

Living laboratories and Research on SD. IPSO Project- Lausanne, June 2009





IPSO project

- Aim: recognition/support mechanisms of SD activities for academics
- Why?
 - “Interactive approach” to faculty (based on an experience by TU DELFT)
 - Lack of recognition of research on SD

Research and SD

- Is research on SD given any value?
- Do faculty that participate in this type of projects get recognition?
- Lack of incentives
- SD research based on “voluntarism”
- Faculty that gets involved in SD has to “sacrifice” his/her career as an academic “



What is the IPSO project?

- Project to analyse the framework that regulates the activity of the faculty from a SD point of view
- Proposals to incentivize the faculty who does or wants to do research or/and education on SD
- One aim is to propose policies to the university leaders
- Possibility to start a debate with administration and other universities



Expected results

- July -December elaborate a number of proposals for the government board
- VERY IMPORTANT: the proposals will be elaborated in a participatory way (survey, Sustainable UPC congress...)
- List of proposals as a departure point



Preliminary results

1. In your University, is there an official policy for SD?

	Answers	%
Yes	27	46,6%
No	31	53,4%
Total	58	100,0%

6. Do researchers who consider SD as part of their research receive any recognition/support from the institution?

	Answers	%
Yes	14	24,1%
Ocasionally	13	22,4%
No	29	50,0%
NS/NC	2	3,4%
Total	58	100,0%

7. Do researchers who consider SD as part of their research have probably more prestige among their colleagues?

	Answers	%
Yes	9	15,5%
No	25	43,1%
I don't know	20	34,5%
NS/NC	4	6,9%
Total	58	100,0%

9. In your university, are SD merits considered in academic professional development?

	Answers	%
Yes	7	12,1%
Ocasionally	28	48,3%
No	22	37,9%
NS/NC	1	1,7%
Total	58	100,0%

Examples of good practice in recognition/support of SD activities for academics

PROBLEM

-staff who try to deliver sustainability teaching outcomes through collaboration, face **lack of departmental recognition** for their efforts, and in essence do it 'voluntarily', in addition to existing work loads.

-people can only do so much out of the goodness of their hearts. If **work in SD is not recognized** in year-end-reports, people see it as an "add on" rather than part of their job.

GOOD PRACTICES

-There have been some valuable projects at our university where teaching and/or research has been linked with sustainability aspects of the campus fabric and operations - i.e. to understand and reduce the **unsustainable impacts of the university's own activities**

- Those **involving changes in pay.**

-considering **grant schemes** dedicated to **interdisciplinary** projects tackling SD questions. In our strategic action plan we also point to the need of taking into account an interest and past activities on SD in hiring.



- annual Awards
- SD is a part of the form we must fill to research programs or projects of our university.
- The Global Institute of Sustainability provides a campus-wide sustainability research support framework.
- UCSD created a new Sustainable Solutions Institute which **allocates funds** to researchers who embrace sustainability
- **Financial** benefits for those who act, teach and research in field of SD.

- Our best successful example is the creation of one specific research centre for SD: ICTA, research Institute on Environmental Sciences and Technology)

13. Examples of failed attempts to introduce recognition/support mechanisms of SD activities for academics

- Those that are built based on **speeches** about values or consciousness change.
- **Isolated** initiatives
- Finding longer term support for such a teaching project is very difficult.
- to measure total impacts of projects instead of measuring sustainability as a fractional decrease in a project's increasing impacts.
- Mechanisms introduced from **the executive level** but not supported by faculty and staff..
- We are starting to embark on initiatives to engage with all disciplines throughout the University with regard to integrating into all curricula the principles of sustainability, interdisciplinary research, and community outreach under the umbrella of a newly established Office of Sustainability. **In the past, such initiatives were not considered important enough, but now the attitudes to sustainability are being accorded high priority.**
- We had proposed a "Club S" points strategy to honour the work people are doing with SD on campus. Once people accumulated enough points they could get a 1 course teaching buyout. The proposal "crashed and burned" as we say in North America! Too bad since people can only do so much out of the goodness of their hearts. **If work in SD is not recognized in year-end-reports, people see it as an "add on" rather than part of their job.**



A UPC example of living laboratory

- Workshop “consuming Barcelona” with students
 - 1 week
 - Organized by students from different student organizations. Supported and promoted by the Centre for Sustainability
 - Involving 25 students from all university (different disciplines, different campuses)
 - Involving **facilities management** (know the practical information, the real life problems) **researchers** (experts on mobility) and **students** (fresh, new ideas, hard workers, enthusiastic)



Workshop “consumint Barcelona”

- Outcome:
 - Students: “it has changed my life”
 - Facilities management. First time (ever!) they worked with students, letting them ask crucial questions. A powerful tool to change mind-sets
 - Faculty: include this experience in their classes.
- Why did faculty get involved in the workshop?
 - “voluntarism”!!!
 - No recognition
 - BUT! They can use it in their classes



Some questions...

- Examples of good practice in recognition/support of SD activities for academics???**
- Examples of failed attempts to introduce recognition/support mechanisms of SD activities for academics**