

Date : 1 November, 2010
Time : 14:11-16:40hrs
Workshop : 2
Title : Higher Education: Towards a Sustainable Future
Coordinators : Simanta Kalita, Ishwar Poojar
Moderators : Jim Taylor, Alicia Jimenez
Rapporteur : Dr. Rengalaxmi, Bijoy Goswami, Gundula Haage

Speaker : Rick Clugston
Topic : Overview of the Earth Charter Initiative in HE



Rick pointed out mainly two things:

First, he reflected on the concept of Sustainable Development through the lens of the Earth Charter, arguing that the Earth Charter presents a strong way of Sustainability.

Secondly, he discussed how a university would look like, if a university includes the Earth Charter in its mission. What would be the changes in teaching, research, operations, student life?

He finished his presentation giving a few examples out of Case Studies of universities, which have endorsed the Earth Charter and are moving towards a more sustainable future. Several of these examples can be found in the special issue of the journal for Education for Sustainable Development, which will be launched during this conference.

Speaker : Jim Taylor

Topic : The International Training Programme (ITP) in ESD: Case Studies for Change

Jim discussed the importance of practice instead of theoretical knowledge of the ethical principles. He gave an example of Namibia, a case study amongst school students, which was a part of the International Training Programme on ESD.

In this example, Liina Nantinda, an ITP participant, let her Namibian students identify 5 human behaviours:

Drinking water, use food, producing waste, use energy/electricity and travel. The Children were supposed to work out the carbon emission for each of these behaviours per day and afterwards calculate their own CARBON FOOTPRINT.

Through this hands-on experience, the pupils understood the results of their actions by heart and not only by head.

He finished with an advice for every participant: GO HOME WITH ONE CHANGED ACTION IN MIND

Speaker : Jim Taylor

Topic : Sharing by the Indian Education Department

Amit Khare insisted the need for a sustainable and inclusive growth and elaborated the policies taken up by the Indian Government in the field of Sustainable Development, especially connected to Higher Education. Furthermore, he listed out the challenges they are facing and remedies taken up to overcome these. The major challenges are building a human asset, ensuring equitable access to Higher Education and providing enough qualified teachers in the Indian Education Sector. He also insisted on the need of an interdisciplinary approach in HE as well as society linkages. He strongly expressed the need of strong leadership and institutional capacity building is necessary to transfer the values to the next generation.

Speaker : Priyankar Upadhyaya

Topic : Peace and Social Sustainability dimension in Higher Education

Dr. Upadhyaya urged that the Earth Charter is very useful to promote Sustainability. The indigenous ethical values are ingrained in the Indian culture and should be well felt in HE system. His talk focused on defining Sustainability, value education and conflict resolution related to spirituality. The Sustainable Development is not only related to environmental development, but also to peace, conflicts, and other dimensions. In collaboration with the Peace University Costa Rica, Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi has developed a Master Programme on Sustainable Development and Peace based on the Asia Pacific Curriculum building. He also critically reflected the educational system and the often missing link between science and humanity. He also pointed out the importance to forge partnerships.

Speaker : Praveen Bist

Topic : Blueprint for Green University Campuses as a way to realize the 14th principle of the Earth Charter

Dr. Bist mentioned that it is mandatory in Indian Universities to have a course on Environmental Studies. He pointed out the importance of practice that are based on the theoretic knowledge, therefore the need for campuses to GO GREEN.

He explained the ways by which colleges/ universities could adapt ethical and sustainable practices. Amritha Vishwar Vidyapeeth, Coimbatore, where many green practices are being followed, such as composting, recycling, reducing etc.

He furthermore pointed out some ways to make Green Campuses more attractive for universities and colleges, like making it a UGC mandate, providing funding support etc. To encourage and inculcate the values of green practices, he gave the example of the Serve-an-

hour programme at Amritha Vishwa Vidyapeeth: All students are encouraged to volunteer for at least 1hour per week for these practices

In the session the participants were able to put their views of ethical values and sustainability in the context of Higher Education. Many of the younger participants shared their views on the topic.