



the InHouse Policy Consultancy

Review of Funding for Education for Sustainable Development:

1 December 2005

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Executive summary

1. In House Policy Consultancy (IHPC) were taken on by Defra's Sustainable Development Unit jointly with DfES' Whitehall Relations Team to:

Review DfES and Defra funding of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) that occurs through intermediaries to the formal education and youth work sector.

The report has been commissioned by Government but is an independent report expressing the views of the interviewer and interviewees outside central government.

Key areas to be addressed by the review were:

- What DfES, Defra and Landfill Tax Credit Scheme funding of ESD through intermediaries occurs now and has done in the past that has now ceased to exist (particularly the last few years);
 - Whether there are any significant gaps in ESD funding provision;
 - Whether ESD funding is coherent, strategic, in line with the strategic aims of DfES and Defra and properly managed;
 - Whether organisations involved in ESD should be more fully supported financially by government through core strategic long term funding or project funding;
 - Whether the overall direction of ESD funding streams and the capacity of these organisations can meet government objectives and aspirations.
2. The review involved reading background documents as provided by DfES, Defra, and interviewees, and interviewing key individuals within Defra, DfES and a range of other bodies.
 3. Interviewees commented extensively on the strategic approach to ESD, since funding cannot be considered in isolation from that. (The term 'interviewee' is used throughout to signify those interviewed outside central Defra and DfES). Key issues were:

- Many interviewees stressed how vitally important it is that there is a shift in the priority attached to ESD. A consistent concern expressed was that very significant numbers of schools are not actively engaging with ESD. Evidence for this is anecdotal but an audit to confirm it categorically would be a major exercise. Some interviewees felt that schools infer a low priority to ESD due to the absence of specific funding or objectives.
- A consistent view was that government needs to establish what it wants to achieve on ESD, and to provide a strategic vision and objectives.
- ESD currently features in different areas of the curriculum rather than being taught as a separate subject. Interviewees did not dispute this approach, but it makes it hard to establish what is happening in schools and to inspect ESD. DfES are currently part-funding an Ofsted-led three year survey of the potential of sustainable development as an approach for Whole School Improvement in a sample of schools.
- One of the questions for this review was whether the approach to ESD funding is in line with DfES and Defra's strategic aims. Some interviewees made the point that the current approach to ESD funding is entirely consistent with DfES' Five Year Strategy. However a couple of interviewees said that DfES do not have a strategy for how the purpose statements at the front of the curriculum will be met. For Defra, some interviewees said that funding is not consistent with Defra's strategic aims. Defra tends to engage in educational activity as part of their programmes rather than strategically across the department, so it is difficult to obtain strategic information.
- As ESD covers such a broad range of activity, it would be a very significant task to assess in detail the importance of the NGO contribution across the board. However it does seem from interviews that NGOs have been important in working with schools on ESD. Those within government do not always have evidence as to how effective NGOs are in terms of ESD, so it is not possible to say at this stage whether specific NGOs should be more fully supported financially for ESD. It is difficult for officials in DfES and Defra to know whether they are engaging the right NGOs to support this agenda.
- DfES have had engagement with a range of NGOs across the broad ESD agenda, for example on Growing Schools and the Education outside the Classroom Manifesto. However many interviewees were concerned that DfES have not worked in partnership

with the NGO sector as a whole on ESD. A number of interviewees also made a point about a lack of transparency in how government allocates money to 'ESD' activity.

- A number of interviewees said that there is a lack of co-ordination and some infighting within the NGO sector. It was suggested that this has been made worse by government funding approaches such as the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme (LTCS).
- Two key funding streams for ESD for NGOs that existed until recently are no longer available in nearly all cases: the Environmental Action Fund (EAF) and the much larger Landfill Tax Credit Scheme (LTCS). These were not specific 'ESD' funds but did provide significant amounts for NGO ESD activity. LTCS funding is no longer available for ESD activity. Some funding for work in schools has been provided to a small number of organisations under the new round of EAF (2005-08) which is focused on changing behaviours towards more sustainable consumption patterns, but relatively this is a very small amount compared to under the 2002-5 fund. Estimates of the amount of funding that EAF and LTCS provided for ESD in the past vary significantly. To a large extent this is because of the difficulty defining an "ESD project": for example under the broad SDEP definition of ESD all current EAF projects comprise at least an element of ESD. Broad estimates range up to £1.22M per year from EAF and £10M per year from LTCS. This is a significant amount of funding lost from these two streams and therefore from those NGOs involved. However in the wider context of spending on ESD more generally (**Annex B**) it is less clear whether there has been a significant reduction in funding overall.
- Since 1988, the direction of DfES funding policy has been to delegate funds direct to schools, whereas the previous approach meant that there was local advisory support and professional development services in LEAs. This has meant a gradual reduction in LEA advisors, except where schools opt to buy into their services. One interviewee estimated that £50M a year was formerly allocated by LEAs to supporting what was then 'environmental education'. However this review did not find evidence of how much was spent by local government on ESD and so what reduction has occurred. Similarly, there is no evidence as to the extent to which schools use their delegated budgets to buy in ESD support from NGOs, but the common view among interviewees was that this does not occur to any significant extent.

- There is some ongoing funding of ‘ESD’ from government sources, which includes some significant DfES funds which have ESD elements. However since ESD is not considered as a discrete element of funding streams it is difficult to establish what is spent on ESD and what funding is directed through intermediaries. The funding of ESD across government could not be said to be comprehensive or strategic.
4. A full understanding of any gaps in funding would require both a clear statement of what government aims to achieve on ESD and a significant audit of what additional help schools might require to meet government objectives. Without that information it is not possible to say whether specific funding gaps exist. However a full audit would be very resource intensive.
 5. A range of suggestions were made by interviewees for how ESD should be funded in future, along with the associated strategic approach which could also be taken. Key suggestions included:
 - **A national strategic ESD framework.** There was general agreement that there needs to be a government-driven national strategic framework for ESD.
 - **ESD ‘standards’.** Some interviewees suggested encouraging use of one of the existing standards which encompass elements of ESD eg. Healthy Schools or Eco-schools. Others suggested that a number of additional standards could be encouraged.
 - **Accredited delivery agents.** One suggestion was that there should be ‘accredited delivery agents’ to make it easier for schools to see which bodies they could work with in their area.
 - **ESD funding.** Interviewees stressed the need for future funding to be allocated on a strategic and transparent basis. The future approach preferred by most NGOs was that there should be an ESD fund. Most thought that this should be for NGOs to apply for directly. However some interviewees thought that schools should apply for the money. Suggestions about amounts of money included the sorts of amounts given to other key government programmes such as Healthy Schools, or sport – which amount to as much as hundreds of millions.

- **A regional/local approach to ESD.** DfES' Sustainable Development Action Plan for Education and Skills set out aims for local and regional support of ESD activity. A small scale Ofsted review of ESD found that the most successful schools were most strongly categorised by (along with other factors): '*a well-developed local support network*'. Some interviewees favoured a return to the approach of LEA support for ESD, whereas others stressed the advantages of regional support for ESD activity. Regional ESD partnerships have already formed in some areas.
 - **An ESD infrastructure body.** Many interviewees commented on the value of having an infrastructure body such as CEE to be a key co-ordinating body for ESD. There were varied views about the value of CEE as it has operated to date, but a number of interviewees stressed the value of CEE and others felt that government support of an infrastructure body should be part of a future strategic approach.
6. Recommendations from this review are necessarily based on a relatively small number of interviews. Before any new approach can be formulated on NGOs' role in delivering ESD (and appropriate funding arrangements), it will be necessary for DfES and Defra to articulate more clearly what their objectives are on ESD. On that basis, recommendations at this stage are:

Recommendation 1:

Government should clarify what it aims to achieve on ESD and what part different departments, NDPBs, NGOs and the private sector could play. Given their sustainable development remit, Defra should play a key role in defining what the aims of ESD should be, although overall policy responsibility lies with DfES.

Discussions should include all departments (and their agencies) with a key interest, most notably DfES, Defra, DCMS, ODPM, DFID, DoH and DTI.

A strategic framework should be produced, in consultation with stakeholders, setting out the overall direction of ESD. This should include:

- ***Overall aims and objectives for ESD;***

- *How ESD fits with existing work such as the National Curriculum, Healthy Schools, Enabling Effective Support and other elements of the government's environment protection, global education and communities agendas;*
- *Government view on key ESD 'standards' such as Eco-schools.*

Until there is strategic consideration of what Government is aiming to achieve, it is not possible to state what delivery mechanisms are most appropriate and what funding is necessary.

However in taking forward the ESD agenda, Government should give serious consideration to:

- *The views of interviewees (as set out in the section 7 of this report) about the need for regional/ local support of ESD activity. More work should be done into what regional ESD approaches are currently being used in all regions. This could be used both to consider both how such approaches could be supported by central government and how regional approaches could inform a national strategic framework.*
- *Whether there is a need for additional funding to deliver ESD objectives.*
- *The way in which NGOs, local government and the corporate sector could be involved in delivery.*

Recommendation 2:

A partnership agreement should be drawn up between DfES and Defra and possibly other government departments with a key interest to set out what government aims to achieve on ESD.

Recommendation 3:

Future government work on ESD should be taken forward in consultation with stakeholders, and the involvement of the voluntary sector in delivery should comply with the 'Compact'.

1 Introduction

1. In House Policy Consultancy (IHPC) were taken on by Defra's Sustainable Development Unit jointly with DfES' Whitehall Relations Team to:

Review DfES and Defra funding of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) that occurs through intermediaries to the formal education and youth work sector.

The report has been commissioned by Government but is an independent report expressing the views of the interviewer and interviewees outside central government.

The review covered primarily the funding that occurs through intermediaries (i.e. non-governmental organisations and government agencies), rather than that which is paid directly by Defra/DfES to the formal education sector. The project focused on funding which reaches the formal education sector and focused mainly on schools but touched on informal learning through youth work to a limited extent.

2. Key areas to be addressed by the review were:
 - What DfES, Defra and Landfill Tax Credit Scheme funding of ESD through intermediaries occurs now and has done in the past that has now ceased to exist (particularly the last few years);
 - Whether there are any significant gaps in ESD funding provision;
 - Whether ESD funding is coherent, strategic, in line with the strategic aims of DfES and Defra and properly managed;
 - Whether organisations involved in ESD should be more fully supported financially by government through core strategic long term funding or project funding;
 - Whether the overall direction of ESD funding streams and the capacity of these organisations can meet government objectives and aspirations.
3. The review involved reading background documents as provided by DfES, Defra, and interviewees, and interviewing key individuals within Defra, DfES and a range of other bodies. A list of interviewees outside central government is at **Annex A**. In addition, a small number of telephone conversations were held with DFID and Home Office about

existing funding streams. Throughout the report, the term ‘interviewee’ is used to mean those interviewed excluding civil servants in central Defra and DfES.

2 Current ESD Strategy

2.1 Defining ESD

4. There is not one generally-accepted definition of ESD. Some of those interviewed referred to the Brundtland definition of SD, others to one definition of ESD used by the SD Education Panel, namely:

‘ESD is about developing the knowledge, skills, understanding and values to participate in decisions about the way we do things individually and collectively, both locally and globally, that will improve the quality of life now without damaging the planet for the future.’

5. Others saw no value in trying to define it tightly, with some instead referring to the general principles set up in the UK SD Strategy. Some interviewees were keen to stress that ESD goes much wider than environmental education, whereas some talked about ESD primarily in terms of environmental issues. In its broadest sense, ESD includes citizenship, diversity, equity and justice, and ‘uncertainty’¹ – making it a very wide concept that it is difficult for many people to understand fully.
6. A number of interviewees were concerned that DfES, Defra and other parts of government do not have the same definition of ESD, sometimes even within one Department. One interviewee noted that Rio stressed the need for Education for SD ie. The ‘softer’ goals of improving skills and confidence and re-orientating systems. Their view was that DfES are instead focused on education about SD. Most interviewees said that, even though there is not one tidy definition of ESD, there is a clear enough idea of its key elements that it should be considered as a distinct area. However a small number of interviewees did suggest that because ESD is such a broad area, there would be value in taking forward discrete elements of it separately at least initially. It was suggested by some that environment education should be a key focus given the more tangible outcomes which it offers.

¹ ‘ESD in the Schools Sector.’ A Report to DFEE/QCA from the Panel for ESD, September 1998.

2.2 ESD policy approach

2.2.1 DfES Approach

7. Within government, DfES have overall responsible for sustainable development in education. DfES' *Sustainable Development Action Plan*, (September 2003) set out actions for government and others in order to 'develop a commitment for ESD'. DfES' June 2005 response to the EAC sets out their policy approach:

“When we developed our Five Year Strategy for Children and Learners, published in 2004, we recognised the need to think about the kind of world we want our children to grow up in. The underlying principle of the Five Year Strategy is freedom and independence for frontline headteachers, governors and managers with clear, simple accountabilities and more streamlined funding arrangements, including guaranteed three year budgets for all schools with per pupil increases each year, and the new Ofsted self-evaluation framework. For schools, this translates into more freedom to teach and improve - including to teach about sustainable development and to develop schools as sustainable communities. The Government intends to strip out unnecessary bureaucracy, give teachers and headteachers more confidence, and treat different schools differently – challenging those that underperform, but being less directive with those that perform well. The Government will help schools to engage more effectively with parents and the local community. There will be a major focus on teacher professional development, linking it explicitly to career progression.

The meaning of sustainable development for the DfES should be understood in this context and we are confident that this will enable schools, supported by central and local government and others, to deliver sustainable schools.

The role of the Department for Education and Skills is to set a strategic framework and to enable schools to operate effectively within it. A part of setting the framework is to articulate what the Department expects of schools.

The Strategy makes clear that schools should engage with sustainable development:

“Every school should also be an environmentally sustainable school, with a good plan for school transport that encourages walking and cycling, an

active and effective recycling policy (moving from paper to electronic processes wherever possible) and a school garden or other opportunities for children to explore the natural world. Schools must teach our children by example as well as by instruction."

To make these words have meaning and a positive impact on the lives of millions of children, we have in place a number of statutory and non-statutory requirements and initiatives which together will enable all those responsible for teaching our children to be able to do this; for example the National Curriculum, school travel plans, Growing Schools, building and procurement assessments and importantly, the Sustainable Schools website.

Though within the statutory framework the Department does encourage schools and provide practical advice, guidance and tools in a number of areas, including sustainable development, it is essentially up to schools how they take these things forward, depending on their own priorities, local circumstances and the needs of their pupils. That said, we have shown that we are prepared to set firm standards where necessary; for example, we specify legal requirements for teaching sustainable development in the national curriculum and we require new school buildings to achieve the Building Research Establishments' Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standards as a condition of capital investment. The key here is balance - a framework of expectations and requirements, within which we provide support and encouragement for schools to excel in their own ways. In this way, we believe, sustainable development will be a lively reality for schools, capturing the enthusiasm and commitment of pupils, staff and local communities, rather than a bureaucratic, top-down initiative imposed by central government.

We recognise this is a different way of doing things and it will take some getting used to, but the Government wants local people to have the power to do things for themselves, including in sustainable development in education."

"The Committee's evidence highlights the tension between a point of view that says schools should 'do' ESD as a discrete and labelled activity, and a different approach which would encourage schools to identify how their many activities and their subject teaching already make a contribution, and then to demonstrate ways of extending those. The Government is clear that freeing up schools to make their own

decisions within a slimmer accountability framework will enable them to work within national priorities and at the same time respond to local circumstances and pupil needs to raise standards. We will combine this new relationship with schools with encouragement to incorporate environmental or wider sustainability issues into teaching and management practices.”

“...though the Department has many projects underway which support ESD, they are not explicitly labelled ‘ESD’, and therefore the contribution to sustainable development is missed; the Extended Schools initiative would be one such example. This initiative is designed to increase the value added by schools to their local communities and could provide a vehicle for stronger community engagement, including educational activities. “

8. DfES have a number of programmes, most with related funding, which contribute to ESD, such as the National Healthy Schools Standard and school travel plans, as included in **Annex B**. There are also plans to develop a ‘*Sustainable Schools*’ strategy. The ‘embedded’ approach, though it has advantages, makes it much more difficult to obtain evidence of ESD activity and associated funding.
9. The QCA (DfES’ curriculum NDPB) has a website advising teachers about ESD². An important element of DfES’ future approach to ESD is a ‘Sustainable Schools’ website within TeacherNet. This will build on the QCA site, and is being developed with advice from WWF-UK. It should be up and running next spring. The idea is that schools and teachers will be able to access information from a single portal which enables them to distinguish between different initiatives and guidance. The website will also enable schools to give customer feedback on schemes they use, advising colleagues about which have been worthwhile. The intention is that the website will help connect schools with national, regional or local intermediaries, working on whichever element of sustainable development the school is interested in. DfES does not intend the website to quality assure schemes centrally.

² <http://www.nc.uk.net/esd/teaching/index.htm>

2.2.2 Defra Approach

10. Defra's five year strategy commits the Department to two key priorities of environmental leadership and putting sustainability into practice. Key challenges for Defra (in partnership with other Departments) are improving the local environment; finding effective ways to achieve more sustainable consumption and production; meeting the challenge of climate change; achieving thriving rural communities and a sustainable farming industry; and protecting and enhancing the natural environment. Many of the outcomes Defra seek will need the engagement of all sections of society, including children and young people. Education and awareness raising already feature in many of Defra's programmes as part of the necessary delivery framework. At present Defra integrates educational work into its various programmes and projects rather than managing it as a strategic programme with central control and oversight.

2.2.3 Curriculum and Inspection

11. Since 2000 ESD has been a requirement in four subjects of the national curriculum: science, geography, design & technology and citizenship, studied by all pupils 5-14; and in science & citizenship studied up to age 16 by all pupils. With the move to more focused Ofsted inspections, SD will not be covered routinely in the way that it is in Wales. It will be picked up as a strength or weakness in some schools as inspectors follow up schools' self-evaluation. DfES is part funding an Ofsted led three-year survey of the potential of sustainable development as an approach for Whole School Improvement in a sample of schools. The Ofsted survey will be shadowed by independent research into individual attitudinal change in teachers and pupils in the same sample of schools, which includes primary, secondary and special schools as well as an Academy. Drawing on findings from these, consideration will be given to extending the Ofsted survey work in 2007/8 to a more widespread review to explore how one would go about inspecting sustainable development in education.

2.2.4 Teacher Training

12. In their recent EAC response, DfES provide an update on SD in teacher training:

“The bursar/business training programmes which were developed with the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) have been reviewed to take account of sustainable development. An environment module for the school business management programme has been piloted successfully, and will be incorporated in the certificate School Business Management from Spring 2005. The Department has been working with the NCSL to explore how school leaders at all levels, and those being trained and prepared for leadership roles, are able to integrate sustainable development into the leadership and management of their schools. NCSL have developed documentation on sustainable development for use within the *National Professional Qualification for Head Teachers* (NPQH) and further materials have been developed by WWF for inclusion in the College’s *Leading from the Middle* programme. We are aware that senior management at NCSL need to be engaged to help establish overall strategic integration across the programmes and initiatives.”

2.2.5 Local Support

13. Prior to the Education Reform Act 1988, the use of education funding at local level was determined by LEAs, who were able to use as much as they wanted centrally to fund their priorities. The principle of delegation to schools, brought in by the ERA, was that most decisions on the use of resources were better made at the front line. Since then delegation has been stepped up and downward pressure has been exerted on money held centrally by LEAs. This is in line with DfES’ decision to devolve funding as far as possible to the front line, as set out most recently in their Five Year Strategy. Advisors are now employed by LEAs only where schools wish to purchase their services, and in many authorities the number of advisors has reduced. There are fewer advisors overall for subjects except english and maths which are the focus of the government’s primary and secondary national strategies. Whereas previously there were often ‘environmental education’ advisors in LEAs, these now very rarely exist, and there are very rarely specific SD advisors. There is no record of how much was spent by LEAs on supporting environmental education, although one estimate from an interviewee was that £50 million per year was formerly allocated by LEAs. The money is now instead provided directly to schools, which may choose to spend it on ESD activity.

2.2.6 ESD indicators and objectives

14. Government has been criticised because of the lack of an ESD indicator in the UK Sustainable Development Strategy. There is currently no baseline against which to assess ESD activity, although this is an area where measurement is very difficult. There is a commitment within the UK SD Strategy to develop an indicator and DfES is proceeding with work to achieve this. A strategic statement of ESD objectives is necessary before an indicator can be developed.

3 Comments on the Current Government Approach to ‘ESD’

15. Some interviewees acknowledged that there has been progress in some areas of ESD, for example ‘Growing Schools’, and Objectives 2 and 3 of the DfES action plan. However many interviewees stressed how vitally important it is that there is a shift in the priority attached to ESD. A consistent concern interviewees had was that very significant numbers of schools are not actively engaging with the sustainable development (SD) agenda. Many felt that SD in its widest sense will never be achieved unless SD is taken more seriously in schools. Many interviewees said that some schools are active in the SD area, but that this is very dependent on key teachers being keen and perhaps working with intermediaries.

16. It was pointed out by two interviewees that ESD is also worthwhile purely from a school improvement point of view – and that there is a good case that approaches to learning through ESD are a powerful force for increasing pupil achievement. Consistent and very strong messages from interviewees were that ESD has slipped seriously down the political agenda, that ESD messages are not getting through to young people, and that there is a real need for government to commit to addressing ESD. 2005 is the launch of the UNESCO Decade on ESD, and it was stressed that this provides an ideal opportunity to get ESD back up the political agenda. Many interviewees thought it would be missing a real opportunity not to do more on ESD now, and specific suggestions are picked up later in this report.

3.1 Strategic Approach

17. Many interviewees thought that the SD Education Panel had set a very useful agenda, but that that has been lost since the Panel's last report in 2003. A really key finding from interviews has been that interviewees are not clear what government's strategic aims and objectives for ESD are. It was recognised that some objectives are included in the DfES Action Plan and, in a general sense, in the UK SD Strategy. However a consistent view put forward by interviewees was that government objectives on ESD are insufficient. It was recognised that the broad scope of ESD in its broadest sense makes it difficult to formulate a coherent approach. However the strong and consistent view from interviewees was that this should not be a reason to continue with the status quo. One interviewee provided written background before being interviewed in which he noted:

'Policy development and implementation of ESD has in the UK (and I would suspect in other countries) gone ahead of debating what we are trying to achieve.'

18. Some interviewees felt that the EAC report³ supported their view that ESD is not a priority for many schools. There has not been a comprehensive audit of the state of ESD in schools, although Ofsted looked at ESD in 26 schools in 2003⁴. Ofsted concluded from that small sample that even in successful schools there is still much to do before the schools can claim to have met their own aspirations for ESD. Some interviewees stressed that there needs to be more discussion with schools about what they want and need.

19. A number of interviewees said that schools want clear guidance from government on taking forward ESD. A few interviewees said that schools are still affected by the culture of detailed instructions from DfES and inspections by Ofsted, so that because ESD is not high on the agenda for DfES or Ofsted schools do not receive the message that it is important. Many interviewees felt that existing ESD objectives have not been adequately communicated to schools and other key stakeholders. The common view among interviewees was that the DfES website will not be enough. The real problem was said to be a lack of status and even understanding of ESD, which needs to be addressed by actions to increase demand from schools, such as teacher training and development and local support.

³ Environmental Audit Committee. 'Environmental Education: Follow-up to Learning the Sustainability Lesson'. April 2005

⁴ 'Taking the first step forward.... Towards an education for sustainable development'. Ofsted, 2003.

20. A consistent view was that government needs to work across departments and with stakeholders to establish what it wants to achieve on ESD, and to provide a strategic vision and objectives. One interviewee noted that there is a risk of stagnation, duplication and gaps if a more strategic approach is not taken. Key questions which interviewees thought should be addressed to inform development of a strategic framework included:

- The extent to which schools are currently engaging with the ESD agenda.
- The extent to which existing ESD initiatives are delivering changes in the understanding and behaviour of young people. One suggestion was that an organisation such as MORI could carry out such a survey.
- What young people and teachers want in terms of ESD.
- Whether teachers are adequately trained in ESD, and whether it is adequately built into their competencies. One interviewee said that teacher training on ESD had reduced, with people often dropping the ESD unit in order to pass other exams.
- Whether the current inclusion of ESD in parts of the curriculum is enough.

3.2 Consistency with DfES and Defra Strategic Aims

21. One of the questions for this review was whether the approach to ESD funding is in line with DfES and Defra's strategic aims. Some interviewees made the point that the current approach to ESD funding is entirely consistent with DfES aims since their strategic approach is to devolve more responsibility to schools. However a couple of interviewees said that DfES do not have a strategy for how the purpose statements at the front of the curriculum will be met. For Defra, some interviewees said that funding is not consistent (one interviewee said "*totally inconsistent*") with Defra's strategic aims. Some interviewees noted that the ideas for ESD are really in the UK SD strategy. Others thought that Defra do not have specific objectives for ESD, and that Defra are unclear what their involvement should be.

22. Many interviewees thought there has been insufficient debate about ESD within government, and that there is a need for this to start soon in order to push ESD up the agenda. A couple of interviewees thought that there is a need to build capacity within DfES

for ESD so that ESD can be planned strategically. It was suggested by some interviewees that Defra need to do more to push the ESD agenda, and a few interviewees suggested that it would be useful if there was a key contact or team within Defra with responsibility for ESD.

3.3 Working with NGOs

23. DfES have had engagement with a range of NGOs across the broad ESD agenda. For example on Growing Schools they have had strategic engagement with FACE, FCFGG, LTL, NAFSO and CFE. On the Sustainable Schools website they have worked with Oxfam and WWF. In developing the Education outside the Classroom Manifesto they have engaged with over 150 organisations through stakeholder meetings and working groups. A number of NGOs have also delivered ESD projects for DfES, and there has been engagement with and funding of CEE.

24. However many interviewees were concerned that DfES are not working in partnership with the NGO sector as a whole on ESD. A common view on this was captured by one interviewee's comment:

“There is a vacuum on the strategic join-up between NGOs and government [on ESD]”

Many interviewees felt that DfES is unwilling to engage strategically with all but two or three NGOs. One example given was that when responsibility for the new website was moved from QCA to DfES, the advisory group that included NGOs was shut down. It is worrying that so many NGOs felt they have not been consulted on the DfES' future approach. The consistent view from interviewees echoed a statement made in a submission to the EAC earlier this year:

‘A fundamental weakness of progress since 2003 has been the failure by DfES to recognise the importance of strategic ownership and engagement on a collective basis.’

Many NGO interviewees stressed that government and NGOs are basically working to achieve the same outcomes, and they would like the opportunity to work with in partnership with government as NGOs do in many policy areas.

25. Other government departments have partnership-based approaches with NGOs, in some cases with formal agreements. For example DFID have a formal partnership approach with DEA. The current DEA agreement runs for 3 years until March 2007, and sets out key high level outcomes and specific activities and indicators. DFID provides funding which is tied to performance. DFID and DEA officials meet regularly to discuss written progress reports, and variations to the programme and/or budget are agreed at the meetings.

4 Intermediaries' work on ESD

4.1 The Importance of Intermediaries

26. As ESD covers such a broad range of activity, it would be a very significant task to assess in detail the importance of the NGO contribution across the board. However it does seem from interviews that many NGOs have been important in working with schools on ESD.

Interviewees in Defra and DfES were asked how important NGOs and government agencies are for the delivery of ESD. The common response was that it was difficult to give a comprehensive answer. People within government generally work with a small number of organisations specific to their area, and did not feel qualified to say across the board which NGOs are important for ESD. Many noted that there are a whole range of organisations, including many small local organisations, doing good work.

27. Even within specific policy areas, those within government are not always clear how important NGOs are in terms of ESD, which NGOs are most vital and what exactly their contribution is. Within at least one specific policy area – waste policy, Defra is currently undertaking a piece of work to understand what different NGOs contribute and how government might engage with them more strategically. It is therefore not possible to say at this stage whether specific NGOs should be more fully supported financially for ESD. However some people within Defra and its government agencies said that NGO work on ESD is very important. In the biodiversity area, Wildlife Trusts and BTCV were seen as vital in the delivery of the biodiversity strategy, one strand of which is 'Public Education and Understanding of Biodiversity'. A number of other NGOs were flagged by public sector interviewees as doing very useful work on ESD, including Groundwork, the Field

Studies Council, Learning Through Landscapes, RSPB, WWF-UK and WWT to name a few.

28. A 2004 DfES-funded review⁵ found that *'there are many excellent resources from NGOs'*. A submission to the EAC from Leeds City Council said *'historically much of the [ESD work] has been as a result of voluntary effort through effective local networks of NGOs.'* Regional interviewees also said that NGOs are important partners in ESD. Within the NGO sector, the common view was that the sector has been crucial in delivering ESD, with many interviewees stressing that NGOs are the key deliverers of ESD. As can be seen from the written evidence provided to the last EAC enquiry, many NGOs consider that the NGO sector has done significantly more than government in funding and encouraging ESD activity, and that a great deal of expertise on ESD clearly exists within the sector. Some interviewees noted that NGOs have become particularly important since the reduction in local support of schools by government.

4.2 Evaluation and Monitoring of Intermediaries' ESD Activity

29. To help assess the importance of intermediaries, interviewees were asked how organisations that carry out ESD activities measure what their work achieves and provide evidence of the practical difference their work makes. ESD outcomes are often difficult to measure, but interviewees acknowledged the importance of evaluation. There was a view from DfES that NGOs are starting to get better at demonstrating the practical outcomes of their work, but that intermediaries are not generally strong in this area. However many NGOs stressed how good they are at demonstrating outcomes, and that they have to be given that much of their funding depends on being able to do so. Some interviewees commented positively about CEE's booklet *'Measuring Effectiveness: Evaluation in ESD'*⁶ which advises organisations on the importance of evaluation.
30. Interviewees provided some specific examples of the work that NGOs have delivered on ESD, including measurable outcomes. For example Waste Watch runs the Schools Waste Action Club (SWAC), which since 1998 has worked with over 1000 schools and helped to divert an estimated 2400 tonnes of waste from landfill. Waste Watch's 'Cycler' robot has

⁵ *'ESD – Subject specialist teachers: a needs analysis.'* July 2004. Managed by the Geographical Association.

⁶ <http://www.cee.org.uk/documents/Measuringeffectiveness>

visited over 750,000 pupils and has resulted in very positive feedback from schools. Global Action Plan runs an 'Action at School Initiative' which has involved 145 schools and resulted in over 100 schools reducing rubbish going to landfill by 41%, and over 20 schools cutting their energy bills by an average of £9,435 per year. NGO websites and publications also provide an extensive range of other examples of the projects and activities they run – some of which are small scale and/or with less measurable outputs. For example RPSB's field teaching scheme 'Living Classrooms' provides visits to nature reserves led by RSPB field teachers. Envision support events for young people on issues including green spaces and healthy and ethical food. To fully understand the importance of NGOs for ESD would require a substantial audit of the ESD activity of a large number of NGOs and schools. This is outside the scope of this review, and would be a very significant piece of work.

4.3 Co-ordination of Intermediaries

31. Many interviewees felt that different NGOs do not agree on how ESD should be defined or delivered, and that there is a lack of co-ordination and some infighting within the sector. Some interviewees said that individual NGOs are often too focused on pushing their own particular agenda and on pursuing funding streams, although the point was also made that government funding approaches have contributed significantly to this. One interviewee said the LTCS funding method in particular had resulted in a whole host of organisations now existing with various degrees of credibility and a lot of duplication. There was concern that lack of co-ordination within the sector means that there is duplication and that schools receive too many action packs from different NGOs. However some NGOs said that there is plenty for all NGOs to do, and that NGOs are good at working together, particularly where government encourages them to do so. One strong view from the regional interviewees was that NGOs need to re-orient their thinking to understand what the education system needs from them, so that they can then access any available funds.
32. The EAC recommended that DfES should draw up a framework for how NGOs work on ESD. A number of interviewees pointed out the difficulties of that. Many said that it is not government's role to draw up such a framework. NGOs are independent bodies which are constrained by their charitable objectives. However it was suggested that it would be possible to draw up an agreement for partnership working. A few interviewees thought that CEE should have done more before now to encourage NGOs to work together in a

structured way. However others noted that the sector is much more likely to work coherently if a financial commitment is made by government. It was also noted that NGOs were involved in the Sustainable Development Education Panel, which recommended a framework approach.

5 Funding

5.1 Current and Recent Funding of ESD

33. **Annex B** sets out key funding streams that have supported ESD in the past. Key funding streams for ESD for NGOs that existed until recently are no longer available in nearly all cases. There is some ongoing funding of 'ESD' from government sources, including some significant DfES funding streams which have an ESD element. However it is difficult to obtain a comprehensive picture as many projects could be said to include ESD, but are not defined as such.

5.1.1 Funding available to NGOs

34. The most significant funding streams for NGOs in the past were the Environmental Action Fund (EAF) and the Landfill Tax Credit Scheme (LTCS). In 2002-05 the EAF supported projects under two headings: (a) Biodiversity and (b) Understanding and Awareness of Sustainable Development. The second strand in particular included some projects that promoted ESD, so whilst EAF was not specifically an ESD funding stream some projects were focused on ESD in the context of either biodiversity or raising awareness of sustainable development.

35. Since 2003, LTCS funding has no longer been available for ESD activity. It was felt that a more strategic approach to sustainable waste management was needed for the UK to meet its EU obligations to make substantial reductions in landfill from 2010 onwards. The focus of the EAF has also changed. The focus of the 2005-08 EAF is sustainable consumption and production - projects 'that find ways of making sustainable living attractive to consumers and sustainable behaviour attractive to producers'. Within this there is some funding going towards ESD where it is looking to change behaviours rather than just raise awareness.

Some funding for 'ESD' has been provided to a small number of organisations under this round, but relatively this is a very small amount compared to under the 2002-5 fund (see **Annex B**).

36. Estimates of the amount of funding that EAF and LTCS provided for ESD in the past vary significantly due to the difficulty in identifying 'ESD' projects. To a large extent this is because of the difficulty in defining an 'ESD' project – for example under the broad SDEP definition of ESD all current EAF projects comprise at least an element of ESD. However estimates of past funding range to up to £1.22M per year from EAF and £10M per year from LTCS. There have also been individual allocations of money from DfES to intermediaries for environmental education, amounting to £983,100 in 2004-5, and a number of other significant DfES funds now have an ESD element. Defra has also provided additional funding for work that could be called ESD – for example under the biodiversity workstream.

5.1.2 LEA and school funding

37. (The changes to LEA funding which have occurred since 1988 are detailed in section 2.2.5.) Money is now provided directly to schools, which may choose to spend it on ESD activity. There has not been any research on the extent to which schools now use their delegated budgets to buy in ESD support. However the common view among interviewees was that this does not occur to any significant extent.
38. It was pointed out by many interviewees that giving schools the option to spend money on ESD through NGOs is no guarantee that they will do so given the vast number of competing priorities that they face. One interviewee said that some schools are prepared to pay for NGO work, but that others are unable to because of other pressures. One interviewee said that there is currently no social equity – with richer schools more likely to be involved in ESD. Comments included:

'Schools won't spend the money unless it is specifically stated that they should'.

'[Schools] are understandably reluctant to share funding with intermediaries – particularly on areas such as ESD where objectives are unclear.'

Many interviewees echoed the view that some schools will not be willing to spend money on ESD unless they get the message that it is a priority for government. Some evidence was provided that schools do not feel able to fund NGO projects on ESD. For example Waste Watch's 'Cycler' robot had an 18 month waiting list when it was free, and there has been very positive feedback about it from schools and local authorities, but when the decision was taken to charge schools £250 for a visit many schools did not feel able to pay for it. It has also been difficult for local authorities to meet the cost, although again they demonstrated high demand when it was free.

5.2 Is funding coherent and strategic?

39. One of the key questions for this review was whether ESD funding is coherent and strategic. The overwhelming response from interviewees is that ESD funding is not coherent and strategic, which clearly links back to their consensus view that government's overall approach to ESD is not strategic or coherent.

40. A number of external interviewees felt that there is a lack of transparency in how government allocates money to 'ESD' activity. In a recent PQ response, DfES recorded that they spent just under £1M on ESD work in 2004-5 (**Annex B**). However for interviewee organisations, there was a lack of awareness about what DfES had spent in 2004-5. There was also considerable annoyance from many interviewees that DfES has worked very closely with and funded a small number of NGOs, without being transparent with NGOs more generally about what it is trying to do and what money is available. One interviewee said:

'Where there has been money and proposals are sent in, some are randomly accepted.'

There was uncertainty about what the criteria are for giving core grants. The point was also made that for organisations whose work is cross-departmental and has relevance to more than one government department, it is unclear what the procedures are for funding.

41. There are already a number of pots of money that contribute to ESD, for example in the development education, sustainable communities and citizenship areas. One suggestion was that all such initiatives could be 'badged' as part of a wider ESD framework.

5.3 Gaps in ESD Funding

42. Until it is clear what government's objectives are for ESD and there is baseline knowledge of the penetration of the agenda it is not possible to say specifically where the gaps in funding are. However many interviewees said that there is now virtually no government funding for NGOs for ESD, and particularly not funding that is available through transparent mechanisms. Some said that it is not so much that there are gaps rather that there is hardly any money. A number of interviewees noted that NGOs are spending vast amounts on ESD activity – millions of pounds a year in some cases. Some specific examples were provided of NGO activity which it will be very difficult to take forward without additional government funding, for example Groundwork's RMC Greenlink scheme which helped schools develop links with local businesses to provide a better understanding of issues such as waste minimisation. One interviewee said that NGOs cannot fund the activity indefinitely due to the amount it costs them. Some else said that there is a need for delivery organisations to support schools, but that many will soon disappear if funding is not made available.

43. A consistent view from interviewees was that government needs to provide more funding for ESD to really allow progress to be made. However there was consensus that funding needs to be accompanied by a strategic framework for ESD. A very consistent view was that greater resources would need to be targeted effectively and linked to clear objectives on what is to be achieved.

44. One interviewee was not sure that there should be more money for NGOs, rather it was about government providing a strategic lead and ensuring that there is consistency in the approach that NGOs take. A point made in written evidence to the EAC was that delivering ESD cannot be achieved just by additional resources – it is also important that existing resources and initiatives take account of ESD.

6 Government and the Voluntary and Community Sector

45. It is worthwhile considering the cross-government approach to working with NGOs on shared agendas. Fundamental in this area is the 'The Compact'⁷, which provides a framework to enable effective partnership between government and the voluntary and community sector. The Compact is an agreement between government (Home Office leads) and the Voluntary and Community Sector. DfES and Defra are committed to working according to the Compact.

46. The Compact encompasses a number of Codes of Good Practice including one on funding which contains the government's commitment to implement an effective funding framework. The details on funding good practice are in **Annex C**, but key points are that government should:

- respond to the sector's need for greater financial stability to enable it to fulfil its full strategic role,
- improve sustainability and longer term planning;
- ensure clarity and greater consistency in funding conditions;
- invest in the capacity of the sector's infrastructure;
- promote fair access to strategic, project and contract funding, and provide clarity in the objectives of grant programmes and their eligibility criteria; and
- strengthen partnership working.

47. It is also worth noting that, following consultation, DfES has recently launched a Children, Young People and Families Grant Programme. This programme was created to help DfES make its funding to voluntary organisations more strategic and to make it easier for organisations to apply for funding for work that improves outcomes for children, young people and families. The programme will bring together five existing grant programmes managed by the DfES from April 2006.

⁷ <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/comrace/active/compact/>

7 Possible funding and strategic approaches

48. During this review a range of suggestions were made by interviewees for how ESD should be funded in future, along with the associated strategic approach which could be taken. The key suggestions made are set out below. A number of interviewees agreed that the ideal end point would be that schools would be so actively engaged with the ESD agenda that it would be an integral part of how they operate and teach, with the result that NGO support would become less vital. However many interviewees said that with the current lack of understanding of and engagement with ESD in many schools, there is a need over perhaps the next 5-10 years for discrete funding of ESD activity. A number of interviewees stressed the advantages of providing funding for innovative new projects at this stage of ESD development, whereas interviewees also mentioned the need for more strategic long term funding. A key requirement was thought to be a structured approach so that government funding is issued against agreed objectives.

7.1 National Strategic Framework

49. There was general agreement that there needs to be a government-driven national strategic framework for ESD. Such a framework would have to take account of existing programmes that contribute to ESD, for example DFID work on global education and ODPM's 'Skills for Sustainable Communities' agenda, and it would need to be agreed with LEAs, subject associations, QCA, and Ofsted. It was also suggested that key government departments – DfES and Defra and possibly others should draw up a partnership agreement on ESD. DfES and the Department of Health have a strategic partnership agreement which sets out where joint activity will be focused. Some interviewees suggested that the national framework should set overall aims, with strategic groupings around the key elements of ESD eg. energy, biodiversity, waste, global education.

50. As a possible model, “*Enabling Effective Support*”⁸, was mentioned by a few interviewees as being a successful approach which resulted from dialogue rather than being purely DFID-led. DFID did an audit of the resources and support available for schools for development education. DFID has supported the development of 11 regional strategies to provide more

⁸ <http://www.dfid.gov.uk/pubs/files/enablingeffectivesupport.pdf>

comprehensive, high quality support to teachers for delivery of the global dimension of education. Each regional strategy focuses on how global perspectives can be effectively delivered and supported in the formal education sector, particularly through new partnerships and co-operative ways of working. Different regions are taking quite different approaches to regional strategy, but as an example the East Midlands uses ‘locality groups’ – a combination of NGOs, LEAs and local education centres. The intention is that ownership is eventually transferred more to the education sector. DFID has provided £100k per region to enable partnership working, but there has been an expectation of match funding from other sources. The DfES SD Action Plan (p9) said that DfES will ensure that ESD builds on DFID’s ‘*Enabling Effective Support*’ Strategy. This does not seem to have been pursued to date but should be discussed with DFID. DFID have had discussions with DFES’ International Division about how different regional networks that deal with global education might be rationalised.

7.2 ESD ‘Standards’

51. ESD ‘standards’ were mentioned by a number of interviewees and could be a key area for more detailed consideration as part of a strategic ESD framework. The use of agreed standards would be likely to create opportunities for more intermediaries to provide support to schools and to encourage the NGO sector to work more effectively together. It might also attract new corporate sector funding. Some interviewees suggested encouraging use of one of the existing standards which encompass elements of ESD eg. Healthy Schools or Eco-schools (see below for details). Others suggested that a number of additional standards could be encouraged eg. Growing Schools and Forest Schools. Another suggestion was that there could be a new government-endorsed ESD standard. Another suggestion from one interviewee was that ISO14001 or the simpler BS8555 could be encouraged, although someone else was concerned that these are aimed at businesses rather than schools.

7.2.1 Healthy Schools

52. A number of interviewees suggested this as a useful model for ESD. A standard is set and agreed by government and partnership working is prescribed, but there is enough flexibility for partnerships to adopt different approaches. The initiative operates to a national standard,

the National Healthy School Standard (NHSS). This model allows the scheme to respond to local priorities, needs and opportunities and specifies the development of appropriate local partnerships, while operating within a nationally agreed structure. The Healthy Schools programme has a clear regional structure, based on the 8 regional health authorities in England. A number of reasons were given why the Healthy Schools approach has been successful, including the strategic framework, the resources dedicated to it, objectives being set nationally, regionally and at school level, the support and training provided and the whole-school approach.

53. A number of areas of Healthy Schools relate to the ESD agenda, for example school travel, food production and choice, and school grounds and the school environment. However the ESD agenda also goes much wider than that of Healthy Schools. Some interviewees suggested that one option would be to integrate Healthy Schools with ESD activity, although one interviewee said that ideally ESD should have come first with Healthy Schools as a component of it. A report by CEE to DfES⁹ found that there is local co-operation on the Healthy Schools and ESD agendas. In Leeds, the city council engages a network of local ESD providers, including NGOs, to provide support to schools as they work to achieve the elements of the standard.

7.2.2 Eco-schools

54. Eco-schools is an international initiative designed to encourage whole-school action for the environment¹⁰. It is an award scheme that accredits schools that make a commitment to continuously improve their environmental performance. Schools can obtain a bronze or silver award or a green flag. The scheme is run by ENCAMS in the UK, and ENCAMS funded it with £87k in 2005/5 with Defra approval as part of the grant-in-aid arrangement.

55. Some interviewees said that Eco-schools is a useful model, and could be improved by adaptations. The scheme website directs participants towards NGOs which they can work with, including RSPB, Global Action Plan and Groundwork, and provides contact details, organised by subject area. However a few interviewees were fairly negative about Eco-schools, with criticisms including that very few schools complete the certification process, that it targets mainly primary schools, and there are concerns about how it has been run.

⁹ 'Report to DfES on the links and possible future relationships between ESD and Healthy Schools' (undated)

There has not been general buy-in to Eco-schools across the NGO sector, although one view was that there would be more buy-in if Government clearly supported the model.

56. In 2001, the Scottish Education Department (SEED) adopted a performance measurement for Education Authorities, with Authorities asked to report on:

‘The number/percentage of primary and secondary schools within their area that are participating in the Eco Schools Award or similar accredited environmental award.’

7.3 Accredited Delivery Agents

57. One suggestion was that there should be ‘accredited delivery agents’ to make it easier for schools to see who they could work with in their area. One interviewee suggested that LEAs could have a list of approved ESD providers in their area, based on teacher recommendations. There may be value in such an approach, but it would require resources and could be criticised by organisations that were not accredited.

7.4 ESD Funding

58. Interviewees stressed the need for future funding to be allocated on a strategic and transparent basis. The future approach preferred by most NGOs was that there should be an ESD fund. Most thought that this should be for NGOs to apply for directly. However some interviewees thought that schools should apply for the money. A number of interviewees suggested that a condition of the fund could be that schools should work closely with NGOs (or vice versa if money was provided direct to NGOs). One suggestion was that both DfES and NGOs could be involved in allocating money. It was also suggested that Defra Agencies could be responsible for contracting out the delivery of projects.

59. Some interviewees offered views on the amounts of money they thought should be put into ESD, although many responses were along the lines of ‘*how long is a piece of string?!*’ Suggestions included the sorts of amounts given to other key government programmes such

¹⁰ <http://www.eco-schools.org.uk/>

as Healthy Schools, or sport – which amount to as much as hundreds of millions.

Interviewees were asked whether there is any key intermediary body which could manage and administer any future ESD funding. Possible models that were suggested were the Civic Trust, which administers some EAF money, the Carbon Trust and WRAP. Possible intermediaries that were suggested were the Environment Agency, Groundwork, The Royal Society of Wildlife Trusts (see below) and National Park Authorities. One interviewee thought that the Sustainable Development Commission could perhaps distribute money. It was also suggested by some that a new body could be set up to administer a fund.

60. A number of interviewees said that the approach that RSWT had used to administer the SEED fund¹¹ for three years had been successful. A pot of lottery money was used to fund all aspects of SD activity. An advisory board set the strategic direction of the fund and a decision making body comprised of elected representatives across sectors such as food, soil, transport and waste decided how the money should be spent. The group of NGOs were self-selected as they bid together for the consortium role. One disadvantage of such an approach was that there was not strategic co-ordination across all areas of SD – it was dependent on what bids were received.

7.5 Regional/ local approach to ESD

61. The DfES Action Plan set out aims for local and regional support of ESD activity. The 2004 DfES-funded review referred to previously found that *‘teachers would like help or clearer signposting and guidance to locate the most appropriate [NGO resources]’*. Ofsted’s small scale review of ESD found that the most successful schools were most strongly categorised by (along with other factors): *‘a well-developed local support network, for example involving the LEA in sustainability issues and/or NGOs in providing support across a wide range of projects’*.
62. As detailed in 2.2.5, the DfES approach before 1988 meant that local government could fund subject advisors, including ‘environmental education’ advisors. A small number of interviewees were keen on returning to the LEA model of local advisors. Someone pointed out that a couple of LEAs advisors – one on science and one on geography had been really

key for ESD in their area. However there are also now regional partnerships for ESD, which have grown up in different ways in different regions. These partnerships undertake (or aim to undertake) activities that include supporting schools, increasing demand in schools for ESD activity, co-ordinating NGO activity and involving business in ESD. Key information obtained from interviewees in three regions is set out below:

- In **Yorkshire and Humber** there is an ESD Forum¹², with the RDA chairing a 'Management Group' involving some NGOs, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Dales National Park, and Local Authorities. There is an ESD strategy, and the Forum has carried out a range of activities over the past couple of years, including setting up a website with an e-mail newsletter, the development of learning materials, an initial teacher professional development workshop about global SD issues and, a seminar with Y&H ITT institutions. The intention for the future is to continue with education 'interventions' such as teacher training workshops, online teaching resources, study tours and seminars. However very little funding has been available within the RDA for this activity. The funding so far has been for one regional ESD coordinator for three-years, and there is a risk that there will be insufficient resources to drive the strategy forward.
- In the **North East**, a 'Regional Strategic Partnership' is being set up and will provide support to schools by developing educational programmes, opportunities for curriculum and professional development and regional initiatives. The partnership has been funded from a combination of NGO money, some contract work, most from schools, and previously LTCS money which is now running out. However there is now only about a year's funding left. The Eco-schools approach is promoted in the North East, and other relevant programmes such as Growing Schools, Forest Schools and DFID's global education approach are also recommended to schools on a non-exclusive basis so that there is also room for small specialist NGOs. There is one regional partnership coordinator and nine full time staff. The partnership approach involves co-ordination with LEAs, NGOs, landowners and utilities. The intention is that the partnership will result in NGOs collectively being able to provide a more comprehensive and coherent structure for supporting schools. The interface with schools includes conferences, teacher training and networks. The view from the partnership is that schools need help

¹¹ <http://www.rsnc.org/seed/>

¹² <http://www.yorkshireandhumber.net/esd>

and support in the early stages of their adoption of ESD programmes such as Growing Schools, which may then be able to be withdrawn once the schools have work up and running.

- **In the South West**, Learning South West (which is now more of an NGO than a government body) is leading on the development of a regional ESD strategy. The regional approach is still in the fairly early stages of development, and there is a need to secure funds to take the work forward. As in the other regions, the importance of working with local businesses as well as NGOs was stressed.

63. Interviewees in the regions were keen on an approach where money is allocated regionally to drive ESD. A key argument in favour of this is that it could lead to a regionally co-ordinated approach being taken. The point was also made that government putting money into regional co-ordination could unlock funding from the private sector, the EU and from schools. A regional co-ordination role would not need to sit in the same place in every region – it could be in an RDA or any other appropriate existing or new body or partnership. If the RDA does not have the necessary structures and partnership working arrangements in place then they will not be best placed to ensure that money is allocated to the most effective activities. A couple of interviewees said that RDAs had (initially at least) been focused on economics rather than sustainable development, but some thought that sustainable development may now be rising up the agenda for RDAs. However there was some concern that there are not yet the necessary SD skills within RDAs.

64. The regional approach is already used to an extent for SD activity. For example Defra have allocated £850k for each of the next 3 years to deliver biodiversity action at the regional and local level. The money has been allocated to English Nature to distribute across the regions. A key part of this money will be spent on the employment of regional coordinators who will coordinate regional biodiversity partnerships and help support local and regional delivery.

7.6 Infrastructure Body

65. Many interviewees commented on the value of having an infrastructure body such as CEE to be a key coordinating body for ESD. There were varied views about the value of CEE as it has operated to date, but a number of interviewees stressed the value of CEE and others felt that government support of an infrastructure body should be part of a future strategic approach.
66. There was a view from government interviewees that CEE had a potential role, but that it would have to be defined clearly and to fit with what government is trying to achieve. Many non-government interviewees agreed that CEE or some similar body should be a key part of a future ESD framework. CEE was said to be invaluable in terms of understanding the sector, informing policy development, engaging with those who deliver ESD on the ground, joining up any organisations that choose to become members, running the Joint Agency Group and the environment education research network and running conferences. A number of interviewees thought that there was a need for CEE to reinvent itself to some extent in order to be the key infrastructure body for ESD. For example one interviewee said that CEE is currently about environment education rather than ESD in the broader sense, although others disagreed. A couple of interviewees said that CEE needs to be more focused on practical implementation as well as drawing together NGOs, and that it needs to engage with school practitioners as well as NGOs.
67. Some interviewees thought that government should view CEE as an ‘infrastructure body’, so that it gets core funding grant in the way that Volunteering England and NCVO have in the past. When working with infrastructure bodies, government can have a relationship where it buys specific services. Alternatively, government can make a certain amount of money available and find out what an infrastructure body could provide for that amount of money. For example NCVO receives considerable grant-in-aid from the Home Office, based on agreed service provision. The services to be provided are defined at quite a high level, so part of NCVO’s role is to identify solutions. Such an approach can involve money coming from different agencies and parts of government that value the service provided by an infrastructure body.

7.7 Other funding suggestions

68. Other suggestions included:

- A few interviewees suggested that schools could be given a designated budget which is allocated to ESD. However this approach is inconsistent with DfES' strategic approach of giving schools more flexibility.
- One suggestion was that key intermediaries could be funded from policy money where they make a vital contribution to delivery.
- It was suggested that DfES should do more to engage strategically with the corporate sector collectively. A few interviewees said that there would be more success in attracting private sector funding into ESD if there was a clearer strategic approach and if government put in some funding.

7.8 Overall views from interviewees

69. Particular approaches that received strong support from interviewees were:

- (1) Allocating extra funding for ESD work until such time as schools are more fully engaged with the ESD agenda. There are clearly different options for how such funding might operate, including a pot which schools could apply to, or providing money directly to schools. There may be scope to draw in private sector money nationally as well as regionally to support a clear ESD framework.
- (2) Funding regional or local co-ordinators for ESD. This could be on the basis that they would (continue to):
 - align with any national strategic ESD framework;
 - support schools in ESD activities;

- work closely with intermediaries to ensure that support for schools is provided in a coordinated way which fits schools' needs;
- work with the private sector to engage them in ESD activity where appropriate and to secure private sector funding where possible.

8 Conclusions and Recommendations

70. A consistent view from interviewees was that many schools are not actively engaged with ESD. There has not been a comprehensive audit of the state of ESD in schools, although Ofsted looked at ESD in 26 schools in 2003¹³. Ofsted concluded that even in successful schools there is still much to do before the schools can claim to have met their own aspirations for ESD. To confirm categorically that many schools are not actively engaged with ESD would clearly require a baseline assessment of school ESD activity. Apart from the Ofsted sample the evidence is anecdotal and impressionistic. However the view was a very common one amongst interviewees for this review, including from some outside the NGO sector. Many interviewees agreed that the ideal situation in the long term would be that ESD is so embedded in schools (and other sectors) that government and NGO involvement is unnecessary. But it seems that such a situation is a fair way off, so that in the meantime, perhaps for the next five years or so, there is a need for government to take a more active involvement in how schools address ESD.

71. There needs to be a more strategic approach to ESD, driven by government and involving key stakeholders. There needs to be understanding of what schools need in order to make progress, and development of an approach which allows their needs to be met. An approach which continues to rely on schools deciding to engage with (and divert funds to) ESD without a stronger message from government seems unlikely to lead to schools generally attaching more priority to ESD than they do now.

72. Recommendations from this review are necessarily based on a relatively small number of interviews. To fully formulate any new approach will require detailed work across government and with key stakeholders. On that basis, recommendations at this stage are:

Recommendation 1:

Government should clarify what it aims to achieve on ESD and what part different departments, NDPBs, NGOs and the private sector could play. Given their sustainable development remit,

¹³ 'Taking the first step forward.... Towards an education for sustainable development'. Ofsted, 2003.

Defra should play a key role in defining what the aims of ESD should be, although overall policy responsibility lies with DfES.

Discussions should include all departments (and their agencies) with a key interest, most notably DfES, Defra, DCMS, ODPM, DFID, DoH and DTI.

A strategic framework should be produced, in consultation with stakeholders, setting out the overall direction of ESD. This should include:

- *Overall aims and objectives for ESD;*
- *How ESD fits with existing work such as the National Curriculum, Healthy Schools, Enabling Effective Support and other elements of the government's environment protection, global education and communities agendas;*
- *Government view on key ESD 'standards' such as Eco-schools.*

Until there is strategic consideration of what Government is aiming to achieve, it is not possible to state what delivery mechanisms are most appropriate and what funding is necessary.

However in taking forward the ESD agenda, Government should give serious consideration to:

- *The views of interviewees (as set out in the section 7 of this report) about the need for regional/ local support of ESD activity. More work should be done into what regional ESD approaches are currently being used in all regions. This could be used both to consider both how such approaches could be supported by central government and how regional approaches could inform a national strategic framework.*
- *Whether there is a need for additional funding to deliver ESD objectives.*
- *The way in which NGOs, local government and the corporate sector could be involved in delivery.*

Recommendation 2:

A partnership agreement should be drawn up between DfES and Defra and possibly other government departments with a key interest to set out what government aims to achieve on ESD.

Recommendation 3:

Future government work on ESD should be taken forward in consultation with stakeholders, and the involvement of the voluntary sector in delivery should comply with the ‘Compact’.

9 Related Observations on ESD in the school sector

73. There are clearly a range of actions government could take to increase demand for ESD in schools, such as focus on teacher and head teacher training and governor awareness of ESD, and more comprehensive assessment of ESD by Ofsted. Interviewees made a range of suggestions for future ESD activity, some of which have been included in this section of the report, although they are beyond the remit of this review. The key points raised were:

Other Countries

- A number of interviewees suggested that the Netherlands experience is worth looking at – they currently have a four year ‘Learning for Sustainability’ national strategy endorsed and supported by a number of government departments.
- Sydney Institute for ESD - Macquarie University was also mentioned as being worth looking at.

DfES Agencies

- Many interviewees stressed that there is a need to increase the focus on ESD in teacher training and career development, and in head teacher training.
- One suggestion was that DfES should ensure that the funding of their agencies is linked to an emphasis on ESD.
- A number of interviewees thought that Ofsted could do more to encourage ESD. Some interviewees mentioned that Ofsted are looking at School Development Plans. It was

suggested that Ofsted inspectors could be trained on ESD. An option which was mentioned but considered to be possibly too advanced at this stage was for Ofsted to ask schools how they are developing SD.

Regional/Local Level

- One interviewee suggested that high level, independent regional positions are necessary, which could perhaps be based in DfES' Science Learning Centres. These should be supported with enough funding to kick-start activity, and could distribute funding.
- One interviewee suggested that there could be ESD outreach workers or 'champions' to promote access to ESD practice, signpost opportunities, deliver training to teachers and young people and build local networks of ESD practitioners and consumers. It was suggested that there should be 200 such champions across England.

Increasing demand from schools

- The Sustainability Integration Group (SIGnet) is a network of bodies that is working together to integrate SD into the post-school sector. It is funded by DfES and facilitated by Forum for the Future. This approach could be extended to the school sector, targeting key decisions makers such as head-teachers and governors and DFES agencies.
- Ask teachers what support and assistance they want on ESD.
- Governors should become more involved in ESD.
- Every school could have an ESD champion.
- There could be an entitlement for all children to experience out-of-classroom learning.
- A couple of interviewees suggested that there could be specialist schools for ESD, or even that an ESD element could be one part of being a specialist school. The first Sustainable Development Academy, St Francis of Assisi, will open next year.

- One interviewee suggested that ESD needs to feature in School Improvement Plans (and the longer term Development Plans) in order to be given priority in schools.
- One interviewee suggested that there is a need to ask young people what they think they need in terms of ESD, using forums such as the UK Youth Parliament.

Indicators

- Various views were received during this review about the value of ESD indicators and objectives. Some interviewees were of the view that government needs to do something to measure progress on ESD. However interviewees also stressed the obvious difficulties in trying to measure the effects of ESD, including the problems in linking any changes in young people's understanding and behavioural change to particular elements of education. One interviewee suggested that self-assessment is often more useful – schools should set their own indicators and update them as they progress.

10 ESD in the Informal Education Sector

74. This review focused primarily on the funding of ESD in the formal sector, but also covered the informal sector to a limited extent. However the views received in this area were not comprehensive enough to allow conclusions or recommendations to be made. A common view was that DfES' work with NGOs in the informal sector is much better than in the formal sector. It was commented that DfES have recently begun to take a more cross-government approach to Youth Work and SD. It was suggested by interviewees that there is less political involvement in the informal sector, so that it is easier for DfES to work in partnership with intermediaries. In their submission to the EAC, DEA suggested that the model of partnership working initially taken for ESD in youth work is an effective model for other sectors of education. There was recognition in evidence to the EAC that many government departments have recognised the role of informal learning, and that there is an opportunity for DfES to co-ordinate the efforts across government.

75. However some interviewees said that government is not doing enough in this area, and that more funding should be provided for the many organisations that are leading and carrying out work in this field. It was also pointed out that more needs to be done to encourage schools to provide informal experiential learning opportunities.

Annex A: Interviewees

Name	Organisation
Judith Hanna	English Nature
Nick Rijke	Environment Agency
Penelope Jones	Countryside Agency
Orlando Rutter	National Parks <i>(Co-ordinated written comments from Parks provided)</i>
Helen Steele Craig Johnson	Yorkshire Forward
Judith Cohen	Learning and skills development agency
Steve Ruse	Leeds City Council <i>(Written EAC submission provided)</i>
Paul Vare	Learning South West
Mike Tones	Durham LEA
Libby Grundy	CEE
Doug Bourn	Development Education Association
Nick Nielson	Envision
Ann Finlayson	WWF-UK
Alan Woods Alison Ellis Carl Thurston	Encams

Name	Organisation
Matthew Percy Elaine Waterstone Kirk Archibald	Energy Saving Trust
Doug Hulyer	WWT
Tony Thomas	Field Studies Council
Andy Simpson	RSPB
Sara Parkin	Forum for the future
Trewin Restorick	GAP
Barbara Herridge	Waste Watch
Helen Freeston	Wildlife Trusts <i>(Co-ordinated written comments from Trusts provided)</i>
Chris Southwood	Groundwork

Annex B: Funding for ESD

DfES

In response to a PQ about funding for environmental education in 2004-5, DfES included a note that a number of DfES funding streams to NGOs include funds for environmental education to support, for example teaching resources, continuing professional development, and some core costs, giving a total of £983,100 in 2004 – 05. The figure of £983,100 comprises:

- a. £250,000 – Learning through Landscapes
- b. £308,000 – School Works
- c. £25,000 – Forum for the Future
- d. £5,000 – National Association of Field Studies Officers
- e. £10,000 – British Food Fortnight
- f. £8,000 – Council for Environmental Education (CEE)
- g. £4,400 – Association for Citizenship Teaching (ACT)
- h. £2,500 – Association for Science Education (ASE)
- i. £2,500 – Royal Geographical Society (RGS)
- j. £2,500 – Geographical Association (GA)
- k. £4,700 – Design & Technology Association (DATA)
- l. £15,000 – Heads, Teachers & Industry (HTI)
- m. £250,000 – Energy Savings Trust (EST)
- n. £20,000 – Access to Farms
- o. £11,000 – Federation of City Farms & Gardens
- p. £3,000 – Henry Doubleday Research Association
- q. £2,000 – Royal Horticultural Society
- r. £25,500 – Development education association
- s. £34,000 – Council for Environmental education

This includes funding only to NGOs either whose primary function is one of environmental or sustainability education or where the project funded was specifically focussed on environmental or sustainability education. DfES funding tends to be allocated on a policy-specific basis, i.e. for particular projects to support individual policy initiatives, rather than through a general ESD bidding process.

Other DfES funding contributing to ESD is:

INITIATIVE	FUNDING (£)
Building Schools for Future	£2 billion per year
School Food improvement	£280m over next three years
National Healthy Schools Standard	Over £9m for 2005-06
School Travel Plans	£50m between 2004 and 2006
Extended schools	£160m to date; £680m over 2006-07 to 2007-08
Growing Schools	£250k in 2004-05; £260k in 2005-06
[Citizenship is not “ring-fenced”]	
[No funding announcement yet on Manifesto for Outdoor Education]	

Defra

Environmental Action Fund (EAF)

EAF was launched in 1992 to assist voluntary organisations in England to support government environmental objectives, where activities are not eligible for other grants. The total value of fund has remained around £4.2 million a year. The fund has regular open bidding rounds when voluntary and community sector organisations can apply for a new set of project funding lasting for three years. The most recent rounds of funding have run from 2002-05 and now from 2005-08. The focus of fund has changed over time to reflect Government priorities.

The 2002-2005 round supported understanding and awareness of sustainable development, and biodiversity. EAF was therefore not a specific ESD fund, though some projects – both on the sustainable development and biodiversity side - had an ESD focus. Defra estimate that the EAF grant support to formal education projects in any one year before the 2005-8 round was between £0.5 and £0.8 million in any year. Defra note that this amount is a best estimate due to the difficulties in accurately identifying all projects which may have a basis in formal education. It does not include support for projects involving more informal modes of education. The April 2005 EAC report (page 7) contained an estimate that for the 2002-2005 round a total of £3.671 million was allocated to education projects – amounting to £1.22 million per year.

The focus of the 2005-08 fund is sustainable consumption and production - projects ‘that find ways of making sustainable living attractive to consumers and sustainable behaviour attractive to producers’. Within this there is some funding going towards ESD where it is looking to change behaviours rather than just raise awareness. For example, Envision and Peacechild are being funded to work with school children. Envision will receive £47,340 this year (£65,105 in 06/07 and £64,372 in 07/08), and Peacechild £69,700 (and then the same in 06/07 and £74,700 in 07/08). Other groups will also be working with schools in some way or another, for example, the YHA is being funded through EAF, and part of their work will be looking at working with school groups on their visits, to introduce them to ideas of sustainable consumption.

The 2005-8 fund is £2.25 million and was allocated to projects following the normal competitive bidding round. The remaining £1.95 million from the EAF pot is for one year’s roll-over funding to organisations receiving funding under biodiversity criteria within 2002-2005 scheme, and this money will transfer to support new biodiversity projects in the future (ie. the fund has split in two to support both sustainable consumption and biodiversity, which each part managed by the relevant

parts of Defra or its agencies). However it is not yet possible to identify what of that biodiversity money will be used for 'ESD'. Such work will in future be funded by English Nature and then Natural England, and the details of the transfer are currently being worked out.

CEE received EAF funding of £423,650 over the period 1999-2002 and £630,000 for the three years to March 2005.

The Landfill Tax Credit Scheme (LTCS)

This scheme was introduced in 1996 to divert tax paid on waste going to landfill into environmental projects. The LTCS supported many worthwhile projects, but it was felt that a more strategic approach to sustainable waste management was needed for the UK to meet its EU obligations to make substantial reductions in landfill from 2010 onwards. The reform of the LTCS provided funding for a new strategic public expenditure programme - the Waste Implementation Programme, which was set up by Defra in June 2003 - to divert biodegradable municipal waste from landfill, as required by the EU Landfill Directive. £90 million of landfill tax funding has been passed to Defra and has gone into the Waste Implementation Programme.

On 1 April 2003 Object C and CC: 'research and development, educational activity or collection of information about more sustainable waste management' were removed from the funding criteria. The remaining category within the LTCS Community Fund states education "cannot be the main intent of the project". Also, to be eligible for the Community Fund a project must be within a 10 mile radius of a landfill site. This does not allow for national or regional education projects and limits a project to working with groups in a very specific area.

Defra estimate that from 2000-2004, a total of £1.8million of LTCS was spent on projects with a basis on formal education – equivalent to about £0.4million a year. However this amount was provided as a best estimate due to the difficulties in accurately identifying all projects which may have a basis in formal education. It does not include support for projects involving more formal modes of education. Information in evidence to the EAC said that, according to Entrust, between 1996 and February 2004, LTCS provided around £29.2 million of funding to over 1,100 educational projects. Waste Watch have estimated that the amount spent on formal education projects from LTCS was at a very minimum £1.5 million per annum and could be as high as £10 million per annum.

Waste Implementation Programme

Within the Waste Implementation Programme (WIP) funding, including that administered by WRAP, there has not to date been provision for schools-based education work. However Waste Watch is due to talk to Defra soon about what they might spend money on in schools. Defra are also in the process of reviewing their relationship with the voluntary sector waste organisations, with the likely aim of developing a more strategic relationship with the sector. This may include allocation of WIP money for waste education, but the review will not conclude until the autumn and funding decisions will then need to be taken.

The Waste and Resources Action Programme (WRAP)

This has received £30 million of WIP money from Defra for the Recycle Now campaign, but this does not make provision for schools-based education work.

Waste Partnership Fund

Defra allocated £3 million for 2005-06 for this fund to be used for 'Awareness Raising' but is only available until March 2006. Waste Watch secured a grant of £24,300 for the development of a national waste education network, but it seems that they were the only education-focused project to receive funding.

Defra grant-aids **ENCAMS**, and recently provided £87 k for the Eco-schools programme after a £2M bid for the programme was unsuccessful.

It was mentioned that some bits of money from the **Environment Agency**, **English Nature** and **British Waterways** 'seeps' down to educational work, but no-one provided figures.

Lottery Funding

The New Opportunities funded SEED programme has demonstrated the demand for funding for projects linking the environment and education. Environmental education had the largest take-up of any SEED theme: of £14.17 million distributed from 2002 to 2004, £3.79 million was distributed for education projects. The programme has now ended and some are of the view that criteria for successor funds, such as the Community Recycling and Economic Development Programme (CRED) and the Big Lottery Fund Young People Fund, do not clearly allow environmental education programmes to be funded.

A couple of interviewees flagged that some NGOs are hopeful that the **Big Lottery Fund** may in future provide money which could be used for ESD purposes. There is a 'Young People's Fund'¹⁴ which may provide funding. Various NGOs are apparently talking to the administrators about this possibility, but it is as yet unclear what funding there might be for ESD work. However one view was that this fund does not present clear opportunities for environmental education programmes to be funded.

The New Opportunities OOHSL fund provided £270,000 to a Wildlife Trust, but this fund was found to be difficult to access as most of it was directed at LEAs who did not attach as much priority to ESD as to other areas such as music or literacy.

The **Community Recycling and Economic Development Programme (CRED)** was established with £35 million from the New Opportunities Fund. Education and public awareness projects that also meet a number of other programme priorities are eligible. Waste Watch secured CRED funding for a project in Rotherham 'Taking Home Action on Waste.' However CRED has proved very difficult to access for organisations wishing to work primarily with schools as it requires the ability to prove a direct link between an education activity and an increase in recycling tonnages. The fund is now closed to new applications.

The **Heritage Lottery Fund** has provided funding for biodiversity work – generally for capital projects. For example the Wildlife Trusts have received just under £1.5 million for 12 natural environment education projects in the past five years.

ODPM

ODPM fund Groundwork for project development and their national role, but it is unclear what the amounts are. The money is specifically to meet ODPM objectives.

The Single Regeneration Budget was mentioned as a source of some funding, for example of Wildlife Trusts.

There was a mention of Neighbourhood Renewal Fund money being used in the Tees Valley for ESD work, which apparently was lost when the funding criteria changed from 'Education Improvements'.

DFID

DFID's Development Awareness Fund has the aim of promoting public knowledge and understanding of development issues. This is about £1-1.5M per year, with £10-100k per project and also grants below £10k administered by other organisations. Project proposals have to set out clearly what specific learning outcomes are envisaged and some matching funding is normally expected. Projects which have received funding since 2002 are listed at:

<http://www.dfid.gov.uk/funding/daf-further.asp>

Local Authorities

Within Defra, it was noted that Local Authorities (as opposed to Local Education Authorities) often work with schools – for example promoting recycling or encouraging travel plans. A few interviewees mentioned that limited LA funding is available. For example Waste Watch received between £17k and £146k per annum for its Schools Waste Action Club between 1998 and 2005. No one was aware of what the amounts were, but no-one said that amounts were significant. It seems that it is difficult to break down what is spent on ESD activity. For example one figure provided was that local government invests approximately £1 million per year on biodiversity work, but it is not clear how much of that is for educational work.

¹⁴ <http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk/programmes/ypf/index.htm>

Home Office

There are a number of Home Office funds which might potentially provide funding for NGOs involved in ESD, for example Change Up aims to build capacity and infrastructure in the VCS, and Futurebuilders assists frontline organisations to increase the scale and scope of their service delivery. However no interviewees mentioned receiving money from such funds.

EU

No-one said that significant funding has been received from the EU for ESD. One interviewee mentioned that there is some EU money for schools to investigate environmental issues. Someone else mentioned that European funds were also accessible for regional bids, but that these tend to focus on social and regeneration issues so creative wording is required in order to obtain money for ESD.

Corporate Funding

The Wildlife Trusts mentioned that corporate partners, especially landowners such as utility companies have provided significant funding to many trusts. A more general comment made was that corporate investment in environmental education has been significant in the past.

Annex C: Government ‘Compact’ with the Voluntary and Community Sector

1. The Compact encompasses a number of Codes of Good Practice including one on funding which contains the government’s commitment to implement an effective funding framework that:
 - helps to ensure value for money;
 - responds to the sector’s need for greater financial stability to enable it to fulfil its full strategic role;
 - improves sustainability and longer term planning;
 - ensures clarity and greater consistency in funding conditions;
 - invests in the capacity of the sector’s infrastructure;
 - promotes fair access to strategic, project and contract funding, and provides clarity in the objectives of grant programmes and their eligibility criteria; and
 - strengthens partnership working.

2. In line with the Compact, the Code of Good Practice for funding also emphasises the importance of multi-year strategic funding and recommends that funding should be used to support the core operational activities of an organisation:
 - where these activities match the objectives of the funder but the organisation is able to deliver them at a level and to an audience that the funder is not;
 - where the funder wants to assist a particular target group; or
 - where the funder recognises the implicit value of the organisation (its track record/strategic position) and its role in the wider voluntary sector context and wants to support that role.