

The National Environmental Protection Programme of Hungary

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The statements relating to climate change draw attention to the necessity of the distribution of knowledge relating to climate change among the population and within the education system, starting from elementary school up to higher-level institutions on different levels.

Decree OGY Nr 96/2009 (XII.9.) on the National Environmental Protection Programme (hereinafter referred to as: Programme) discusses the necessary steps and tasks in a separate chapter in order to achieve the strengthening of environmentally conscious thinking and attitudes.

Below I present the findings of the Programme in relation to environmental education and training, which are integrally connected to the role of climate protection education.

The draft of the special policy strategy of the 4th National Environmental Protection Programme for the period 2014–2019 was made in October 2013.

Introduction

The relation between humans and nature and its quality are in the long run influenced by social values and the production and consumer habits deriving from them.

Environmental consciousness has to be made an integral, determining element of social values so that the cause and effect relations are clear to everyone.

The system approach of people in this regard shall be formulated so that the burden on the environment will be the least, with regard to both social and business activities (emissions of hazardous substances, reduction in waste production, and economic utilization of resources).

To be successful in the formulation of an environmental attitude it is essential that everybody sees its necessity and understands the knowledge, and should be ready for changes, through small yet determined steps in the interest of an environmentally conscious lifestyle.

The main goals of the National Environmental Protection Programme are as follows [1]:

- establishment of environment education, attitude formulation in the complete process of lifelong learning;
- sustainable production processes and consumer habits gaining importance;
- development of systems ensuring sustainable production processes, more effective dissemination of information.

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Programme on Environmental Education, Attitude Formulation

Environmental education promotes the establishment of an environmentally conscious attitude for all age groups, just as personal role models, its influence on the generations growing up and the gained knowledge will be capable of become determining in their lifestyle and decisions.

The values of persons and also of the society are also formulated in case of successful environmental attitude formulation.

The Programme considers it a future goal to create an effective information and cooperation system from the nurseries up to high-level education and adult training through creating an environmental knowledge chain. It is taken as an important token of success that each age group is encouraged to have an environmentally conscious attitude and be interested in the establishment and safeguarding of the appropriate state of the environment, and for the formulation of sustainable consumer habits.

Programme in Public Education

Several positive initiatives could be incorporated into the educational work and syllabus through the legal environment and institutional conditions of public education, for this reason public education can set this as a primary target area.

Pursuant to Act on Public Education it has become compulsory for all schools to establish a local environmental education and health education programme.

Qualification frame systems on a national level to promote the strengthening of environmental consciousness have been established and operated, such as “green kindergartens”, “eco-schools”, and “forest-kindergartens” and “forest-school” programmes.

In such establishments bigger emphasis is placed on environmental education and attitude formulation, and these must also take the environmental aspects into account.

Each establishment has different needs and possibilities to join and be a part of real development work. Due to this, the Programme makes it necessary to establish a support system on a medium level serving the strengthening of environmental consciousness.

The goals are set as follows:

- strengthening an environmentally conscious attitude and practice in the operation of schools;
- extension of educational supplementary materials with knowledge on environmental consciousness and sustainability;
- strengthening the activities in the education process, which establish responsible behaviour towards the environment, strengthening the activities offering practice and knowledge, and improving skills;
- maintaining and extending existing programmes;
- strengthening the cooperation of schools, local communities and parents in order to sustain the results achieved.

Programme in Educational Institutions

The Program draws attention to the fact that schools have to elaborate a concept and enforce it in the field of environmental education, which shall include making the operation environmentally friendly, starting with energy conservation and including the products sold in the snack bars.

E.g. reduction in energy and water use, increase of the products with low waste ratio sold in the snack bar, etc.

Program in Vocational Education

The Program summarizes that module–type education and legal environment created in the field of environmental, nature protection and water vocational education provide an adequate basis so that those experts with such environmental protection vocational qualification enter the labour market, who are precisely aware of the term “sustainability” and have also acquired practice thereof.

It points out that the improvement of environmental consciousness and the inclusion of sustainability–relevant knowledge in the different points of correlation both in the field of educational, and syllabus–development. Thereby environment conscious thinking can gain importance in the work performance of the different special fields and it can be prevented that environmental protection remain a separate profession.

Programme in Higher Education

The Program draws attention to the opportunities presented by the Bologna education system and the three–year revision of the training structure. Environmental protection aspects are better enforced, either with regard to the establishment of new faculties, or to the determination and accreditation of educational and graduation requirements.

These goals are set as follows:

- *all students shall receive special knowledge in environment and nature protection, water management — adjusted to the educational line;*
- students attending teacher training and continuing teacher training shall receive training on the significance of environmental consciousness, on the relevant knowledge, assisting in the accomplishment of environmental education;
- to enhance the educational level of specialists in environmental protection, and to train teachers who are capable of additional attitude formation;
- to increase the role of environmental consciousness in institutional performance goals and in contracts with bodies operating it.

Programme on the environmental attitude formulation

The Program points out that the success of environmental protection relevant attitude formulation conducted in educational establishments is greatly promoted if the knowledge learnt in theory appears in the everyday routine as well.

If the players on different levels of society speak up for environmental protection matters, people will have a clear view on the state of their direct and wider environment, on the importance of ecosystem services, on the role of environmental protection, and they will learn the environmental, chemical and biological risks of products used every day, the consequences of their use, and thereafter the possibilities of reducing the risks.

The Programme highlights that it is important to integrate the environmental aspects into the activities of certain industries and special fields.

It reminds us that public collections (libraries, museums), public educational institutions and bodies can help, organise and formulate environmental education, attitude formulations in a direct and indirect manner.

It points out that the circle of cooperating partners in the field of environmental education and attitude formulation needs to be extended with the churches and media — beyond the civic bodies.

The Programme sets the goals as follows:

- environmental and nature protection should appear more focused in the lifelong learning process of the society;
- *strengthening of the relation of environmental and nature protection, of the interaction points with other special fields;*
- strengthening of the cooperation among public collections, public educational institutions and bodies, civil bodies, churches and media, helping their active participation in environmental education and attitude formulation.

Environmental Education

Environmental education means education for culture, world-view and lifestyle. [2] It gives means into our hands so that we may protect our natural environment for future generations.

Education on the protection of environmental values contributes to the formulation of students' feeling of responsibility toward environmental problems.

Teachers, educators have the important task, on all levels of the educational system, to introduce the pupils and students to the beauty and variety of nature. Thereby affection, respect and responsibility for environmental values can be deepened in future generations.

Programme on the Role of the Media

It is considered important to strongly show the issue of environmental consciousness in the programme and to present positive local examples and to critically present the environmental polluting and wasting processes.

It stresses the role that the media can improve the communication of the civil environmental protection bodies, can facilitate the flow of their information, and thereby can greatly promote the success of their work.

Summary

I have presented above the most important statements of the National Environmental Protection Programme relating to education and attitude formation.

In summary I point out that the Programme draws attention to the fact that the improvement of environment consciousness and the inclusion of sustainability–relevant knowledge in the different points of correlation both in the field of education and syllabus development are important in cases of all special education. Thereby environmentally conscious thinking can gain importance in the work performance of the different special fields and it can be prevented that environmental protection remains a separate profession.

In the field of higher education it is considered a goal to be attained that all students shall receive special knowledge in environment and nature protection, water management — adjusted to the educational subject. The support of talent care programmes connected to environmental and nature protection, the elaboration and conduct of the award system of the National Scientific Student Conference, special studies and dissertations, and doctoral thesis represent an additional goal.

The Programme points out that it is important to integrate environmental aspects into the activities of certain industries and special fields, and the relations of environmental and nature protection, and points of connections shall be strengthened throughout all special fields. [3]

References

- [1] *Decree OGY Nr 96/2009 (XII.9.) on the National Environment Protection Programme*
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- [2] KISS F., ZSIROS A. (2006): *A környezeti neveléstől a globális nevelésig.* (Education Excipient), Nyíregyháza: MPKKI. Based on book Kuknyó J. (Ed.): *A környezeti nevelés.*
- [3] *National Environment Protection Programme for the period 2014–2019*
www.kormany.hu/download/5/c7/11000/IV%20Nemzeti%20K%C3%B6rnyezetv%C3%A9delmi%20Program.pdf (downloaded: 07 01 2014)