

www.sustain.no

A support system for Education for Sustainable Development



Protecting and Promoting Human Health



An internet based support network for schools was established in 1997 after several years of research and development work. The program has evolved to support Education for Sustainable Development.





Objectives and target groups

The aim is to provide a system for knowledge building that contributes to sustainable development and in which:

- * participants are active and develop knowledge by collecting, structuring and communicating new information about interactions in nature and interactions between nature, man and society
- * all pupils and students are given an opportunity to experience nature and to recognize the beauty and value of nature

- * pupils and students develop a sense of identification with other peoples. They learn to have solidarity with the world's poor and an understanding of their responsibility for the future.

The programme aims at all levels of the education system.

Brief description

www.sustain.no is a learning resource, organized in several activities for schools. All information and support tools are found on Internet, but the work is done the field with hands-on involvement by students.

www.sustain.no is a program providing schools with methods, background-information and data-bases. Schools develop their own projects using guidelines on the Internet. Students learn through field work, analyses of findings, discussion of results and writing of reports.

It is important to recognise the connections and interactions between social, economic and ecological development.



The content

Biological diversity

Biological diversity describes nature's variability, variety and abundance. Biological diversity is about more than plants and animals and their ecosystems – it is about people and our need for food security, medicines, fresh air and water, shelter, and a clean and healthy environment in which to live.

Climate and air quality

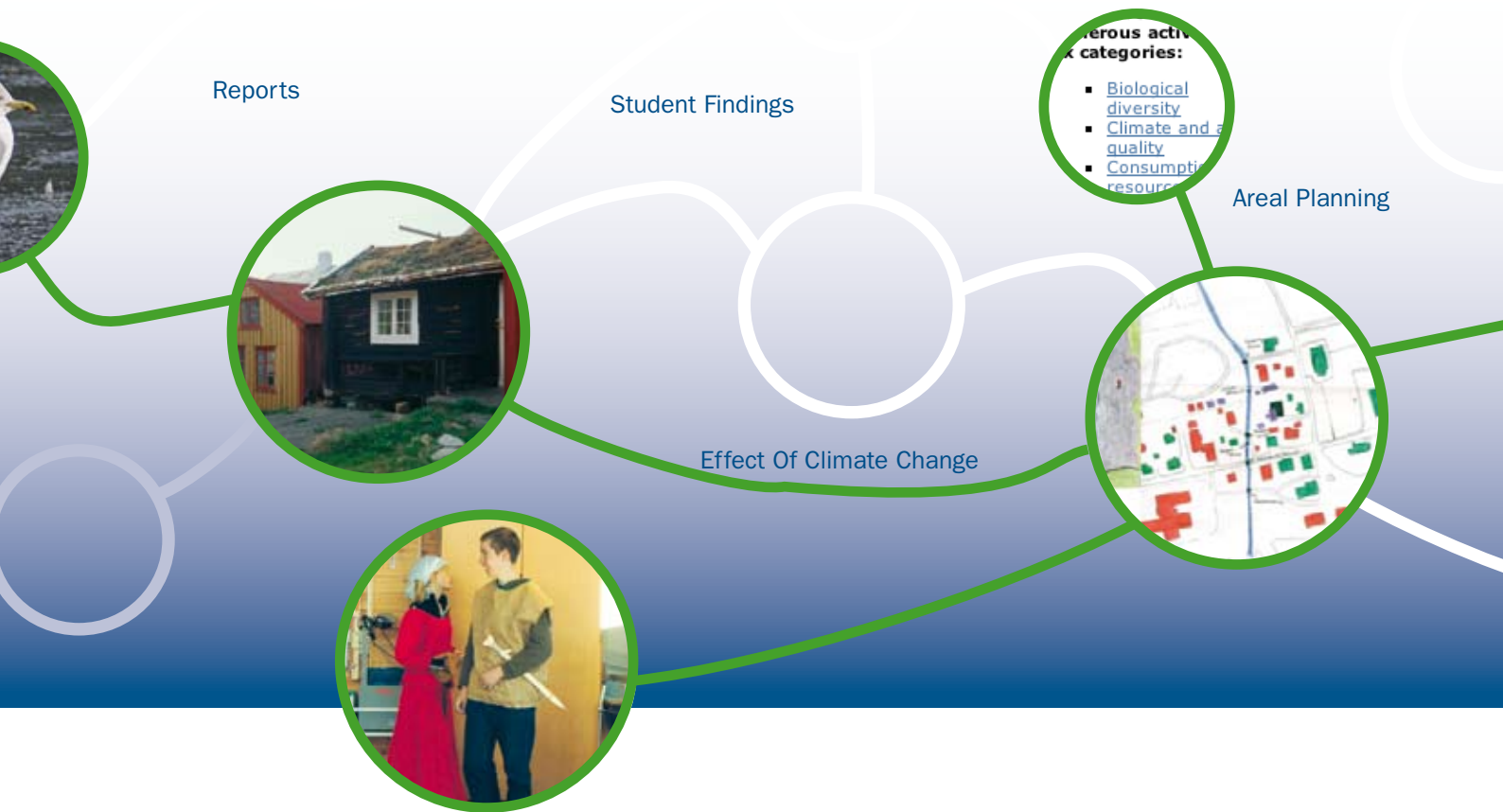
Life on earth is adapted to a specific composition of gases in the atmosphere. Emissions of climate gases can lead to a change in the global climate. It is essential that we gain insight into and understand how we are creating today's climate changes. Taking the correct actions is vital to secure a stable global climate.

Consumption and resources

The activities address the various aspects of our own consumption. The students investigate their own consumption and relate it to a sustainable development. The pupils can reflect on their own lifestyle and what the term 'global poverty' really means.

www.sustain.no is a support system.

It encourages cooperative and experimental learning.



Democracy and participation

Sustainable development includes ecological, social and economic aspects. Globalisation is a diverse process that can have both positive and negative impacts on sustainable development. The individual's ability to influence the development may seem limited at a first glance, but there are many ways in which we can participate and make a difference in our local environment and through deliberate choices.

Energy

We hear most often, perhaps, about pollution, energy crises and threats of global environmental problems; but these issues are also related to our expectations for future growth and improvements in our quality of life. By using the tools, which are now available on the Internet, we can teach energy as a concrete and action-oriented subject. The portal contains several activities the students can choose among.

Water

Water is an essential resource for all living organisms. Without water, no life can survive. Making sure that everybody has access to sufficient clean water is a major challenge in securing a sustainable development. In areas where there is enough water, the quality may be poor. Monitoring water quality is therefore important and pupils can contribute.

www.sustain.no facilitates student participation and provides contexts for developing the students' own learning, ideas and perspectives.

Pollution

Human Rights

Climate Change



Water Quality



The planning of a local project should include these steps:

Phase 1: The students discuss what they want to achieve, and how they want to proceed.

Phase 2: Contact local authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) or other people for help to identify relevant issues that are suitable for study.

Phase 3: Choose an object of study.

Phase 4: Pupils and teachers should collaborate on an outline for the work:

- the goals of the work
- the activities to be conducted
- the organization of the work
- communicating the results
- evaluating the work process
- possible follow-up.

Phase 5: Carry out various activities:

- monitoring and registration activities
- practical maintenance, management tasks
- investigate different issues
- look at the topic from a global perspective
- learn about local and global health issues linked to the topic

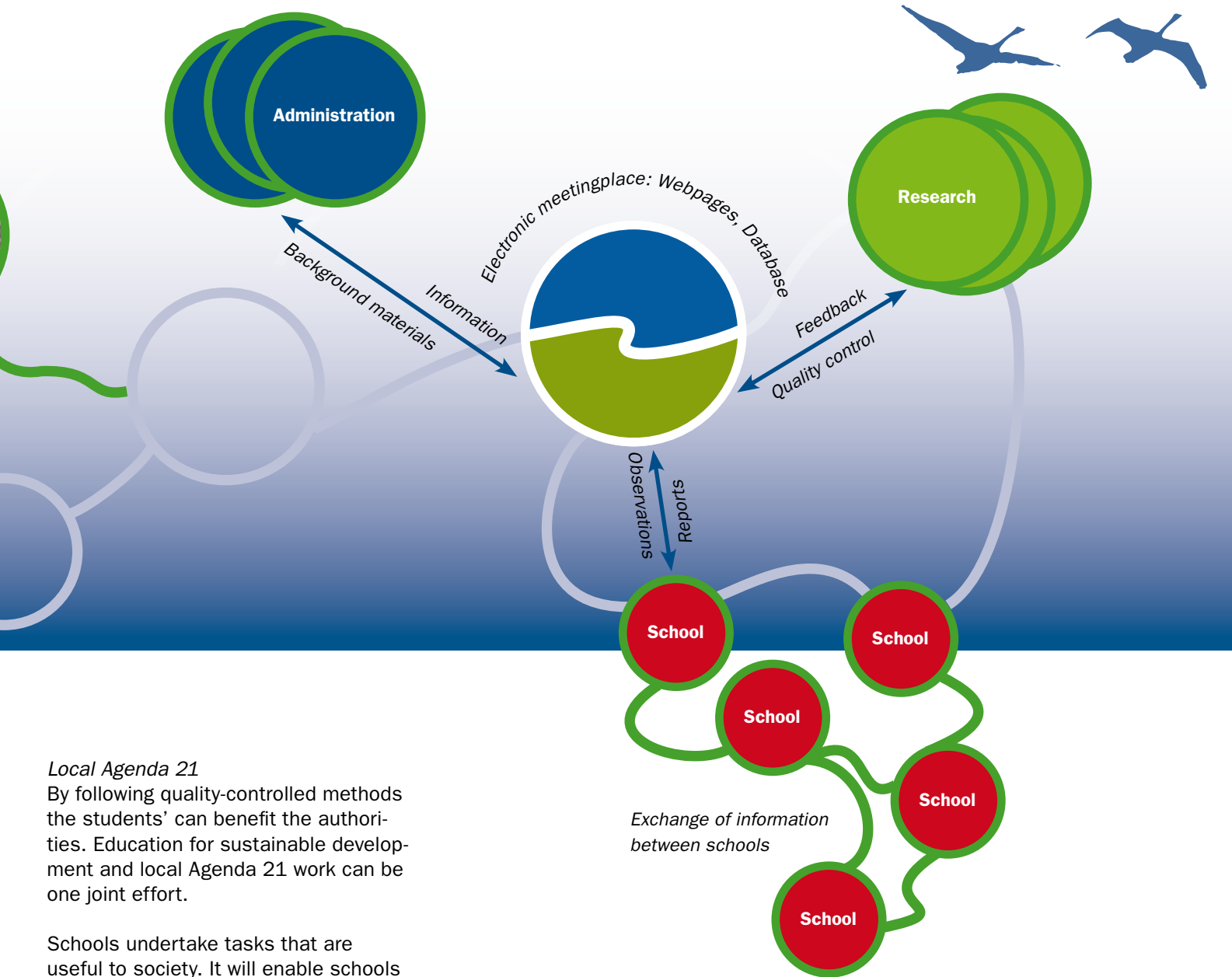
The Web site contains guides for carrying out tasks and background material for interpreting results. There are forms for completion and submission. The researchers who manage the Web site can be contacted.

Phase 6: Results may be communicated locally by using text, drawings and photos, setting up information boards along a nature and/or culture path, sending a letter to the local authorities and/or contacting a journalist about a presentation in the media.

Shared database

The results of the students' work are entered into a shared database, which schools and the local and central authorities can draw on for information. The schools participating in the network receive supervision and guidance from leading research institutions.

Education for sustainable development has an action-based perspective that builds on knowledge from a broad range of subjects.



Local Agenda 21

By following quality-controlled methods the students' can benefit the authorities. Education for sustainable development and local Agenda 21 work can be one joint effort.

Schools undertake tasks that are useful to society. It will enable schools and society to exchange information and the environmental situation will be portrayed more realistically than in the mass media.

Exchange of information between schools

The figure shows the main actors and the information flow.

Education for sustainable development and Local Agenda 21 work can be combined as one joint effort.

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