

## Copernicus Alliance Newsletter No. 4



### COPERNICUS Alliance

European Network on Higher Education for Sustainable Development

Promoting transformational learning and change for sustainable development in higher education

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(2012-13)

[Dr. Clemens Mader](#)

Elected Vice-President  
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[Dr. Ingrid Mulà](#)

COPERNICUS officer

### COPERNICUS Alliance Newsletter

This is the Copernicus Alliance (CA) Newsletter No.4. We hope that it provides a valuable knowledge sharing platform for members.

If you would like to make a contribution to the next newsletter please contact Ingrid Mulà by the 7th January 2012 at: [office@copernicus-alliance.org](mailto:office@copernicus-alliance.org)

We would also appreciate it if you could tell us whether you find the newsletters useful and give us some feedback and suggestions for improvement.

### News

✦ **CA will be at the 6th International Barcelona Conference on Higher Education organised by GUNi (13-15 May 2013)**

#### 1. Rio+20 Treaty for HE Event - CA has joined forces with UNU IAS - GUNi Conference (13 May 2013)

As part of our commitment to influence international dialogues, **CA has joined forces with UNU IAS to co-organise a side event at the GUNi Conference** which will specifically focus on engagement and social change for sustainability in higher education. The side event, entitled

“The People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education: Engaging communities of learning in social change for sustainability”,

will bring together CA members, signatories of the Treaty and Regional Centres of Expertise to share their learning, challenges and successes in engaging higher education communities in social change for sustainability.

The outcome of the event will be a **UNU IAS publication** which will provide key insights, frameworks and approaches on community engagement for sustainability in higher education and will showcase innovative experiences in this area.

A specific call for contributions for this side event will be organised and sent to all CA members shortly.

#### 2. CA annual meeting for members will take place during the GUNi Conference (16 May 2013)

The CA annual meeting for members will take place at the GUNi Conference on 16 May 2013 with the aim of sharing CA developments and progress as well as to discuss future network activities. Details of this meeting will be confirmed and sent before Christmas. We hope that all of you will be able to attend and participate in the dialogues.

#### 3. Registration is now open for the GUNi Conference

Registration for the [GUNi Conference](#) is now open. **Please do let Ingrid Mulà know if you are joining the CA side event and annual meeting in Barcelona at: [office@copernicus-alliance.org](mailto:office@copernicus-alliance.org).**

✦ **CA currently developing a EU project to support Network activities**

CA is currently working on the submission of a European bid ([ERASMUS Academic Network](#)) which will build upon the work of the Network and will seek to give continuity to the [People’s Sustainability Treaty](#)

[on Higher Education.](#)

The 3-year project involves the creation of a thematic academic network with a minimum of 25 EU member states. Partners of the Network will consist of CA members, Treaty's signatories and international higher education associations and agencies. Only EU countries can take a formal role in the project.

The initial project idea is to map ESD competences of existing university teaching staff and identify how competences are and can be best developed to enhance quality academic practice in this area. The aim is to produce strategic guidance for universities to effectively support changes to curriculum development and academic provision. This project idea has been sent to a small writing group who will further develop the project during the following months.

**Invitations to participate as partners will be sent in the up-coming days. We look forward to your participation and cooperation. This opportunity is provided as part of the CA commitments made for 2012-13 to engage members in collaborative research and funding.**

✦ **CA invited to attend the 7th Meeting of the Ubuntu Committee of Peers for the RCEs in Japan (25-26 November 2012)**

CA is member of the Ubuntu Committee of Peers since 2003 and has been invited at this meeting where applications for new RCEs to be acknowledged within this year will be reviewed and advice to the UNU on policy and strategic matters will be provided.

✦ **CA activities and The People's Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education were presented at the European Development Days Side Event: "Building Future Curricula: Sustainability in Higher Education" (Brussels, 15-18 October 2012)**

This side event co-organised by Hogeschool-Universiteit Brussel (HUB), the Students' European Network for Sustainable Development (SENSD), and the Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (KU Leuven), sought to engage participants in discussing the relevance of integrating sustainable development into higher education programmes and the need to provide a labour force adapted to the next generations' challenges.

CA was invited and Dr Ingrid Mulà was funded to attend at this event where the People's Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education and key Network activities were presented.

✦ **CA members at the 7th Global RCE Conference (Tongyeong, 21-24 September 2012)**

CA members from the University of Graz, Open University Netherlands, University of Gloucestershire and Leuphana University represented CA at this important Conference which looked to the end of the UN Decade on Education for Sustainable Development in 2014 and beyond, providing a vision for the future and generating the momentum needed to make that vision a reality.

The work of CA as well as the [People's Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education](#) were presented at one of the sessions of the Conference by the Vice-president and co-ordinator of CA. Possibilities for further collaboration with the RCE community were also discussed during the Conference. An outcome of these discussions is the recent partnership created with UNU IAS to co-organise a side event at the GUNI Conference (13-15 May 2013) and edit a joint publication in the area of community engagement for sustainability in higher education.

✦ **CA Membership Renewal 2012 – Deadline 30 November 2012**

**We would like to remind you that membership for 2012 is up for renewal.** Invoices were sent in October and we will need you to make the payment as soon as you are able. This is important to support Network developments and future activities. Please note that if we have not received the fee before the Christmas break, we will need to close your membership.

### **Updates from CA members**

✦ **„Sustainicum“ – Sustainability in Higher Education Teaching –Austrian Universities developing sustainability teaching platform**

Sustainicum is a cooperation project between three CA members in Austria: University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences in Vienna, University of Graz and Technical University of Graz, and is funded by the Austrian Federal Ministry for Science and Research. Sustainicum aims at fostering higher education teaching by developing an online open platform for exchange and information, where professors, lecturers and people interested can both view as well as share innovative teaching ideas – ranging from small thematic components, teaching methodologies, scripts, to experiments and simulations. A variety of

thematic topics will be included in the platform – all related to sustainability and innovative teaching, such as regional development, climate change, water resources, social entrepreneurship, traditional knowledge, sustainable lifestyles, etc. The Sustainicum platform will go online in January 2013. Most contributions will only be available in German at the beginning, but an English translation will be provided in the upcoming months. More information will be provided [here](#).

#### ✦ **University of Lüneburg Updates, by Marco Rieckmann and Clemens Mader**

- From October 2012, a new certificate programme in “Sustainability and Journalism” will be offered for journalists at the Professional School of Leuphana University of Lüneburg. The programme is coordinated by the Institute for Environmental and Sustainability Communication. Please click [here](#) for more information (in German).
- Study “Political barometer of sustainability in Germany”: Led by Professor Dr. Harald Heinrichs and Norman Laws, the study has examined how sustainability is implemented in the administrative institutions and parliamentary bodies and which recommendations can be provided for strengthening this implementation. The study shows that German policy is not fulfilling its role model. For example, there are many dedicated employees, but the necessary backing from the top often is lacking. You can download the study [here](#) (in German).
- Dr Clemens Mader was invited to “The power of ESD” Conference organised by SWEDES (Visby, Gotland, 24-26 October 2012). This conference held in Visby at Gotland Island (Sweden) brought together 120 international practitioners, researchers and policy makers (from 35 countries) working in the ESD. They shared promising and evidence-based practical, theoretical and policy insights and lessons from around the world. Their conclusions will serve as inputs for the final two years of the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005 – 2014) and the period thereafter. Find more information on the outcomes of the conference by clicking [here](#).
- Dr Clemens Mader, spoke via Skype at the UNICA students conference “The ideal university” (Copenhagen, 12 October 2012). The session, organised by oikos international the students organisation for sustainable economics and management focused on the role of students in higher education assessment. Dr Clemens Mader brought an insight into current practices and discussed quality criteria for higher education from the students’ perspective. More information [here](#).

#### **Partner of the Month**

##### **Charles University Centre for Environment (Czech Republic) by Jana Dlouhá and Andrew Barton**

The [Charles University Environment Centre](#) (CUEC) is an independent institute within Charles University in Prague which focuses on interdisciplinary cooperation and research in the field of sustainable development and ESD. CUEC seeks to bring about innovations into the educational system and to promote systemic change at all levels. Innovative practices include (i) the systemic building of open education resources and their use as part of our teaching/learning activities; (ii) cooperation with a range of actors through CUEC national projects; and, (iii) the testing of new forms of transboundary scientific work. Efforts to bring about systemic change in the educational system include involvement in expert teams with both the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Environment. CUEC has also been involved in a number of international EU-funded projects over the years, and has recently been working with a consortium of Central and Eastern European universities, as well some Western universities with internationally recognised expertise in ESD in the hope of establishing a strong alliance for spreading and strengthening ESD capability and capacity in the most recently democratised part of Europe.

An important part of the CUEC’s work is the support for different communication processes: either within the academic community (a Forum of University teachers exists since 1993), and beyond (voluntary work in the civic sector). To open up space for a scientific dialogue on the environmental and ESD themes, CUEC established the peer reviewed [journal Envigogika](#) in 2006. Our products include several methodologies (4 methodological materials for the incorporation of different innovations into teaching/learning certified by Ministry of Environment), and preparation of a special issue of the Journal of Cleaner Production called Learning for Sustainable Development in Regional Networks. Our future plans include cooperation with Czech regions to develop local knowledge in the form of regional case studies and support for communication processes between a range of actors where an academic institution plays the role of a catalyser of social learning processes and analyses their outcomes.

#### **COPERNICUS Working groups**

**There are many opportunities for CA members to actively contribute to the network through its working groups.** You can participate in any of the existing groups by subscribing at our [website](#) or contact the conveners of the group (see below).

If you would like to create your own group, please do email us at: [office@copernicus-alliance.org](mailto:office@copernicus-alliance.org).

Existing groups:

- ✦ Implementation of Sustainability in Universities (Clemens Mader)
- ✦ Innovative Teaching & Learning (David Clemson)
- ✦ European Interdisciplinary Research on Sustainability (Jenneth Parker)
- ✦ Policy Lobbying (Maik Adomssent)
- ✦ Outreach (To be confirmed)

## Events

- ✦ **Post Rio+20 Event, The Future of Education for Sustainability in the UK (London, 14 November 16.00-18.00)**

*London, The Boardroom, University of Westminster, 309 Regent Street, W1B 2UW*

The [EAUC](#) is facilitating an event, on 14 November at the University of Westminster, that aims to engage influential stakeholders from the education community in discussion around how this important agenda could be taken forward and how NGOs, Government and Agencies can work together to accelerate constructive change for sustainability through formal and informal education.

The Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, who was present at the Earth Summit, is invited to respond to the education agenda in the FWW document at the event. The Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove has also been invited and will respond as he was consulted in the period leading up to the Summit. Further invitations have gone out to MPs of respective political parties, Times Higher Education and Guardian.

This event is by invitation only, if however you feel your organisation should be represented please contact EAUC on [info@eauc.org.uk](mailto:info@eauc.org.uk).

- ✦ **International Research Workshop on Regional Learning and Sustainable Development (Leuphana University, Lüneburg, 16-17 May 2012)**

This international research workshop will gather researchers to investigate and exchange on new approaches and research outcomes in the fields of regional learning for sustainable development. The two-day workshop will be held 16th – 17th of May 2012 at Leuphana University of Lüneburg in Germany. The workshop will be structured in plenary, paper and open space sessions. Four paper tracks will focus on the following topics and contents: 1. Transformative Cross-Sector-Partnership Approaches; 2. Transdisciplinary Approaches, 3. The role of Entrepreneurship; 4. Scaling Up Local Multi-Stakeholder Networks for Sustainable Development. The call for papers ends: December 30th. Please find more information by clicking [here](#).

- ✦ **7th World Environmental Education Congress (Marrakech, 9-14 June 2013)**

The Seventh WEEC will take place in Marrakesh, Morocco, from 9 to 14 June 2013. The focus of attention will be on all themes relative to environmental education and all the protagonists – academics, teachers, students, practitioners, institutions and those from civil and industrial society – will be welcomed.

For the first time, a WEEC is being held in a country with an Arab - Muslim culture, and for the first time a theme (the relation between city and countryside in search of harmony) will be the object of great transversal attention across all the thematic areas, obviously without ignoring all the other themes.

For more information about the 6th WEEC, please visit the Conference [website](#).

## Publications and resources

- ✦ **Call for Papers: Special Issue of Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal on: Effective Change Management, Governance and Policy for Sustainability in Higher Education**

For full details please visit click [here](#)

Issues to be addressed in papers could include, but are not limited to:

- Management and governance systems in higher education which have successfully given sustainability a more central role in universities and colleges

- Effective higher education change processes towards sustainability
- New paradigms of higher education development towards sustainability
- Senior leadership towards sustainable higher education development
- Successful strategies for engaging the senior executive and governing bodies of universities in giving sustainability a strategic focus in their university
- The effective implementation of national and international policy and Education for Sustainable Development in Universities
- The role of University accounting, tracking, reporting and planning systems in limiting or developing sustainability practices in Universities
- The productive engagement of stakeholders in University governance and management an embedded approach to sustainability in universities and colleges
- The role of Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCEs) in strengthening the sustainability performance of universities
- Case studies of successful transdisciplinary approaches of education, research and management in higher education
- Case studies which demonstrate the importance of Universities in the institutional and regional transformation to sustainable development
- Case studies on the involvement of academics and students in addressing University operational sustainability issues and solutions

For questions or abstracts please send an email to the guest editor:

[clemens.mader@inkubator.leuphana.de](mailto:clemens.mader@inkubator.leuphana.de)

#### ✦ Recent publications from Leuphana University

- Barth, M. & Rieckmann, M. 2012, Academic staff development as a catalyst for curriculum change towards education for sustainable development: an output perspective. *Journal of Cleaner Production* 26, p. 28-36, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/09596526/26>
- Fischer, D. 2012, Framing Student Participation in Education for Sustainable Development, in: *Global Sustainable Development: A Challenge for Consumer Citizens*. O'Donoghue, M. (ed.). Dublin: CDVEC, <http://www.springerlink.com/content/n302487jj4r419g7?MUD=MP>
- Fischer, D. & Freund, E. K. 2012, Educating for Sustainable Consumption as a Response to the Global Water Crisis: An Investigation of an Embedded Learning Approach, in: *Climate Change and the Sustainable Management of Water Resources*. Filho, W. L. (ed.). Berlin: Springer, p. 743-759.
- Mader C. (2012) Sustainability process assessment on transformative potentials: The Graz Model for Integrative Development, In: *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Elsevier, DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2012.08.028
- Mader M., MADER C., ZIMMERMANN F.M., GOERSDORF E., DIETHART M., (2012) Monitoring networking between higher education institutions and regional actors, In: *Journal of Cleaner Production*, Elsevier, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2012.07.046>.
- Michelsen, G. & Rieckmann, M. 2012, UNESCO chairs for (higher) education for sustainable development, *IAU Horizons, World Higher Education News* 18 (2), p. 16-17.
- Rieckmann, M. 2012, Future-oriented higher education: Which key competencies should be fostered through university teaching and learning? *Futures* 44 (2), p. 127-135, <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/journal/00163287/44/2>
- Zimmermann, F. M., Mader, C., Michelsen, G. & Adomßent, M. 2012, The European Higher Education for Sustainable Development Network – COPERNICUS Alliance – back on stage with Charta 2.0, in: *Higher Education in the World 4*. G. U. N.. I. (ed.). 4. Palgrave MacMillan, p. 134-136. (GUNI Series on the Social Commitment of Universities), <http://us.macmillan.com/highereducationintheworld4/GlobalUniversityNetworkforInnovation%28GUNI%29>

#### ✦ The Sustainable University – Process and Prospects, out on 13th February 2013

This Routledge Book edited by Stephen Sterling, Larch Maxey and Heather Luna will be out on 13th February 2013. There will be a launch at the Festival of Research in Plymouth in March, and a London launch in Greenwich in April.

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The Copernicus Alliance brings together higher education institutions from across Europe which are committed to re-orienting universities so that they can make a meaningful contribution to sustainable development. These institutions have signed the [Copernicus Charter](#) which identifies ten change pathways for sustainable development in higher education.

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