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ESD RC

A Global Portrait

International Symposium: Sustainability in Higher Education

Professor Daniella Tilbury,
Chair of Sustainability

Director of Sustainability,
University of Gloucestershire

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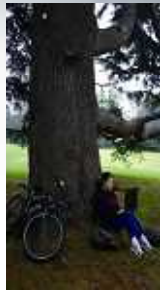### A Global Portrait – Getting the Big Picture!

The Big Picture:

- Trends across different countries and regions across the globe

- Trends within a HE institution – the big picture within an institution

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The Global Picture: Context

- The Sustainability agenda is becoming increasingly relevant to HE.

- HE considering the current and future impact of its educational, research, outreach and operational activities.

- Universities are motivated by the scientific challenge, moral concerns and/or a way of distinguishing themselves in a crowded market place.

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The Global Picture: Review of Papers

Review of papers and texts from across the globe:

French, English, Spanish, Italian; Cantonese; Portuguese, Japanese, Korean.

International and National Journals
Monographs and books
Conference papers

Since 1990 -2008

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The Global Picture: Regional Trends

- There have been many developments in the area of campus management and sustainability – particularly in the US, NZ and Australia.

- Few attempts at embedding ESD into the curriculum – Europe most advanced.

- Pacific and Africa key advances in offering specialist courses which meet needs of communities.

- Asia key developments in the science and technology research associated with sustainability.

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The Global Picture: Thematic Trends

- Importance – good rationales.

- Campus Greening – with Carbon footprinting and ISO 14001 articles dominating.

- Community outreach – one off projects which involve external and internal stakeholders in activities.

- Curriculum – curriculum or professional development activities. Subject not institutional focused.

The Global Picture: Making In-Roads

- *Calls for institutional learning and institutional change towards sustainability.*

- *Institutional auditing – still focused on content analysis of courses or energy auditing.*

- *Few have considered how sustainability becomes a Strategic Priority in HE Institutions.*

Big Picture Tools?

Scheme	Useful Overlap	Key Differences
HEEPI Higher Education Environmental Performance Improvement (UK)	•Aims to improve performance by developing benchmarking in further and higher education •Provides useful information for senior managers •Shares good practice across institutions	•Focus is on environmental performance rather than on learning •Appears to offer open 'learning events' to disseminate information beyond scheme members
Universities that Count Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (UK)	•HE benchmarking scheme •Aims to raise awareness among senior managers •Encourages cross-department and institutional learning	•Based on existing commercial model transferred to HEIs •Focus on environmental performance and corporate responsibility rather than ESD
STAUNCH Sustainability Tool for Auditing University Curricula in HE (UK - Wales)	•An assessment tool developed to allow HEIs to measure their contributions to teaching from a sustainable development perspective	•Only available commercially •Complex to use – requires inputs from consultants •Not easily used for cross-institution learning/comparison
AISHE Auditing Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education (Netherland/EU)	•Based on EFQM Excellence Model •Philosophy is: process-oriented, qualitative and descriptive	•Does not reflect its philosophy, e.g. emphasis on certified environmental management practices •Highly complex tool, too cumbersome for our purposes
UNECE/UNESCO Developed separately but increasingly linked	•Focus on ESD •A non-competitive benchmarking approach using both qualitative and quantitative indicators	•Wide-ranging, cross-sector but chiefly based on schools •HE indicators are not context-specific – too 'broad-brush' for institutional learning
Second Nature (USA)	•Has gathered case studies on some excellent practice in ESD and SD	•Commercial approach run as a consultancy service •Few institution-wide examples Does not provide a benchmark
College Sustainability Report Card Sustainable Endowments Institute (USA)	•Clearly identified indicators based on research into 'best' practice. Some useful ESD indicators under 'administration'	•Focus is chiefly campus operations – ESD is a minor component
Sustainability Assessment Questionnaire Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (USA)	•Strong focus on ESD (curriculum and research)	•Highly quantitative and prescriptive in its approach •Broader than ESD - includes greening goals with no clear link to learning
Grand Valley State University Sustainability Initiative (USA)	•Useful example with clear emphasis on learning/ESD	•Very specific to this institution •Greening goals with no clear link to learning
The Green League 2008 (USA)	•Clear layout with few indicators and informative notes for users	•Covers all aspects of sustainability except ESD
Global Reporting Initiative Index (USA)	•Wide range of indicators to review for learning outcomes •Useful notes on using indicators	•Unwieldy range of indicators – focus on governance and environmental management
Berkeley Campus Sustainability Assessment (USA)	•3 out of 32 indicators related to learning/ESD	•Focus is chiefly campus operations – ESD is a minor component

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Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

THE UNIVERSITY OF GLOUCESTERSHIRE:

- *UoG is not alone in actively pursuing the sustainability*

- *UoG perhaps unique in having committed to this area as a defining feature of the University's work for over 20 years.*

- *UoG has identified sustainability as it defining principle*

- *Working towards embedding sustainability in its DNA*

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. What does it mean?

- **It means sustainability is a core activity of the University**

- **It means more than greening the campus**

- **It means a focus on mainstreaming across all portfolios**

- **It means investment in establishing monitoring and accountability systems**
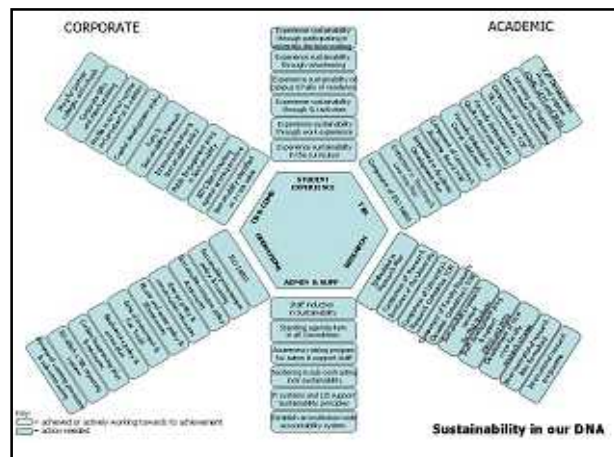
- **It means investment in capacity building**

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. What does it mean?

UOG's mission (2005):

'… Within this overarching mission, the University will contribute fully to the economic, social and cultural life… . It will also develop an approach to social responsibility which reflects its commitment to sustainability and social justice.'

Sustainability in our DNA

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. How does it show?

- **Sustainability is in the University's** *mission; Strategic Development Plan; Teaching and Learning Strategy; Research Plan; Public Engagement Policy, etc.*
- **As from Sept 08 - Sustainability will be standing agenda committees.**
- **All our research Institutes have sustainability as a core theme**
- **Procurement decisions influenced by sustainability**
- **University has an accountability system**

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. How does it show?

- **University wide bicycle loan scheme for students to cycle between campuses and around town.**
- **Progressive removal of personal printers**
- **Beginning to have paperless meetings**
- **High profile opportunities for academic debate**
- **Greener by Degrees – Soundings in Sustainability Literacy**

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. How does it show?

- **Ranked No.1 by** *The Times* **Green League of Universities (People and Planet 2008)**
- **2008 Winner of the Continuous Improvement Green Gown Award**
- **2008 Runner-up for ESD – Green Gown Award.**
- **2008-2010 EU Marie Curie Fellowship for embedding ESD across University**
- **Media has labelled us as a Sustainability Champion**

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. How does it show?

Most Employable!
97% of our graduates find employment after study

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. How did it happen?

It has not happened overnight

Recognising it is a journey of continuous improvement

Institutional narrative:

  'The way we do things around here'

Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. How did it happen?

Going with the Grain of the Institution:

Tradition of religious inquiry which helped inform the university's commitment to social justice and responsibility

Context for ethical and moral commitment to sustainability

Framed the nature and focus of the University's leadership.

Values mutual support and public service

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Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. How did it happen?

Commitment from the Top

Role of VC crucial in making sustainability a defining concept

Leadership led to UoG becoming the 1st English University to be awarded ISO14001 for whole of institution.

'Initially viewed as a high risk strategy by the SM - experience rapidly demonstrated that the outcomes was in fact the opposite'

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Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. What still challenges us?

Everything…but particularly..

- *enticing students to the agenda*

- *supporting academic staff within their discipline specialisms*

- *encouraging admin and support staff to develop their own responses and action plans.*

- *external funding sources to support institutional development*

- *International agenda and capital developments*

- Communicating what we are doing – not as news worthy

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Sustainability as a Strategic Priority

Q. What have we learnt?

Recognise the importance of *relationships and partnerships* at the local, national and international level

Be inclusive and seek *engagement* of staff and students as well as external stakeholders

Have a *vision* and not just a strategy

Be *systemic* and not just *strategic* in its approach

Innovate do not just integrate

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Sustainability as a Strategic Priority at UoG

PROMISING FUTURES

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A GLOBAL PORTRAIT

'Our fear is that current practice is like expecting a dot-to-dot picture to yield a Rembrandt portrait'

UK House of Commons, Environmental Audit Committee