

Iniciatives for national strategy on environmental health education in Slovenia

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The promotion of human health and protection of the environment are becoming increasingly important to individuals, communities, companies and governments. Weather and climate are essential elements of our environment, they have impact on almost all human activities. In this contribution we are focusing on their impacts on human health and well being. With climate change this aspect will becoming even more important as in was in the past. In order to be able to foresee the future consequences of climate change for human well being, it is necessary to determine the present links and relationships between weather, climate and human health. Only this knowledge will enable us to assess our vulnerability and resilience to climate change impacts and allow us to mitigate and adapt to negative environmental consequences of climate change and particularly to mitigate as much as possible impacts of severe weather and climate events.

The development of the knowledge-based society creates new opportunities for citizens to become more aware of health and environmental issues that affect them. Environmental education aims to safeguard the health of people from environmental threats, provide leadership in environmental health sciences to protect public health; respond and share solutions to environmental health problems worldwide; and communicate information about genes, diseases, and environmental risk factors. This educational effort will encourage changes in behavior that will create a more sustainable future in terms of environmental integrity, economic viability, and a just society for present and future generations.

At the Institute of Public health of Koper, the College of Health and the Faculty of Education of the Primorska University (UP), in the collaboration with the Environmental Agency of the RS of the Ministry of environment and spatial planning and the Ministry of Health we have recognized the importance in the field of prevention and management of illness and promotion of environmental health. Our activities are mainly concerned with introduction of environmental health education and to represent a new vision of education, which helps better understand the world in which we live, addressing the complexity of environmental health problems and to cope with their treats. Our vision of education emphasizes a holistic, interdisciplinary approach to developing the knowledge and skills needed for a sustainable future as well as

changes in values, behavior, and lifestyles. It is very important to act at the same time on the field of non-formal education, so in the collaboration with the Municipality of Koper we have started a campaign to inform and to educate communities on the main environmental and health issues. The aim is not only to pay particular attention to awareness-raising concerning the environment and health, but to educate consumers, corporations and governments on the need to make ourselves ready and to adapt, for instance for climate change, and for obvious irreversible changes, like diminution of the non-renewable natural resources, biodiversity and lack of drinking water. Since multilateral approach towards to achieve the proposed goals are more powerful, boundary cooperation between member states, and others in the region is a key element.