

# School Garden Forum

## 1. School Gardens Around the World

Throughout the world, there is a long tradition of School gardens which have existed in many different forms and sizes, with just as many different soil types, plants, aims and expectations of pupils and teachers. It is common in school gardens for children to arrange their surroundings creatively and thereby affect their future as well as ours.

In Berlin we are working together with teachers and their classes, discussing the possibilities of sustainable school gardens. In big cities particularly, it is very rare for children to have contact with nature and an awareness of the importance of a healthy environment is often missing. School gardens can play a key role in stopping this dangerous alienation.



We would like to further develop our successful cooperation with schools and NGOs in Berlin and Brandenburg as well as internationally. We will launch the School Garden Forum in order to discuss new ideas and begin projects and partnerships. The main topics are Global Learning, environmental education and biodiversity. The starting points for this forum should be school gardens worldwide. The Museum of Natural History in Berlin and the International Network for School Gardens will support schools with scientific information, public relations and with setting-up a website for international networking. The website enables schools with school garden projects to get in touch with each other and to develop partnership initiatives. Every quarter we will discuss the major topics and publish a newsletter with the results of the projects as well as relevant informative articles. Together with pupils we would like to design posters, postcards and presentations as well as participating in competitions. Recently we prepared a poster and a postcard with contributions from German and South Africans schools for the ICLEI World Congress ([www.iclei.org/worldcongress2006](http://www.iclei.org/worldcongress2006)) in Cape Town at the end of February 2006 in cooperation with the School-Environmental-Centre Berlin-Mitte ([www.suz-mitte.de](http://www.suz-mitte.de)) and the Cape Town NGO SEED ([www.seed.org.za](http://www.seed.org.za)).

This project aims to reconnect young people with their environment, in both urban and rural settings, through international partnerships, exchanges and nurturing enthusiasm for nature and sustainable development.



museum für naturkunde  
der Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin  
[www.naturkundemuseum-berlin.de](http://www.naturkundemuseum-berlin.de)

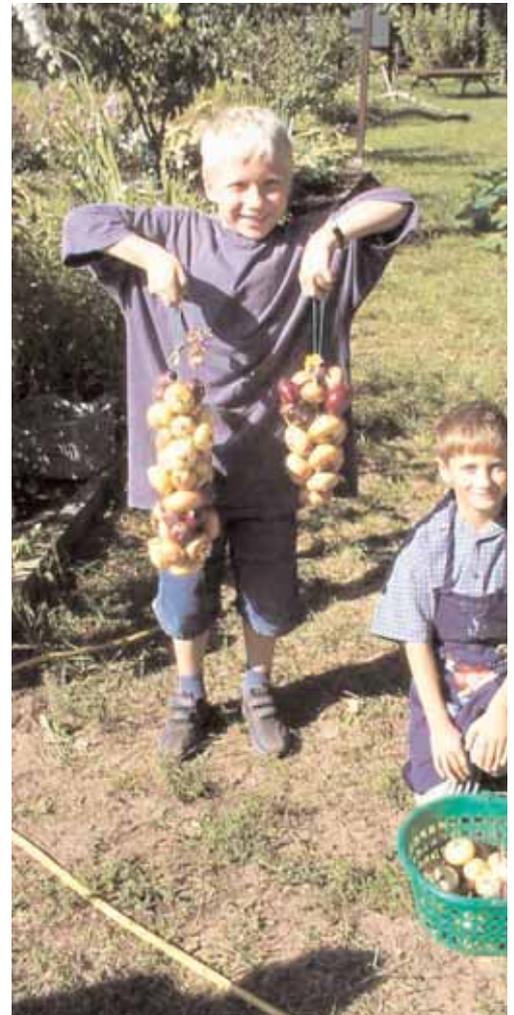


## The interactions can take place at different levels:

- Pupils from a school in Germany are introduced to pupils from a school in South Africa, Brazil or any other country. They are challenged to communicate about the different conditions of their school garden project and to discover differences or common practise.
- At the teacher's level it could be a platform for sharing experiences of setting up an 'outdoor classroom' and sharing teaching resources across all areas of the curriculum and for pupils of all ages. It would also be a way to receive additional information about health, nutrition, environmental and learning practises, case studies on outdoor learning and school grounds development etc.
- Organisations in the fields of education, environment and ecology can share information about funding sources, published research, training, resource materials and places to visit, news and events.

## 2. Share Experiences and Learn From One Another

To incorporate the idea of sustainable development in our project more authentically, we are looking for partners from all over the world, particularly other classes and schools working on sustainability. We would like to establish partnerships with school gardens which are interested in international cooperation. These partnerships will lead to children of different cultures learning about each others experiences of school gardens and comparing them to their own.



## Envision the Future and Start Now!

## Join and Promote This Project!

### 3. A Successful Partnership Between NGOs, the Museum of Natural History, and Schools

The Museum of Natural History in Berlin has over 25 million items in its collection and is one of the largest of its kind in the world. It is dedicated above all to the study of the evolution of the earth and life as well as the question of how today's biodiversity emerged. A network of large natural history museums around the world yields important results for the study of biodiversity and its developing history. The Museum of Natural History is working on this project to bring the importance of biodiversity to school gardens.

The main aim of the »International Network for School Gardens - Education for Sustainable Development« project is the initiation and promotion of cooperation amongst schools with school gardens which can be used for educational purposes. Apart from activities in the school garden we can also envisage the use of other, smaller open spaces in the schoolyard or public spaces near the school. »Community gardens« and »urban horticulture« could also generate food and income for the school and could expand conventional school garden work.



## Partners

### School-Environmental-Centre Berlin-Mitte

The School-Environmental-Centre offers children from pre-schools and schools a range of opportunities for environmental education. Between April and September every year some 40 to 50 classes or groups a week, around 750 pupils, come to different gardens. Special attention is given to combining ecological and botanical details with hands-on experience.

### SEED - Schools Environmental Education and Development, Cape Town

SEED trains teachers to teach Environmental Education and transforms learning environments. SEED's core program is the sustainable schools program, which develops a sustainable environmental education program and multi-function Permaculture garden at the school. SEED also runs various other programs, including the SEED Academy, a series of short courses with different themes, which culminates in an implementation of the appropriate Permaculture system. Through these programs and in partnership with other organisations we work to nurture a broad-scale schools environmental movement.

*»Gardens are not made by sitting in the shade ...«*

Rudyard Kipling

### Concept:

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