

North – South Cooperation on Research in Sustainability Science

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The challenge

One of the challenges would be that the existing academic disciplines are so strong and are trying to keep their own identities, so it is very difficult for us to allocate human and financial resources for the development of sustainability science.

Professor Kazuhico Takeuchi



All UNESCO member states agree...

Medium term strategy:

- § 54: *In response to the emerging global sustainability challenges, UNESCO will put into practice integrated science for sustainable development, or **sustainability science**.*
- §82: *(...)UNESCO will contribute to influencing and shaping the research agenda of global and regional scientific cooperation, through the lens of **sustainability science** and social inclusion which will be a defining factor of the post-2015 development agenda.*

Reiterated in Major Programmes II and III:

*"UNESCO will fully embrace the concept of **sustainability science** in the design and implementation of its Programmes".*

SDGs and research

- SDGs ideal for SuS problem-solving approach
- Scientifically based knowledge essential
- Unique opportunity for funders to adopt a new approach



But...



"Seawise Giant", "Jahre Viking", "Knock Nevis", etc.

- World largest ship ever built
- 458 m long, 24.6 m draft, 564,763 DWT
- It took 9 km to stop, turning radius: 3 km,

Realities of the global research funding system

- Some universal features
- Some variations
- Not particularly innovative



Some encouraging signs

- Greater alignment between research councils
- Regional and global councils
- Recognition of need for targeting global challenges
- Acceptance for multi- and interdisciplinary approaches



HOWEVER

- **Sustainability science hardly on the agenda**



Australian Government
Australian Research Council



Some examples from the EU

Funded projects using SuS approach (at least partly):

- FP7: 8 projects
- H2020: 3 projects
- ERC: 4 projects



Mapping SuS in higher Education & Research



Sustainability Science in the world
MA, PhDs and Research Programs

Source: CROP/University of Bergen

Spreading the concept must be a priority

- Gather representatives of major councils
- Follow up on institutions offering SuS studies
- Present the concept at scientific conferences
- Ask governments to address SuS in their SDG reports
- UNESCO to use NatCom networks
- Use MOST (Interministerial meetings)
- Approach private foundations (often more flexible and innovative)



Building North - South partnerships

SDG Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Examples of partnership instruments in STI & HE

- Future Earth



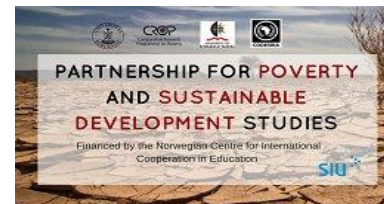
- H2020 co-fund programmes



- Global Research Council



- Bilateral partnership programmes



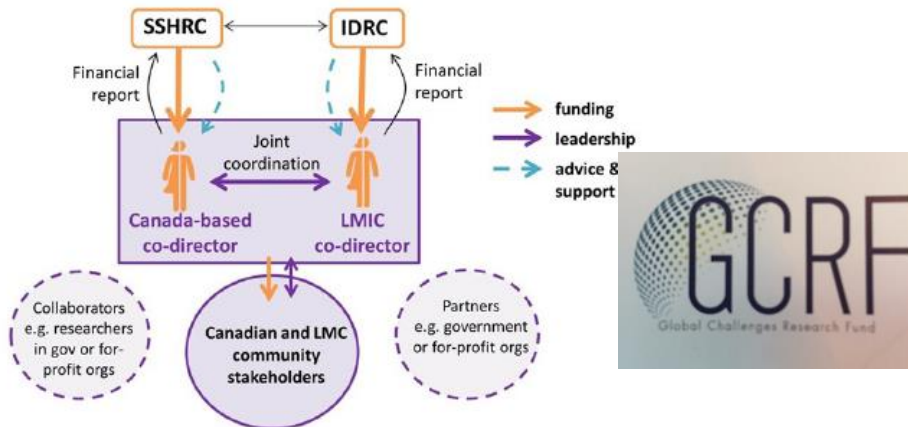
Best practices?

Several models:

- ICURA (Canada – IDRC/SSHRC)
- PEER (USA – USAID + many)
- RPC (UK – DFID + many)
- r4d (Swiss – SDC/SNSF)
- SATREPS (Japan – JICA/JST, AMED)



Project model



Dr Jennie Dodson

UK Collaborative on Development Science



Image: (CC) Scale by Magr' pics for everyone

£1.5 Bn over 4 years!

Best practices in Sus?

A bit early to tell, but

when it comes to SuS, «South» more avant-garde

- Kuala Lumpur symposium gave good examples
- Less evident in other parts of the world



- **T2S: A very promising initiative**

