



INTERGOVERNMENTAL CONFERENCE
ON ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION FOR
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT, 2012

The intergovernmental conference 6 – 7 September 2012
Plenary Session IV: Capturing Progress: Endorsing Good Practices in
EE/ESD

A statement by Environment Online – ENO / Mr Mika Vanhanen

Dear ministers or representatives, the government of Georgia, UNESCO, UNEP and other organisations, ladies and gentlemen,

It is a great honour to represent my organisation in this conference. Environment Online – ENO is a global virtual school and network for sustainable where schools around the world study environmental issues and do concrete deeds for the environment involving their local communities to take part. I am the founder of ENO, a classroom teacher from Finland who launched it 12 years ago. Our regular themes have been forests, water, climate change, ecological footprint and cultural topics. Different dimensions of sustainability are embedded in the contents and activities, including cultural sustainability. Today, the network extends to nearly 10 000 schools in 147 countries. Most schools come from less developed countries. Since 2000, ENO has received numerous national and international recognitions and awards, latest it was a finalist in United Nation's Forest Heroes Awards in 2012.

We took part to Rio+20 Summit where we published our new book *Planting Seeds of Action*, presented our initiative about ENO Green Cities successfully in Rio+20 Dialogues and most of all, made a strong commitment of planting 100 million trees by 2017. This commitment was highlighted in the overall summary of Rio commitments, out of over 700 pledges. BBC's environmental correspondent Richard Black said, it was *"the most dynamic-sounding pledge on the register"*. So far schools have planted about 9 million trees so we will have a big challenge. I am happy to see participants here from 100 countries and look forward to your assistance in spreading the information to schools and assist them in your countries. Be also aware that for our campaign we will launch tree planting olympics bi-annually from next year ending 2017. These **Treelympics** are for every school, every child and every country.

Dear audience,

Dr. Morice Strong, Dr. Noel J. Brown and UNEP passed task for the world community to commit sincerely to the aims of Agenda 21 in the Rio summit 1992. They were disappointed after two years how the moral side of the commitment did not have realized. In his assessment of the results of Rio 1992, Dr Brown said that the moral commitment was just the missing element of the world equation. The results of the development was to find in Johannesburg 2002 summit. Although the official slogan was "Rio +10" the assessment of the NGO's was "Rio-10". And now in Rio again we ask, why the ethical side of the commitment is missing?

We propose that the organizations of the UN add to the three attributes of sustainable development the fourth attribute, which is the precondition of the ecological, economical and social namely "ethical sustainability". Our delegate professor R.E. Heinonen was speaking about this issue and proposing this in the Rio+20 Summit. The most important result of our tree planting supports this. It points out the change of attitudes through the process of planting activities and reveals new understanding of the intrinsic value of trees and water.

I end this speech with a quote from my song for ENO, called Act Now- Forest Matters.

*"This seedling in my hand, I will let it grow
for those who built our land so many years ago
We have all the keys and after centuries
if our game is fair the green gold will be there."*

Thank you.