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Eco-schooling and sustainability citizenship: exploring issues raised by corporate sponsorship

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Eco-Schools, run by the charity Keep Britain Tidy and sponsored by the corporations ASDAN, EDF Energy, HSBC, and Homebase, are now the major vehicle for education for sustainable development in English schools. This article examines the ways in which corporations shape policy on sustainable development and education and goes on to suggest that corporate sponsorship may be limiting the potential of eco-schooling to develop sustainability citizenship. It draws on Fielding and Moss's advocacy of radical education, Dobson's understanding of sustainability citizenship, and Hayward's typology of environmental citizenship education, to recommend a more politically realistic approach to eco-schooling. Lessons from the Eco-Schools website and from The Pod are examined and revisions suggested to reflect this approach.

Keywords: citizenship; corporations; corporate social responsibility; democracy; ecoliteracy; eco-pedagogy; eco-schools; neo-liberalism; radical education; sponsorship; sustainable development; sustainability

We consider that inherent in the crisis are an erosion of basic values and the alienation and non-participation of almost all individuals in the building of their own future. It is of fundamental importance that the world's communities design and work out their own alternatives to existing policies. Such alternatives include the abolition of those programs of development, adjustment and economic reform which maintain the existing growth model with its devastating effects on the environment and its diverse species, including the human one. (Rio+20 Portal, 2011, paragraph 4)

The above paragraph is from the Treaty on Environmental Education for Sustainable Societies and Global Responsibility prepared by citizens and organisations of civil society from around the world for the People's Summit, an integral part of the Rio+20 summit on sustainable development held in 2012. The treaty acknowledges a global crisis of economy and environment; associates this with an erosion of basic values and democracy; and recommends that communities reflect and act on

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alternatives to the dominant capitalist growth model that underpins the world economy.

In considering how schools might assist such reflection and action and thereby contribute to the realisation of sustainable development, this article outlines the reasons for the erosion of values and democracy; links sustainability to the revival of civil society and democracy along with new forms of citizenship; and suggests that updated forms of citizenship education should lie at the heart of education for sustainable development (ESD). It should draw on the theory and practice of radical democratic education and so enable schools to become catalysts of change within their communities.

Currently most ESD in English schools takes a less radical approach and its principal vehicle is the movement to encourage them to become Eco-Schools or sustainable schools. With the demise of the Labour Government's policy on sustainable schools (DfES, 2006), the main promoter of eco-schooling is Keep Britain Tidy, a non-governmental organisation and charity supported by corporate funders (<http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/ecoschools/>). Drawing on the ideas outlined in the first two parts of the article, the third part examines the curriculum guidance and resources provided by Eco-Schools. It assesses the extent to which corporate funding may limit the scope and potential of eco-schooling; and suggests ways in which its curriculum might be revised and extended to better foster a truly enabling ESD.

Neo-liberalism and the corporate assault on democracy, environmentalism, and education

The neo-liberal regime of capital accumulation that has dominated the world economy in recent decades was designed to restore the rates of return on capital and further shift power to economic and political elites (Harvey, 2010). Characterised by privatisation, deregulation, financialisation, trade liberalisation, and globalisation, it saw networks of corporate and political elites shift the balance of power from the state to the market, and use public relations, the media and education to reshape community beliefs, values and behaviour. In what has been termed 'the silent take-over' (Hertz, 2002), corporations persuaded politicians and citizens that their activities were in the public interest and that they would behave responsibly free from restraints and regulation, such as democracy allows. The result is a system in which 'the corporation is king, the state its subject, its citizens consumers' (Hertz, 2002, p. 6). Governments hide behind markets and are increasingly reluctant to take responsibility for the direction of national development or to offer arguments for preferring one form of development over others. Consequently there is the erosion of basic values and the alienation from politics which the Treaty on

Environmental Education mentions. As the corporate state undermines the social contract between the state and citizens by largely ignoring civil society, fewer turn out to vote. Politics becomes a public relations exercise dominated by the media and political debate largely excludes consideration of radical alternatives to the status-quo.

Beetham (2011) examines the current state of democracy in the UK and explains how private corporations have increased their influence over government through the financing of political parties; think tanks; lobbying; membership of advisory bodies; revolving doors between government and the private sector; and joint partnerships. He reminds us that the tension between government promoting corporate interests or promoting the welfare of citizens has intensified since the financial crisis of 2008. Austerity is bringing greater recognition of the nature and costs of neoliberalism and prompting protests around the world with diverse social movements urging and demonstrating alternative kinds of economics, governance, social imagination, and political agency, all underpinned by radical conceptions of democracy (Campagna & Campiglio, 2012).

As well as using their power to co-opt governments, corporations have sought to counter the ideas and gains of the environmental movement. Under the banner of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (Bakan, 2004; Bryane, 2003) they increasingly employ public relations, advertising, social media, and the sponsorship of educational projects, to convince the public that they work to protect the environment and promote sustainable development (see for example the website of the World Business Council for Sustainable Development: <http://www.wbcsd.org/home.aspx>). Central to such efforts are ideas of sustainable development as benign growth (balancing economic, social and environmental goals via triple-bottom line accounting) and/or ecological modernisation (using technological fixes to do more with less) (Dryzek, 1997). Under the influence of corporations, governments adopt approaches to sustainability that work with the market and avoid ideological debate. Dobson (2011) examines two such approaches: fiscal incentives such as London's congestion charge, and nudging citizens into more sustainable behaviours by, for example, providing larger bins for recyclable waste and smaller bins for non-recyclable waste. He suggests that these approaches bypass questions of ethics and remove issues of sustainability from ideological debate that could result in more democratic and egalitarian forms of sustainability. They also fail to promote social learning about behaviours and policies that support sustainability.

Faced with the problem of finding new ways to invest ever-increasing amounts of capital, corporations, aided by the World Trade Organisation, have persuaded governments to open public services to private investment (Beckmann, Cooper, & Hill, 2009). Private companies already provide many services to English schools and the growth of new kinds of

state schools outside the control of local authorities provides them with additional opportunities to make profits. Exposing state provision to privatisation and market forces, under the banners of standards and choice, results in the loss of democratic control over schools; more selective and unequal provision; a further loss of teacher professionalism; an erosion of teachers' conditions of service; and a narrowing of the curriculum (Benn, 2011). Following the introduction of the national curriculum in 1988, teachers lost powers to decide what and how to teach and their professional autonomy has been further undermined by schools adopting managerial practices from the private sector that measure success using narrow criteria (testing, league tables, inspections, performance-related pay). Pupils are seen as human capital to be prepared for a neo-liberal world as self-sufficient individuals, flexible workers, lifelong learners, and calculating and risk-bearing consumers. As with sustainability, government policy removes education from ethical and political debate to become a matter for consumer choice and managerial expertise. What should be a public resource fostering democratic debate about sustainable futures risks becoming an undemocratic instrument for reproducing an unsustainable present.

As in the wider society, the values, assumptions and beliefs of neo-liberalism are largely taken for granted, rendered invisible, and so neutralised in schools. Existing forms of economy, democracy and consumer culture are not examined critically because moral, social and political education are low priorities; a fragmented curriculum, based on a limited number of academic subjects, obscures a holistic view of the world; and real world issues are frequently seen as too difficult or controversial for young minds to address. In sponsoring projects in schools that offer curriculum guidance and materials, corporations seek to ensure that their view of the world is reproduced. Like government policies on the environment and education, the guidance and materials generally fail to promote ethical and political debate.

Beder (2009, 2012) provides an overview of what she terms the corporate capture of childhood, a theme also addressed by Barber (2007) and Palmer (2007). Corporations have long provided classroom materials for schools and now also promote voucher schemes whereby schools can obtain such things as books, computers, and sports equipment. Such materials and schemes are attractive to schools at a time of budgetary constraints and appeal to corporations as they raise brand awareness; overcome much of the scepticism associated with direct advertising; associate the brand with the 'goodwill' attaching to schools and teachers; and may be tax-deductible. Organisations exist to promote and offer guidance on corporate links with schools (see for example: Business in the Community, <http://www.bitc.org.uk/community/education/>) but the National Union of Teachers has concerns about

their growing influence (NUT, 2012). Slingshot Sponsorship (2012) reminds us that companies often choose to sponsor a charity engaged in educational projects as this aligns their brand with a cause-related issue (such as sustainable development) and so enhances their reputation for corporate social responsibility. In what is essentially a business deal, they gain by association with charities as they are better able to differentiate their brand from others and to capture new audiences and markets. Manteaw (2008) suggests that such sponsorship can be desirable if it encourages businesses to align their CSR activities more closely with the aims of ESD.

Radical democratic education and education for sustainability citizenship

The extract from the Treaty on Environmental Education that introduces this article suggests that to counter corporate power it is necessary to revitalise democracy and civil society so that citizens are able to reclaim power over the market and the state and determine their own self-chosen paths to sustainable development. Central to such change is education that is radical in that it seeks to change basic social structures, processes and thought; and democratic in that democratic values and practices pervade the culture and social relations of the school. Fielding and Moss (2011, 2012) argue that such education should take place in common, truly comprehensive schools that are age-integrated, multi-generational, human scale, and a resource for the local community. The curriculum should be interdisciplinary, enquiry-based, experiential, and project-centred and organised around team working by educators with diverse perspectives and interests. It should allow learners to reflect on alternative visions of the future and begin to enact those they consider desirable, viable, achievable, and sustainable. Schools should be governed by democratically elected and accountable local bodies, such as local authorities, and policymakers should consider the criteria for evaluating transformative educational change, and the models whereby it might be realised, that Fielding and Moss provide.

In considering what form a radical and democratic ESD should take, we can start by considering the Earth Charter, first proposed at the Earth Summit in 1992 (Earth Charter Initiative, 2012). After widespread discussion and debate throughout global civil society, this Charter launched in 2000 offers 16 principles for building a global society based on respect for nature; universal human rights; economic justice; and a culture of peace (see Figure 1). While the Charter was not endorsed by the 2002 or 2012 Earth Summits, it lies at the heart of the UN Decade of ESD (2005–2014) and has been merged with a future-orientated ecological politics, and the critical pedagogy of Paulo Freire, to create ecopedagogy (Gadotti, 2008; Kahn, 2008, 2010). This seeks to develop

- Build democratic societies that are just, participatory, sustainable and peaceful (Principle 3).
- Adopt patterns of production, consumption and reproduction that safeguard Earth's regenerative capacities, human rights, and community well-being. (Principle 7).
- Ensure that economic activities and institutions at all levels promote human development in an equitable and sustainable manner (Principle 10).
- Strengthen democratic institutions at all levels, and provide transparency and accountability in governance, inclusive participation in decision-making and access to justice (Principle 13).
- Promote a culture of tolerance, nonviolence and peace (Principle 16).

Figure 1. Five of the 16 Earth Charter Principles.

three complementary forms of ecological literacy (ecoliteracy) throughout society:

- (1) **Technical ecoliteracy** involves understanding the basic science of the bio-physical world as far as it is relevant to social life; knowing how societies can affect ecological systems; and examining appropriate technologies that may allow the progressive co-evolution of society and the rest of nature.
- (2) **Cultural ecoliteracy** involves understanding the ways in which different cultures comprehend and value nature; recognising discourses within the media that shape understanding of nature and sustainable development; and valuing elements of indigenous, traditional, modern and postmodern cultures that support sustainability.
- (3) **Critical ecoliteracy** involves understanding sustainable development in the context of political economy and the ongoing production and reproduction of society. It requires learners to evaluate existing and alternative forms of democracy and their links to sustainability citizenship (see below). It also requires them to envision utopias in which Earth Charter principles are realised.

Clearly, critical ecoliteracy is not only concerned with raising awareness of Earth Charter principles, such as those listed in Figure 1, but also with allowing learners to reflect and act on the kind of political economy (patterns of production, consumption and reproduction – Principle 7) that would give them expression. ESD that cultivates technical and/or cultural ecoliteracy without cultivating critical ecoliteracy is clearly deficient, yet such neglect characterises the literature prompted by the UN Decade of ESD (Huckle, 2012) and the ESD delivered in most English schools. It is a symptom of the deradicalisation of environmental education and development education that has resulted from their acceptance as mainstream

themes within the curriculum (Bryan, 2011; Selby & Kagawa, 2011). Egan (2012) examines the neglect of corporate power within the discourse and practice of development education and suggests that NGOs increasingly working in partnership with the corporate sector is one factor that explains this neglect.

The radical roots of ESD can be found in texts published over 20 years ago that called for the greening of education (Randle, 1989); a new social curriculum that embraced sustainability (Dufour, 1990); and an education network to lobby for what would now be termed ecoliteracy (Lacey & Williams, 1987). In the late 1980s I applied the concept of political literacy, developed by the Programme for Political Education (Crick & Porter, 1978), to the development of a curriculum that explored environment and development issues in ways that allowed pupils to link them to prevailing forms of political economy and consider radical alternatives (Huckle, 1988). Social theorists subsequently improved our understanding of the politics of sustainable development (Dryzek, 1997; Hopwood, Mellor, & O'Brien, 2005) and those forms of environmental, ecological and global citizenship that may be needed to balance citizens' rights to a sustainable future with their responsibilities to the rest of human and non-human nature existing both locally and at a distance, both now and in the future (Dobson, 2003; Monbiot, 2004; Smith, 2012). The introduction of citizenship education into English schools as a statutory subject from 2002 (Kerr, Smith, & Twine, 2008) provided greater scope to explore these forms of citizenship with older pupils (Huckle, 2008).

The use of the term sustainability citizenship in Dobson's recent writing provides a new stimulus for thinking about the core content and pedagogy of ESD and eco-schooling. He suggests that the sustainability citizen displays, 'pro-sustainability behaviour, in public and private, driven by a belief in fairness of the distribution of environmental goods, in participation, and in the co-creation of sustainability policy' (Dobson, 2011, p. 10). Based in 'other-regarding' values it reflects Earth Charter principles and anticipates a shift from the market to civil society as the originator and legitimating source of policy. Drawing on cosmopolitanism, civic republicanism and feminism (Dobson, 2003), sustainability citizenship (see Figure 2) embraces rights and responsibilities in both the public and private spheres and requires critically eco-literate citizens to reflect on the nature of sustainable development and act to co-create policies whereby it might be realised. Government has a key role to play in promoting such citizenship throughout civil society and in schools, but as we have seen its hands are currently tied by the influence of neoliberalism, corporations and the market.

Hayward (2012) makes the case for stronger links between environmental and citizenship education; identifies the various ways in which children experience environmental citizenship; and offers a typology of

1. believes that sustainability is a common good that will not be achieved by the pursuit of individual self-interest alone;
2. is moved by other-regarding motivations as well as self-interested ones;
3. believes that ethical and moral knowledge is as important as techno-scientific knowledge in the context of pro-sustainability behaviour change;
4. believes that other people's sustainability rights engender environmental responsibilities which the sustainability citizen should redeem;
5. believes that these responsibilities are due not only to one's neighbours or fellow nationals but also to strangers distant in space and even in time;
6. has an awareness that private environment-related actions can have public environment-related impacts;
7. believes that market-based solutions alone will not bring about sustainability. The sustainability citizen will therefore recommend social and public action (Dobson, 2011. p. 10).

Figure 2. The sustainability citizen.

environmental citizenship education. She summarises three forms of citizenship education using mnemonics that suggest such education may deliver **SMART** experiences of thin environmental citizenship; **FEARS** of non-citizenship; or the **SEEDS** of strong ecological citizenship (see Table 1). **SMART** citizenship education reflects and strengthens neo-liberal approaches to sustainable development or the greening of capitalism. It requires young citizens to take personal responsibility for environmental problems and address them through **self-help agency** and changed behaviour. It equates good citizenship with **market participation** as green entrepreneurs, inventors and consumers, and just decision-making with abstract and **a priori rules and universal justice**. Pupils observe or experience **representative decision-making** and their participation is often limited to voting. They are encouraged to imagine technical solutions to

Table 1. Three kinds of environmental citizenship education (Hayward, 2012).

Environmental citizenship education that fosters SMART environmentalism and thin environmental citizenship	Environmental citizenship education that fosters FEARS of non-citizenship	Environmental citizenship education that fosters the SEEDS of ecological/sustainability citizenship
Self-help agency	Frustrated agency	Social agency
Market participation	Environmental exclusion	Environmental education
A priori, universal justice	Authoritarian decision-making	Embedded justice
Representative decision-making	Retributive justice	Decentred deliberation
Technological transformation	Silenced imagination	Self-transcendence

sustainability issues and to see sustainable development coming about through purely **technological transformation**. The emphasis on self-help ignores the scale and complexity of the problems, deflects attention from the role of government and the state, and may induce stress that leads to denial and withdrawal. Market participation fails to teach social responsibility and fosters the false belief that light green reformism will deliver sustainability. Teaching *a priori* principles of justice that apply to all implies that citizens are not obliged to act if others don't and overlooks the fact that it is not enough to agree to a given set of rules since citizens need to learn to challenge such rules if they serve to maintain injustice. Decision-making by representatives or voting leads learners to accept representative democracy as the norm whereas decision-making via prolonged debate and conversation would highlight the virtues of discursive democracy and suggest that other models of democracy are possible. Imagining technical solutions can foster arrogance towards the rest of nature and direct attention to the symptoms rather than the drivers of unsustainable development.

In developing my argument about the possible deficiencies of eco-schooling supported by corporations, I intend to overlook Hayward's second kind of citizenship education that fosters the **FEARS** of non-citizenship. This relates to those young people who struggle to experience citizenship as any form of participation or belonging due to a variety of social problems. Bypassing such education is not to suggest that such pupils and forms of citizenship education are not present in English schools, but rather a reflection of the limitations of space and of the key contradiction within eco-schooling between elements that foster **SMART** experiences of thin environmental citizenship and those that foster the **SEEDS** of ecological or sustainability citizenship.

Hayward's account of education that fosters sustainability citizenship begins by suggesting that it fosters **social agency** or the collective ability to exert political power, act together, and make a difference. Such agency shapes and requires political literacy and is best developed through real and simulated participation in sustainability issues with learners engaging in lobbying, community protests, campaigning, and activities that demonstrate routes to alternative forms of decision-making and living. Formal and informal **environmental education** should develop all three elements of ecoliteracy as it explores such issues as climate change, loss of cultural diversity, and corporate social responsibility. Outdoor education should cultivate the love and respect for nature that lies at the heart of the Earth Charter and this should also be developed through the arts and humanities. **Embedded justice** refers to the need for citizenship education to foster everyday practical reasoning about procedural and distributional fairness or our environmental responsibilities to our fellow citizens and to strangers distant in space and time (see Figure 2). Moral and values education

are key to developing such reasoning with learners engaging in activities that may involve values clarification, moral dilemmas, decision-making, and the formulation of eco-codes. **Decentred deliberation** allows democratic discussion across all the interests within the school and community; across all the knowledge claims informing ecoliteracy; and can listen to all those who have a claim on the learner's environmental responsibility. Such deliberation allows learners to perceive and challenge power that has no democratic mandate and is facilitated by the rise of social media. **Self-transcendence** refers to the need for education to foster the political imagination and prompt learners to envision sustainable futures that transcend our current pre-occupations and ways of living. Learners should study and engage with individuals and communities living alternatively in the present and should learn that concrete, democratic alternatives to our present capitalist system exist in both theory and reality (Campagna & Campiglio, 2012; Wright, 2010). With respect to corporate power, the SEEDS of sustainability citizen would develop the elements of critical literacy outlined by Egan (2012) (Figure 3) which he develops further into a framework of relevant values, skills and knowledge and understanding.

Eco-schooling and education for sustainability citizenship

In November 2012 over 16,000 English schools (around two-thirds of the total) were registered with Eco-Schools England and over 1700 had attained the top level of award, a green flag. Registered schools carry out an environmental review, draw up an action plan, and evaluate the results of actions designed to tackle nine topics: transport, waste, water, litter, school grounds, healthy living, energy, biodiversity, and the global perspective. The process is holistic in that it focuses on the campus, curriculum and community, and involves the whole school (pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff and governors) together with members of the local community. The school's eco-committee plays the key role in guiding a school towards green flag status. This requires pupils to take significant responsibilities; the school to have done in-depth work on at least three

- considering our historical, present and future relationships with global corporations as citizens, consumers and workers;
- expressing empathy and solidarity with communities damaged by corporate power and challenging such abuses of power; and
- taking collective action to help ensure that the operations of global corporations are ethical, equitable, just and environmentally sustainable (Egan, 2012, pp. 55–56).

Figure 3. Critical literacy with respect to corporate power involves...

topics; the grounds to be litter free; and the school's energy certificate to be acceptable and up to date. Schools register themselves for bronze and silver awards, but green flag status requires them to submit documentation and be visited by a trained volunteer assessor whose observations are relayed to Eco-Schools staff on a standard form so that they can make the final judgement.

The website of Eco-Schools England states that it is managed by the charity Keep Britain Tidy in partnership with EDF Energy (one of the big energy suppliers), ASDAN (an educational charity, curriculum development organisation and awarding body), Homebase (a DIY company, part of the Home Retail Group), and HSBC (an international bank). The nature of this partnership is not specified although one significant outcome is The Pod, a website that offers campaigns and activities to 'help build sustainability into the curriculum' that is the result of EDF Energy and Eco-Schools 'working together for greener schools' (<http://www.jointhepod.org/>). The bi-monthly magazine Blue Marble is circulated to all eco-schools; is supported by a website and on-line community (<http://www.theblue-marble.com/index.php/home-bluemarble/about-blue-marble>); and was launched in close co-operation with Eco-Schools and Keep Britain Tidy.

In reply to questions from the author, the Education Manager of Eco-Schools was not prepared to disclose the organisation's total budget or how much was raised from corporate sponsors and other sources (personal communication, October 24, 2012). He assured me that corporate sponsors are vetted to ensure that their aspirations are compatible with those of Eco-Schools but no reference is made to other bodies that assess the social responsibility of corporations and their reputations as sustainability citizens. It is made clear to sponsors that they can have no control over the nature, content or process of Eco-schooling as managed by Keep Britain Tidy, and while the materials on the Eco-Schools website are produced by the Eco-Schools team, those on The Pod are commissioned by its managers and subsequently approved by Eco-Schools.

A review of the Eco-Schools website, The Pod, and Blue Marble magazine suggests that Eco-Schools is essentially recommending and supporting SMART environmentalism and thin environmental/sustainability citizenship. Pupils and schools are encouraged to engage in self-help; to participate in the market as responsible green consumers (see the advertising in Blue Marble magazine); to abide by an eco-code drawn up by a committee of representatives; and to associate sustainable development with technological innovations such as solar panels. This is not to suggest there are no elements supporting the SEEDS of strong sustainability citizenship within its guidance and resources, nor is it a claim that corporate sponsorship leads directly to the emphasis on a limited form of environmental/sustainability citizenship education. Readers should form their

own opinions on the issue after reviewing the case studies, lesson plans, and other resources on the websites, and should acknowledge that teachers are likely to adapt and modify lesson plans before they are used in the classroom. While corporate sponsorship is unlikely to be a direct cause of the prevailing limitations of eco-schooling, it does seem that those who manage Eco-Schools and write its guidance and lesson plans, together with those who write for The Pod, have failed to recognise the influence of prevailing notions of sustainable development and the need for democratic and radical education that promotes the rational consideration of alternatives.

To support this argument I examined lesson plans for secondary pupils taken from the Eco-Schools website and The Pod. In late 2012, the Eco-Schools site had a total of 16 lesson plans for Key Stage 3 (11–14 years) and Key Stage 4 (14–16 years) pupils, and eight of these are recommended for both stages. Lessons are linked to school subjects with science, geography, and technology best represented (nine, six and four lessons) and other subjects getting little or no attention. Table 2 provides an overview of five of the lessons with commentary and suggested extensions designed to develop sustainability citizenship. The lessons on the website emphasise technical ecoliteracy with no lessons in the arts and humanities that focus on cultural ecoliteracy, and a neglect of the lessons' potential to develop critical ecoliteracy.

In late 2012, there were 17 lesson plans aimed at Key Stage 3 pupils on The Pod. Fifteen have associated resource packs and five have associated worksheets that encourage pupils to take their learning home and encourage their families to be greener. Again the emphasis is on science and geography but 12 of the lessons are linked to citizenship and personal, social and health education (PSHE). Four of these lessons are described, commented upon, and extended in Table 3. Again there is neglect of cultural and critical ecoliteracy and despite claims of coverage, opportunities for citizenship education are poorly realised and developed.

Overcoming the current limitations of eco-schooling

The extensions in Tables 2 and 3 focus on introducing an element of political realism into the suggested lessons but much more will be needed if eco-schooling is to provide the SEEDS of sustainability citizenship. A survey of school staff carried out in 2011, suggests that they would welcome this. While 95% regard Eco-Schools as good or excellent, only 22% believe that their students understand the 'big picture' as it relates to sustainability (Eco-Schools, 2012).

Eco-Schools has encouraged much progressive practice as it has engineered a 'light greening' of schooling. Its benefits, together with those of the previous Government's sustainable schools policy, have been widely

Table 2. Five lessons from the Eco-Schools website.

Lesson title (Key Stage, Subject/s)	Overview	Commentary	Extension to develop elements of sustainability citizenship
Eco-Cities (KS3 & 4, Science)	<p>Students understand the meaning of an eco-city and design their own UK eco-city in order to understand how a community can become self-sufficient. Students will consider ways to produce energy and food and manage transport and waste in a sustainable manner.</p>	<p>The factors students are encouraged to consider in designing their eco-city do not include the forms of economy, power relations, and decision-making that would best allow waste-free production and promote ecological planning over current forms of city planning.</p>	<p>Students might study the Transition Towns movement and gather the views of the local community and town councillors on whether their town should become a transition town (Hopkins, 2008).</p>
Electricity: the energy to change lives (KS3 & 4, Science)	<p>To appreciate that access to 24/7 electricity is a luxury for us in the UK and by investing in renewable energies and sharing knowledge we can help works towards global access to electricity.</p>	<p>Draws on the initiative of one child in Malawi and promotes self-help. Need to examine the causes of poverty in Malawi and the scope for appropriate technology transfer via trade, aid, and development.</p>	<p>Tradeable energy quotas linked to a global programme of 'contraction and convergence' might lead to greater equality in the world's use of energy. Students might debate the desirability and feasibility of such quotas and programmes (Meyer, 2006).</p>
Mentor a Business (KS3 & 4, Business Studies)	<p>To take the role of a sustainability consultancy for a small local company and create and present a sustainability evaluation report and strategy to the company. The strategy should include ten easy-action steps in the short-term that will lead to better social and environmental interaction of the business and the community. This might be in the form of a simple staff guidance sheet.</p>	<p>A sound introduction to corporate social responsibility and businesses as sustainability citizens. Business might be interpreted widely to include social enterprises, co-operatives, and self-help organisations. Pupils should consider the interests of owners and shareholders alongside those of workers and consumers, and should seek to interview trade unionists alongside owners and managers.</p>	<p>Students download the CSR reports of corporations such as HSBC, EDF Energy, and Homebase from the Internet. They examine the claims in these reports against the record of the companies as corporate citizens. Do newspaper reports link such companies to such issues as the closing of local banks, nuclear power, and over-consumption? What do websites such as Corporate Watch, Ethical Consumer, and Multinational Monitor have to say about these companies?</p>

(continued)

Table 2. (Continued.)

Lesson title (Key Stage, Subject/s)	Overview	Commentary	Extension to develop elements of sustainability citizenship
Green Products Debate	To understand your position as a consumer and to evaluate the effect products you choose will have. The aim of this lesson is to help students reflect on and appreciate their position as a consumer and to evaluate what their choices will mean for health and the environment.	Realistically not all people can put ethics before price when buying cleaning products. There is a role for regulation in ensuring that all products are environmentally friendly.	Participatory economic planning would allow workers and consumers to jointly decide what gets made, sold and used. Students might learn more about Parecom (Albert, 2002) and envision their local community run according to its principles.
If I Were a Councillor (KS4, English, Media Studies and Humanities)	To understand the role of a councillor and explain what you would do if you were the local councillor or MP. Present your case to your local councillor/MP.	Properly a lesson in citizenship. Has potential to develop sustainability citizenship but more background is needed on political parties, party manifestos, and green politics.	Faced with austerity, the town of Volvos in Greece has adopted a system of bartering based on local currency (Boyd, 2012). Should local councillors learn from Greece and introduce such systems in UK towns to help citizens cope with growing austerity?

Table 3. Four lessons with citizenship links from The Pod.

Lesson Title (Key Stage, Subject/s)	Overview	Commentary	Extension to develop elements of sustainability citizenship
Better Off By Bike (KS3, Citizenship)	Pupils learn about a road building project in their area. They think about the pros and cons of building new roads, and consider the ways in which they contribute to the number of new roads being built.	Linked to campaign materials to encourage safe cycling to school. Important that pupils research the comparative power and influence of the road building and road safety lobbies.	Students carry out a survey to find out how far their parents and grandparents travelled to school. They compare the results with how far they travel to school. What are the advantages of common community schools with local catchment areas?
Degree of Change (KS3, Citizenship, PSHE, Maths)	Pupils learn about how climate varies across time and space. They explore factors that can affect climate and learn to distinguish short-term variability from long-term trends. The evidence for human-induced climate change is presented.	Essentially a science/geography lesson in six parts. Only the plenary mentions citizenship, asking pupils to research their carbon footprint and how they can reduce it.	Students role-play a global summit on climate change and so come to understand the interests and positions of the major players such as China and the USA (see for example, http://climateinteractive.org/simulations/world-climate).
Energy Mix (KS3, Science, English, Geography, Citizenship)	Pupils learn about the security, sustainability, and affordability of different kinds of energy and the advantages of relying on a mix of energy sources. They plan their own ideal energy mix for the UK.	Citizenship elements slight. Link to debates in the House of Commons over the Energy Bill 2012/13 (Behr, 2013) and splits within the Conservative Party over support for renewable energy.	Students learn about green new deals designed to revive the economy, provide jobs and save energy. Such deals have different elements depending on which political party or pressure group is proposing them (NEF, 2012).
Will Wind Work (KS3, Geography, Citizenship)	Pupils carry out fieldwork in the school grounds and decide whether a wind turbine is a feasible energy source for their school.	Pupils have to find out how the community might be affected but opportunities to teach about local planning and national planning in relation to wind turbines are overlooked.	The Eco-Committee might consider whether the school should bank with an 'ethical' bank that supports renewable energy projects or a credit union that helps people save to pay their energy bills.

acknowledged (OFSTED, 2009; Hacking & Scott, 2010), but students now deserve a more honest and empowering introduction to sustainability. There are good reasons for believing that no form of development dependent on perpetuating economic growth and the maximisation of private profit can be sustained in the future, and that radical alternatives are needed (Shutt, 2010; Slavin, 2012). If eco-schools are to offer students hope with regard to the future, then Eco-Schools needs to encourage the critical consideration of such alternatives. This may lead to a re-thinking of its relations with its existing sponsors and/or a search for new sponsors.

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