



# Learning to Live on Planet Earth

National Conference on Education for Sustainable Development  
March 20 - 21, 2007 at Avari Towers, Karachi

## Education for Sustainable Development and Media

### Introduction

Given its increasing hold on public consciousness, media plays a vital role in advocating for change and altering popular perceptions. Therefore, it comes as no surprise that development organisations have elicited its help in furthering the cause of the environment. As such, these organisations have invested much time and energy in building the capacity of journalists, producers, directors, script and storywriters to address and engage with conservation issues. This has resulted in increased coverage of environment-related reports and stories, especially in the print media. The media's response to the Tasmin Spirit disaster in 2003 is a case in point.

Although this is an encouraging development, the task is far from over. Despite its direct linkages with poverty and livelihood issues as well as economic well-being, most media houses do not assign reporters to cover the environment beat on the premise that it does not qualify as 'hard' news. Local journalists often tend to lack insight and perspective on sustainable development and its impact on society at large. As a result, there is a dearth of quality reportage and investigative stories and reports involving research and analysis. Instead, development issues continue to be dealt with a *news item approach*. Additionally, the proliferation of new media in the form of private television channels, FM radio stations and internet news services and the resultant influx of new entrants in the field means that there are legions of journalists that need to be sensitized to sustainable development issues.

This workshop aims to highlight the role of ESD in informing and equipping media to advocate and campaign for sustainable development keeping in mind the linkages between ecology, economy and society. It will also focus on learning from examples in other parts of the world to take the sustainable development agenda forward, developing effective linkages with key partners and focussing on the required skills and processes to market sustainable lifestyles.

### Facilitator

Frits Hesselink started his career as a fellow at the Institute for International Law, University of Utrecht. He was also the co-founder and managing director of SME MilieuAdviseurs: The Dutch Institute for Environmental Communication. Hesselink remained involved for more than a decade in the formulation and implementation of various Dutch national programmes for environmental education. Due to his dedicated efforts for environmental education and communication, he was also associated with IUCN's Commission on Education and Communication (CEC) and served as its chairman. Currently, he runs his own consultancy HECT which focuses on environmental education, communication and training and carries out projects for governments and international organizations in Europe and other parts of the world. He is also serving the CEC as a special adviser on its various projects.

### Participants

Print and electronic media (TV, radio, advertising agencies) film (documentaries/commercial), representatives from government departments, civil society and the private sector who are working on communication and media related work.

