

Children and the Environment

Actors on the International Arena



Save the Children fights for children's rights. We deliver immediate and lasting improvements to children's lives worldwide.

Save the Children works for:

- a world which respects and values each child
- a world which listens to children and learns
- a world where all children have hope and opportunity

Code number: 2002-2753

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First edition: 2

Printed by Save the Children Sweden

This publication is partly financed by Sida (Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency). Sida has not taken part in its production and does not assume any responsibility for its content.

Background

In the coming years, children's rights to a healthy physical environment will have high priority at Save the Children Sweden. A new programme focusing on the role of the physical environment is going to be developed.

As part of the preparation of the programme, seven reports have been produced. This is one of them. The objective is that these reports serve as a "package" of basic information. Central concepts are defined, problems analysed and actors described. Possible activities at different levels are identified and related to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other international agreements, such as the Agenda 21 and Habitat Agenda action plans.

The reports are:

Children's Right to a good Physical Environment. Central concepts and Problem Definition. Code no 2002-2747 (Also available in Swedish: Barns rätt till god fysisk miljö – centrala begrepp och problemdefinition. Code no 2002-2748)

Children's Rights and the Physical Environment. A Review of Current Knowledge. Code no 2002-2749. SEK 100.

The Rights of the Child and the Physical Environment. The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other Relevant International Agreements. Code no 2002-2750

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Reporting System and the Physical Environment. Code no 2002-2751

Children's Rights from an Environmental Perspective. Implications for Action. Code no 2002-2752

Children and the Environment. Actors on the International Arena. Code no 2002-2753

Barn och miljö. Aktörer i Sverige (Children and the environment. Swedish actors - the document is only available in Swedish). Code no 2002-2754

All of these documents may be ordered from Save the Children Sweden, 107 88 Stockholm, Sweden. Telephone number +46 8 698 90 20, fax +46 8 698 90 25. Or visit our on-line bookshop: www.rb.se/bookshop. Postage and handling will be charged.

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Summary

In order to get a general idea of how environmental problems are approached, which the actors are, and how a child right perspective is integrated in the activities, a rough overview was made on Internet.

This report is the outcome of a search covering UN-agencies, other inter-governmental bodies, research institutions, international NGOs, and networks. Information on the regional level is so far limited to European intergovernmental bodies and European private organisations and networks. Swedish actors are presented in a separate report.

Both agents having a child right perspective in all the activities and those advocating for such a perspective in single cases or as additional activities are included.

The information has mainly been collected by use of “environmental links” and through interviews with well-informed persons. The search continues, and hopefully also the readers of the report will contribute with further knowledge.

As expected the overview shows that there are actors as well as activists, that there is a great variation of problems, targets and time perspectives. Some actors and research networks concentrate on the urban, local physical environment with the aim to improve the living conditions for children, for youth, or for a whole population. By reclaiming the streets, young people call for participation in planning. A few actors take an integrated approach to all children’s rights as expressed in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Others point at the rights to health, knowledge, or education.

Some actors look at the effects without analysing causes, while others concentrate on the causal factors. These differences are often related to their time perspective, i.e. if they target immediate problems or make efforts to change deep-rooted values or legal frameworks.

That actors have different goals, experiences, resources and working methodologies also means that there is a range of possible partnerships for Save the Children Sweden. In some cases the most fruitful way to safeguard the rights of the child may be a continuous and close cooperation with a single actor. In other cases participation in a loose network may be more efficient.

Both Agenda 21 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child put an emphasis on children’s rights to be listened to in matters concerning them. Environmental youth organisations, and groups of children or young persons are therefore of particular interest, as well as work at preschools and schools. Also research projects and international non-governmental organisations with elements of work with children and young persons are of great interest for future partnerships.

International Intergovernmental Bodies

UNICEF www.unicef.org

The Child Friendly Cities Initiative (CFCI)

UNICEF is guided by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and strives to establish children's rights as enduring ethical principles and international standards of behaviour towards children. During the last years urban children have been paid particular attention to by the Fund, and a major reason for this is the initiative of Child Friendly Cities (CFCI). This initiative is interesting, as it makes an effort to integrate CRC, Agenda 21 and the Habitat Agenda and puts emphasis on the importance of commitments from local policy-makers to realise these international agreements.

The initiative was launched in 1996 as an outcome of the Habitat II to make cities liveable places for all. The Habitat II Conference declared that the well-being of children is the ultimate indicator of a healthy habitat, a democratic society and good governance. A child friendly city places the rights of its children at the very centre of municipal planning and programming strategies.

CFCI has developed to a rather loose network carrying out diverse experiences without standardised methods and techniques. However, in September 2000 an International Secretariat was established by UNICEF, UNCHS (Habitat), the Italian Committee for UNICEF and the Istituto degli Innocenti in Florence. Now the Secretariat provides information, supports interested municipalities, and encourages interchange of ideas and experiences among cities committed to fulfilling children's rights. A close cooperation has developed with the Local Government and Mayors Association, IULA (See more below).

The child friendly cities initiative has the following goals:

- Healthy and safe environments
- Environments that nurture the development of children at all ages
- Guaranteed secure lives
- Access to quality basic services for all
- Special attention for disadvantaged children
- No discrimination at all

One precondition to reach these goals is that children have the right to participate in making decisions that affect their lives and are offered opportunities to express their opinions. This is in line both with what is stated in CRC and in chapter 25 of Agenda 21. Also requirements closely linked to a sustainable development is highlighted. Some of these are: Equitable social and economic conditions, good access to clean water, adequate sanitation and solid waste removal, and protection from the effects of environmental hazards and natural disasters.

UNCHS – Un Centre for Human Settlements www.unchs.org

UNCHS is the focal point for coordinating activities to implement the Habitat Agenda. The mission statement is to promote socially and environmentally sustainable human settlements and adequate shelters for all. In this way, the Centre contributes to the overall goal of reducing poverty in a rapidly urbanising world.

A key function of UNCHS is to monitor how the Habitat Agenda is implemented internationally, regionally, nationally and locally. This is done through global urban observatory and statistics and best practices. The Centre is responsible for more than a dozen programmes and campaigns. Most of the programmes are carried out in cooperation with other UN Agencies, e.g. UNEP, UNDP, UNICEF and UNESCO, the World Bank, and bilateral agencies, known as the Cities Alliance. Considering that local participation is an important strategy of the Habitat Agenda local authorities, and the civil society are other often also actively involved.

The Safer Cities programme

Some of the programmes pay special attention to children and youth. One example is “Safer Cities”. The Centre states that insecurity and crime affect different groups in different ways but that youth and women are particularly vulnerable. The programme supports integrated youth policies at the city level to address the special needs of youth. Furthermore, it seeks to influence youth policies at the national level. The “Safer Cities” programme was launched at the request of African mayors, and there are projects in Johannesburg and Durban in South Africa, in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania, Abidjan, Ivory Coast, Antanarivo, Madagascar, Dakar, Senegal, Nairobi, Kenya and Yaounde, Cameroon.

The programme is in line with the ECOSOC resolution of 24 July 1995, and one of UNHCS’s partners is the European Forum for Urban Security, EFUS. This European forum is a network of approximately 300 cities with the goal of encouraging exchanges of technologies and positive experiences. It promotes the concept of urban safety to be built into policies in the areas of education, employment, culture and urban development, to the benefit of all citizens. The work of the network focuses on the following areas:

- Developing a common safety policy
- Linking safety responses to social responses
- Re-establishing neighbourhood bounds
- Taking into account the link between micro- and macro criminality.

Two more organisations are worth mentioning in relation to urban security, even if it is not quite clear to what extent children or young persons are focussed. The two organisations are:

The International Centre for the Prevention of Crime (ICPC)
www.urbansecurity.org and
The Institute for Security Studies www.crime-prevention-intl.org

UNESCO - UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation www.unesco.org

Many of the activities of UNESCO are directed towards children and youth, and several sections deal with education and research on sustainable development, environmental and urban issues.

In 1998, the director-general of UNESCO stated that:

“the goal of sustainable development requires fundamental changes in human attitudes and behaviour. Progress in this direction is thus critically dependent on education and public awareness. The concept of sustainable development is not a simple one, and there is no road map to prescribe how we should proceed. Yet, time is short, and we are called upon to act without delay. We must move ahead now, in spirit of exploration and experimentation and with the broadest possible range of partners, so as to contribute through education to correcting trends that place in jeopardy our common future.”

Consequently, UNESCO is involved in a large number of environmental education programmes all over the world, often in partnership with national ministries of education, schools, research institutes or ministries of natural resources. One example is the multi-media programme “Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future”. Another one is “The Baltic Sea Project” aiming at encouraging students to participate in the development of sustainable future for the Baltic region. A third interesting example is “Growing up in cities”.

Growing up in cities

“Growing up in cities” is a research programme that started with UNESCO support already 1970. In the 1990s the programme was revived. A collaboration started between the MOST Programme called Management of Social Transformations (MOST)¹ at UNESCO and Norwegian Centre for child Research and Childwatch International of Oslo as well as numerous other national and international organisations, which helped sponsor individual project sites.

¹ MOST programme concerns scientific and policy approaches to social development and the management of social transformations, particularly in the areas of multiculturalism, migration, urbanisation and local and regional coping processes in response to global phenomena.

The effort of the programme is to link the initiatives and policy statements made in the Habitat Agenda, Agenda 21 and the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. All these three international agreements support young people's participation in improving the environment.

"Growing up in Cities" rests on the assumptions that meaningful change starts at the local level and that the process of making change is as important as the product of that change.

The policy of "Growing up in Cities" is that young people must be active participants in evaluating their communities, in determining priorities for change and in helping make change happen. In such a process, children both improve the quality of their communities, and develop greater awareness of the world around them, greater appreciation of their own value and capabilities, and invaluable experience in being constructive, contributing members of their communities. Therefore "Growing up in Cities" promotes education for action. The project provides opportunities for young people to learn life skills and gain self-confidence through engagement in improving the public places of their local area: the same places where they will need to demonstrate social and environmental responsibility and the capacity for democratic action when they become adults.²

UNEP – UN Environment Programme www.unep.org

UNEP's mission is to provide leadership and encourage partnership in caring for the environment by inspiring, informing, and enabling nations and peoples to improve their quality of life without compromising that of future generations.

UNEP's child and youth programme started in 1985, the International Youth Year, and many activities are carried out together with other UN-agencies and the civil society. The programme includes a youth advisory council (YAC) and a network with list servers. Sustainable consumption campaigns, environmental information material for young people, painting, photo competitions and surveys are examples of activities within the programme.

Furthermore, regular conferences for children (6-15 years) and youth (16-25 years) have been organised. The first children's conference was held in Eastbourne (UK) in 1995, with 800 children from 90 countries. The second conference was held in Nairobi in 1998, and the third conference in year 2000.

² A number of conferences both for researchers and local authorities has been organised, and it may be worthwhile to contact participants for further information about presented projects, e.g. Lisa Sundell, Maj-Britt Olsbo and Ing-Marie Larsson from Gothenburg municipality.
http://www.google.com/search?q=cache:2tqip_x0sJw:www.unesco.org/education/+&hl=sv

This had more than 1000 participants, and was also held in Eastbourne. The fourth conference is planned to take place in Canada in May 2002.³

The main goals of these international children's conferences are to increase the understanding on environmental issues through sharing of experiences and opinions, to provide opportunities for children to collectively voice their concerns for the environment, to provide opportunities to create new relationships and to remove artificial ethnic barriers, as well as to inspire children to think globally and act locally.

During the millennium International Children's Conference (ICC), a statement was made and forwarded to the Global Ministerial Environmental Forum held in Malmö. In this statement a number of challenges for governments, the UN system, people of the world and children of the world were listed.

- Governments were requested to improve laws and policies concerning clean water, pollution, solar power, sewage, recycling, and environment-friendly alternatives to plastic bags.
- People of the world were asked not to waste water, not to use polluting chemicals, to join beach clean-ups, to plan at least one tree for every one that is cut down, to show respect and stop discrimination and wars, to replace plastic bags with suitable alternatives, to avoid motor vehicles for short trips and to stop vandalism and graffiti.
- Children of the world were requested to save and re-use water, to join others to make stronger environmental groups, to have their voices heard by governments, to keep the world clean and rubbish free, to demand alternatives to fossil fuels and to refuse to use plastic bags when shopping.
- The UN system was requested to start an environmental network for all children across the world.

CSD – Commission for Sustainable Development

CSD serves as the central organising body for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development, and is one of UNEP's partners. The commission was created in 1992 to ensure effective follow-up of the Rio Conference (UNCED). CSD monitors and reports on how agreements are implemented at the local, national, regional and international levels with poverty and changes in production and consumption patterns as overall subjects.

CSD is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) with 53 members. It consistently generates a high level of public interest. Over 50 ministries attend the CSD each year and more than one thousand NGOs are accredited to participate in the Commission's work. It encourages governments and international organisations to host workshops

³ More information is available at the homepage of CRIN.

and conferences on different environmental and cross-sectoral issues. CSD also ensures the high visibility of sustainable development issues within the UN system and helps to improve the UN's coordination of environment and development activities.

The Inter-Agency Committee on Sustainable Development (IACSD) undertakes the inter-agency coordination. Its main role is to identify major policy issues relating to the follow-up to UNCED by the UN system and to advise on ways and means of addressing them so as to ensure effective system-wide cooperation and coordination in the implementation of Agenda 21. IACSD was established in October 1993 and has held meetings twice a year since then.

<http://www.igc.apc.org/habitat/csdngo/>

In the available material, children and young persons are practically invisible, much due to the fact that problems are identified from other perspectives. It seems however as CSD as well as IACSD could be important entry points for a childright perspective.

IULA – The International Union of Local Authorities

www.iula.org

IULA has been working as an international association of local governments to promote and unite local governments worldwide since 1913! The international union is made up of 112 national associations of local authorities and some 200 individual cities in more than 110 countries.

With the decentralisation process that is taking place in most countries local governments have got more responsibility for decisions and services.

In IULA's programme "Say yes to children" it is stated that the well-being of children will be brought up as a recurrent theme in its courses, congresses and information activities. The Union will also support and encourage local authorities to do so whenever relevant and stresses the advantages of activities at the local level.

IULA and UNICEF IN PARTNERSHIP

Together IULA and UNICEF have developed strategies how to fulfil children's rights in local communities. These strategies include supporting and encouraging community participation, building partnerships and creating frameworks for local analysis and action, improving situation analysis and monitoring systems, working cross-sectorally, creating national and international networks, and increasing active participation of children and women in decision-making. There are experiences from Columbia, Ecuador, Nepal, Philippines, Rwanda and Senegal.

ICLEI – The International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives www.iclei.org

ICLEI is formally linked to IULA. Its mission is to strengthen a worldwide movement of local governments. It has official consultative status and advocates the interests of local government before UN bodies.

The overall goal is to achieve a sustainable development, and the Council serves as an information clearinghouse providing policy guidance, training and technical assistance to increase local governments' capacity. More than 350 cities, towns, and counties from around the world are members, and hundreds of additional local governments participate in specific ICLEI campaigns and projects. Besides IULA, UNEP, UNCHS, and Earth Council are partners of ICLEI.⁴ At present ICLEI is facilitating the local government preparatory process for Johannesburg through a secretariat (WSSD) and IULA.

The Cities Alliance www.citiesalliance.org

The Cities Alliance is a multi-donor coalition of cities and their development partners. The Alliance was launched in May 1999 by the World Bank and UN Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). The aim is to find out new tools to improve the efficiency and impact of urban development cooperation. The City Alliance has identified two main areas:

- Improving the living conditions of the urban poor by slum-upgrading programmes
- Supporting city-based consensus-building processes, by which local stakeholders define their vision and develop city strategies with clear priorities for action and investments.

The governance and organisational structure of the Cities Alliance comprises a consultative group (CG), a policy advisory board (PAB) and a secretariat, housed at the World Bank office in Washington. PAB provides guidance to the CG on key strategic and policy issues and evaluates the impact of selected programmes.

The CG is composed of financial contributors to the Cities Alliance and political heads of the international associations of cities and local authorities.

⁴ On July 1, during a plenary session held at the Luther Church in the city of Wittenberg, Mr. Maurice Strong, co-chair of the Earth Charter Commission and president of the Earth Council, offered a keynote speech where he made a call for ICLEI members to embrace the Earth Charter. ICLEI then formally endorsed it and, as a follow-up, the organization is now actively seeking its membership to formally ratify the Earth Charter at public meetings and use the document. See further below "The Earth Charter Initiative".

IULA Metropolis, the United Towns Organisation (UTO) and the World Association of Cities and Local Authorities Coordination (WACLAC) represent local authorities. The countries that are represented in CG are: Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, UK, and USA. Sweden is represented through Sida. Beside these member countries African Development Bank, Austria, Denmark European Commission, Finland, Spain, UNDP, UNICEF and ILO participate as associate members.

Two main categories of activities are sponsored under the Cities Alliance:

- Activities originating from local authorities but approved by the government, and
- Regional and global activities to raise awareness, share knowledge and, and disseminate good practices.

As a rule, the Alliance seeks to complement activities of participating partners, for example the Sustainable Cities Programme (SCP), Water and Sanitation Programmes, or bilateral programmes carried out together with local authorities.

The Cities Alliance is approaching urban problems from the perspective of planners and managers without differentiating the city inhabitants. A precondition for a partnership is therefore primarily to find a common point of departure, in which children and young persons are visible.

WHO – The World Health Organisation www.who.org

WHO states that a growing number of diseases are linked to unsafe environments and that children are particularly vulnerable to chemical and biological hazards in air, water and soil.

In July 1999, the Department of the Protection of the Human Environment (PHE) therefore set up a Task Force for the protection of children's environmental health. Its mission is to pay attention to diseases associated with chemical and physical threats, and biological risks in the environment.

The task force on environmental health

The Task Force's activities rest on international recommendations made during the 1990's. Among these are the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, The World Summit for Children, Agenda 21, Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labour, Declaration of the Environment Leaders of the Eight (G8) on Children's Environmental Health, Declaration of the Third Ministerial Conference on Environment and Health (1999), and the Berlin Commitment for Children of Europe and Central Asia in 2001. The G8 declaration states some of the main environmental health threats and sets priorities for action, calling for the specific participation of WHO.

The Task Force consists of members from WHO Headquarters, Regional Offices and Centres of Environment and Health as well as WHO programmes related to child and environmental health. There are also representatives from other organisations and external experts acting as advisors to the Task Force.

The Task Force recognizes that the main global environmental problems that affect children's health are (a) inadequate access to safe drinking water and sanitation, (b) exposure to air pollution, (c) accidents, injuries and poisonings. In the future, activities within these fields should emphasize children's health and development still more than up till now. Exposure to lead, pesticides, chemicals in the workplace, indoor air pollutants, radiation, contaminants in water and food and waste sites should be given special attention. WHO promotes activities such as identification, assessment, prevention, and communication.

Environmentally healthy schools

Environmentally Healthy Schools is one example of programmes for school children that WHO supports. The support is most often implemented through a collaboration with organisations and Networks.

WFP – The World Food Programme

www.wfp.org or www.ngo.grida.no/ggynet/igo/wfp.htm

The world food programme, founded in 1961, is the United Nations frontline hunger relief agency. During 2000 the World Food Programme reached more than 83 million people in 83 countries.⁵

Its mission is:

- to save the lives of people caught up in humanitarian crises, in refugee and other emergency situations. This is done through Food-For-Life programmes;
- to support the most vulnerable people - children, pregnant women and the elderly - at the most critical times of their lives, through Food-For-Growth programmes; and

⁵ The Executive Board, comprising 36 members, is WFP's governing body. It consists of members elected by the [FAO](#) Council and the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) who serve three-year terms and are eligible for re-election. The Board provides a forum for inter-governmental consultation on national food aid programmes and policies; reviews trends in food aid requirements and availability, and formulates proposals for effective co-ordination of multilateral, bilateral, and non-governmental food aid programmes, including emergency aid.

- to help the hungry poor become self-reliant by providing Food-For-Work programmes to build roads, wells, schools, etc. needed for economic development.
- to promote world food security in accordance with the recommendations of the United Nations and FAO.

Thus, WFP tries to reach refugees escaping conflict or families left homeless by natural disaster. The programme also assists in rebuilding critical bridges and roads washed out by floods or destroyed by man. Assistance is provided to people in the most desolate and destitute places, using all kinds of available transport means. Considering that WFP recognises children as one of the most vulnerable groups makes the programme a pertinent actor in disaster situations of various kinds.

FAO – The UN Food and Agriculture Organisation www.fao.org

The Sustainable Development Department

FAO has a Sustainable Development Department (SD), which advises governments on integrated policy, planning, and management of natural resources. SD coordinates the organisation's implementation of Agenda 21 and programmes on organic agriculture, promotes an ecosystem approach to agriculture as well as sustainable energy strategies.

The Sustainable Development Department supports self-reliant groups and alliances and fosters the active participation of men and women.

Adequate and equitable access to resources to both rural women and men is stressed and the key role of women for production and food security is emphasized. Children and young people play several important roles within the agriculture sector, too. However, at least in the major document of FAO, boys and girls are invisible.

UNHCR – UN High Commissioner for Refugees www.unhcr.org

The primary purpose of UNHCR is to safeguard the rights and well-being of refugees. This is done both by providing refugees with basic necessities such as shelter, food, water and medicine in emergencies, and seeking longterm solutions.

The number of refugees under the protection of UNHCR is estimated at 25 million, half of which are children. Many refugee children live in refugee camps or war devastated countries that definitively do not fulfil children's rights. Children and young persons need special attention, something that is facilitated through cooperation between UNHCR and other UN bodies, for example UNICEF, WHO, and UN High Commissioner for Human Rights.

UNHCR also cooperates with international and national NGOs such as the International Save the Children Alliance and Save the Children Sweden.

UNHCR recognizes that a strong integrated work is necessary to fulfil the aim of introducing a normal, structured daily life as soon as possible. For children, this does not only mean school activities but also possibilities to play, to interact with peers and to be alone in privacy. However, often these rights are neglected in programmes directed to all refugees, irrespective of sex or age. Children and youth are not of highest priority when resources are scarce. Consequently, child rights organisations have an important function making UNHCR and other actors aware of the special arrangements that are needed in order to realize the rights of the refugee children and young boys and girls.

ECOSOC – UN Economic and Social Council

www.un.org/esa/coordination/ecosoc/charter.htm

ECOSOC is one of the principal organs of the United Nations.⁶ The year-around work of the Economic and Social Council is carried out in its subsidiary bodies: Executive boards, functional commissions, regional commissions, and standing committees and expert bodies. The commissions and committees meet regularly and report back to the Council.

Two relevant commissions

Among the functional commissions is the Commission on Sustainable Development, while the Commission on Human Settlements and the Committee on Energy and National Resources fall under the category of standing committees and expert bodies (together with the committee on NGOs).

In the advocacy work for a child rights perspective on environmental and urban issues it may be worthwhile trying to influence the Commission on Sustainable Development and the Commission on Human Settlements. Also the regional commissions (see below) may function as relevant entry points.

It is likely that the first step is to make these commissions aware of the importance of including a child right perspective.

⁶ These are the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council, the Trusteeship Council, the International Court of Justice, and the Secretariat.

OECD – Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development www.oecd.org

OECD consists of 30 member countries and active relationships with some 70 other countries, NGOs and civil society. It supports good governance in public service and helps governments to ensure responsiveness of key economic areas, and more than 30 themes are covered. Among these are environmental issues and sustainable development.⁷ Others are economic and social issues, education, development, statistics, surveys, reviews and publications. Beside its statistics, OECD is probably best known for producing internationally agreed instruments, decisions and recommendations to promote rules in areas where multilateral agreements are necessary.

As OECD is a key organisation in many respects it is important to advocate for a child right perspective. The information on the Internet is not sufficient to make conclusions about suitable entry points or links between OECD and other actors but needs further discussions, and reviews.

⁷ OECD is governed by a Council made up of representatives of the member countries. The main office is in Paris with Centres in Berlin, Mexico City, Tokyo and Washington. <http://webnet1.oecd.org/oecd/pages/home/displaygeneral/0,3380.EN-about-0-nodirectorate-no-no-no-0,FF.html>

International non-governmental organisations

There are many international non-governmental organisations (INGOs) with focus on environmental problems or a sustainable development. Some environmental organisations and networks are run by young people. However, on the whole, organisations whose main objective is to realise children's rights are few. It is more common that organisations have special, partial programmes or projects for children and youth.

Another interesting trend is that networks are initiated with the aim to pay special attention to children's rights. In such networks, several organisations cooperate to forge children's rights to a health environment. The networks may be more or less loose, and the cooperation may take various forms, involving international NGOs (INGOS), local NGOs, or UN-agencies.

In the collection of information a snowball technique has been used. Envirolink is the main starting-point. That is a non-profit organisation that unites hundreds of organisations and volunteers in more than 130 countries. <http://envirolink.netforchange.com/>

The information below should be seen as the outcome of a first phase of a data collection process. It includes organisations and networks that explicitly mention children and/or young persons in their programmes on the web, and which are consequently possible partners in Save the Children Sweden's future environmental programme. There may however very well exist additional INGOS with such programmes.

Plan International www.plan-international.org

PLAN International is a child-focused non-political organisation. It was founded in 1937 as "Foster Parents Plan for Children in Spain" to help children whose lives were disrupted by the Spanish Civil War. With the outbreak of the Second World War, PLAN extended its work to include displaced children within war-torn Europe.

Since then Plan has developed its work further to benefit all children in a community. The mission is now more general - to achieve lasting improvements in the quality of life of deprived children in developing countries. Currently PLAN works in 43 developing countries.⁸

Decisions on how to use the funds to benefit the children are based on strategic plans prepared by Country Offices in consultation with children, their families,

⁸ <http://www.plan-international.org/international/news/extra/extra3.html> and info@plan-international.org or http://www.planinternational.org/international/about/where/country_info.html

and communities. Plan encourages each community to assess what it really needs to secure decent living conditions and safe and healthy homes and environments. Then PLAN helps families and communities to organise themselves and gain access to basic services and essential facilities. No individual donations are given to children or their families.

In the year 2000 PLAN invested in five different kinds of programmes: Growing up healthy, Learning, Habitat, Livelihood, and Building relationships.

The Habitat programme area may be of particular interest to Save the Children Sweden. The rationale of Plan's involvement is expressed in the following way: "The environment in which children grow up has a tremendous impact on their development. Children need stability in their living conditions and safe, healthy homes and environments. Equally important, they need access to basic facilities and sustainable natural resources".

Therefore PLAN seeks to increase security of tenure, provide good quality, ensure communities can access affordable financial and material resources; help communities manage and protect natural resources effectively; provide access to basic services and facilities; ensure communities can respond to and mitigate the dangers of hazards, pollutants and disasters.

In South America 12 million USD were spent on Habitat programmes during 2000, and 1,5 million children benefitted from these programmes. Many were low-cost programmes to improve the environment. In some places regular rubbish collections were organised, trees were planted and organic gardens founded. The gardens produced a wide range of vegetables, which were sold at low price. This resulted in a healthy nutritious diet for the community, and particularly for the children.

A special programme was developed in connection with the disaster in Central America caused by the hurricane Mitch. In this programme young persons assisted in reconstructing buildings and infrastructure at the same time as they were offered training in that craft.

PLAN states that there is a close link between the Habitat and livelihood programmes aiming at improving the well-being of children through improving the situation of the family. The underlying assumption is that if a family's income is increased, more thoughts can be given to the needs of the children. Better farming methods could for example mean that a family can provide a better diet for their children. A small business supported by a local reliable savings and credit scheme, might mean that a family can send all their children to school. Learning a relevant skill or trade may also lead to better facilities being available in the community.

A common denominator for all PLAN's programmes is the emphasis on children's direct participation directly at the grassroots level. PLAN recognises that children can and must be at the centre of the development process, not just

at the centre of development programmes. Therefore PLAN has initiated a three-year pilot programme in El Salvador, The ChildPro initiative - Children's Participation in Programming. The pilot programme is aimed at motivating children to participate; helping community leaders value children's perspectives; and training staff how to work with children in project planning, implementation and monitoring.

PLAN is a member of The Global Movement,⁹ launched in February 2001 with the motto to change the world with children. (See further below).

Childwatch www.childwatch.uio.no

Childwatch International is a nonprofit, non-governmental network of institutions involved in research for children. It is located at the University of Oslo in Norway. Childwatch aims at initiating and coordinating research and information projects on children's living conditions and children's rights. By providing relevant and reliable information based on research Childwatch can serve as a link between the research community and policy makers.

The core members of Childwatch International are key institutions who are committed to child research with an interdisciplinary approach, and within the framework of international cooperation. In this way, the network provides unique opportunities to generate knowledge of global relevance on children's lives and on childhood.

As was mentioned earlier, Childwatch is a partner to UNESCO in the research project "Growing up in cities". Another project concerns children's right to health and a safe environment, which is carried out in partnership with Inches. http://www.childwatch.uio.no/projects/health_and_se/index.html

⁹ PLAN contributed substantially to the drafting of *A World Fit for Children* document, especially from its extensive grassroots experience. Networks with governments and partnerships with UN agencies, non-government-organisations (NGOs) and Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) were established, and PLAN ensured that its key areas of interest - universal birth registration, early childhood care and development, quality education and children in media and communication - were included in the final form of the Document. For the *Future Agenda for Children* principles to be realised, it is vital that governments, NGOs and CSOs everywhere be made aware of the aims of *A World Fit for Children*, and that they work together on a 'child first' platform. To this end, *The Global Movement for Children* was established. See more below.

INCHES – International Network on Children’s Health

www.inchesnetwork.org

In 1998, the participants of a Conference on children’s environmental health raised the idea of initiating an international network to provide and exchange information at the international level. The overall goal was to create a broad forum that could facilitate access to facts and data globally. As a multi-disciplinary concern, children's environmental health requires the active engagement of government and civil society, including parents, children, and persons from different disciplines who are working in the field of pediatric environmental health.

More specifically the purpose of the Network is

- To create a global clearinghouse of research and information on children’s environmental health.
- To identify information gaps and stimulate to new research.
- To increase the understanding of how environmental factors influence child health.
- To educate and facilitate information exchange on best practices and policies
- To advocate for children’s environmental health internationally.

Information covers both the immediate environment and more general environmental factors. The immediate environment of children may include a range of health hazards from lack of access to clean safe water, inadequate sanitation, lack of nutritious food, and inadequate waste management systems. Broader environmental pressures include climate change and persistent organic pollutants, global environmental changes such as global warming, decreases in the ozone layer, and the Greenhouse effect.

Internet is the main platform for INCHES. To avoid exclusion of regions and groups, INCHES strives to assist under-served regions and population groups to obtain access to the Internet.

INCHES has also initiated a project with the objective to create a framework for monitoring reports to the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child (CRC). This framework is supposed to link children’s rights to environmental and health rights. One precondition for such an integrated view is that monitoring and reporting systems are harmonised, a task that the Network has taken. On the website, there is no information about the progress of the project, and further contact with the researchers is suggested.¹⁰

¹⁰ Dawn Walker, the Canadian Institute of Child Health (CICH), is reported to be contact person

ISDE – International Society of Doctors for the Environment

www.isde.org/

ISDE is an environmental independent NGO of medical doctors. It was created in 1990 and covers member organisations in more than 100 countries. (The member organisation in Sweden is Svenska Läkare för Miljön with about 300 members). The Society fosters contacts and cooperation with UNEP, UNESCO, WHO, UNO and many NGOs, such as INCHEs.

The main purpose of ISDE is to help defend the environment locally and globally to prevent numerous illnesses, to ensure the necessary conditions for health, and to improve the quality of life for this and future generations. The members are concerned about the rise in incidence of pathological conditions related to environmental degradation.

ISDE has agreed upon a declaration on children's health and the environment. The Society urges that all stakeholders take prompt and effective actions to achieve significant reductions in hazardous exposures to children, as they bear a disproportionate risk to the rest of the population. Children should be put at the centre of government policies on housing, poverty elimination, income support and health, and should be given legal protection.

ISDE advocates that health policies give priority to prevention rather than the cure of diseases, to information campaigns, better education, and psychosocial programmes aimed at reducing unhealthy and harmful lifestyles. The Society presents a long list of actions to be taken. (The list is available below Activities on ISDE's homepage). One example is that all new commercial products are submitted to adequate testing in order to ascertain its harmlessness before being approved, rather than to merely presume it.

ISDE has also formulated a declaration on urban health, as the Society notes that environmental health problems are particularly severe in urban settings, including violence and other social problems. In the declaration it is stated that measures are not taken to make urban life suitable for young children, the aged and the disabled, and ISDE recommends a large number of measures to be taken (For more details see Activities on ISDE's website).

The Global Movement for Children – A Joint Initiative

The Global Movement for Children is a shared vision of six major organisations - UNICEF, PLAN International, International Save the Children Alliance, World Vision International, Bangladesh Rural Advancement Committee (BRAC) and Netaid.org Foundation (NetAid); organisations amongst whose key concerns is the welfare of children and dedicated to promote the rights of the child by changing the world with the children.

Nelson Mandela and Graça Machel are two prominent leaders of the movement which was particularly active during the preparations of the UN Special Session for children planned for during September 2001. The Movement performed campaigns and supported children and adults to speak out on ten imperative actions, which must be undertaken to improve the lives of children.

One of the ten urgent requests reads: Protect the earth for children. This implies that there everyone, including governments, civil society and the private sector, has to assure the well-being and security of future generations by safeguarding the environment at global, national and local levels.

The Movement states: “We can still choose how we use our environment. But if we are wasteful today, our children won’t have the same choices tomorrow. When we use resources wisely, we honor the trust the next generation has placed in us. Every generation has the right to a safe and healthy environment and the opportunities it provides”.

Special emphasis is given to access to clean water, decent latrines and proper resource management, as water-borne diseases and a lack of safe water cause the preventable deaths and illnesses of millions of children. The Movement calls attention to the fact that more than one billion people lack access to clean water, and more than 2 billion do not have access to a decent latrine.

www.gmfcc.org/en/protectearth/learnmore.html

IPA – The International Association for the Child’s Right to Play www.ipausa.org

IPA is an INGO founded in Denmark in 1961. The Association develops and recommends political programmes and actions to protect and promote the Child’s Right to Play. The association is interdisciplinary, and the members are persons of all kinds of professions working for or with children. Membership is open to any individual, group or organisation that endorses the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child, and puts an emphasis on Article 31.

An important role of IPA is linking national action groups in order to break negative trends in the societies, particularly those preventing children’s right to play. Through the Association the groups can exchange ideas, and experiences, which may result in innovative solutions.

In many cases IPA works in close association with international organisations, and the Association is recognised by ECOSOC, UNESCO and UNICEF as a non-governmental organisation with consultative status.¹¹

¹¹ The association is governed by a Board of Directors and a Council of National Representatives which includes five members at-large elected every three years. President of the Board is Robin Moore and among the Regional Vice presidents is Nilda Cosco in Buenos Aires, also linked to the “Growing up in cities project”.

A Seed – Action for Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development www.aseed.net/un-corporated/uncorp-frameset.htm

A SEED is an activist movement established by young people in 1991 in response to the Earth Summit proceedings. The movement carries out activities in connection with high-level meetings, distributes articles and brochures. The main goal is to forge alliances among young people committed to social and environmental justice.

A SEED is militant and takes a clear political stand. On a list of friends and antagonists, the movement identifies “Friends of the earth” as a friend while UNCED, UNCTAD, UNEP, UNEP and WHO are identified as “just interesting”. UNICEF is not mentioned at all. The movement is very critical to several governments as well as to the industry:

“Today, even more urgent than in 1992, a radical change is needed to solve the current environmental devastation, the widening gap between the rich and the poor and the scarcity of social justice. In their fundamental principles the United Nations stands for peace, security, human rights and development and the United Nations was created to solve these worldwide problems. However the increasing influence of corporations on the UN-bodies and the UN-processes is obstructing any positive environmental and social equity, empathy and solidarity. The notion of 'sustainable development' is being hijacked by the corporations. Moreover their neo-liberal free market ideology is corrupting the UN”.

CEI – Caretakers of the Environment International <http://caretakers.boker.org.il>

CEI is a non-profit organisation with the aim to establish a worldwide network of secondary school teachers and students who are concerned and willing to do something about environmental issues. The Secretariat is placed in Holland.

More specifically, CEI has the following goals:

- To develop a worldwide network of secondary school students and teachers who share environmental concerns and who face environmental challenges.
- To share successful and innovative environmental education programmes.
- To facilitate joint educational projects that encourages international data exchange and interdisciplinary activities.

Council members come from appr 50 countries, and among these are Anna Grönwall, Sweden and Mr. Roger Hart, Children's Environments Research Group, New York City University.

- To develop strategies which enable delegates to act as ambassadors for CEI in their own country.
- To promote environmental awareness and to develop national networks for environment education.
- To encourage the building of trust, friendship and cooperation among people of different cultural background.

A dozen countries have national CEI-branches¹². The national branches form national and regional networks of schools and organise workshops on environmental education topics. In this way, teachers and students exchange concerns, ideas, strategies, actions and projects in the field of environmental education. As CEI puts strong emphasis on local participation and decision-making there is a great variation of themes taken up.

Every year an international conference on environmental education (EE) for secondary schools is organised. Emphasis is given to activities and firsthand experiences that can be taken back to the classroom, and participants are selected on their past and current achievements in environmental education. At the conference, each participating school is asked to exhibit their most recent EE-project.

To support the network further CEI has a periodical called The Global Forum for Environmental Education, which appears twice a year. It provides a medium for teachers, students and other people interested in EE to write about their own ideas and experiences. The editorial staff consists of secondary school teachers and members of CEI's international board.

WWF –The World Wildlife Fund www.wwf.org

WWF is an independent foundation with offices in about 40 countries with a Secretariat in Switzerland. The role of the Secretariat is to lead and coordinate the WWF Network of offices around the world, through developing policies and priorities, fostering global partnerships, and coordinating international campaigns. A specialist office in Brussels works to influence the policies and activities of the European Union, while a second in Washington works to influence global institutions involved in international economic issues, such as the World Bank.

All WWF's offices carry out local conservation work, within national boundaries, such as practical field projects, scientific research, advising local and national governments on environmental policy, promoting environmental education, and raising awareness of environmental issues. Each independent

¹² Canada, India, Italy, Ireland, Kenya, Netherlands, Pakistan, Portugal, Russia, Scotland, Sweden, and the United States. The vice-president of CEI is Birgitta Norden, Sweden, Email: birgitta.norden@mailbox.swipnet.se and in year 2000 the Swedish branch was host of the yearly conference of CEI.

office additionally contributes funding to WWF's global conservation programme.

WWF has a “kids area” which provides educational and fun materials for users of all ages. It includes WWF fact sheets, teachers’ guides, pointers and special site areas.

Greenpeace www.greenpeace.org

Greenpeace is a 30-year old independent, action-oriented campaign organisation with 25 national offices in about 40 countries, and international offices in Amsterdam and Brussels. The organisation uses non-violent, often spectacular confrontations to expose global environmental problems. It organises public campaigns for the protection of oceans and ancient forests, for the phasing-out of fossil fuels and the promotion of renewable energies, for the elimination of toxic chemicals, for nuclear disarmament and an end to nuclear contamination, and against the release of genetically modified organisms into nature.

Greenpeace states that the overall goal is to protect environmental “commons”, in order to ensure that children can live in world without risks from polluted water, air, land and food. (Annual Report 2001). Children need to be protected. Less emphasis seems to be given to making children aware of environmental problems or mobilising them to defend their environment. In the latest annual reports there is no special section on activities for or with children. However, some national Greenpeace organisations announce a programme for children between 10 and 15 year, the so-called Greenkids. These programmes include information, adapted particularly to this age-group. There are also Greenkids in several cities and regions with activities directed towards young persons below 25 years. Their logo is similar to that of Greenpeace. Yet, these Greenkids seem to be independent. More information about possible links is therefore desirable.¹³

IYF – International Youth Foundation www.iyfnet.org

Founded in 1990, the International Youth Foundation (IYF) is an independent, international NGO. The mission is to strengthen and expand already existing programmes for and with children and young people. IYF works collaboratively with national foundations and organisations in 45 countries.

¹³ The Greenkids Magdeburg may be mentioned as an example. These Greenkids publish and distribute a magazine called “Das grüne Blatt” (Green leaf) and has an electronic information network. <http://www.greenkids.de/> In Canada there is an organisation called Green kids. However, this corporation does not seem to be linked to Greenpeace at all. <http://www.greenkids.com/index.html>

IYF and its 37 national partners are united as a global network by certain core strategies and objectives.¹⁴ The partner organisations work at the local and national level to identify effective programmes, strengthen such programmes, and maximize the impact of the children and youth sector as a whole. This is accomplished by providing technical assistance and sharing of information among NGOs throughout the country. Additionally, partner foundations work to increase awareness about children and youth issues, and advocate at the national level to position children and youth as a national concern. Each partner acts as a catalyst to bring together actors to address children and youth issues and to increase social responsibility toward children and youth. Looking into the various country programmes it is obvious that private companies play a major role in many of the activities.

IYF provides a range of support and services in such areas as environmental awareness, vocational training, health education, recreation, cultural tolerance, development of leadership, conflict resolution, and decision-making skills.

YAN – YouthActionNet
www.youthactionnet.org/aboutus.php

YouthActionNet is an IYF programme that is of relevance. It seeks to connect, inspire and nurture present and future young leaders to preserve the natural environment, fight for human rights, lead movements to curb the spread of hiv/aids, and raise their voices for democracy. YAN is a virtual space where young people can share lessons, stories, information and advice on how to achieve a development in these lines.

YAN is developed by the International Youth Foundation in consultation with a task force of eight young leaders from Australia, Germany, Kosovo, Mexico, Palestine, the Philippines, Uganda, and the United States. The Net is sponsored by the Nokia Corporation, as a part of the global “Make a Connection” programme giving young people an opportunity to “make a connection” to their communities, to their peers, and to themselves.

From the website it is not possible to conclude how central issues concerning the environment and sustainable development are, and more in-depth information is needed.

¹⁴ IYF's Global Action Council is a select group of world leaders who have agreed to play an active role in "making the case" for children and youth. Members are distinguished by their ongoing commitment to enhancing the conditions and prospects for children and youth. Each is working with IYF to encourage greater awareness of children and youth issues through speeches, special events, articles and other awareness-building activities.

H.M. Queen Noor (Jordan), HE President Martti Ahtisaari (Finland), Vigdis Finnbogadóttir (Iceland), Enrique Iglesias (Uruguay), Yuzaburo Mogi (Japan), Janet Museveni (Uganda), Shimon Peres (Israel), Mary Robinson (Ireland), Rita Süssmuth (Germany). Chair is David Bell, UK and Sten Akestam is a Swedish representative.

GCI – Green Cross International www.gci.ch

Green Cross International was founded by Mikhail Gorbachev in 1993, right after the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. GCI has 21 affiliates all over the world with offices in 18 countries.¹⁵ The headquarter is located in Geneva. The mission of GCI is “to create a sustainable future by cultivating harmonious relationships between humans and the environment”.

GCI concentrates its efforts on five main programmes to promote a significant change in human values toward greater respect for Earth's community of life in all its diversity. The programmes, stemming from the initiatives of 21 National Organisations, seek to combine global thinking and local action through the vehicle of international programmes tailored to local needs.

Aiming to improve law and governance systems protecting the environment, Green Cross helped draft the Earth Charter (see below) in partnership with like-minded organisations worldwide. Green Cross continues to contribute to the further development of the Earth Charter through a global participatory process of regional seminars, national hearings, and an interactive drafting effort. Green Cross International formally endorsed the Earth Charter at its June annual meeting.

Youth art contest

Green Cross, in collaboration with UNESCO, FAO, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, has organised three international youth contests titled “Images for the Earth”, carried out in support of the Earth Charter. Many branches of Green Cross, including Sweden, Italy and Burkina Faso, have been actively involved in these contests, which are accompanied with round tables on environmental problems, education, peace, and rights of future generations.

In 1999, nearly half a million students and teachers took part in the youth art contest. In 2000, the theme was “Energy- Renewable Energies and Energy Efficiencies” and the contest included Green Cross participants from eight countries. The fourth edition of this contest has the theme “Trash: Waste and Lifestyles - Nothing is created or destroyed in Nature, but everything is transformed”.

¹⁵ In Argentina, Bolivia, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, the Czech Republic, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Japan, South Korea, the Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Swaziland, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and Venezuela.

THE EARTH CHARTER INITIATIVE www.earthcharter.org/

Since the Earth Summit in 1992 endeavours have been made to elaborate an Earth Charter with fundamental ethical principles for a sustainable way of life. This process has both involved governments and NGOs and a final version was formulated at a meeting held at the UNESCO headquarters in 2000.

One of the objectives of the International Earth Charter Initiative is to promote the educational use of the Earth Charter in schools, universities, faith communities, and a variety of other settings, and to develop and distribute the necessary supporting materials. Another objective is to increase the participation of young people.

Participation of youth stressed

The Principle 12.c of the Earth Charter call for special attention to youth. The Earth Charter Youth Initiative seeks to increase the participation of young people in the International Earth Charter Campaign and to encourage the use of the Earth Charter as a guideline in their work as active agents of change. It is hoped that the Earth Charter will be used as an instrument to promote an integrated and responsible vision of global ethics, an instrument in education, a theme for discussion at conferences and workshops, a guide for professional groups and ethical framework for national/local development plans.

An instrument in education

The Earth Charter Initiative states that education is critical in the provision and enhancement of awareness, knowledge and skills that enable individuals and societies to examine and transform their behaviour. One of the major strategic campaigns for 2000-2002 is therefore to educate students and the public about sustainability, and the Charter is supposed to provide an instrument to reinforce already existing educational approaches. It may include artistic interpretations created and inspired specifically by or for the Earth Charter. Through collaboration, successful projects have been or are being planned or carried out throughout various communities, and examples are presented on the website.

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH www.foei.org/

Friends of the Earth International is a federation of autonomous environmental organisations from all over the world. There are members in 66 countries. The Friends of the Earth carry out campaigns on urgent environmental and social issues, at the same time as they advocate for a shift towards sustainable societies.

The website of the international federation does not provide any information on activities with or for children or youth. However, considering that Friends of the Earth is a federation of rather autonomous national groups it can be assumed that such activities can very well exist on local and national levels. It may therefore be fruitful to search for information on these levels.

IUCN – The World Conservation Union www.iucn.org

The World Conservation Union was founded in 1948. It brings together 78 states, 112 government agencies, 735 NGOs, 35 affiliates, and some 10,000 scientists and experts from 181 countries in a unique worldwide partnership.

The mission of the Union is to influence, encourage and assist societies throughout the world to conserve the integrity and diversity of nature and to ensure that any use of natural resources is equitable and ecologically sustainable

Commission on Education and Communication

IUCN has a commission on education and communication. It may be assumed that the work of this commission includes contacts with schools, children and young people. However, the website does not contain such information. In order to assess the relevance of contact with the Union further investigation is suggested. A first step can be to review the titles of The World Conservation Bookstore available at IUCN.

IISD – International Institute for Sustainable Development www.iisd.ca

The goal of the International Institute for Sustainable Development is to spread knowledge and policy recommendations on [international trade and investment](#), [economic policy](#), [climate change](#), [measurement and indicators](#), and [natural resource management](#). By using Internet communications, IISD [covers and reports](#) on international negotiations and broker knowledge gained through collaborative [projects with global partners](#), resulting in more rigorous research, capacity building in developing countries and a better dialogue between North and South.

The majority of board members are from Canada, some from Asia and Africa. Many of the donors are Canadian bodies, but twelve other governments e.g. those of Sweden and the other Nordic countries are also among the donors.

IISD advocates for an intergenerational aspects on sustainability. What makes the Institute interesting for partnership is that it provides information and

source books on sustainable development for young persons.
<http://iisd.ca/search/search.asp>, and <http://iisd1.iisd.ca/ic/default.htm>

Intergovernmental bodies Europe

ECE – UN Economic Commission for Europe

UN/ECE was one of five regional commissions set up by ECOSOC (UN Economic and Social Council) in 1947. www.unece.org/oes/eceintro.htm.

The commission has 55 member states, and over 70 international professional organisations and other NGOs take part in the ECE activities. The overall goal is to encourage greater economic cooperation in many fields.¹⁶

The division Environment and Human Settlements within ECE in Geneva organises regular intergovernmental meetings of committees. At these intergovernmental meetings official representatives from Europe, North America, Central Asia and Israel address environmental and human settlements issues and negotiate international conventions and protocols to protect environment and health. Two committees of ECE may be of particular interest: The committee on human settlements (CHS), and the committee on environmental policy (CEP).

CEP - Committee on Environmental Policy

CEP came into existence in 1994. It provides collective policy direction in the area of environment and sustainable development, prepares ministerial meetings, develops international environmental law, and performance reviews, and supports international initiatives in the region. It participates both in the "Environment for Europe" process and the regional promotion of Agenda 21. The "Environment for Europe" ministerial process has for a number of years been the most important regional forum for high-level political cooperation in protecting the environment. It regularly gathers all environment ministers of the ECE region to set policies at the pan-European level, and the conferences have increasingly attracted non-governmental organisations.¹⁷

CHS - Committee on Human Settlements

CHS has existed since 1947. It promotes the compilation, dissemination and exchange of information and experience among the member States on housing, urban development, land administration, national and local objectives and policies. The committee also works to improve human settlements statistics. It draws up recommendations to member countries relating to human settlements policies and strategies and encourages their practical implementation. Through

¹⁶ Examples are economic analysis, environment and human settlements, statistics, sustainable energy, trade, transport, industry and enterprise development. Its activities include development of policies, regulations, standards and technical assistance.

¹⁷ The next environment for Europe Ministerial Conference will be held in Kiev, Ukraine in 2002.

case studies and best practices innovative ways of cooperation between different actors are identified.

The Committee promotes partnership between the public, NGOs and the business sector (real estate, banking and industry) of the ECE countries at regional, national and local levels. It facilitates dialogue and cooperation with intergovernmental, governmental and non-governmental organisations, local governments, the private sector and academics. It works especially closely with the European Union, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Council of Europe, the United Nations Commission on Human Settlements, and other UN regional commissions and agencies.

CHS has also established an advisory network called the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network consisting of experts from the private sector, including industry, private business, financial institutions, non-governmental organizations, professional associations, and research institutions dealing with housing, planning and land administration issues, and local authorities.

EU – The European Union

EU presented its sixth environment action programme in January 2001. The new programme is entitled “Environment 2010: Our Future, Our Choice”. The new programme identifies four priority areas:

- Climate Change
- Nature and Biodiversity
- Environment and Health
- Natural Resources and Waste

To achieve improvements in these areas, the new programme sets out five approaches.

- Ensure the implementation of existing environmental legislation;
- Integrate environmental concerns into all relevant policy areas;
- Work closely with business and consumers to identify solutions;
- Ensure better and more accessible information on the environment for citizens;
- Develop a more environmentally conscious attitude towards land use.

The new programme provides the environmental component of the Community’s forthcoming strategy for sustainable development. It calls for the active involvement and accountability of all sections of society in the search for innovative, workable and sustainable solutions to the environmental problems. www.europa.eu.int/comm/environment/newprg/index.htm
The possibilities to influence the forthcoming strategy to include a childright perspective should be examined.

Within the research programme the theme “Human dimensions of environmental change” is of particular interest. The programme includes research on the social and economic causes and impacts of environmental change. The aim is to assist the formulation of the European Union's environmental policies and thus facilitating their implementation.
<http://www.cordis.lu/env/home.html>

OSSE – Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe

In May 2001 OSSE arranged a Conference on Children in Europe and Central Asia. It was the first high-level regional meeting. One theme discussed was intergenerational justice and environmental sustainability. The Conference stated that children's and young persons' right to participate in the development of social, economic and environmental policy is crucial. Doing nothing undermines human development gains and threatens political stability throughout Europe and Central Asia. A set of principles for intergenerational justice was proposed:

- Consumption of natural resources should be at such a rate and with such compensatory mechanisms that coming generations would still be able to use these resources or adequate substitutes.
- Environmental pollution should be kept at a level where it does not accumulate in air, water or soil or irreversible damages natural ecosystems or human health. This means that the rate of pollution should not exceed the self-cleansing and regenerating capacity of the environment.
- Preserving natural ecosystems. Our influence on natural habitats, biological diversity and ecosystems should not degrade or damage them to the extent that our children will not be able to use or enjoy them.

The conference participants were satisfied that many children now participate in Local Agenda 21 projects and also found other positive signs. One example is that most European cities have signed the so-called Aalborg Chapter, committing to promote urban sustainability in such areas as transport, energy, urban planning, water and waste management. Another positive trend is the strong commitment to the “Cities for Climate Protection Campaign”, which has been joined by more than 400 cities worldwide.

Among the interesting activities of the Conference was a presentation of an interview study including over 15.000 children between the ages 9-17. The study named “The young voices” has been carried out through UNICEF with support from OSSE, more specifically, the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights within OSSE. The final report is supposed to be published late 2001.

The outcome of the study may be useful for Save the Children Sweden when programme direction and activities are to be decided. It is therefore suggested that the final results are analysed and discussed as soon as they are available.

Private organisations – Europe

YEE – Youth and Environment Europe

www.ecn.cz/yee/

Youth and Environment Europe (YEE) is the umbrella organisation for over forty regional and national self-governing youth organisations involved in the study and conservation of nature and environment throughout Europe. YEE was founded in 1983 and the office is placed in Prague. One member organisation is the Swedish Fältbiologerna.

YEE links and coordinates international activities carried out by member organisations. Twice a year, member organisations of YEE come together to identify international issues and to develop cooperation between organisations in different countries.

The activities range from training courses, nature studies and camps to public awareness and pressure on companies and politicians concerning environmental issues. Furthermore, YEE produces publications dealing with international and national environmental issues. Among these is the magazine “Youth and environment”.

EEA – European Environment Agency

The European Environment Agency is a central node of an extended network, the European Environment Information and Observation Network (EIONET).
<http://eionet.eea.eu.int/index.shtml>

The aim of the European Environment Agency is to establish an environmental information system providing relevant and reliable information to EU, other policy-making agents and the public.

There is no information on links to childright perspectives. However, as Sweden’s National Agency for Education and the National Council for Cultural Affairs are partners of EIONET this may very well be the case. The issue should therefore be further investigated.

GMES – Global Monitoring for Environment and Security

The need for information, the necessity to coordinate existing resources and create additional ones gave birth to the European GMES initiative. The overall aim with the net is to support Europe’s goals regarding sustainable development and global governance, by making it easier to access quality data, information and knowledge.

Recently a conference on “Global monitoring for environment and security: towards implementation” was held. During the conference, two groups of secondary school pupils expressed their vision of their hopes and their questions. It is suggested that the opinions and expectations of these children are looked into further, considered and taken care of.

More information is available at the following sites:

<http://gmes.jrc.it/Links/links.htm>, <http://www.unece.org/Welcome.html> and <http://www.unece.org/env/welcome.html>

European Information Networks

The following information networks may provide useful information for special issues:

The European Schoolnet for the Environment

www.eun.org/eun.org2/eun/sv/index.html and www.eun.org/eun.org2/eun/sv/resources/content_frame.cfm?lang=en&ov=719

Nice

The Network Information Center on the Environment in Europe is a network of persons from selected [European environment libraries and information centres](#) and the [European Environment Agency](#) Library. The contact persons have been nominated by the European National Focal Points (NFPs).

www.dmu.dk/LibraryNetwork/

Yearbook of International Cooperation on Environment and Development for NGO's on the European Environment Bureau (EEB)

www.greenyearbook.org/ngo/eeb.htm

This is an NGO founded in 1974. It has consultative status at and relations with the Council of Europe, the Commission of the European Union, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee of the European Union, the OECD, and the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD).

NGOs dealing with environmental conservation and protection, based in the EU, in European Economic Area (EEA) countries, or in official EU candidate countries, can become full members. NGOs that are active in the field of environmental protection or related fields, but who do not meet the criteria for becoming full members, may become associate members. By mid-2000 there were 98 full member organisations in 22 countries and 19 associate member

organizations in 11 countries. Several women's organisations are among the members. Children's organisations?

The objectives of the green yearbook is:

- to bring together environmental non-governmental organizations in the member States in order to strengthen their impact on the environmental policy and projects of the European Union (EU);
- to promote an equitable and sustainable life-style;
- to promote the protection and conservation of the environment, and the restoration and better use of human resources;
- to advocate that the external policies of the European Union contribute to sustainable development globally;

to make all necessary information available to members and other organizations likely to assist in the realisation of these aims, and to organise consultations and joint actions.

Information on Actors in other Regions – Next step

In the same way as ECE carries out preparatory work for the Johannesburg meeting in 2002 it is assumed that the other ECOSOC's regional commissions (in Africa, Western Asia, Latin America, and Asia and the Pacific) will contribute to the Summit.

To investigate the possibilities for Save the Children Sweden's partners to influence this work may therefore be fruitful as the next step in a description of actors within the field "Children and the Environment". This may be done directly or indirectly in partnership with existing organisations and networks, like for example CityNet in Asia.

CityNet www.citynet-ap.org/en/intro.html

CityNet is a network promoting local urban improvement initiatives in the Asian-Pacific region. Its vision is non-polluted city environments, and it encourages higher standards of sanitation, and innovation in environmental management.¹⁸

The network is governed by the 117 members of the General Council and has several partners. Some activities have been supported by UNDP.¹⁹

ESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific) has funded CityNet on behalf of bilateral donors members of Cities Alliance. European experts have participated in programmes through the EC-MECP (Municipal Environmental Co-operation Programme). Such collaboration with European Partners is likely to continue through the Asia-Urbs Programme.

To what a degree children or young people are considered or actively involved in the programmes does not appear from the websites. Options and possible ways of cooperation must therefore be further analysed.

¹⁸ The Regional Congress of Local Authorities for Development of Human Settlements in Asia and the Pacific - under the sponsorship of the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the City of Yokohama) - stressed the need to enhance co-operative links between local authorities for the development of human settlements and to promote partnership with other urban stakeholders. To address these issues, the Congress adopted the Yokohama Declaration which was disseminated worldwide.

¹⁹ Through projects such as UMPAP, Urban Management Programme for Asia and the Pacific, and LIFE, Local Initiative Facility for the Urban Environment. Other partners such as UMP-Asia/UNCHS, AP2000, MEIP/The World Bank, UNCRD, WHO and AIT, have also contributed their technical expertise to CityNet's programmes.

