COPERNICUS Alliance Newsletter No. 3

This is the Copernicus Alliance (CA) Newsletter No.3. In this edition, we focus on the Rio+20 events and celebrate the success of the CA-led People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education.

If you would like to make a contribution to the next newsletter please contact Dr Ingrid Mulà by the 20th of April 2012 at: office@copernicus-alliance.org.

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

*The newsletters are only available to CA members.*
News

A warm welcome to new CA members!

The CA extends a warm welcome to the Charles University Environment Centre (Czech Republic) and the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU, Austria) as new institutional members. We look forward to their involvement in our planned activities for this year.

The People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education

The People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education is an initiative led by the CA and seeks commitments to transformative change across the higher education system. The CA team engaged with this initiative as a key way to embed commitments it made for 2012-14 including: increasing the visibility and work of CA at the international level; promoting policy change in higher education; and, the development of collaborative initiatives to support change towards sustainability.

The Treaty presents the collective vision of higher education networks, groups and institutions that are working towards more sustainable futures. It was developed over a 6 month process involving 30 international and national higher education associations and agencies as well as students groups from across the globe. The Treaty process was facilitated by CA, already has over 65 signatories.

The People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education is one of fourteen Treaties which were proposed to the Rio+20 process as independent collective agreements, with the intention of influencing Rio+20 outcomes. All the treaties were presented in a series of events organised at Rio Centro and the People’s Summit in Rio de Janeiro on 19 and the 21st June 2012.

We are delighted with the response received from the international community which has recognised the People’s Sustainability Treaty in building momentum during, and after, Rio+20. The Treaty not only acknowledges the work we have done to date to embed sustainability within higher education, but invites higher education stakeholders to consider the Treaty’s principles and take innovative actions to transform the sector.

The final version of the Treaty and an updated list of signatories are now available online here. We ask any institution or organisation considers becoming a signatory of the Treaty. You can download and continue to develop the Treaty and showcase efforts of signatories beyond 2012. We look forward to working together in influence policy on higher education and supporting change towards sustainability.

Rio+20 - Higher Education in “The Future We Want”

The “The Future We Want” is the Outcome Document of Rio+20 that was delivered to more than 100 Heads of government. In it, political leaders renewed their commitment to sustainable development and reaffirmed the need to develop action plans like Agenda 21.

Paragraphs 229-235 highlight the contribution of education to sustainable development. For the first time, the text is strong regarding ESD and higher education and proposes to continue efforts beyond the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014):

“229. We reaffirm our commitments to the right to education and in this regard, we commit to strengthen international cooperation to provide universal access to primary education, particularly for developing countries. We further reaffirm that full access to quality education is an essential condition for achieving sustainable development, poverty eradication, gender equality and women’s empowerment as well as for accelerated economic development, for the attainment of the internationally agreed development goals including the Millennium Development Goals, and for the participation of both women and men, in particular young people. In this regard, we stress the need for ensuring equal access to education for people with disabilities, indigenous peoples, local communities, ethnic minorities and people living in rural areas.

230. We recognize that the younger generations are the custodians of the future, as well as the need for better quality and accessible education at the primary level. We therefore resolve to improve the capacity of our education systems to prepare people to pursue sustainable development by including through enhanced teacher training, the development of curricula around sustainability, the development of training programs for teachers and increasing investment in research.”
students for 41 careers in fields related to sustainability, and more effective use of information and communication technologies in education. We call for enhanced cooperation among schools, communities and authorities in efforts to promote access to quality education. We encourage Member States to promote Sustainable Development awareness among youth, inter alia, by promoting programs that link education in accordance with the goals of the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development.

232. We emphasize the importance of greater international cooperation to improve access to education including through building education infrastructure, increasing investment in education particularly investment to improve the quality of education for all. We encourage international educational exchanges and partnerships, including the creation of fellowships and scholarships to help improve education goals.

233. We resolve to promote Education for Sustainable Development and to integrate sustainable development more actively into United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014).

234. We strongly encourage educational institutions to consider adopting good practices in sustainability management on their campuses with the active participation of inter alia students, teachers, and local partners, and teaching sustainable development as a component across disciplines.

235. We underscore the importance of supporting educational institutions, especially higher educational institutions in developing and disseminating research and innovation for sustainable development, including in the field of education, to develop quality and innovative pedagogies, entrepreneurship and business skills training, professional, technical, vocational training and lifelong learning, geared to bridging the gap between education and sustainable development objectives.”

The CA lobbied for the inclusion of higher education in the text since the Zero Draft of the Outcome Document was released in January 2012. We firstly proposed a change of language in the Zero Draft to be consistent with ESD. The Zero Draft proposed the development of specialised higher education courses and modules on sustainable development. We suggested that the alternative was that ESD capabilities were embedded across all parts of education. The Second Draft of the Outcome Document included our recommendations.

Unfortunately, a week before government leaders arrived at Rio, the Draft Outcome Document had changed considerably. Although education was still strong in the document, the paragraph on higher education had been removed. A few opportunities existed to change the education paragraphs as these had already been approved in plenary Meetings. The CA together with other higher education for sustainable development networks lobbied to have higher education to be reinserted in the Document. Finally, the Document acknowledged in paragraph 235, the role of higher education institutions, especially in developing countries. Also, higher education was added to paragraph 272, under the section on technology.

Copernicus Alliance at Rio+20

- **CA Member of the Scientific Steering Committee, Philipp Schoeffmann (WU Vienna) and Dr Clemens Mader represented the CA at the People’s Treaties Event at Rio Centro (13 June 2012), by Philipp Schoeffmann**

Spearheading a number of outstanding official side-events the launch of the People’s Sustainability Treaty of the most energetic and fast-paced the Rio+20 UN Conference was going to experience. When over 5,000 leaders and representatives of major groups and stakeholders of civil society met, there was an excitement and collaboration - and of happiness about the completion of a development that was important for all people involved in the process. Together, 14 groups of organisations developed treaties on important areas such as equity, consumption and production, sustainable development goals (SDGs) and spiritual values for sustainable development. The Copernicus Alliance, represented by Philipp Schoeffmann, and Dr Clemens Mader, introduced the Treaty on Higher Education.

- **Dr Clemens Mader represented CA at the RCE event at Rio+20 held on the 15th June at Rio Conference Centre – Event: “Multi-stakeholder learning towards green society” (15 June 2012)**

On 15 June, Dr Clemens Mader was invited to represent the CA, official supporter of this initiative, organised by United Nations University Institute of Advanced Studies (UNU IAS) and the Ministry of Education (Japan). The event explored the role of the multi-stakeholder learning initiatives into green economy, identified potential local-global and local-local and triangular partnerships that could facilitate transnational learning and action research for sustainability.
For more information about this event, please visit the following link.

- **Prof Daniella Tilbury and Dr Ingrid Mulà presented at an event facilitated by Dr Uchita de Zoysa**
  TITLES at the People’s Summit (17 June 2012)

On 17 June, Prof Daniella Tilbury and Dr Ingrid Mulà presented the People’s Sustainability Treaty at the People’s Summit event “Imagine all the people: Advancing a planetary movement.” We had the privilege to meet other Treaty’s facilitators and know more about their initiatives. The participants and speakers agreed to join the Widening Circle campaign.

- **Prof Daniella Tilbury and Dr Clemens Mader represented the CA at the Rio+20 side event: “Unlocking the potential of tertiary education to accelerate sustainable development” (18 June 2012)**

On Monday 18 June, CA joined other higher education for sustainability organisations (such as EAZ, GUNi, KACI, CEE, EuroMed) and hosted an official side event at the Rio+20 Conference. The event was hosted by Sir Bob Watson, Chief Scientific Advisor for Defra (UK) and brought together tertiary education associations, government delegates and student body representatives from across the world, to explore and agree a change in context of the critical role that universities and colleges play in building a sustainable future.

Tilbury took part of the panel representing the CA. Dr Clemens Mader represented the Austrian Government and the People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education was presented at this event. The Treaty was very well received by participants at the event.

**Other Rio+20 Side Events on HE**

There were several HE initiatives launched at Rio+20. For full details, please visit this weblink. You can also watch videos of Rio+20 in the [CA website](http://www.caonline.org).

Perhaps the most significant was the launch of the Higher Education Sustainability Initiative:

On 18 June, leaders of the international academic community came together at Rio+20 to launch a new Higher Education Sustainability Initiative for Sustainable Development facilitated by an umbrella of United Nations partner organisations. The CAA was invited to attend this event which was organised by UN DESA on behalf of UN Academic Impact, UN Global Compact, UN PRME and UN University.

The initiative calls upon leaders of the academic community around the globe to commit themselves to adopting and teaching on sustainable development issues, greening their campuses and engaging with international organisations such as the UN DESD. The CA, acknowledging the role of higher education networks in driving change for sustainable development, has endorsed this initiative which you can view by clicking [here](http://www.caonline.org).

**CA - IAU Partnership results in a Publication: “Contribution of Higher Education and Sustainable Development - NOW ONLINE**

“Research studies demonstrate that only a few universities have been successful in transforming the way their culture and inspiring a widespread institutional change. The reality is that changing the culture and structure of our universities and colleges is highly complex and requires the involvement of the whole institutional community. But, transforming sustainability in higher education has been primarily driven by international partnerships and networks, and this has been an important factor in directing efforts to support sustainability innovation in all areas of universities.”

This special edition of Horizons (vol.18, no.2) is a CA-International Association of Universities (IAU) collaboration and provides an interesting overview of higher education’s engagement with sustainable development. The edition, edited by Prof Daniella Tilbury and Hilligje van’t Land, draws together articles from various regions around the globe and contributions from several CA members including Gerd Michelsen and Marco Rieckman (Leuphana University, Germany); Jana Dlouhá (Charles University, Czech Republic); and, Thomas Breu, Urs Wiesmann, Anne Zimmermann and Urs Zimmermann (University of Bern, Switzerland).

You can download the IAU Horizons (vol.18, no.2) by clicking [here](http://www.caonline.org).
CA contribution to the recent virtual debate “Big Tent III: Sustainability, Knowledge and Communities”

The Big Tent Group of Global Networks has produced two Global Communiqués on issues of community participation in research and engagement. These statements have proven to be quite useful to draw attention of policy makers, funders at local, national and international levels. The nature of these statements is that they are owned and contribute to them and are in a sense co-owned by any and all of the various networks. The mean of a consensus was done through a video dialogue.

Big Tent III differed from the other two in two ways. First, it focused on the role of CU research partnerships and the need for sustainable societies. Second, a virtual internet platform was used to generate discussion rather than a platform that limits participation. Prof Daniella, Tilbury, CA President, was asked to initiative this virtual debate and follow by clicking here.

CA at the 6th Seminar on ESD Research, Edusost Network (Barcelona, 6 July 2012)

The Catalan Research Network on Education for Sustainability (Xarxa Edusost) organised the 6th Seminar on the 5th July 2012. Dr Ingrid Mulà, CA Secretariat, was invited as a panellist to discuss and share her Rio+20 Conference as well as to present the People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education development. The panel was also constituted by Dr Jesús Granados, from the Global University Network for Innovation (CUIN); Susanna Rivero, Secretary for Environmental and Sustainability at the Ministry of Territory and Sustainability (Government of Catalonia).

For more information about this seminar, please visit the organiser’s website.

CA Membership Renewal 2012

The COPERNICUS Alliance membership for 2012 is due for renewal. In the upcoming days, you will receive the University of Gloucestershire. We are asking members to progress this as soon as possible and before September. We look forward to your continued involvement.

In 2012-13 the COPERNICUS Alliance will provide opportunities to: inform global dialogues and international higher education for sustainability; engage in networking and joint bidding with European higher education; participate in training and leadership development programmes for sustainability in higher education; and publish internationally.

London South Bank University (LSBU) - New flexible/distance learning course starting October 2012

Leadership, Learning and Climate Change: The Sustainability Revolution - This will develop your understanding of change and the implications for our future ways of learning, living and being on this planet.

Values and Participation – Local to Global: This provides a wide overview of the general issues and diverse scales and elements of sustainability – from local to global and integrating ecology, economy, society and culture.

All courses provide credits towards the MSC/ PG Dip/ PG Cert in Education for Sustainability and can be chosen as one of these programmes. Each module costs £600 each which provides you with:

- an excellent set of teaching materials (Study Guide and Reader) and case studies from across the globe
- access to VLE, on line activities and the global online learning community
- connections with sustainability organisations in the UK and across the globe
- tutoring and Introductory Day school at LSBU (an optional weekend residential may be provided for an additional fee)
Check out the [LSBU website](#) for a video clip and more details or contact Veronica Leacock on efs@lsbu.ac.uk application form.

✦ University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU, Austria) – Rio+20 contributions, by Madeline Alber, Andrew Barton, Veronica Leacock, and Jakob Zeilinger, in Rio for UNCSD 2012

   - Rio+20 Higher Education Sustainability Initiative

In the run-up to Rio+20, BOKU, in a demonstration of its commitment to advancing sustainability, submitted its Commitment to Sustainable Practices of Higher Education Institutions on the Occasion of the UN Conference on Sustainable Development. The BOKU was the first, and thus far only, Austrian university to have submitted this commitment.

- BOKU researcher and senior lecturer, Michael Braito, in Rio for UNCSD 2012

Michael Braito, BOKU researcher and senior lecturer at the Institute of Sustainable Economic Development, was supported with a small grant from the Centre for Global Change and Sustainability (gW/N), attended the World Conference in Rio de Janeiro. BOKU students and faculty – as well as the broader public – were involved in activities in Rio via a blog (in German) that he updated daily. Upon his return from Brazil, Braito will write a roundtable discussion with staff from the gW/N, the BOKU rectorate and a number of youths interested in BOKU institutes as part of a Rio+20 initiative coordinated and supported by the Austrian Federal Ministry of Education, Science and Research (for more information, please see below). In order to continue sharing his insights into the process and his experiences with as many individuals as possible, Braito will be writing articles for the website of the Austrian National Union of Students, taking part in a number of events and lectures, and has stated that he will continue to incorporate numerous aspects of his participation in Rio+20 into the courses he teaches at the BOKU.

- Alliance of Sustainable Universities in Austria

In order to progress ESD at the national level, BOKU called on other Austrian universities to join the Alliance of Sustainable Universities in Austria. Currently, the Alliance includes nine Austrian universities, plans to bring in additional Austrian institutions. At present, the Alliance is in the development phase, identifying exemplary practices, brainstorming activities and initiatives for its first year, and working together to promote sustainability in Austrian higher education – in the areas of operational ecology, teaching, research and societal responsibility – at all levels.

- Five school students at BOKU in the framework of the Rio+20 internship program (additional ESD perspectives for Science and Research)

Five school students are spending the month of July at three different BOKU institutes learning about sustainability research. Madelaine Alber and Andreas Dünser are applying a model for sustainability criteria to Higher Education in Austria. Jacqueline Keintzel is modelling local temperature records from tree rings in the Vienna area. Agnes Forstinger and Jakob Zeilinger are engaged in a media analysis supporting a project with the Better Life Initiative in Austria.

✦ Charles University Environment Center updates, by Andrew Barton

- Andrew Barton presents the People’s Treaty to the Society of Sustainable Living (Prague, 5 July 2012)

A general overview of the People’s Sustainability Treaty on Higher Education was provided by Andrew Barton, Charles University Environment Center to members of Společnost pro trvale udržitelný život (Society for Sustainable Living) in Prague, Czech Republic, on Tuesday, 5 June. The presentation provided some context to the Treaty and the process of negotiation it will go through at Rio+20 and beyond, as well as highlighting commitments, evolving principles and activities.

- Rio+20 side event: “Measuring a green economy: Insights into ‘Beyond GDP’ indicators”
The Charles University Environment Center together with the Czech Ministry of Environment prepared an event at the Rio+20 Conference with the title "Measuring a Green Economy: Insights into 'Beyond Growth'". At which three respected institutions presented their methods for evaluating various aspects of society within the context of sustainable development.

For more information about this event, please click [here](#).

- **Rio+20: Contribution by Czech Major Groups**

The Charles University Environment Center also led and managed the Czech Republic’s contribution to the Rio+20 Conference by organising the Czech Major Groups in the formulation of a document on what actions to see undertaken to ensure a more sustainable future. Following a public debate stated on the theme of initiative The Future We Want, the CUEC compiled and published a document summarising the views that debate. That document, *Rio+20: Contribution by Czech Major Groups*, has been published prior to the Czech government to commit itself to the outcomes of the Rio+20 Conference and to ensure implementation.
Partner of the Month

University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences (BOKU, Austria)

As a university with a focus on natural resources and life sciences, the BOKU prides itself on being a “U Lebens” (“university of life”) and continuously seeks to develop and improve upon aspects of sustainable research and campus operations. This comprehensive approach to integrating sustainability has led to activities and initiatives ranging from signing the Copernicus Charta in 2002, publishing its first GRI sus and gaining EMAS certification in 2006, to establishing the first Austrian doctoral college (dokNE) on sustainable development in 2007, offering bachelor and master’s programs in Environmental and Natural Resources, now the university’s largest field of study – and researching and promoting organic agricultural practices in the Department of Sustainable Agricultural Systems and the Centre for Development Research.

It was thus no surprise when the BOKU chose to establish a Centre for Global Change and Sustainability. The gW/N networks between institutes, departments, platforms and initiatives at the BOKU in their research in the areas of global change and sustainability, as well as between the BOKU and national and international institutions. This work involves cooperation, knowledge exchange and synthesis in research but also in advice and public relations. In addition to its efforts to increase sustainability in BOKU teaching and research, it also collaborates with partners to advance BOKU campus ecology. To learn more about its activities, please visit our homepage or contact the team directly!

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 groups.

If you would like to create your own group, please do email us at: 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

- IUCN World Conservation Congress (Jeju, Korea, 6-15 September 2012)
The IUCN World Conservation Congress is the world’s largest and most important conservation event. Over the years, it aims to improve how we manage our natural environment for human, social and economic development.

The 2012 World Conservation Congress will be held from 6 to 15 September 2012 in Jeju, Republic of Korea. It will bring together governments, the public sector, non-governmental organizations, business, UN agencies and social organizations to discuss, debate and decide solutions for the world’s most pressing environment and development issues.

For more information, please visit the IUCN webpages here.

✦ GUNi 6th International Conference on Higher Education (Barcelona, 13-15 May 2013)

The Conference is organized by the Global University Network for Innovation (GUNi) and will take place at Universitat Politècnica de Catalunya, in Barcelona, from 13 to 15 May, 2013.

The GUNi Conference is an international forum for debate on the challenges facing higher education. Both the Conference deals with an emergent issue in higher education, which is the subject also chosen for the conference – the critical dimensions in our understanding of the roles, and potential roles, of higher education as active players in contributing to the creation of another possible world. Within this context the Conference will answer the call of the challenges of our time, while maintaining an eye towards the future regarding the creation of new knowledge and HEIs.

For more information, please visit the GUNi website 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 themes relative to environmental education and all the protagonists – academics, teachers, students, policy makers, practitioners 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 the theme (relation between city and countryside in search of harmony) will be the object of great transversal attention. But this theme will not be the only thematic area, obviously without ignoring all the other themes.

For more information about the 6th WEEC, please visit the Conference website.

Publications and resources

✦ Shaping the education of Tomorrow. 2012 Report on the UN DESD

UNESCO is publishing three reports during the DESD – in 2009, 2012 and 2014. This second report focuses on processes and learning in the context of ESD. What kinds of learning processes have emerged in the context of ESD? What is the role of ESD in supporting them? What changes in ESD have occurred since the early years of the DESD? This report is informed by a broad consultation process that includes input from hundreds of policy makers and practitioners engaged in ESD around the world.

You can download the full length report by clicking here.

✦ Call for Papers: Special Issue of Sustainability Accounting, Management and Policy Journal on: Education in Sustainability 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 sustainable 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 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 practices in Universities
• The productive engagement of stakeholders in University governance and management an embedding sustainability in universities and colleges
• The role of Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development (RCEs) in strengthening sustainability performance of universities
• Case studies of successful transdisciplinary approaches of education, research and management in universities
• Case studies which demonstrate the importance of Universities in the institutional and regional transformation towards 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 guest editor: clemens.mader@inkubator.leuphana.de

✦ Learning for sustainability in times of accelerating change

This book, edited by Prof Arjen Wals and Prof Peter Blaze Corcoran, explores the possibilities of designing learning-based change and transitions towards sustainability. In 31 chapters contributors from across the globe demonstrate (re)emerging forms of learning that not only assist in breaking down unsustainable routines, forms of production and consumption, but also can help create ones that are more sustainable.

Please visit the [weblink](#) of this publication.

✦ The Future Fit Framework – An introductory guide to teaching and learning for sustainability in higher education

The Framework, edited by Prof Stephen Sterling, is designed to help the newly interested academic embed sustainability education, and encourage more experienced colleagues to take this work further into 14 sections plus Appendices, the guide is designed so that users can easily find the information and only read the most useful to them without needing to read the whole document.

You can download this publication by clicking [here](#).

✦ 7 Steps to embedding sustainability in your teaching

Dr Jennie Winter, Prof Stephen Sterling, and Associate Prof Debby Cotton of the Teaching and Learning Centre, Plymouth University have recently finished a short but comprehensive document which provides guidance...
interested in embedding ESD into their teaching. It is called 7 steps to embedding sustainability in your available [here](#).

**Bonn Recommendations on ESD beyond 2014**

The German Commission for UNESCO organised an international ESD workshop in Bonn from the 27th to 29th of August 2012. The Workshop entitled "Horizon 2015" contributed to the on-going international discussions about ESD and the United Nations Decade on Education for Sustainable Development (UN DESD) beyond 2014. It provided a platform for around fifty acknowledged experts and government officials from across the world to discuss perspectives for ESD. The workshop focused on the implementation of the UN DESD and the Bonn Declaration (2009) as well as to discuss perspectives for ESD in the future.

Dr Ingrid Mulà, CA Secretariat, was appointed as the rapporteur of the Workshop. Together with Mr OT of the German Commission for UNESCO, she has written the Report of the Workshop.

**Other**

**[AEET] 50 pre and post-doc positions in all fields of environmental research**

Deadline for application: 10 August 2012

The Zentrum für Umweltforschung (UFZ) is currently offering 50 positions in all fields of environmental research. Among these positions are also numerous for environmental scientists, biologists, and mathematicians, but also for biologists (ecology, microbiology, molecular biologists etc.) as research questions about aquatic ecosystems from the micro to the macro scale are of high interest. Detailed information on the offered positions can be found [here](#).