

Sustainability in International Higher Education Area and Policies

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Structure of presentation

- The OECD Higher Education for Sustainable Development Project
- General impressions
- Frameworks for Sustainable Development
- Visions
- Opportunities and Barriers
- Policy Recommendations

Where is the ESD debate?

- UN Decade, regional strategies
- Government policy England Scotland & Wales
- Agency policies 16-19 and tertiary
- Capturing/communicating good practice begun
- Theories aligning

BUT

- Employers, policy makers and senior management in higher education are asking - Will this actually result in a greater likelihood of sustainable development happening?

Project objectives

- Capture Good practice
- Describe a vision of higher education for sustainable development
- Identify barriers and opportunities
- Recommend policy

Method

- Self Evaluation questionnaire
- Internal workshop
- External workshop
- Report

Questions

How does your HEI contribute to reducing the extraction of natural resources?

How does your HEI contribute to reducing the use of natural resources?

How does your HEI contribute to improving biological diversity?

Questions

How does your HEI contribute to improving the health and well being of staff and students?

How does your HEI contribute to building the learning and social skills of staff and students so that they are empowered citizens?

How does your HEI provide access to varied and satisfying opportunities for personal creativity, wellbeing and recreation for all stakeholders?

Questions

How does your HEI improve governance systems so that they are trusted by all stakeholders and accessible to them?

How are your HEI's policies, teaching practices, research and third stream activities contributing to a shared understanding of sustainable development amongst internal and external stakeholders?

How does your HEI support other businesses, the public sector and voluntary groups in society to promote stewardship of natural, social and economic resources?

How does your HEI contribute to safe and supportive local communities?

Questions

How does your HEI contribute to the development of infrastructure, technologies and processes that minimize use of natural resources and maximize use of human innovation and skills?

How does your HEI ensure economic sustainability including the financial valuation of natural (eg the extra cost of green energy) and social capital?

HE4SD Partners

- Tipperary Institute
- University of Copenhagen
- Turku University of Applied Sciences
- Universitat Politecnica de Catalunya
- Chalmers University of Technology
- Hosei University
- University of the Sunshine Coast
- University of Veracruz, UASLP
- Portland State University
- University of Graz
- University of Plymouth

Plus

- **ITSON, University of British Columbia, Oberlin College.**

Frameworks for sustainable development and sustainability

Economic/Social/Environmental plus

- Cultural
- Ethical
- Equality
- Equity
- Social responsibility
- Politics

Frameworks for sustainable development and sustainability

- Five Capitals
- The natural Step
- I = PCT
- Global Reporting Initiative

Frameworks for sustainable development and sustainability

- Nature, environment, culture, society, economy and politics
- The university will deliver by:
 - Improve human health and safety
 - Make UBC a model sustainable community
 - Increase understanding of sustainability inside and outside the university
 - Reduce pollution
 - Conserve resources
 - Protect biodiversity
 - Maintain and maximise the utilisation of the physical infrastructure
 - Maintain and enhance the asset base
 - Ensure ongoing economic viability

Visions

Organisationally the HEI will:

- Gain the respect of future generations
- Be a tool for transformation
- Be a deliverer of change
- Have integrity on SD
- Be responsive to societal need
- Be a key reference for SD
- Contribute to regional SD
- Be a social entrepreneur
- Be a community leader
- Help society achieve SD

Visions

Organisational visions will be delivered by:

- Peer review
- Rigorous evaluation processes
- The integration of sustainability into the management systems
- Playing to organisational strengths
- Having clear action plans
- Delivering concrete impacts

Visions

Research will be:

- **Interdisciplinary and multidisciplinary**
- **Stakeholder partnerships**
- Bring together the natural and social sciences
- Advisor on SD technology
- Leadership in less developed countries

Visions

Students will:

- Be adaptable
- Provide sustainable solutions
- Influence change
- Understand SD and apply it internationally
- Engage in lifelong learning
- Value respect
- Have been recruited knowing the sustainability culture of the HEI

Visions

Teaching will:

- Be transformative
- Have SD integrated into all courses

Visions

Staff will:

- Act sustainably
- Be rewarded for green teaching, research or activism
- Be recruited knowing the HEI's SD ambitions
- Be recognised SD academics

Visions

The campus will:

- Be fully sustainable
- Achieve the highest SD standards
- Be a laboratory
- Be an inspiring place
- Help students and staff to understand SD

Visions

The local community will:

- Have their capacity built
- Be empowered
- Receive locally relevant sustainable solutions
- Work in partnership with the HEI

Opportunities

- Research
- Demand
- Zeitgeist
- Collaborations/partnerships
- Networks
- A proactive unit driving sustainable development internally

Opportunities

- New financial mechanisms
- Socially oriented strategies
- EMS/CSR or other recognition/standard
- Opening up the University
- Competition driving up standards/creating space for change
- Graduate quality
- Communication
- Applied teaching
- Legislation
- Public relations gains

Barriers

- Lack of strategic leadership
- Low demand
- Academic and professional silos
- Communication

Barriers

- Money
- Societal silos
- Low public awareness of sustainable development
- Time
- HE system constraints
- Lack of human resources
- Lack of campus examples
- Antagonism towards sustainable development
- Sustainable development is not recognised as a discipline

Policy Recommendations for HEIs

- Engage in peer review
- Develop Sustainable development action plans
- Establish professional recognition for staff engaged in sustainable development research, teaching or managing
- Value interdisciplinary research

Policy Recommendations for HEIs

- Build the capacity of university leadership
- Build the capacity of staff and students
- Clear concept of sustainable development agreed
- Prioritise research in key sustainable development areas
- Senior management implement the sustainable development vision

Policy Recommendations for the executive

- Evaluate HEIs contribution to sustainable development
- Require HEIs to develop sustainable development implementation plans
- Provide national coordination and support networks
- Finance pilot projects

Policy recommendations for the legislators

- Endorse supra national initiatives such as the Decade, EU and UN sustainable development
- Integrate education for sustainable development in other related legislations such as ODA
- Put a commitment to support education for sustainable development in core strategic documents such as budgets.
- Amend Higher Education Acts to propose sustainable development be a purpose of higher education including the promotion of its integration into courses.
- Promote the local and regional role.

Thank you

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