

Lessons from Nature: education for a sustainable future

EU Comenius Course
28 April – 2 May 2014

**What can nature teach us about sustainability?
Can we develop new business models based on how ecosystems work?**



There is an urgent need to rethink how economies and societies work. This course explores how we can build sustainable economies and societies based on how nature works. The course is essential learning for business, economics, geography and science teachers.

We cannot predict the future, but we do know some facts: natural resources are getting scarcer, the environment is getting more polluted, and our quality of life is threatened by both. The main objective of the course is to explore innovative approaches to sustainable development, using competency based learning and ecosystems as a teaching tool. The course will build on the successful EU Lessons from Nature project, and also share a range of approaches to outdoor learning.

Participants will come from a variety of backgrounds including economics, business, biology, physics, chemistry and geography. This will enable participants to explore how these subjects support each other in developing a sustainable future. The wide range of participants will bring new understanding about how sustainability needs to be supported by all these subjects together.

Lessons from Nature ask what sort of future young people would like to live in and how this future can be made reality. It challenges traditional assumptions about how things are made, economies managed and lives lived. It attempts to present a more hopeful and realistic way for young people to achieve the sort of future they want. After all it will be their future.

The course will take place at the Dershka education centre in the village of Gorno Draglishte in the foothills of the Rila Mountains, Bulgaria. Staying in local guest houses, participants will have the unique opportunity to be part of the local lifestyle and explore how closed loop systems are put into practice and reflect on how they can transfer this experience to their own teaching.

Funding

The cost of the course is €660. Full board accommodation is €440.

There is funding available from the EU to cover the full costs of your participation. You will need to contact your National Agency and they will inform you how to apply for funding. Please use the following link to find your National Agency.

http://ec.europa.eu/education/lifelong-learning-programme/national_en.htm

More information about the training event in Bulgaria can be found on the link below.

<http://ec.europa.eu/education/trainingdatabase/index.cfm?fuseaction=DisplayCourse&cid=5304>

Alternatively you can search the database by using the title or reference number (UK-2014-2013-001) of the course <http://ec.europa.eu/education/trainingdatabase/search.cfm>.

The deadline to apply for a Training Conference is 17 September 2013 – results expected by 17 November 2013

Who can apply?

This course is for anyone involved in school education: education providers, teachers, centre managers, education decision makers

Language

The course will be in English

Some useful information to help you apply:

-  Contact your National Agency to obtain information on the grant application procedures and check the deadline for submission of your application.
-  Check with us that there are places still available and ask us to send you a letter confirming your place on the course.
-  The application form requires you to give the Session ID number – this is SESSION ID: 5931
-  Send your application form to your National Agency following the defined application procedure
-  Your National Agency will inform you if you have been awarded a grant normally 7-10 weeks after the application deadline.
-  Please inform the Cherry Tree (kamen.chipev@gmail.com) if you require support in applying for funding or have any questions.

Travel information – The nearest airport will be Sofia. Cherry Tree will provide full travel details on request and will arrange for transfers to the Deshka Education Centre. The accommodation fee includes one night accommodation at the start and end of the course in Sofia,

About the Cherry Tree and Field Studies Council.

To find out more about the FSC please visit www.field-studies-council.org

If you need to get in touch with us:

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DRAFT PROGRAMME

Day 1

08:30 - Meet & travel to workshop venue

12:00 – Arrival

13:00 - 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:00 Introductory session: sharing experiences & expectations with participants.

15:00 – 15:30 Break

15:30 – 17:00 Introducing Lessons from Nature: how can we be inspired by nature?

Day 2

09:00 – 13:00 State of the environment: why is a new approach to learning needed and why does it matter for business and society?

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:00 Lessons from Nature: discovering the principles in nature.

15:00 – 15:30 Break

15:30 – 17:00 Lessons from Nature: applying the principles in a house and review.

Day 3

09:00 – 12:00 Lessons from Nature - applying the principles to a village and review.

12:00 – 13:00 Can the principles help redesign a community? economy? business?

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 17:00 Visit to local education centre and school.

Day 4

09:00 – 12:00 Applying Lessons from Nature to human systems: exploring how the principles can be applied to business and economics.

12:00 – 13:00 Review: can Lessons from Nature help redesign business?

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch

14:00 – 15:30 Values: how do values support learning for a sustainable future?

15:30 – 16:00 How can we plan for the future?

16:00 – 18:00 Visit to local sites of interest.

Day 5

09:00 – 10:30 Designing your own Lessons from Nature programme.

10:30 – 11:00 Break.

11:00 - 12:30 Course evaluation

12:30 – 13:00 Certificates and close

Note: each evening there will be opportunity to take part in traditional village activities including dancing, singing, crafts and cooking.

* Lunch will be provided every day between 13:00 and 14:00

** Coffee and tea breaks will be provided every day at 10:30 and at 16:30 unless stated

*** Ad-hoc breaks will take place based on activities throughout the course