
Preface

Sustainability in higher education is a fast growing field. From a slow start back in the late 1990s, where only a handful of people and institutions were engaged, this particular domain has evolved considerably over the past decades, and has now become mainstream. Moving on from a marginal area, with only a few researchers, sustainability as a whole and sustainability at university level in particular, has taken a central place in the scientific arena. As a result of this evolution, many people working with environmental education in the 1990s have chosen to embark on sustainability research, a trend which has been positive in the sense that a wide critical mass has now become available, across the continents, and many researchers are now following careers in this area.

But even though there are many actors now working in and around sustainability matters, and that much has been written about sustainability at universities, there is still a perceived need for forward looking, international publications, which go beyond the trivial and push the frontiers of this exciting field. Therefore, this book intends to fill in this gap and at the same time provide a timely contribution to the global debate on how to permeate sustainability across disciplines.

Consistent with this goal, this book presents a set of papers which show the effectiveness of transformative approaches towards sustainability in higher education, moving away from the theoretical discourse, and more into practice, illustrating how sustainability may be implemented within and between disciplines. With inputs from re-known experts and from emerging researchers from a wide range of higher education institutions across the world, the book demonstrates the value of transformative approaches to sustainable development, and the many benefits they may yield.

This book is structured along three parts:

- Part I: Deals with Integrative Processes and Concepts
- Part II: Handles Integrative Approaches in Teaching and Learning
- Part III: Discusses Problem-Solving and Integrative Practices

Papers in this book have derived from the “2nd World Symposium on Sustainable Development at Universities” (WSSD-U-2014), organised by Manchester Metropolitan University (UK) and the Research and Transfer Centre “Applications of Life Sciences” of the Hamburg University of Applied Sciences (Germany),

in cooperation with the United Nations University initiative “Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development” (RCE).

The Workshop, held in Manchester during 3–5 September 2014 and attended by over 120 delegates from 26 countries, was one of the last events to be held as part of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (UNDESD), with a focus on “transformative approaches to sustainable development across disciplines”, contributing to the further development of this field.

I would like to thank the authors for their inputs and for the opportunity to access their experience and their wisdom. I hope this book will help to address the need for truly international works on integrative approaches to sustainability in higher education, and inspire further works in this still developing area.

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Transformative Approaches to Sustainable
Development at Universities

Working Across Disciplines

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