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Mainstreaming Sustainability Science in Research

- Outcomes of discussion on research in sustainability science
- Role of research in sustainability science for implementing the SDGs
- How to promote North-South cooperation on research in sustainability science

*Third Symposium on Sustainability Science:
Towards Guidelines on Research and Education*

1 June 2017

UNESCO Headquarters - Room XIII (Bonvin Building)

Outcomes of discussion on research in sustainability science

- ▶ Creating conditions of possibility for doing effective sustainability science
- ▶ Make sure we use common language (Interdisciplinarity & transdisciplinarity)
- ▶ The call for more research on SuS has focused sharply on the social sciences. Social science knowledge is indispensable knowledge.

SuS: an approach to knowledge production

- ▶ Beyond disciplines
- ▶ Problem-solving
- ▶ Participatory
- ▶ Process oriented
- ▶ Implementation

Taking the sustainability science seriously means doing science differently

- ▶ SuS requires interactions at every step
- ▶ Joint design of the problem to tackle
- ▶ Joint production of knowledge
- ▶ Joint implementation of solutions

Sustainability requires adequate institutional framework:

- ▶ Time to ensure projects meet the real needs of stakeholders and to ensure participation
- ▶ Funding streams
- ▶ Capacity to use research funds with non-academic stakeholders
- ▶ Incentives (reward for researchers to do this type of research)
- ▶ Capacity building (core modules, contextualized training, pool of trainers, web-based platforms)

Sustainability requires adequate institutional framework:

- ▶ Developing indicators to assess and monitor progress
- ▶ Adequate interfaces between science and policy

Role of research in sustainability science for implementing the SDGs

► SuS as an academic background for Future Earth and SDGs

Multi-stakeholders

Knowledge action networks (KANs) (SDGs)

Future earth (research for global sustainability)

Co-evolution of academics and society (co-design, co-production, co-delivery)

Sustainability science (integrating social science and natural sciences)

Role of research in sustainability science for implementing the SDGs

- ▶ Pathway for SDGs implementation with SuS approach

Role of research in sustainability science for implementing the SDGs

► Strategy for CC and Natural Disasters

Policy and dissemination

International framework and cooperation

Funds/ finance

Eco DRR

Resilient city infrastructure

Capacity development

Prediction and early warning

Sendai Declaration

Conclusions and way forward

► Research in SuS

Distinct scientific endeavor

Diversified core fields

Formation of networks of research communities

Conclusions and way forward

► Way forward

Directions for SuS for the next 10 years

Provide scientific knowledge, solution oriented data and instruments for implementation of SDGs

Linking the quality research with relevant international initiatives, networks as Future Earth

Mainstreaming SuS approach and contributing to social transformation towards sustain in collaboration with various stakeholders including business sectors and policymakers

How to promote North-South cooperation on research in sustainability science

UNESCO and SuS

Member States agree

Reflected in:

- Medium Term Strategy
- Reiterated in Major Programmes II and III
- BUT, not clear idea in many cases

How to promote North-South cooperation on research in sustainability science

Realities of the global research funding system

Commonalities: not particularly innovative

It takes time to change

Some encouraging signs

How to promote North-South cooperation on research in sustainability science

Some examples from the EU

Funded projects using SuS approach (at least partly)

FP7 (8 projects)

H2020 (3)

ERC (4)

How to promote North-South cooperation on research in sustainability science

Spreading the concept must be a priority

Not enough to target governments but research councils as well

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 (inter-ministerial meetings)

Approach private foundations (often more flexible and innovative)

How to promote North-South cooperation on research in sustainability science

Building North- South partnerships

SDG 17 Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Examples of partnership instruments in STI & HE

How to promote North-South cooperation on research in sustainability science

Best practices in SuS?

A bit early to tell but

When it comes to SuS South is more *avant-garde*

Kuala Lumpur symposium gave good examples

Less evident in other parts of the world

T2S: a very promising initiative

Belmont Forum

NORFACE



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