Report on study trip of the Norwegian delegation to the Czech Republic

Introduction

Study tour of the Norwegian delegation to the Czech Republic took place from 17.10. to 22.10.2011 and it was one of the activities of the project "Ecological education in Norway and the Czech Republic - INSPIRATION AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE", which was supported within the Block Grant “Technical Assistance Fund”, Financial mechanism of EEA/Norway. Guarantor of the project was the town Český Brod. Partner of the project was the Norwegian company Skogbruketskursinstitutt.

The logic of the study trip program design was following: First, the Norwegian delegation actively participated in the workshop on Eco-school, within which they obtained basic knowledge about the Eco-school program in the Czech Republic and passed on their know-how. The delegation further visited elementary school Žitomírská in Český Brod, which is not involved in the Eco-school program, but would like to get involved. Subsequently, there was a tour of elementary schools in northern Bohemia, which are in various stages of implementation of the Eco-school program and thus provided different examples of good practice (School of Charles IV. in Ústí nad Labem is involved in the program, but has no certificate, Švermova elementary school in Liberec and Slovanka school in Česká Lípa defended the Eco-school certificate once and Povrly elementary and elementary Dubá defended the certificate twice). The program was supplemented by specialized excursions to the National Park České Švýcarsko and Kokořínsko, where it was presented not only the environmental education of visitors, but also the Czech countryside itself and its method of protection. Environmental education was complementing the eco-centers and Střevlík and Čmelák - Friends of Nature programs.

Representatives of educational institutions and public administration from Český Brod participated in the excursion days on 19.11 and 21.11. at their own expense. Kristian Hellesund, biology teacher from Bergen arrived at the workshop on 18.10 at his own expense as well.

At the end of each day, participants completed questionnaires on examples of good practice. This output is part of the report.
Composition of the Norwegian delegation:

<table>
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<tr>
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Program and good practice examples from the study trip

Monday, October 17, 2011

Program
13:05 arrival to Ruzyně airport
13:50 pickup at the airport
15:15 check-in– Hotel Svornost, Prague – Dolní Počernice
15:30 joint lunch
16:15 departure to Prague
17:30 tour of the city with the guide in Norwegian

Tuesday, October 18, 2011

Program
8:30 beginning of the workshop
13:15 end of the workshop
14:00 departure to Český Brod
14:30 visit of the elementary school Žitomírská in Český Brod

program was prepared by: **Mgr. Drahomíra Čutková, the rector**
Presentation of schools, environmental education projects, handing letters to elementary school students from Godeset, Norway - establishing cooperation between schools

16:00  town presentation  
program was prepared by:  **Bc. Jakub Nekolný, Mayor of Český Brod**

17:30  departure to the hotel

**Eco-school workshop**

On 18.10.2011 at the hotel Svornost, Novozamecká 284, Prague - Dolní Počernice, there was a workshop which purpose was to exchange experience in implementing and fulfilling the Eco-school program. Workshop attended 51 people.

The workshop was one of the activities of the project Ecological education in Norway and the Czech Republic - INSPIRATION AND EXCHANGE OF EXPERIENCE, held the city Český Brod. Professional guarantee of the workshop took over TEREZA Association, national coordinator of the Eco-school program.

At the beginning of the event everyone present was warmly greeted, especially:
- Bc. Jakub Nekolný, Mayor of Český Brod
- representatives of the Norwegian Eco-schools: Mrs. Liv Grahl-Jacobsen, Kjersti Lothe, Torunn Jørgensen Hellesund, Åse Marit Hodnefjell, Maj Hanne Vidnes, Tove Helen Grimsby and Mr. Kristian Hellesund, who attended the workshop in his own interest and who paid all costs connected with participation (accommodation, transport) by himself
- Mgr. Jitka Schneiderová, national coordinator of the Eco-school project
- Mgr. Ing. Petr Holý, regional coordinator of environmental education in Prague

At the first presentation spoke Mayor of Český Brod Bc. Jakub Nekolný, who presented the project. Then Mgr. Jitka Schneiderová neatly summed up the implementation of the Eco-school, not only in the Czech Republic but also in Norway.

In the first block of discussion focused on active participation of students in the Eco-school program spoke - Liv Hjørdis Grahl-Jacobsen, Eco-school coordinator, Godeset skole elementary, Stavanger, and students from elementary in Vrané nad Vltavou, Mr. Ondřej Rychetský and Ms. Petra Bláhová, under the leadership of Mgr. Jan Vrtiška, environmental education coordinator.

The second part dealt with the financial demands on participation in the program - how to save money? With their contributions spoke Kjersti Lothe, Eco-school coordinator, kindergarten Lassamyra barnehage, Stavanger, and Renata Bendová, DiS., environmental education coordinator, with her colleague Mgr. Nikola Dudová, Šimanovská elementary, Prague 9.

The third block was focused on the implementation of specific activities of the Eco-school - examples of good practice. With their know-how contributed Torunn Jørgensen Hellesund, Eco-school coordinator, Vadmyra skole, Bergen, and Mgr. Petra Boháčková, environmental education coordinator, elementary of Dr. Edvard Beneš, Prague 9.

The participants got actively involved in the discussion and transfer of good practice. In the end, the most interesting examples of good practice were repeated and summarized.

Good practice examples
• schools’ corridors decorations have not only aesthetic, but also informative function (image of the Vltava river with photographs of various locations around the river – elementary school in Vrané nad Vltavou)
• participation of municipalities, schools and other entities in the Hour of Earth project (possibility to get involved in the campaign on March 31, 2012 from 20:30 pm)
• "School in nature" actually took place in nature - tents in the trees, the water and rock
Stavangerturistforening, Norway
• Images of famous art works from old magazines taped in form of collage – Vadamya skole, Bergen
• containers for sorted waste is made of wood, maintained toilets in relaxation zones in the form of wooden houses - a better fit to the countryside –Stavanegr, Norway
• active involvement of students from elementary schools in Vrané nad Vltavou during the workshops - demonstration of students participation in the Eco-school program
• project Our region – looking for beautiful places around the of schools
• cemetery of garbage in the school garden, regular monitoring of the litter decomposition
• school grants - students have a certain amount from the school budget, they propose how to spend the money with an application
• Eco-school – long-term systematic program for schools, mainly attended by students
• in Norway, field trips are part of the schooling
• project School on wheels - motivating students to travel to school by bicycle
• collecting paper, using raised funds according to students’ decision
• organizing project week, project day, dressing in colors according activities (recycling of plastics - yellow clothes, the collection of paper - a blue clothes, etc.)
Elementary school Žitomírská, Český Brod

School isn’t involved in Eco-school program; based on the knowledge gained during the project, school representatives want to get involved in the project.

The delegation was welcomed by the members of choir lead by Mrs. Mgr. Šárka Houšová, after then the rector Mgr. Drahomíra Čutková briefly presented her school. The school tour itself took place in the classrooms, the gym that had climbing wall, the garden, base of the club breeders, ceramic workshops and other specialized classrooms.

Total number of students in this school is currently 431 they are dividend to 20 classes, the number of teachers is 32.

While visiting Norway, directors of Godeset and Žitomírská elementary schools agreed to make contacts and provide students with the opportunity to correspond in English. Letters from students of Žitomírská were delivered during the visit of Český Brod and correspondence may begin.

Wednesday, October 19, 2011

Program

7:00 departure from the hotel

8:30 arrival to the elementary school Liberec, Švermova

program prepared by: Mgr. Jarmila Hegrová, school rector

Mgr. Hana Gdulová, environmental education and Eco-school coordinator

Mgr. Alexandr Irgl, deputy rector

Eco-team members
• Eco-school program presentation – Eco-codex, activities, Eco-team activities, good practice examples
• School tour, concrete example of environmental education

10:30 .departure from the school
11:00 arrival to the Eco-center Střevlík

program prepared by:  **Ing. Radek Hromádka, director of Eco-center Střevlík**

**Šárka Zbořilová, lecturer**

• Presentation of environmental education educational projects a program, tour of the facilities

13:00 lunch
13:30 departure from the Střevlík
14:15 Čmelák – Friends of nature society

program was provided by: **RNDr. Lenka Opočenská, head of Department for nature**

presentation of environmental educational activities, field trip to Nový Prales

18:00 departure to the hotel Morris in Česká Lípa

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**Eco-school Švermova, Liberec**

Adoption of the Norwegian delegation to the school Švermova was very nicely prepared. First of all, Principal Mgr. Jarmila Hegrová presented school itself, its activities and projects. Mgr. Hana Gdulová, environmental education and the Eco-School coordinator, then followed by a presentation of the Eco-school program implementation process. Throughout the whole time Mgr. Alexander Irgl helped with the welcome of the delegation. Eco-school coordinators, Mgr. Jitka Schneiderová and Marie Krausová took part in the presentation.

During the presentation it was stressed how it is crucial for teachers to work together and to further their education. Similarly like on Tuesday's workshop, it was pointed out that the Eco-school program goes hand in hand with preventive projects n schools.

The benefit of the Eco-school is not only prestige but also the visibility of the school, students and activation of improving the internal environment of the school. It was pointed out that participation in the program is not a momentary or single issue, nor can it be a targeted process leading to only capture the flag. Švermova elementary school started the program in 2006. The important part of the program was a joint meeting of all teachers, where it was strategically planned, what direction the school should develop, and where benefits, barriers, opportunities and threats were compiled key measures were v down. In the next phase, the students participated in the program. Each class has drafted its proposal for Eco-codex from which were selected policies that most often coincide. Each year was then focused on one theme: waste, water, environment, education and energy. Only after 4 years, the school applied for a certificate based on his activities received.
Photo: Ekoškola elementary school Švermova students themselves prepared the Eco-school presentation for the Norwegian delegation

Photo: Autumn elves

Photo: Students were informed about the visit of the Norwegian delegation via bulletin board
Environmental education is systematic; outputs of all projects are archived.

STŘEDisko Ekologické Výchovy Libereckého Kraje - STŘEVLIK

STŘEVLIK is an allowance organization whose founder is the Liberec Region. Its main activity is the practical environmental education aimed at school children but also at public. Eco-centre focuses primarily on residential programs.

Norwegian delegation was welcomed by the director Ing. Radek Hromádka, who introduced the entire complex - historic building farmhouse, the new building "Sun house" in which the basement is a modern equipped laboratory with a binocular magnifying glass and computers and farm buildings serving as a base for a teaching farm, where the original Czech breeds of farm animals are kept (not only for teaching but also as a gene reserve in the Czech Republic).

Šárka Zbořilová, the lecturer, presented the delegation following: educational programs for schools and the public: Feet on the ground, Heart in nature (for kindergarten - sensitivity and understanding of nature), Life on the farm or how animals live with people (for 1st grade school - how people behave to animals), expedition of the memory of Jizerské mountains (for 2nd grade school - how man affects nature), Mosaic Earth (for high schools - perception of the world in a global context), etc.
Čmelák – Friends of nature society
The last tour was provided in collaboration with RNDr Lenka Opočenská, the head of department for nature. In the headquarters of Čmelák company the delegation was introduced to its activities and projects.

Čmelák – Friends of nature society is a nonprofit environmental organization combining practical conservation with environmental education. It actively protects, maintains and enhances the diversity of nature, promotes sustainable
living, performs environmental education and awareness. It involves the widest possible public in their projects, it is the association of land (17 lands with total area of 50 hectares), and it organizes projects for youth or for companies.

The greatest benefit was the excursion to the Nový Prales at Ještěd. In practice, it was show what the Land Association means. The company buys pine forest land that no one protects, because it isn’t valuable in terms of biodiversity. Then they reconstruct it. The aim of the company is to transform the spruce monocultures in forest species composition with the natural character of the rainforest. The company builds fences so the animals don’t harm planted trees, it creates a suitable environment for the trees (fair places), plants seedlings beeches, firs, elm, cherry, ash, all that without heavy equipment.
Thursday, October 20, 2011

Program
7:00 departure from the hotel
8:00 arrival to elementary school of Charles IV. in Ústí nad Labem

Program was provided by:  **Mgr. Věra Zimová, environmental education coordinator**

**Mgr. Pavel Ťupek, elementary school rector**

- school presentation
- presentation of environmental education activities and Eco-school project issues
- school and project day workroom tour

10:30 end of the visit

11:00 arrival in elementary school in Povrly

Program was provided by:  **Mgr. Jaroslava Najmonová, elementary school rector**

**Mgr. Hana Vaněčková, environmental education coordinator**

**Ivan Málek, deputy Mayor of the county**

**Eco-team**

- the Eco-school program presentation - defending the certificate, Eco-school and environmental education activities, examples of good practice
- Tree planting on the occasion of the Tree Day
- discussion

13:00 end of the visit, lunch in the school cafeteria

14:00 departure to NP České Švýcarsko
15:00  arrival to Hřensko, Mezní Louka

Program was provided by:  
**Tomáš Salov, Public Relations and Press Officer of the National Park Administration České Švýcarsko**

19:00  departure to the hotel

18:30  arrival to the hotel Morris in Česká Lípa

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**Elementary school of Charles IV. v Ústí nad Labem**

Already at the very beginning of the preparation of the study tour, it was arranged that at the school of Charles IV. the project day will be scheduled on the day of the Norwegian delegation visit.

The delegation was welcomed by Mgr. Věra Zimová, the environmental education coordinator, and Mgr. Pavel Ťupek, the rector. The first part of the program was the presentation of the school and its activities within the environmental education. School is involved in the Eco-School, but still did not receive a certificate, it does change anything on the fact that the school offers numerous projects aimed at environmental education to its students, organizes the project days 4 times a year (activities previously tested by teachers during first week) and also holds the project at night, cleaning nature, different project weeks (apple-week) trips into the countryside working with workbooks, presentations of the surrounding countryside, etc. environmental education is closely associated with prevention (students make presentations on topics such as anorexia, healthy food), upper class go on field trips with lower grades (cooperation). The projects are aimed at protecting the environment, yet it offers interesting game but frame (Avatar, etc.).

The total number of students is currently 302, they are divided into 14 classes.

After school presentation, the delegation went on a tour of the whole school and project day workrooms. The program was very interactive and imaginative. Students were divided into groups (groups were mixed); for the purpose of the project are each group spent in a workshop of 2 hours, then the group exchanged.

For the Norwegian delegation to contribute to the program, it was planned that the children learn the Norwegian song about waste sorting and recycling. Students were given lyrics of the song in Norwegian, phonetically transcribed in and in Czech, they also receive audiovisual version of the song so they could start preparing. Norwegian song was played few times on radio during a school visit and in the end students sang it together with the delegation.
Photo: Placing Czech products magnets on the economic map of the Czech Republic

Photo: Making carpets with the motif of the forest from old materials

Photo: Making baskets from paper tubes
Povrly elementary school

Among the most beneficial excursion, as in the implementation of the Eco-School, was the visit of the elementary school in Povrly. The delegation was welcomed by Mgr. Jaroslava Najmonová, the rector, Mgr. Hana Vaněčková, coordinator for environmental education and Ivan Málek, deputy Mayor of the municipality.

Eco-school defended the certificate twice. The fact that the program is a daily part of the school was visible on students, who accompanied the delegation at school. Their commitment, awareness and motivation were an answer to the question of whether the Eco-school program has some significance.

After the school visit, during which many Eco-school program sub-activities were presented, (such a prestigious competition for the best flower decoration classes, daily monitoring of performance of small solar power plant and related savings, monthly monitoring of consumption of heat and water quality monitoring of surrounding water resources, nature trail or cemetery waste), students ceremoniously planted maple on the occasion of Tree Day.
The lunch in the school cafeteria was followed by a pleasant discussion with the rector.

Photo: Cemetery of garbage - core from apples, paper towel, plastic bag, etc. are buried here

Photo: photo of the Eco-team and Norwegian delegations in front the school
Photo: Eco-team students show their animals in the zoo’s corner to Norwegian delegation

Photo: Every day the weather is recorded, along with how much energy was produced and how much energy was produced

Photo: Welcome at school with the rector, environmental education coordinator and Povrly municipality deputy Mayor
NP České Švýcarsko

Last day excursion was professionally focused trip from Mezní Louka to Pravčická brána. The guide was Mr. Tomáš Salov, the Administration of the National Park České Švýcarsko - public relations and press officer.

During the trip there were breaks for interpretation on "What to does NP have in common with Norwegians?" and the environmental education. Following topic were also discussed – the Financial mechanism EEA/Norway (deer monitoring, monitoring the chemical composition of water, forest monitoring, counting visitors NP), a project of returning salmon in the river Kamenice (in which thousands of small salmon is emitted every year, of which dozens annually return) or the public relationship towards the nature. Discussion on state forest usefully completed the knowledge gained in the eco-centre Střevlík and Čmelák.

The delegation arrived at Pravčická brána at the time of sunset, which magnified the unusual experience of the beautiful nature of the national park.
Photo: during the professional excursion in NP České Švýcarsko with Tomáš Salov
Friday, October 21, 2011

Program
8:00   departure from the hotel
9:00   arrival to elementary school Slovanka in Česká Lípa

Program provided by: **Mgr. Václav Špetlík, elementary school rector**

**Mgr. Jana Pancová, environmental education coordinator**

**Eco-team**

- tour the school with commentary
- panel discussion with Eco-team and coordinator of environmental education
- lunch in the school canteen

11:45  departure
12:30  arrival to Dubá elementary school

Program provided by: **Mgr. Jindřiška Skalická, elementary school rector**

**Mgr. Jana Mašková, environmental education coordinator**

**Bc. Věra Valová, deputy rector**

**Alena Adámková, English teacher**

**Mgr. Zdeňka Šepsová, Dubá Mayor**
**Eco-team members**

Šárka Škapiková, editor at Český rozhlas Sever radio station

- school tour, environmental education a Eco-school activities

14:15 end of the visit

14:35 arrival to Ráj, PLA Kokořínsko presentation

program provided by: *Ing. Marcela Holubová, PLA Kokořínsko Administration*

- PLA presentation
- Field trip

18:30 departure to Prague

20:00 check-in – Hotel Dolce Villa, Nebušice

**Elementary school Slovanka in Česká Lípa**

Last day excursion began in the elementary school Slovanka in Česká Lípa. The rector Mgr. Václav Špetlík welcomed Norwegian delegation with freshly squeezed cider from apples grown organically in the school garden. After a brief presentation of the school, there was a spontaneous debate on the integration of handicapped students in Czech and Norwegian schools, which followed by tour of the school and classes.

From comments during the tour these information were interesting in: School celebrated its 40th anniversary of its existence, yet it is still 99% adjusted for students in wheelchairs; the school is attended by about 600 school children; school is very active in applying subsidies to other non-investment spending, which is evident for example in the IT classroom and in all classes - interactive whiteboards, new furniture; student are encouraged to read – they want to improve their ranking in reading rate, which is currently lead by the Norwegians, so they take part in the "Prague reads to children"; children have their own zoo, they are allowed to borrow animals to home for the holidays; very popular is group work, where children learn the different roles – leader, silencer of arguments, timekeeper, etc.; classes decoration aims to make learning enjoyable for children - the first visited class was called "The Indians", it was an Indian decor, there was a tee-pee in front the board.

After the school visit there was some time set aside to discuss with the Eco-team, which was accompanied by Mgr. Jana Pancová, environmental education coordinator. Children introduced the Eco-school program activities, such as the use of rainwater for watering the lawn, planting hedges (cooperation of older pupils, who have calculated how many plants will be needed, and younger students, who planted shrubs), preparation and compliance of the Eco-codex, collecting chestnuts and acorns for wildlife, project days, Owl Academy, practical activities of Eco-team (there are representatives from each class in the Eco-team - they are in charge of transmitting information about the activities of the Eco-school, and they provide feedback to the Eco-team), etc. The school received a Green Flag and students are proud of it properly.

The program ended with lunch in the school cafeteria.
Photo: 1. Grade - Indian decor class

Photo: containers for waste sorting in the school hallways, on the left press for PET bottles
Dubá elementary school
The last visited school was an elementary school in Dubá. School managed to defend the certificate of Eco twice already. If it can succeed next year, it will need recertification not every two years, but once in five years, which was very interesting and as subsequently discussed information for the members of the Norwegian delegation, they will present during the autumn Eco-school meeting in Stavanger. In Norway, the school must recertificate each year.
Despite the fact that the delegation has visited many schools, they found many examples of good practice here as well.

The Norwegian delegation was welcomed by Mgr. Jindřiška Skalická, the rector, Mgr. Jana Mašková, environmental education coordinator, Bc. Věra Valová, deputy rector, Alena Adámková, the English teacher and Eco-team. An honor was the start of the visit with Mgr. Zdeňka Šepsová, Mayor of Dubá. During the visit the delegation was also accompanied by Šárka Škapiková, the editor of Český rozhlas Sever radio station.
The study tour was finished in Ráj, the Norwegian delegation was charmed not only by the beautiful nature but also the folk architecture. Professional program was prepared Ing. Marcela Holubová from PLA Kokořínsko Administration. Within a very well-prepared presentation she introduced the subject of protection in the PLA - not only nature but also folk buildings.

The demanding trip was completed in a picturesque setting of Kokořín rocks. Along the way, there were breaks, during which presented natural phenomena were pointed out and during which educational programs for children and their relationship to nature were discussed. The delegation visited Kokořínsko after sunset, draped in a nostalgic haze.
Photo: With Ing. Marcela Holubová on the way to the rock city - example of folk architecture

Photo: With Ing. Marcela Holubová at Kokořínsko
Saturday, October 22, 2011

Program
7:45   departure from the hotel Dolce Villa
7:55   arrival to the airport
9:35   departure to Stavanger
10:05  departure to Bergen

The received financial support as part of the Block Grant - “Technical Assistance Fund”, Financial mechanism of EEA/Norway.