more in-country in-service workshops are required to meet such a need?

Expected Outcomes

The respondents reported a number of key outcomes and expectations from establishing ESD as part of a training curriculum. These included improving population education, linking Environmental Education more effectively with ESD, women empowerment, more ESD awareness followed by action, promoting better ESD values, more inclusion of ESD into the main Training Curriculum, better links with TE Institutions and NGOs, Making teachers change agents vis a vis ESD, creation of Environmental Societies and better transcultural understanding.

The principal barriers for introducing ESD into Training Curricula included the following: lack of staff expertise, no job opportunities for staff and maybe students, few ESD experts in the national context at present, lecturing staff still at the novice stage, threats to staff comfort zones, lack of funding, ESD not an examination subject at present, poor resources both physical and human, and finally tedious and inefficient institutional course validation procedures.

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