



Education for Sustainable Development: Stakeholder Vision and Role of the Media

**National Consultation
Thursday 26th November 2009
Coach House, Dublin Castle**

Summary of Proceedings

The Regional Centre for Expertise (<http://paulo.ul.ie/rce-ireland/index.html>) and Comhar (<http://www.comharsdc.ie>) organised an event on Education for Sustainable Development on Thursday 26th November 2009 in the Coach House, Dublin Castle. Education for Sustainable Development¹ (ESD) is fundamentally about values, with respect at the centre: respect for others, including those of present and future generations; for difference and diversity; for the environment and for the earth.

The event consisted of two sessions. The morning session focused on the draft Stakeholder Vision for ESD. A draft national strategy for ESD has been prepared but has not yet been published (the Department of Education and Science has the overall coordinating role). In the meantime, publication of a Stakeholder Vision on ESD is an important step in advancing a shared understanding of ESD.

A panel discussion on the role of the media in sustainable development took place in the afternoon and participants were invited to put forward questions for the panel. Participants were also encouraged to view the projects supported by Comhar SDC's Media Fund.

The aim of the proceedings is to draw on all of the opinions and points made at the conference into a succinct document. Individual points, therefore, do not necessarily reflect the views of Comhar SDC, the Regional Centre for Expertise (RCE) or any of the participants. The final document has not gone through an agreement process.

¹ Education for Sustainable Development is referred to as ESD throughout the document.

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Session 1- Vision for Education for Sustainable Development

Noel Casserly, Director of Comhar and a member of RCE steering group welcomed everyone to the event and outlined objectives of the day.

Gavin Harte presented ESD in action. Gavin offers learning tools, workshops and lectures to explain sustainable development for business, educational institutions and the general public. He presented on climate change through an interactive presentation, which encourages people to engage with the issue. Gavin has been presenting to a wide range of organisations and recently presented to third level students with support from Comhar and the EPA.

Ann Finlayson works with the UK Sustainable Development Commission and is Director of the charity Sustainability and Environmental Education, otherwise known as SEEd. Ann gave an active and entertaining talk; some of the main points are summarised below.

- There are different understandings of learning. One in five UK students is miserable in the current system; it is not working. We are in denial about what is happening to young people.
- Education is not about pouring information into someone's brain. We need to teach in new ways that allow more self-learning and active learning. We need to teach skills not just knowledge. We also need to deal with some of the softer issues, for example the role of self esteem. Education is not just about content and knowledge. It is a way of thinking that allows people to make decisions and choices.
- Education is not just about children. Informal and life long education are extremely important.
- People remember stories. We are wired for narratives.
- We are social beings, so it makes sense that we should learn in groups.
- Development education and environmental education should come together under sustainable development.
- There is a need to change the discourse and be honest with people about the severity of problems, while at the same time offering solutions. Children are sick of hearing about climate change. They do not want to be scared. We need to empower people and make sure they know what they can do. At the same time, we need to be honest. Changing a light bulb isn't going to make our problems go away; if people see things are not working, they are likely to get disheartened.
- Action research plays a major role in teacher training.



Elaine Nevin presenting on the Stakeholder Vision for Education for Sustainable Development.

Elaine Nevin, Director of Eco-Unesco and a member of the RCE, made a presentation on the draft Stakeholder Vision for ESD.

The Vision outlines where the education system in Ireland needs to move to teach the concepts of sustainable development in an open and democratic way.

ESD is not just about teaching material, but is a method of teaching which encourages action based learning and skills development. The draft Vision identifies – with reference to internationally agreed strategies and frameworks – ESD challenges for the next five years.

The four key elements of the draft Vision are as follows:

1. Embed ESD at every level of the education system
2. Promote public awareness of ESD, which is designed to provide the knowledge, skills and values to encourage individuals, businesses and organisations to take action in support of a sustainable and just society, care for the environment, and responsible global citizenship.
3. Promote capacity-building in support of ESD.
4. Promote high standards of environmental management in public institutions.

This is a voluntary Vision; the actions that it recommends are not binding on the groups and organisations that endorse the Vision. However, what this document seeks to do is to provide an overview of the actions necessary for the development of an effective ESD strategy.

The draft Stakeholder Vision for education for sustainable development is available at: http://www.comharsdc.ie/files/2009_ESDVision_pap.pdf.

Discussion on the Draft ESD Vision



A breakout group discussing the draft Stakeholder Vision.

Michael Ewing, co-ordinator of the Environmental Pillar of Social Partnership, moderated the discussion which was delivered a world café style. **Niamh Kirwan**, Policy Analyst, Comhar SDC was the rapporteur.

The discussion produced very valuable feedback relevant to the draft Vision as well as to the draft national strategy on ESD. There was some discussion on whether the Vision is the place for specific targets, or if this is more the role of a strategy. Where some suggestions on the draft Vision might be more appropriate to the draft Strategy, these are identified as such. The main points from the discussion are summarised below.

The Vision

- In general, the feedback on the Vision was positive and the current draft Vision was seen as a good starting point.
- The Vision should be exciting and should inspire people.
- There are different strands within ESD and some are more important than others. There is a need to stress these and prioritise important strands, such as climate change.
- ESD is not just about knowledge, but about care. The Vision should emphasise the ethic of care and social responsibility.
- The objectives were seen as relevant and ambitious, which they need to be. We can aspire to the objectives but there needs to be tangible measures. There needs to be specific actions in the form of SMART targets, but these do not need to be too prescriptive. The Vision should also include stronger targets for the tertiary and professional sectors and should also include non-formal education.

- The Vision should allow us to assess where we are in 2020. We need to be producing 30% less emissions, be more energy secure, be more self sufficient in food production and be more food secure, we need to have viable job creation opportunities and have improved quality of life.
- There are concerns that the actions for government will not be carried through. The Vision should have a timeline and specific time frames to show where we will be in x years time [for the Strategy].
- There is no analysis of what should be taught [for the Strategy].
- The Vision should show more examples of actions and how ESD could be integrated into the education system [for the Strategy].
- The Vision needs to focus on public policy in the broadest sense. There does need to be wider community involvement. However, at the same time, we do need a formal strategy in order to engage with wider groups and move beyond NGOs.
- There should be an interactive Vision online that individuals and groups can adjust for themselves.
- The focus needs to be on action learning.
- The reference to FETAC is not strong enough. It operates on all levels and has some very innovative programmes and is therefore a key target.
- The NESC document on well-being can be used as a basis for the Vision.

The National Strategy

- There is a danger that the strategy will not do anything. The strategy needs to have timelines and targets and should coincide with UNESCO reporting dates. SMART targets should be set based on tangible measures and specific actions. The Strategy should outline the deliverables, who is responsible for what and specify costs.
- There needs to be an appropriate scoring and monitoring system, Comhar or Eco-Unesco could be in a position to assist in this?
- The plan should be objective based and relate to the key needs in the education system.
- There needs to be bigger buy in from Government and improved interdepartmental co-ordination on the strategy.

- The people in government responsible for creating and rolling out a strategy for ESD must themselves have significant qualifications in sustainable development or significant experience and understanding of sustainable development.
- There needs to be targeted policies within each sector.
- All government policy should be based on sustainable development principles, not just ESD.
- The implementation of the strategy should not be voluntary. There should be some form of legislative control.
- The goal should be to achieve an integrated education system rather than promote ESD as a separate model.
- The strategy should reflect best practice and what is happening elsewhere. Baseline studies are necessary, especially in the planning stages.
- Opportunities to input should be more interactive and also allow feedback from the general public.

ESD

- The core principles for ESD should be realised throughout the education system. Education needs to be formally addressed at all levels to make it work. ESD needs to be mainstreamed and well integrated into all education levels, courses and modules. It should be enjoyable, adaptable, inspiring, understandable, empowering and embedded.
- ESD should be about community based activities and should be experience-based. It should include socialisation, community education and youth work.
- ESD should be envisaged as life-long learning.
- Educators must be willing to engage with complexity. This is true for all levels and modes of education.
- ESD is about communicating and teaching in a creative way so individuals can engage at all levels.
- A framework is needed so that self assessment and appraisal can occur.

- Any curriculum for ESD needs to at least include a whole-systems approach to Sustainable Development; a good example is The Natural Step (TNS) Sustainability Framework. This framework enables sustainability principles to be successfully embedded into different parts of the education system, in a similar way that the principles have been embedded into different parts of a local government or corporation to link them together with a common framework. TNS is a scientifically endorsed definition of sustainability; endorsed by 170 scientists in the RSBS Science of Sustainability Report 2006.

ESD and Primary/Second Level Education

- Change is underway in primary and secondary education.
- The curriculum is currently seen as full. ESD is seen as an additional element. We need to identify how everything can be connected so that the outcome is ESD.
- The education system is currently exams focused and does not take account of skills.
- All ESD skills, knowledge and dispositions are already in the curriculum. But we are not paying attention to connecting these up.
- Children should be encouraged to build skills banks. At the moment we only reward academic achievements. Skills should also be acknowledged.

ESD and Third Level Education

- There is little evidence of ESD in 3rd level, it the weakest link in the education system.
- Sustainable development should be part of all courses, particularly for management courses.
- Universities can contribute through initiatives like setting up green campuses, food growing on campus and providing a module of sustainable development in all courses.
- There needs to be better inter-linkages between different universities and between universities and their local communities.
- There needs to be better inter-linkages between research in universities and practice.

- One way of bettering the relationship between third level colleges and their local communities this is through a science shop. This can be a bureau for change in the community, in terms of research and practical help. In addition, students learn by doing. It means that the campus could be opened up enhancing communication and the learning process.
- There needs to be more on-site action research. Galway IT is running a green energy course.

ESD and Other Courses and Training

- Educators must engage in the challenge. Teacher and educator training courses and education are a key target area. Teachers should be encouraged to be imaginative and creative, especially in important sectors in the future such as IT and science.
- Courses in sustainable development should be cheaper to appeal to more people. Lower costs would make them more accessible for community groups.
- ESD modules should also be included in training for professional development and planners. Continuing Professional Development modules in professional bodies should be set as entry requirements and there should be external validation of modules. It should include modules on social responsibility and the ethic of care.

Other Strands of Education

- Early childhood education and pre-school education should be included in ESD.
- ESD should include a futures element to it, with links to futures education.
- People should be given an understanding of how media/PR works.

ESD and Community

- Education has quite a narrow focus on formal learning. We need to envisage an education system that includes other groups such as farmers, community and youth and business. Education needs to happen in community context.
- ESD should be core in communities and we should link in with other organizations and movements. There needs to be an emphasis on

increasing wellbeing and quality of life, while mitigating climate change and preparing for the future.

ESD and Business

- ESD should engage business and relate to Corporate Social Responsibility. Business ethic has to change and align itself with the principles of sustainable development.
- Young people are full of ideas. They should not be given the impression that in the working world people do not care. They should see that sustainable development is part of business ethic. This will ensure a positive feedback loop. It will empower people to change how business works in the long-term.
- There should be standards for businesses that prevent green-washing and promote sustainability measurement and standards. Incentives should exist to induce business to engage in a real way. This could be through an environmental or eco-label.
- Targets should be benchmarked based on the organisation type.
- There should be courses for businesses and organisations and schools to show them how to make their activities more sustainable.

ESD and Other Institutions

- An eco-label for business, colleges, and schools would communicate commitment to sustainable development.
- Sustainable development officers within local authorities would be beneficial in terms of creating more sustainable local authorities and encouraging sustainable development at a local level. It would also encourage uniformity in individual local authorities and across the different local authorities.
- ESD needs to be included in development plans, including social sustainability. Current consultation is often tokenistic.

Interaction and Engagement of Stakeholders

- There needs to be more communication, sharing and learning across NGOs and other sectors, for example farmers, community, business and youth. There is currently too much division.

- We need to examine where community groups and the wider public fit in. ESD and its development should be an inclusive process with action and engagement from a wide sector of society. Ownership is a key concept.

ESD and Empowerment

- ESD is about empowering people. It is a hands-on-process that aims to teach people practical skills. Education should focus on action and experiential learning.
- There is also need to focus on some of the traditionally softer issues, such as building self esteem.
- The Scientific community is losing people. There is a degree of environmental dogmatism. It is not giving people ownership of the environment.
- There is a disconnection between what we believe and how we express it in our own lives.
- Initiatives, such as the TidyTowns awards provide opportunities for integrating sustainable principles into local life and educating people about sustainable development. TidyTowns could have a code of sustainable development that towns would commit to.

ESD and Change

- The difficulty in doing this work in market-oriented consumer society should not be underestimated. ESD is very challenging to the established order. We need to shift the moral space and our values.
- Changing the education system will not be easy. But there is a need to tackle the hard challenges and not avoid them. ESD should take account of the key debates rather than the key points. It is about exploring and accepting a range of perspectives.
- People's perceptions should be challenged with ESD. Sustainable development should not just be a middleclass concern.
- We need to look at opportunities to disseminate and take action independently and informally.
- The concept of polluter pays should be more strongly enforced. We need an environmental levy to pay for the damage we have done and protect vulnerable people. This would provide funding for new solutions and increase local employment.

- There should be penalties for breaches, so that people can see the importance of protecting the environment.

The Language of ESD

- The language and wording that is used is very important. People don't understand the language which can be a big barrier in enhancing understanding of environmental issues. There needs to be clarification of the sustainable development definition.

Session 2 - Panel Discussion- The Role of the Media



John Bowman chairing the Panel Discussion on the Role of the Media

The session was chaired by Dr. John Bowman, broadcaster and historian.

The panel comprised:

- Nathalie McDermott, Director, On the Road Media, UK
- Frank McDonald, Environment Editor, Irish Times
- Maud Hand, Multimedia Production & Training Consultant
- Duncan Stewart, Architect and Independent Television Producer
- Paul Cunningham, Environment Correspondent, RTE
- Peadar King, Director, KMF Productions

Opening Remarks of Panelists

Nathalie McDermott: Nathalie considers that many journalists come from similar backgrounds, meaning that a particular world view is portrayed in the media. This tends to be middle-class and urban based. Her organisation On the Road Media trains different people to communicate and allows people to circumvent the usual institutions for communication that not everyone has access to.

Frank McDonald: Frank feels that the Irish Times has taken the issue of climate change very seriously. Most of the major conferences are covered. He does not feel that he has great difficulties in convincing upper management to keep the climate agenda out there. He does feel there is limit to what the media can do. The media can present information to the public; but what the public do with that information is up to them. Frank received a media fund award from Comhar this year and published an article on the impact of climate change on the Maldives.

Maud Hand: Maud has first hand experience of producing work that incorporates ESD. She recognises that there are difficulties in getting the work commissioned. Shows such as Big Brother bring in the advertising money; the sustainability dimension should be brought into entertainment-based shows.

Duncan Stewart: Duncan is involved in broadcasting to get a message out. He would not be able to make his programmes without funding from different organisations, such as the EPA. Duncan recognises that lifestyle slots have to be just that; they are not always able to tackle harder issues. The media is

irresponsible in the wider context of sustainable development. Issues such as climate change are seen as a turn off. TV is more about entertainment than communicating honest, truthful messages to people in an entertaining way.

Paul Cunningham: Paul believes that the environment is viewed as a luxury of the Celtic tiger. The end of year coverage this year was all about the economy and jobs. The economy and job creation are considered to be real issues about real people; the environment is not seen as part of this. The media in general, has not made the connection between the economy and the health of the environment. We need to make sure that we promote the message through relating to people's lives, for example through highlighting growing green business and jobs. We need to question people who do not respect sustainable development, for example in the recent floods, who built the houses on flood plains? Social networking is growing to be an extremely important platform that presents new and additional ways of communicating.

Peadar King: Peadar thinks that there should be more access for independent programming on mainstream television. Peadar presented the programme 'What in the World?' which dealt with a range of global development and human rights issues. There are independent producers making programmes that deal with environmental and humanitarian issues; but they do not always have an opportunity to broadcast on RTE. Many programmes that are broadcast are shown at undesirable timeslots. There needs to be more coverage of the impact of Irish decisions, for example the stories of people who have been deported.



The Panel discussing the Role of the Media

Some of the main points to emerge from the discussion were:

- There should be more efforts made to cover international stories; there are not enough foreign correspondents. When RTE does send reporters; they do a very good job. However, it is often a matter of scarce resources. Ireland is a small country.
- Issues need to be linked, for example to show how sustainable development is important for the economy we can demonstrate the growth of the green economy and green jobs.

- Why do we have to hear two sides of the story on climate change? There is a virtual consensus amongst the peer reviewed scientific community; it has been accepted that climate change is happening and that it is man made. Trying to present two sides gives the impression that there is ambiguity and doubt. There are no standards when it comes to reporting on such important issues. However, censorship can be a dangerous thing.
- There is overwhelming scientific consensus on climate change and the media is beginning to accept that climate change is a reality. People are beginning to make the connection between the floods and the fact that we can expect more of these intense weather events.
- There is a huge amount of sensationalist and irresponsible journalism. Scepticism about climate change is sometimes broadcast in name of sensationalism. The media sometimes plays to the audience by not taking the issue seriously. Climate change is more serious than the downturn in the long term, but has not been given the coverage it needs.
- Climate change is an increasingly heated argument and little campaigning has been run. We cannot ignore what is happening. There are huge vested interests. In Copenhagen, we should be asking for fundamental change in the western world. We are going to have to switch to low carbon society; and it better sooner rather than later.
- The media wants to sell papers and stories. This was demonstrated recently with the creation of the public private sector split. The media incitement focused on making people take sides and avoided the issues at heart.
- The oil producing countries have a lot of money to give to back up climate sceptics. People want to listen to scepticism, as it allows them to take a step back from the issues.
- The media is driven by commercial concerns. There are certain times of the year when there is little news and fluff stories are broadcast. The media needs to work in tandem with people on the ground, who are breathing and living these issues.
- There is a reluctance to ask the tricky questions, because there are commercial vested interests. For example, we have not questioned green energy and if it is working. We are a small country, which means that leaders do have an interest in the stories.
- We don't open the agenda wide enough for other people, for example we are not hearing voices of the new generation.

- We haven't got anyone here from the tabloids at the top table. We are in a way speaking to the converted. People buy them and are interested in the stories. They are a media that should not be ignored.
- It is generally working class people that read the red tops. Climate change and sustainable development tends to be a middle class issue. We need strategies to engage different groups of people. In addition, not all of the red tops are the same. Tabloids should not be automatically discounted; the information just has to be presented in a certain way.
- Climate change is not an issue in the general elections. That maybe because it is an agreed issue, so there is no need to talk about it. This misleads the public in terms of its importance
- People are carrying out more activities online that ever before. There is an exciting new possibility that the youth are beginning to embrace. We don't always need a conventional broadcaster. You Tube and Twitter are another platform that people can use to communicate with people from all over the world.
- Social media can break down issues to the detail that affects people on the ground. We can't continually chase broadsheets and big media. This is where local hyper media is important.
- Some people are frustrated with how discussions are fed; which has traditionally been a top down delivery. Social networks address this. People are sharing information about everything that interests them. They are not waiting for institutions to relay the information, but are going out and sharing it themselves. We need to recognise the power of this. Web 2.0 is not about technology, but about how we share information as a society. This has changed forever; we don't just rely on main stream broadcasters. In 2007, social networks overtook porn on the web for the first time ever. Forums like Wikipaedia are open to a lot of errors, but also have more editors than ever before.
- There is certain amount of distrust of the media, both traditional and social. People are not really sure where to turn for information.
- New modules can take a long time to integrate into the fabric of the education system.
- Development issues should have a dedicated slot. They can sometimes fit into the WBD- Worthy but Dull category. Instead, sustainability should be normalised and be integrated into all issues.
- We need to communicate in new ways, for example, getting the message across through soaps and other entertainment programmes.

- There is an audience for real fact and education programmes. But there is also a need for simplifying the information without dumbing it down.
- In a recent radio show, a well known broadcaster referred to 'so-called climate change'. Such incidents are not uncommon and sometimes there is a lack of balance with climate change sceptics being aired without challenge. RTE, with its public service remit needs to be more careful in its editorial judgement.
- We need to look at how we can make environmental issues sexy and relate to lifestyles in Ireland
- We are in danger of being distracted by saying 'mainstream issues'. There are very few mainstream issues and limited space.
- A lot of time goes into making programmes. They are generally aired once and that is it. Now, many are available later on web, which is a good development.
- The media must ensure that people are given the space to ask questions. There is a celebrity driven broadcast focus.
- Sustainable development is a mouthful of a word and can be a hard concept to sell.
- There is a difference between misinformation and disinformation (knowing the truth and hiding it).
- It is widely recognised that sustainable development needs to be embedded into policy. But how do we embed sustainable development into media?

Annex 1

Programme for the Event

Education for Sustainable Development: Stakeholder Vision and Role of the Media

**National Consultation
Thursday 26th November 2009
Coach House, Dublin Castle**

10:15 Registration, tea and coffee and exhibition and display of Comhar Media Fund Projects.

11. 00 Opening Remarks – Gavin Harte, ESD Training

11.10 – 13.30 *Session 1: Stakeholder Vision for Education for Sustainable Development*

Chair: Noel Casserly, Director, Comhar SDC

- Keynote Address: Ann Finlayson, UK Sustainable Development Commission and Director, SEED
- Presentation of a Draft Vision for Education for Sustainable Development: Elaine Nevin, National Director, Eco-unesco
- Discussion and Feedback: Moderated by Michael Ewing, Environmental Pillar of Social Partnership

13.30 – 14.15 Lunch

14.15 – 16.00 *Session 2: Awareness & Education for Sustainable Development: The role of the Media*

Chair: John Bowman, Broadcaster and Historian

Panel:

- Duncan Stewart, Architect and Independent Television Producer
- Frank McDonald, Environment Editor, Irish Times
- Paul Cunningham, Environment Correspondent, RTE
- Peadar King, Director, KMF Productions
- Maud Hand, Multimedia Production & Training Consultant
- Nathalie McDermott, Director, On the Road Media, UK

Annex 2

About Comhar SDC and RCE Ireland

Comhar SDC

Comhar SDC (<http://www.comharsdc.ie>) was established building on experience of social partnership. Comhar SDC undertakes work at the request of any Minister or on its own initiative. It is an advisory council that provides guidance to the Government on measures that can move us to a sustainable, equal and low carbon society. It has an independent chairman and 25 members representing stakeholders from 5 pillars:

- Environmental
- Community
- Economic
- Professional/ academic
- State

Comhar SDC's terms of reference, as agreed by Government, give it a broad and flexible remit. In summary, they are:

- to advance the national agenda for sustainable development
- to evaluate progress on achieving sustainable development in Ireland
- to assist in developing tools and models that can progress Ireland towards sustainable development
- to advise the relevant individual(s) and/or organisation(s) on how to implement the tools and models
- to contribute to the formation of a national consensus on sustainable development.

RCE Ireland

RCEs are regional networks designed to strengthen collaboration on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in their area. A network of RCEs exists throughout the world. RCEs are designated by the United Nations University.

RCE Ireland is an action and research network consisting of higher education institutes, public sector bodies and NGOs. RCE - Ireland aims to promote and support activities and research that result in effective integration of ESD principles and practices into formal, informal and non-formal education in Ireland (<http://paulo.ul.ie/rce-ireland/>). Comhar is one of the RCE - Ireland partners.

RCE Ireland covers the Republic of Ireland and was approved by the United Nations University in 2007. RCE - Ireland is based at the Department of Education and Professional Studies in the University of Limerick.

Annex 3

Speaker and Panelist Biographies

John Bowman is a broadcaster and historian. He presents current affairs and historical programmes on RTE radio and television. John is past Chairman of Comhar. He was recently elected an Honorary Fellow of Trinity College Dublin.

Noel Casserly is the director of Comhar Sustainable Development Council. He has previously worked in the Environment and Spatial Planning units in the Department of the Environment. Noel has been Comhar's representative on the RCE since its establishment.

Paul Cunningham is the environmental correspondent for RTE and author of "Ireland's Burning - How Climate Change will Affect you". He has reported extensively from abroad on conflicts, natural disasters and global warming. He has won an ESB National Radio Journalist of the Year Award and an Irish Film and Television Award

Michael Ewing is the Coordinator of the Environmental Pillar of Social Partnership (<http://www.environmentalpillar.ie>). Michael has been working on sustainability and environmental issues for many years and including as a researcher at the Centre for Sustainability Institute of Technology, Sligo, where he conducted a detailed assessment of Environmental Democracy in Ireland (<http://www.environmentaldemocracy.ie>).

Ann Finlayson is the Commissioner for Education and Capability Building with the Sustainable Development Commission. She is also currently director of the charity SEEd (Sustainability and Environmental Education-<http://www.se-ed.org.uk/>). Ann has a working knowledge of formal, informal and non-formal education and is passionate about the role of learning in sustainability.

Peadar King is a former second-level teacher and is currently the director of KMF Productions. He is presenter producer of the RTE Television "What in the World?" series, which aims to pose searching questions about the causes and consequences of contemporary global political and economic inequalities.

Maud Hand is a multi-media producer, trainer and writer with 20 years' production experience with BBC, Channel 4, RTÉ and the Irish & UK independent media sector, producing community projects locally and globally (<http://www.maudhand.com/>). With a masters in peace studies from Trinity College, Dublin, sustainable development issues underpin Maud's broadcast portfolio.

Gavin Harte is currently providing Education for Sustainable Development (<http://www.esdtraining.net/>) for business, third level colleges and the general public throughout Ireland. He also works with Step and in partnership with the

City of Dublin Energy Management Agency (Codema) developing an energy efficiency renovation programme for homeowners in Dublin. He has worked as the national director of An Taisce and was the founder and developer of Ireland's first eco-village in Cloughjordan, Co Tipperary.

Frank McDonald is environment editor with the Irish Times. He has also published several books dealing with sustainability and environmental issues, including Chaos at the Crossroads with James Nix and The Builders with Kathy Sheridan. Frank also tries to integrate sustainability into his everyday life and his city living and lack of car are testimony to the fact.

Nathalie Mc Dermott is founder of On Road Media (<http://www.onroadmedia.org.uk/>), which trains people to produce podcasts and video blogs and to set up their own social networks to connect, share information and contribute to wider public debates. Nathalie previously worked as a BBC radio producer and then in prisons teaching offenders to run radio stations.

Elaine Nevin is the national director of Eco-Unesco (<http://www.ecounesco.ie/>). Elaine sits on the Comhar council, is an RCE member and is active on a number of other boards. She believes that education should be about participation and should encourage young people to actively engage with and challenge ideas.

Duncan Stewart is an architect and energy consultant. Duncan is the presenter and producer of the series Eco Eye, broadcast on RTE. He has also produced and presented in many environmental TV documentary series. He is also a director of (<http://www.greenme.ie>), a website designed to help people make informed decisions about moving towards an eco-friendly lifestyle.

Annex 4

Projects funded under the Comhar SDC

Media Fund in 2010

Summary of Applications Received for the 2009 Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund

The Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund was established in 2008, with the aim of securing more and better coverage of sustainability and related issues. The fund is open to all media organisations and journalists in Ireland.

Comhar received 11 applications for the Media Fund in 2009, and seven projects were successful in securing funding. The quality of applications being funded is very high, with projects ranging from a documentary series following people trying to live more sustainable lives to a feature on how the Maldivic islands are in danger of disappearing due to climate change. Comhar SDC provided funding assistance ranging in amount from €850 to €2,500 to the seven successful projects. In addition to mainstream broadcast and print media, a number of special interest and photographic projects also received funding.

All funded projects had to address at least one of four themes chosen by Comhar SDC to reflect their work priorities:

1. Climate change and clean energy.
2. Building sustainable communities.
3. Building the green economy.
4. Biodiversity and natural resources.

The seven successful applicants also committed to employing sustainable practices in delivering their projects.

The projects that received funding under the Comhar Sustainable Development Media Fund in 2009 were:

1. Bioenergy specialist Barry Caslin received funding to produce a series of articles on biomass, biofuels and energy crops for publication in The Irish Farmers' Journal.
2. El Zorrero Films received funding to produce 'An Bealach Glas', an Irish-language documentary series following people trying to live more sustainable lives, for broadcast on TG4 (<http://www.vimeo.com/channels/71222>).
3. TV Producer Maud Hand received funding for a multimedia project on sustainable communities. The project focuses on the community based at the foot of Cnoc Meadh and the Headford Hinterlands, in particular around Campbell's Tavern in Cloughanover, about 16 miles from

Galway City. The project outputs included a website, a programme on Galway Bay FM and a feature article in the Connacht Tribune (<http://www.maudhand.com/#/cnoc-meadha-jic/4535330947>).

4. Frank McDonald, Environment Editor with The Irish Times, received funding to assist in researching and producing an article on the impact of climate change on the Maldives for publication in The Irish Times (<http://www.irishtimes.com/newspaper/weekend/2009/1205/1224260125257.html>).
5. Freelance photo-journalist Eileen O'Leary received funding towards a media project exploring sustainable development initiatives in Lesotho.
6. Freelance journalist Clare Taylor received funding towards a project exploring the impact of empty housing developments on local communities, that was published in the Irish Independent (<http://www.independent.ie/lifestyle/property-plus/what-do-we-do-with-all-the-ghost-estates-1994706.html>).
7. Zucca Films received funding to produce 'Transition Tweens', a series of programmes aimed at under-12s and focusing on life for young people in Ireland's first Transition Town, Kinsale.

Annex 5

Questions for the Panel on the Role of the Media

Do the media care about real issues, or are they only interested in stories that sell?

- Deirdre Hogan, Ubuntu Network/ University of Limerick

Why don't the media present more information on ethics/ethical investments and long-term thinking?

- Michael Ewing, Environmental Pillar

Money rules the media; how do we get a public service objective into the media so that sustainable development can be covered? Positive stories don't get/get little coverage compared to bad news controversy, unless there is an advert supporting it.

- Abby McSherry, An Taisce

Media tends to tell facts (right or wrong) and leads to a conclusion. How can media be used to engender more critical thinking and questioning? Can it be interactive?

- Mags Liddy, Ubuntu Network

Will the Copenhagen Summit produce a worthwhile outcome?

Is there a possibility of releasing a series of programmes similar to the BBC discovery series to promote local culture and history, eco-tourism and community initiatives? Nationwide satisfies a part of this brief but not completely.

- Trevor Seery, Green Jobs

Are there guidelines for media where ESD principles can be embedded?

- Senan Gardiner, Presentation Ireland

To Paul Cunningham: Does RTE have a coherent sustainability policy? If so, does it address its responsibility for promoting fossil fuel initiatives through the advertising of unnecessary products through proactive capitalist consumer culture?

- J. Sullivan

To Frank McDonald: Would you agree that any positive impact of the Irish Times sustainability policy is by far outweighed by the negative impact of advertising in the Irish Times by fossil fuel intensive industries, in particular the automobile and aviation industry?

- J. Sullivan

Are environmental related press releases seen as a threat leading to possible revenue loss by the print media?

- Tom Roche, Just Forests

How many of the panel have a post-graduate qualification in sustainable development?

To Gavin Harte: Is there anything we can really do, given our tiny place in the grand scheme of things? How can we practically shift lethargy and complacency?

Taking into consideration the social pressures on younger people, especially males, how do you think the media can highlight the significance of wellbeing and quality of life?

- Sean O'Farrell, Organic Farmer and Ecologist

How do we make Education for Sustainable Development stories sexy? Are these moral issues? Do advertisers want to see ESD coverage in the media? Do owners of media outlets want to see ESD coverage in the media?

Why do the media still explore two sides of the climate change story?

- Gavin Harte

Would it be a good idea to have a weekly supplement on sustainability? Publishing daily carbon emissions could raise awareness on how much carbon we produce. How sustainable is a hardcopy paper? Do we need to name and shame?

- Shirley Gallagher

Annex 6

Attendance List

Name	Organisation
Abby Mc Sherry	An Taisce
Aidan Clifford	Director of the CDVEC Curriculum Development Unit
Ann Fitzgibbon	Trinity College Dublin
Annette Cahalane	Environmental Protection Agency
Barry Caslin	Teagasc
Ben Whelan	Cultivate
Caitriona McCabe	Trinity College Dublin
Carmel Mee	Southern Regional College
Clare Taylor	Sustainable Energy Ireland
Daniel Meister	Eco-Unesco
David Clarke	El Zorrero Films
David Dowd	DIT Bolton Street student
Davie Phillip	Cultivate
Deidre Hogan	Ubuntu Network
Deirdre McGovern	An Taisce
Derek Ngadi	Congolese Anti-poverty Network
Dr Shirley Gallagher	SysPro
Elizabeth Clooney	
Felicity Gaffney	National Botanic Gardens
Gavin Daly	John Spain Associates
Gilbert Storrs	Communitycafé
Helen Foley	University College Cork
Ian Clotworthy	
Joanne Davidson	RPS
John O'Neill	
John Russell	Southern Regional College
Judy Osborne	An Taisce
Liza Delaney	
Lorcan Mc Dermott	Dublin Institute of Technology
Mags Liddy	University of Limerick/ Ubuntu Network
Mark Keenan	Chair of GP sustainability policy group
Mark Nolan	Trinity College Dublin
Matthias Feilder	IDEA
Moira Byrne	Environmental Awareness Officer, Wicklow Co Co.
Niamh O'Flynn	
Nikolay Zamuruev	Russian Embassy in Ireland
Nodlag Houlihan	Zucca Films
Ornagh Darcy	
Peigin Doyle	Journalist/editor
Peter Wyse Jackson	National Botanic Gardens
Rebecca O'Halloran	Africa Centre
Roland Tormey	University of Limerick
Rosalind Duke	CICE
Ruth Doyle	Trinity College Dublin
Sean O'Farrell	Organic Farmer and Ecologist
Senan Gardiner	Presentation Ireland
Tom Roche	Just Forests
Trevor Seery	Student
Veronica Heywood	An Taisce's Booterstown Nature Reserve Management advisory Committee
Vincent Nally	Irish Rural Link