

**Germany /Allemagne**

**(687)**

**UNITWIN / UNESCO Chairs Programme**

**Progress report**

**Period of activity: 2006 -2007**

**UNESCO Chair Higher Education for Sustainable Development**

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## **I. Activities**

### **1. Academic activities**

#### *Education*

- Lecture

#### 1. Theory and Methods of Sustainability Communication

Duration: 1 semester; Academic year 2006 / 2007 (winter term)

Target group: Undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: regional.

#### 2. Cooperative and Participatory Methods in Enterprises – Ways to sustainable management practices.

Duration: 1 semester; Academic year 2006 / 2007 (winter term)

Target group: Undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: regional.

#### 3. Gender and Sustainability – Consequences for communicating sustainability.

Duration: 1 semester; Academic year 2006 / 2007 (winter term)

Target group: Undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: regional.

#### 4. Sustainability reporting at Lüneburg University – Theoretical foundations and their application .

Duration: 1 semester; Academic year 2006 (summer term)

Target groups: Undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: regional.

5. Sustainable Development through Participation ? An analysis of international Development cooperation procedures and institutions.

Duration: 1 semester; Academic year 2006 (summer term)

Target groups: Undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: regional

6. Environment and Sustainable Development in the Media Society

Duration: 1 semester; Academic year 2006 (summer term)

Target groups: undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: regional

- Virtual Campus for a Sustainable Europe (VCSE)

The VCSE Project comprises an innovative virtual campus of higher education institutions, which surpasses the gates of academia and invites relevant “societal actors” in a public dialogue on how “e-learning” may serve as a new, inter-disciplinary, trans-disciplinary and intercultural instrument in dealing with sustainable development on a European level.

Duration: 2007 – 2009

Target groups: undergraduate students, academia, other societal actors

Geographical coverage: European.

### *Training*

Study Programme Sustainability

Teams of undergraduate students from all faculties at Lüneburg University tackle challenges of a sustainable development, finding innovative solutions, which materialize in small projects.

Duration : 2 semesters ; Academic year 2005/ 2006

Target groups: Undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: regional

Intended use for results: The study programme offered the possibility to invent and try out sustainable solutions. Participating students thus also sharpen their views on politics, economy, cultural and social issues and their actors.

### *Research*

1. Sustainable University – Sustainable Development in the context of university reverts.

Aims: Six sub-projects aim at sustainable organisational change and seek to elaborate determining factors for successful Integration of the sustainability paradigm into various fields of activities at a higher education institution, at the example of Lüneburg University.

Duration: Jul 1, 2004 – Dec 31, 2007

Target groups: undergraduate students, administrative and scientific staff at Lüneburg University, national and international academics.

Geographical coverage for partners: local, regional and international

Intended use of results: contribute to a science-based understanding how a higher education institution’s organisational change towards sustainable teaching and research can be

supported; sustainability impact assessment of a higher education institution; transfer of knowledge.

2. Sustainable University – Subproject Interdisciplinarity in Teaching.

Duration: Jul 1, 2004 – Dec 31, 2007

Target group: Scientific staff, Academics

Geographical coverage: local, national and international

3. Sustainable University – Subproject Lifeworld University

Duration: Jul 1, 2004 – Dec 31, 2007

Target groups: Undergraduate students, Academics

Geographical coverage: local

Intended use of results: Create scientific knowledge about the impact of informal learning settings at a campus on individual motivations and behaviour, create and emanate empirical knowledge on how to influence individual behaviour and life styles towards sustainability.

4. Sustainable University – Subproject Sustainability audit and controlling

Duration: Jul 1, 2004 – Dec 31, 2007

Target groups: Scientific and administrative staff, undergraduate students

Geographical coverage: local, regional, national, international

Intended use of results: Install and maintain innovative structures for implementing a sustainability management system at Lüneburg University; improve the long-term management of energy and resource use at Lüneburg University; draw up a sustainability report, after broad consultation and permanent exchange with external stakeholders; use the example of Lüneburg to promote sustainability audit schemes at higher education institutions; contribute to the development of sustainability audit indicators for higher education institutions.

5. Sustainable University – Communication and Knowledge Transfer

Duration: Jul 1, 2004 – Dec 31, 2007

Target groups: Academics, scientific and administrative staff, undergraduate students.

Geographical coverage: local, regional, national, international

Intended use of results: Contribute to the promotion of sustainability related to teaching, research and management of higher education institutions; emanate and stimulate discussion about the results of the project “Sustainable University”; involve scientific and academic staff of Lüneburg University; involve scientific and administrative staff on regional, national and international scale.

6. Sustainable University – Subproject Energy and Resource Management

Duration: Jul 1, 2004 – Dec 31, 2007

Target group: administrative staff, undergraduate students

Geographical coverage for partners and participants: local, regional

Intended use of results: improve the management of energy and resource use at Lüneburg University; create a energy and resource use database; install an accounting system for energy and resource consumption at Lüneburg University; create scientific knowledge on ways to influence the energy use patterns of students by means of conducting and evaluating an energy saving campaign.

Transfer/Development:

International Master in Sustainable Development and Management (EU ALFA Programme – Project Nr. II-0494- A).

Duration: Aug 15, 2005 – Aug 15, 2007

Target group: Academics

Geographical coverage for partners and participants: international (Latin America, Europe)

Intended use of results: Development of an International Master's Programme

Sustainable Development and Management; preparation for implementation at 9 European and Latin American Universities.

## 2. Conferences / Congresses/ Meetings

- Conferences

1. International Conference “Higher Education for Sustainable Development : New Challenges from a Global Perspective”

Date and place: Sep 25 – 27, 2005; Lüneburg University, Germany.

Participants: 150 Participants from 20 countries

Geographical coverage: International – (Europe, Northern America, Asia, South America).

2. 2<sup>nd</sup> International Conference “World in Transition – Sustainability Perspectives for Higher Education”

Date and place: July 5 – 7, 2007; San Luis Potosi, Mexico.

Participants: 170 Participants from 34 countries

Geographical coverage: International- (Latin America, Northern America, Europe, Asia, Africa).

3. UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development – the Contribution from Europe; Conference in the framework of the German EU Presidency; Preparation and Chairing of Workgroup Session on “Higher Education for Sustainable Development and the Bologna Process”

Date and place: May 24 – 25, 2007; Berlin, Germany.

Participants: 200 Participants from 25 countries

Geographical coverage: regional

- Meeting

German Society for Human Ecology (DGH) : Annual Meeting 2007 – Higher Education. Institutions and Sustainable Development. Specific Contributions of Human Ecology

Date and place : May 10 – 12, 2007; Sommerhausen, Germany.

[ <http://www.dgh2007.org/dokumente.html>]

45 Participants from 16 countries

Geographical coverage: International (Europe, Northern America).

### 3. Partnerships / Inter-university Exchanges

- International Cooperation

1. Cooperation with European and Latin American Universities on curriculum development and the role of new media in teaching for sustainable development in the framework of the EU-Alfa-Programme.

2. Cooperation with Universities, in the framework of VSCE (Virtual Campus for a Sustainable project), such as :

- University of Macedonia, Macedonia
- University of Greece, Greece
- Charles University, Prague
- University of Czech Republic, Czech Republic
- Open University, U.K
- University of Netherlands, Netherlands
- University of Graz
- University of Austria, Austria

- Exchange

Postdoctoral research exchange with University of Wageningen, Netherlands – sending out 1 visiting professor in 2006.

### 4. Publications and multimedia materials

#### *Publications*

- Books

1. Higher Education for Sustainability. New Challenges from a global perspective, 2006, 272 p.

Publisher(s): Adomssent, Maik / Godemann, Jasmin / Leicht, Alexander / Busch.

2. Wi(e)der die Armut? Positionen zu den Milleniumszielen der Vereinten Nationen, 2006, 219 p.

Publisher(s): Kuhn, Katina / Rieckmann, Marco.

4. Handbuch Nachhaltigkeitskommunikation, 2007, (2<sup>nd</sup> revised edition), 940 p.

Publisher(s): Michelsen, Gerd / Godemann, Jasmin.

- Periodical

#### *Quarterly*

1. International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education; Volume 8, Issue 4, 2007  
Special Issue: “Sustainable University” – holistic approach to sustainability in higher education institutions.

Publisher(s) Guest Publishers: Adomssent, Maik / Godemann, Jasmin / Michelsen, Gerd.

2. Environmental Education Research  
Special Issue: Sustainability in Higher Education Research, 2007  
Publisher(s) Guest Publishers: Beringer, Almut / Adomssent, Maik / Scott, William

*Monthly*

Politische Ökologie; Volume 93, April 2005, Baustelle Hochschule. Nachhaltigkeit als neues Fundament für Lehre und Forschung.  
Publisher(s): Altner, Günter / Michelsen, Gerd.

- Teaching / learning material

Kuhn, Katina / Rieckmann, Marco, Nachhaltige Entwicklung. Themenblätter im Unterricht, Herbst 2006, Nr. 57, 64 p.  
Publisher(s) : Bundeszentrale für politische Bildung ( bpb).

*Multimedia material*

In 2006, a database was created with the aim to bring together those higher education institutions and study programmes which approach sustainable development. The database (accessible online at <http://www.leuphana.de/infu/chair/networking/institution.php>) is constantly building up, containing to date approx. 100 institutions and study programmes from many world regions.

## **II. Outcomes**

On national and European level, the UNESCO Chair's activities helped bringing forward the concepts of inter- and transdisciplinary education and research, to counterbalance disciplinary approaches which are equally needed to achieve sustainability.

On a regional level, activities led to the successful restructuring of the curriculum at Lüneburg University. On a broader level, the UNESCO Chair has been influencing national and international policy on higher education for sustainable development. As a member of the German working group on higher education of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD), the Chair continuously works on the inclusion of sustainability as a paradigm for higher education in Germany and Europe.

Since its inauguration, the UNESCO Chair Higher Education for Sustainable Development is active to stimulate international debate about the meaning of sustainability as a paradigm for higher education institutions. Two international conferences in 2005 and 2007 discussed various aspects, among them regional interpretations of sustainability needs. Both conferences helped starting a global network of higher education representatives active or interested in sustainability issues, which needs continuous broadening. In 2006, a database was created with the aim to bring together those higher education institutions and study programmes which approach sustainable development. The database accessible online is constantly building up, containing to date approx. 100 institutions and study programmes from many world regions.

The curriculum development of an International Master Programme Sustainable Development and Management brought together 9 higher education institutions from Europe and Latin America. In July, the curriculum development has been successfully terminated.

### **III. Forthcoming activities**

For the remainder of the current biennium 2006/2007, the UNESCO Chair's primary focus will be on promoting the results of the International Conference "World in Transition", which took place in July, 2007. This will be done by both online publication and printed and enriched version of the proceedings.

Next to this, increased efforts to improve the global database are being undertaken. In the forthcoming weeks, the discussions with international partners on how to launch, maintain and enlarge a global resource database for higher education for sustainable development will be brought forward.

Thirdly, a survey shall be launched to identify global and regional needs among already identified members of the global HESD community. This survey should yield guidance on the development of the global web-based HESD database and identify most urgent sustainability challenges for higher education in different world regions.

### **IV. Development prospects**

The INFU – Institute for Environmental and Sustainability Communication works along three paths for embedding sustainable development into higher education.

Firstly, INFU is active in acquiring new projects and already carries out projects, which target sustainable development issues at universities. These third-party funded projects allow for scientific research and transfer of knowledge in regard to sustainable development. The project-related funds currently also form the backbone of INFU's financial resources to conduct broader activities in regard to higher education for sustainable development.

Secondly, INFU maintains educational activities and qualifications for students of environmental sciences. A third way of promoting sustainability in higher education is pursued by taking a pro-active role in the development of national and international policy on education for sustainable development.

It is the institute's permanent goal to secure and broaden the financial basis for the UNESCO Chair by acquiring projects, which allow the funding of scientific research and the dissemination of results in regard to higher education for sustainable development.

International cooperation on higher education for sustainable development will remain a main pillar of the UNESCO Chair's activities. Efforts are being undertaken to continue activities of the "Sustainable University" project on an international scale.

INFU will continue developing the UNESCO Chair's dimension of international networking and exchange, in order to enhance the recognition of sustainability as a new paradigm for higher education institutions worldwide. INFU is aware that not all world regions have been approached evenly in the past biennium. It is one development goal to intensify debate with partners from Asia and Africa in the years to come.

To secure the needed continuity in stimulating international debate on higher education for sustainable development, INFU is currently heading for core funding for the purposes of the UNESCO Chair.

Furthermore, actions are foreseen to stimulate international debate by means of a globally accessible and interactive web-based data collection. In the short and medium term, finances and partners for the maintenance of this resource website will have to be acquired to let the needed global exchange in HESD resources become a success.