HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

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The Report of SUSTAIN Project

SUSTAIN

Creating ESD Learning Community

Secretariat of Sustainability Weeks
Hokkaido University
March, 2017

About This Document

This is the overview document of “Sustainability Tool for Academic Institutions (SUSTAIN) Project” which was launched in 2009 by Hokkaido University with collaboration with member institutions of Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research (ProSPER.Net) and Institute for the Advanced Study of Sustainability, United Nations University(UNU-IAS).

This mainly consists of PDF files converted from the SUSTAIN website which was created by the project members in 2009. To keep the records as of when they worked on the project, some pages might include out-of-date information, website links, and contact information which is currently not valid or available.

Also, please kindly understand that it is difficult to answer any inquiries about project details. We hope this document helps you to contribute to achieve a sustainable society.

Secretariat of Sustainability Weeks
Hokkaido University
March, 2017

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1. Overview

About SUSTAIN

The project started in 2009 with the mission of facilitating and encouraging institutions of higher education to engage in ESD, Education for Sustainable Development. The first goal is to provide a framework for sharing good practices and facilitating the dialogue and self-reflection, and to this end, the project has developed SUSTAIN, SUStianabiliy Tool for Academic INstitutions. After three pilot tests, the tool is now waiting to be released.

Testimonials

"It is both meaningful and encouraging for the faculty that the tool is aimed at supporting institutions to define their courses for sustainable future by making them aware of what they have not been aware of otherwise."

- anonymous, Hokkaido University

" The process helped raise our own awareness of the reasons for the approaches we had selected, and provide an opportunity to think again about some of the underlying rationale and whether this had changed since the design of the original programme."

- anonymous, T University

2. Website of the project

SUSTAIN Project

History

Against the backdrop of growing interests in ESD among higher education institutions, the project was proposed by Hokkaido University in June 2009, as an undertaking of ProSPER.Net, an alliance of leading universities in the Asia-Pacific region that are committed to integrating sustainable development into postgraduate courses and curricula.
The first goal was to develop an alternative to existing ESD assessment tools, therefore the project started under the code name of AUA, Alternative University Appraisal, at the outset.
The project has been funded not only by ProSPER.Net but also by Hokkaido University and the International Cooperative Initiative (2009–2011) of MEXT, Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science, and Technology of Japan.

Mission

Our mission is to facilitate and encourage institutions of higher education to engage in education, research and outreach activities and to reinforce the governance, which forms the basis for other activities, for sustainable development.

Vision

We envision ourselves being a pivotal point in the learning community of higher education institutions in Asia and Pacific region, where institutions can identify their own strengths and weaknesses, learn from one another and share good ESD practices in their own areas of interest.

Goal

We aim to provide a framework for sharing good practices and facilitating the dialogue and self-reflection while respecting diversities in missions.

Project Members

Nine member institutions of ProSPER.Net have volunteered to work together for the vision, and formed "Core Members".
Other institutions within the ProSPER.Net community also have greatly contributed the project.

Value Proposition

There are a number of approaches to support higher education institutions to mainstream ESD. Many assessment tools have been also proposed by various institutions/organizations from a standpoint that "knowing yourself is the first step to improving." While SUSTAIN shares the same standpoint, it differentiate itself from others on the following ground.

a). No standardized comparison

Whether relative assessments (rankings) or absolute assessments (ratings), many tools try to measure institutions by using their uniform standards which reflect their own idea of what ESD should be.

SUSTAIN appreciates efforts by different institutions to address different issues differently from different perspectives, as the diversity is an essence of SD, and therefore does not try to assess institutions by unilaterally imposed standards.

b). Empowerment by sharing perceptions among stakeholders

Many tools presume that "the facts" already exist. Those facts are used as baselines, against which improvements are measured over the time, or compared with "facts" of other institutions.

SUSTAIN treats facts as unconfirmed, and truth as multifaceted. SUSTAIN's self-assessment is not a process to decide whether the institution meets or fails the criteria. Rather, it provides an opportunity for stakeholders of the institution to get together, reciprocally recognize differences in perceptions owing to different roles or responsibilities, and reach common perceptions.

c). Emphasis on actions

From academic point of view, assessments are expected to judge superiority of outcomes. The trend of assessment is for more emphasis on outcomes and less emphasis on processes, and which is especially evident in Western countries. However, in societies where outcomes are emphasized, actions tend to be prioritized in a way that the biggest outcome can be expected in the shortest-term; therefore low-profile actions are sacrificed.

SUSTAIN believes that proposing specific states as "ideal outcomes" will jeopardize the risk of discouraging diverse efforts for

SD, which could be detrimental in Asia, where diversity is more complicated. SUSTAIN acclaims institutions which actually take necessary actions regardless of types and sizes of perceived outcomes.

d). Community Orientation

In assessments in general, assessors and assessees do not usually work on an equal footing; Assessors either unilaterally assess assessees, or give consultation as service-for-fee.

In SUTAIN, both sides are members of a community, just switching their roles depending on the time and situations. Dialogue is designed to make sure that every participant has some learning to do beforehand, and has some take-away's. SUISTAIN Activity Checklist has also evolved and continues to evolve by reflecting the collective intelligence of the community.

Concepts

SD and ESD

The background behind the project was a growing attention to SD since United Nations introduced "Our Common Future, From One Earth to One World: Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development" in 1987.

In the 1992 UN Earth Summit at Rio de Janeiro, the organizers recognized the importance of education and brought up a concept of ESD and adapted Agenda 21. In 2000, ESD was recognized as an essential vehicle toward the twenty-first century, and the UN Millennium Declaration and Millennium Development Summit Goals were both approved by committing to ESD. ESD again became an issue in the UN World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002, and upon the recommendation of Japanese government, a campaign called UNDESD 2005-2014 (United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005-2014) was adapted.

- Our definition of SD and ESD.

Four Categories of Education

SUSTAIN defines "education" of ESD rather broadly, and categories activities of higher education institutions into four - three missions ("education", "research", "outreach"), weights of which may differ depending on institutions, and "governance", which governs the management and control of other three categories of education.

A. Governance
In this category, attentions will be paid to overarching administrative structure and policy directions. Governance is basic framework which influences implementation of all ESD related activities in education, research and outreach.

B. Education
This category concerns curriculum, teaching, capacity development and other learning opportunities offered for students, faculty members, staff and communities.

C. Research
Research activities and application of researches will be focused on in this category.

D. Outreach
Collaboration with local communities or organizations outside of the educational arena, and other activities intended to raise public awareness or transform the society will be focused on.

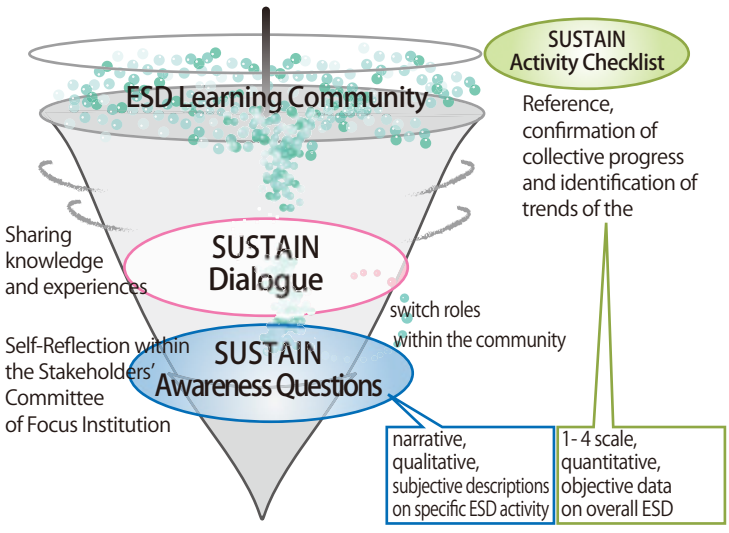
SUSTAIN Tool

What is

The name stands for
SUStianbility **T**ool for **A**cademic **IN**stitutions

SUSTAIN is a tool, with which members of higher education institutions community learn from each other to enhance ESD towards the realization of SD.
Although it takes a form of assessment, it is not intended to make judgments about superiority / inferiority. Rather, it aims to enhance ESD of overall community through mutual learning by providing opportunities where institutions and stakeholders participate in the process of self-assessment of an institution and share best practices and thoughts.

Components



SUSTAIN is composed of three components: SUSTAIN Awareness Questions（formerly known as SAQ（Self-Awareness Questions)), SUSTAIN Dialogue (formerly known as Peer Consultation), and SUSTAIN Activity Checklist (BIQ (Benchmark Indicator Questions)).

SUSTAIN Awareness Questions
A set of narrative questions and institution profile for reviewing or revisiting a particular ESD initiative of an institution ("Focus Institution", or FI)
Focus Institution forms a committee consisting of its stakeholders ("Stakeholders' Committee"), whose members are expected to eventually understand each other's perspective through the process of discussing answers.

- SUSTAIN Awareness Questions

SUSTAIN Dialogue
Dialogue between representatives from other institutions in the community ("Dialogue Partners") and FI's Stakeholders' Committee. The Dialogue participants discuss Pre-Recommendations, which had been prepared by the Dialogue Partners and provided to the FI in advance. Pre-

Recommendations are made based on the information provided by FI in the form of answers to Awareness Questions.
Through this process,participants from FI confirm differences which exist among its stakeholders, understand each other,
and stand on the same page towards further enhancement of ESD.
At the same time, Partners also can learn from the case of FI.

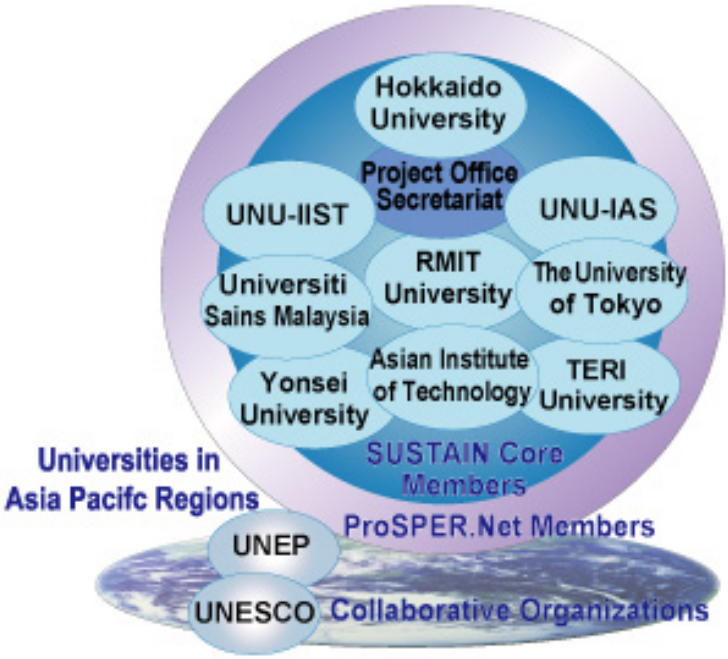
- SUSTAIN Dialogue

SUSTAIN Activity Checklist

A 1-to-4 scale survey about institutional-level ESD activities.
The purposes are to visualize progresses of ESD enhancement and identify trends.
It is not intended to compare institutions.

- SUSTAIN Activity Checklist

Core Members



Nine ProSPER.Net member institutions constitute SUSTAIN Core Members.

Messages from Core Members

- Asian Institute of Technology, Thailand
- Hokkaido University, Japan
- RMIT University, Australia
- TERI University, India
- The University of Tokyo, Japan
- UNU International Institute for Software Technology (UNU-IIST), Macau
- UNU Institute of Advanced Studies, Japan
- Universiti Sains Malaysia, Malaysia
- Yonsei University, South Korea

(alphabetical order)

Hokkaido University serves as Project Leader and Secretariat.

Hokkaido University

Keizo Yamaguchi
President of Hokkaido University

HOKKAIDO UNIVERSITY

At Hokkaido University we believe the Alternative University Appraisal (AUA) project is very important. Hokkaido University is honored to be able to contribute to the promotion of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) at universities all over the world in our capacity as the host institution of the AUA Project. Upon establishment of the AUA Secretariat in 2009, Hokkaido University also formed an AUA Committee, consisting of several faculty members and two full-time support staff. In close collaboration with the member institutions and stakeholders, we hope to create a world-wide learning community for good ESD practices starting in the Asia-Pacific region, and further strengthen our initiatives for a sustainable future.

Keizo Yamaguchi
President, Hokkaido University

TERI University

Dr. Rajendra Kumar Pachauri
Chancellor, TERI University

Quality human resource is the biggest asset for a society to progress on the path of sustainable development. Institutions of higher learning play a major role, within the broader context of social, scientific, political and cultural reforms which drive economic progress of the society. TERI University has been engaged in offering higher education through programmes related to sustainable development for the last ten years. Its programmes emphasize the theory-practice connect by including stakeholder interaction as part of the curriculum in all its programmes.

It gives us immense pleasure to be part of the AUA core team. The AUA project provides an opportunity to universities to evaluate their performance towards producing leaders in various disciplines, who not only excel in their specific professions but are also sensitive to every aspect and dimension of sustainable development. We believe that the AUA project will bring a refreshing aspect of innovation in universities, which will have a strong relevance for addressing the sustainability challenges of tomorrow.

Rajendra Kumar Pachauri
Chancellor, TERI University

United Nations
University-Institute of Advanced Studies

Prof. Govindan Parayil
Director of UNU-IAS

UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSITY

UNU-IAS
Institute of Advanced Studies

In June 2008, in conjunction with Hokkaido University's Sustainability Weeks 2008 and the G8 Hokkaido Toyako Summit Round activities, an academic alliance in Asia and the Pacific for Education for Sustainable Development called ProSPER.Net (Promotion of Sustainability in Postgraduate Education and Research Network) was launched under the auspices of the United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU-IAS).

ProSPER.Net currently consists of 19 leading higher education institutions in the Asia-Pacific region striving to integrate sustainability into education and research. ProSPER.Net serves as a platform of collaboration among members. Funded by the Ministry of the Environment of Japan, joint projects developed in 2008-2009 targeted the integration of sustainable development in business school curricula, training of educators and researchers on sustainable development, and an online postgraduate programme in public policy and sustainable development.

For 2010, new projects were accepted for funding, including a summer school on sustainable development, training on and integration of sustainable

development in engineering schools, development of closer linkages to poverty reduction and Alternative University Appraisal (AUA), to name a few. The AUA project started in 2009 with funding support from MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, Japan) under its International Cooperation Initiative.

Select ProSPER.Net members embarked on this important project to develop an Alternative University Appraisal System as a viable alternative to existing, conventional university raking systems that are influential but can be constraining.

We at UNU-IAS are very fortunate and proud to be working with international experts on university performance evaluation from various international and Japanese agencies, as well as universities in Japan and abroad, to improve and provide valuable feedback to the AUA self-awareness questionnaire and benchmarking groups.

Our expectation is that together, we will develop a system to assess and properly reward efforts being undertaken by universities that are striving to integrate sustainability issues in their major areas of activity, aiming for the overall improvement of university practices.

Govindan ParayilTae Young Lee
Vice-Rector, UNU/Director, UNU-IAS

Universiti Sains Malaysia

Dzulkifli Abudul Razak
Vice Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia

The Alternative University Appraisal (AUA) was initiated with two underlying principles in mind. Firstly, to enhance the value and attractiveness of universities with focus on Education for Sustainable Development (ESD); and secondly, to create a learning and supporting community to implement and prove the ESD practices. The raison d'être is obvious: as we embrace Education for Sustainable Development to serve the educational needs of the 21st century, as well as accomplish the goal of the UN-DESD in the academia, the thrust should no longer be about competing to rank one another based on some pseudo-scientific methodology, instead to develop a system that will encourage learning and collaborating with one another within a network. In this way, each university will benefit from one another in a transparent developmental way while lifting the standard of academic and sustainability excellence across the board.

By doing so the basic philosophy of education as "the leveler of society" can be better achieved between partnering academic institutions of higher learning. Thus, the mission of the AUA is to unambiguously

seek to facilitate and encourage institutions of higher education to engage in education and research for sustainable development. It is also to raise the quality and impact of these activities by providing benchmarking tools that support diversity of missions, as well as enhancing a framework for sharing good practices and encouraging dialogue and self-reflection. This resonates well with the direction that Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM) prides itself as part of the UNU Regional Centre of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development. It is also in harmony with the University's mission – "Transforming Higher Education for a Sustainable Tomorrow."

It is our hope that the AUA with your active involvement and participation can be a forerunner in defining and creating the university of the future.

Dzulkifli Abudul Razak
Vice Chancellor, Universiti Sains Malaysia

Yonsei University

Prof. Tae Young Lee
Dean of Graduate School
Yonsei University

YONSEI UNIVERSITY

Congratulations on the successful launching of Alternative University Appraisal project.

Yonsei University is delighted to participate in the AUA project as a member ProSPER.Net joined by other major universities in Asia. As a part of such international exchange, advancement of international cooperating research institutes such as ProSPER.Net is extremely important. Especially, the field of sustainable development is given serious attention in any countries of international community. The current government of Korea is promoting sustainable development through the concept of green growth.

Research and educational institutions and industries are striving together to reduce carbon dioxide emission and prevent greenhouse effect.

Especially, Yonsei University has partially opened the International Campus in Incheon this year and will be fully opening the campus in 2012. Yonsei University is planning to host UN Center for Sustainable Development and will also establish School of Asian Studies to carry out various education and research program, including sustainable development. Yonsei will continue to support and put efforts for mutual growth through great research opportunities like AUA.

Once again I extend my warmest wishes for the development and prosperity of AUA and ProSPER.Net.

Tae Young Lee
Dean of Graduate School
Yonsei UniversityChancellor

Sustainable Development (SD)

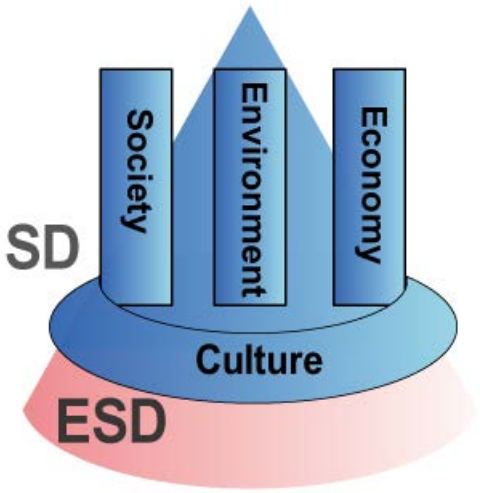
We fundamentally adhere to the definition of sustainable development in "Our Common Future", which was published by the World Commission on Environment and Development in 1987, and was later adopted by the United Nations General Assembly.

The report, more commonly known as "Brundtland Report", defines SD as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". We understand that it concerns not only about the equity among generations but about the ones among countries, races or values, and others.

It continues to state that "sustainable development requires meeting the basic needs of all and extending to all the opportunity to satisfy their aspirations for a better life". SD's vision is to ensure equal opportunities for all, and it is not a balancing act. SUSTAIN therefore avoids judging what is to be prioritized over others.

As is commonly conceptualized, SD addresses three key areas - society, environment and economy - and underlying culture, which influence people's behaviors and attitudes.

- Visit "Our Common Future".



Education for Sustainable Development (ESD)

Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) is far more than "education about SD". In a broad sense, "it is a learning process (or approach to teaching) based on the ideals and principles that underlie sustainability and is concerned with all levels and types of learning to provide quality education and foster sustainable human development."(UNESCO Bangkok)

- Visit the definition by UNESCO Bangkok.

The UN DESD vision is "to have a world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from education and learn the values, behaviors, and lifestyles required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation". (UN DESD International Implementation Scheme)

- Visit Internatinal Impletation Scheme.

Although ESD is all-encompassing in its nature, not all SD programs and actions of higher educational institutions may constitute ESD. To be considered ESD, these SD initiatives should foster sustainability, as explicitly contained in institutional missions.

Higher education institutions should reorient themselves to participatory, transdisciplinary, inclusive, and multifaceted education when they strive to enhance the quality of education with the aim of attaining the UN DESD vision.

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