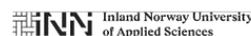


2023/2024 Report for the International Association of Universities (7 May 2024)

Higher Education and Research for Sustainable Development Global Cluster: [SDG 4 Subcluster](#)

The SDG 4 Subcluster with its members

- Jana Dlouhá, Environment Centre, Charles University, Czechia.
- Mirian Vilela, UNESCO Chair on Education for Sustainable Development and the Earth Charter, Earth Charter at the University of Peace, Costa Rica.
- Alexander Siegmund & Tobias Kloes, UNESCO Chair on World Heritage and Biosphere Reserve Observation and Education, Department of Geography - Research Group for Earth Observation (rgeo), Heidelberg University of Education, Germany (since 2023).
- Robert J. Didham, UNESCO Chair on Education for Sustainable Lifestyles, Inland Norway University of Applied Sciences (INN), Norway.
- Dzul Razak & Zainal Sanusi, UNESCO Chair in Future Studies, Sejahtera Centre for Sustainability & Humanity, International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM).
- Daniel Fischer & Deepika Joon, UNESCO Chair in Higher Education for Sustainable Development, Leuphana University Luneburg, Germany.
- Heila Lotz-Sisitka, SARChI Chair on Global Change and Social Learning Systems, Director Environmental Learning Research Centre, Education Department, Rhodes University, South Africa.
- Charles Hopkins & Katrin Kohl, UNESCO Chair in Reorienting Education towards Sustainability, York University, Canada (coordinating university).



further creates knowledge exchange and networking through involvement with IAU and UNESCO. Cluster members were able to meet throughout the reporting period at international conferences, such as the 13th Global RCE Conference in Malaysia in October 2023 and the UNESCO ESD-Net Global Meeting in Japan in December 2023.

In collaboration with the IAU Secretariat, the Subcluster was [able to contribute](#) to the UN consultations on the scope and zero draft of the Global Pact for the Future (IAU, IIUM, York) to be adopted during the Summit of the Future in September 2024 during the 79th UN General Assembly.

In March 2024, the article on leadership for a new social contract, originally submitted to [UNESCO's Call for Think-Pieces on Governance and a New Social Contract for Education](#) by partners from the Earth Charter, IIUM, INN, and York, was published as a peer-reviewed journal article in [Springer Prospects](#).

Following the ESD-Net Global Meeting in Japan in December 2023, the Subcluster distributed a network statement '[Our shared vision for ESD](#)', issued by the [UNITWIN Network on Education for Sustainable Development \(ESD\) and Social Transformation](#).

Hosted by Leuphana University with funding from the German Environment Foundation, and in conjunction with the Earth Charter, Heidelberg University of Education, Rhodes University and York University, the first edition of the online course [Politics4Future](#) was carried out for more than 60 future teachers and community activists from five countries and will be made available as an open education resource.

Through statements, speaking engagements, and policy advice, partners continue to draw attention to the concept of ESD as a key enabler of all SDGs as well as the whole-institution approach towards sustainability. e.g. at the 2023 ANGEL Conference at UNESCO Headquarters or 2023 IAU Conference in Qatar.

Additional SDG 4 Subcluster Coordinator Report: Heidelberg University of Education

The Heidelberg University of Education is committed to become a model university for the integration of sustainable development and ESD as the 'University of Education for Sustainable Development 2030'. It acts as a think tank and incubator for relevant initiatives and processes with a focus on teacher education locally, nationally, and internationally. The Heidelberg Centre for Education for Sustainable Development plays a crucial role in these efforts by promoting networking within and beyond the university and by initiating and conducting inter-/transdisciplinary research and development projects on sustainability issues and ESD. One of the most notable aspects of the University's initiatives is the new master's program 'Digital Education for Sustainability'.

- Within the project [Nalele:LevelUP](#) (Project period: 2023 – 2026, Funding: Federal Ministry of Education and Research (BMBWF, grant number 01JO2306) the participating multipliers, e.g., from different higher education training centers in Germany are supported by networking offers, coaching and teaching and learning material in conducting their own ESD courses.
- The adaptive e-learning platform [zukunft.lernen.jetzt](#) (Project period: 2023-2024, Funding: Baden-Württemberg Ministry of the Environment, digital@bw) is designed as an innovative tool for the further education of multipliers of ESD and provides adaptive modules in the school and university sector with the aim to provide content for all fields of education in the near future. At the point of intersection of the two societal challenges of digitalization and sustainable development, it offers individual e-learning content in the context of the SDGs and ESD.
- The [ACT4SDGs](#) (Project period: 2024 –2026, The ERASMUS+ CBHE-STRAND-2 project is co-funded by the European Union) project aims to support the integration of the SGD and ESD into academic teaching in 10 partner institutions in Argentina, Colombia, Costa Rica, and Mexico. By the end of the project, more than 1,200 academic teaching staff members will have been trained and will go on to drive wider change in their higher education institutions and in the wider society in which they operate.

Additional SDG 4 Subcluster Coordinator Report: Leuphana University of Luneburg

- In August 2023, [Prof. Daniel Fischer](#), joined Leuphana University as Professor for Sustainability Education & Communication. Daniel's research explores how more sustainable ways of living and consuming can be facilitated through communication and learning. His joining also paved the way for establishment of [Sustainability Education and Transdisciplinary Research Institute](#) (SETRI) at Leuphana. He is also appointed as UNESCO Chair in Higher Education for Sustainable Development held by Leuphana since 2005.
- Deepika Joon, coordinator of UNESCO Chair at Leuphana invited to North American Association for Environmental Education as CEE Change fellow. As part of the fellowship, Deepika Joon is looking into role of school leaders in fostering ESD at school level.
- Politics4Future partners meeting (joint collaboration with four satellite members of this cluster) took place in November 2023 to discuss key learnings and next phase of collaboration activities as part of IAU cluster and UNESCO Chairs network
- Leuphana hosted Dr John Bhurekeni, post doctoral researcher from Rhodes University for a research stay at Leuphana in December 2023 which germinated the idea of a new collaboration

called “Cultural Politics4Future: Advancing heritage-activated learning approaches for sustainable development in Southern Africa”

- Leuphana University was honoured as a role model in the area of schools and universities as part of the [16th German Sustainability Award](#) awarded in November 2023.
- In February 2023, Leuphana hosted international [online dialogue](#) on New Recommendations on Education for Peace, Human Rights and Sustainable Development. Prof. Mirian Vilela, Prof. Lotz-Sisitika from sub cluster 4 and Dr Möller from German UNESCO Commission were facilitated in dialogue by Prof. Fischer on understanding the implications of [1974 recommendations](#).
- ESD Roundtable on 27 February 2024 gathered representatives from UNESCO, German UNESCO Commission, Hamburg ESD initiatives and Leuphana University to foster regional cooperation to strengthen ESD in Luneburg and Hamburg regions.

Additional SDG 4 Subcluster Coordinator Report: York University, Canada

York University placed 40th in the 2023 Times Higher Education Impact Ranking and continues to implement its strategic frameworks, such as the [University-wide Academic Plan](#), furthering the university’s commitment to the SDGs. In addition:

- York University set a nationwide precedent by establishing a first wholly autonomous [Indigenous Research Ethics Board](#) (IREB), the first for a post-secondary institution in Canada.
- York’s Office of Sustainability developed a [sustainability action commitment](#) and a Sustainability Strategy (2024-2030) is expected to be launched soon, following broad [community consultations](#).
- The free [Microlecture Series in Sustainable Living](#) is an innovative and interdisciplinary open access program that gives participants the opportunity to learn from six of York’s world-renowned academic experts on a diverse range of topics related to sustainability.