

Greetings from Duesseldorf

Duesseldorf, the capital of Northrhine-Westfalia, has been committed to develop a strategy of sustainable development by the local agenda 21 for several years.

With the help of its residents and the support by politicians and the administration a lot of interesting ideas for projects have become reality in our city, like for example:

- new international school partnerships
- selling fair trade coffee
- getting uniforms for our fire departments which fulfill ecological criteria
- the Fair House, a department shop which sells secondhand products for very low prices and qualifies people who have not done a regular job for a long time
- the network of environmental audit schools, which representatives of your country got to know four years ago here in Duesseldorf.

Recently I have been invited to a lot of presentations of project results of students in the environmental and sustainability management in your schools. During these presentations I was able to experience the commitment, profound knowledge and joy with which the young people try to solve some of the problems on our planet. There were projects about topics like energy saving, waste management, founding sustainable student companies or establishing international school partnerships.

As the mayor of Duesseldorf, the capital of Northrhine-Westfalia, I am delighted that so many international contacts between our countries and especially between our schools have come into existence. As a city with a European and global focus Duesseldorf is very much interested in relations of this kind. I hope you and our delegation from Duesseldorf will have an interesting exchange of experiences and I am eager to see how this cooperation will continue.

Joachim Erwin

Mayor of Düsseldorf, capital of Northrhine-Westfalia

**German-Finish Cooperation-Seminar “Sustainability in schools”, Helsinki library,  
3<sup>rd</sup> of April 2007, for more details see  
[www.umweltschulen.de/audit/duesseldorf/finnland.html](http://www.umweltschulen.de/audit/duesseldorf/finnland.html)**