



Assessing sustainability initiatives in a multicultural network

td-net Conference 2011,
Bern
Dr. Clemens Mader

In cooperation with Dr. Zinaida Fadeeva, United Nations University - IAS



RCE Graz-Styria

REGIONAL CENTRE OF EXPERTISE
Education for Sustainable Development

Content

- **Global RCE Network**
- **Assessment of RCEs – Why?**
- **Assessment of RCEs – How?**
- **Assessment of RCEs – Outcomes**
- **Outlook**

The global RCE Network

- Regional Centres of Expertise on Education for Sustainable Development
- Initiated 2005 in course of UN-DESD with 5 RCEs
- **2011: 85 RCEs around the world**
- **Aims:**
 - Establishment of regional actor networks in the field of ESD oriented along regional challenges
 - Global knowledge exchange and capacity building for sustainable development
- **Regional network partners/drivers:** NGOs, public, private, research institutions, educational institutions,...

Transdisciplinarity of RCEs

- Four basic principles of transdisciplinary processes:

1. ... collaboration between science & society
2. ... is societal problem driven
3. ... interdisciplinary
4. ... mutual learning & education effects

(Mader, 2009)



Characteristics of global RCE network

Diverse characteristics of RCEs

Sustainability Challenges

Cultures

Financial Capacity

Stakeholder background

Management Structure

**A
S
S
E
S
S
M
E
N
T
?**



Sounds impossible to assess?

Assessment of RCEs – Why?

PROs on global and local level

- how RCE contributes to sustainable development?
- gain overview on the RCE including strengths & weaknesses
- identify risks and potential conflicts at a sufficiently early stage;
- improve participation of actors in the development and assessment of the RCE
- make improvements to the RCE in areas of management, sustainability,...
- Explain and justify the project & funding and the decision taken

(adopted after Du Pasquier, 2008)

Assessment of RCEs – Why?

Critical Issues

- Rare existing practical examples
- Participative approach: Identifying and defining the leadership, the roles and responsibilities of the actors forming the regional social network
- How environmental, social, and economic information is analyzed, integrated, presented and weighted.
- how to **combine *qualitative* and *quantitative* information** into a single assessment.

RCE assessment development – How?

TIMELINE

- 2005: 5 RCEs Initiated by United Nations University – IAS
- 2006: 12 RCEs first annual reports sent by RCEs, list of activities,
- 2007: 22 RCEs annual reporting along common structure (pdf)
- 2008: ~25 RCEs annual reports along common structure (pdf)
further tests of indicator based assessment
- 2009: 55 RCEs annual reports along common structure (pdf)

START of ASSESSMENT INITIATIVE

- 2010: 75 first analysis of annual reports (08/09) by RCE Graz
development of **online reporting platform based on GMID,**
- 2011: 85 RCEs reporting by online platform,
analysis of entries based on GMID and
storytelling

RCE Assessment – How?

Workshops at annual RCE conferences

- Interactive workshops for participation of RCE actors

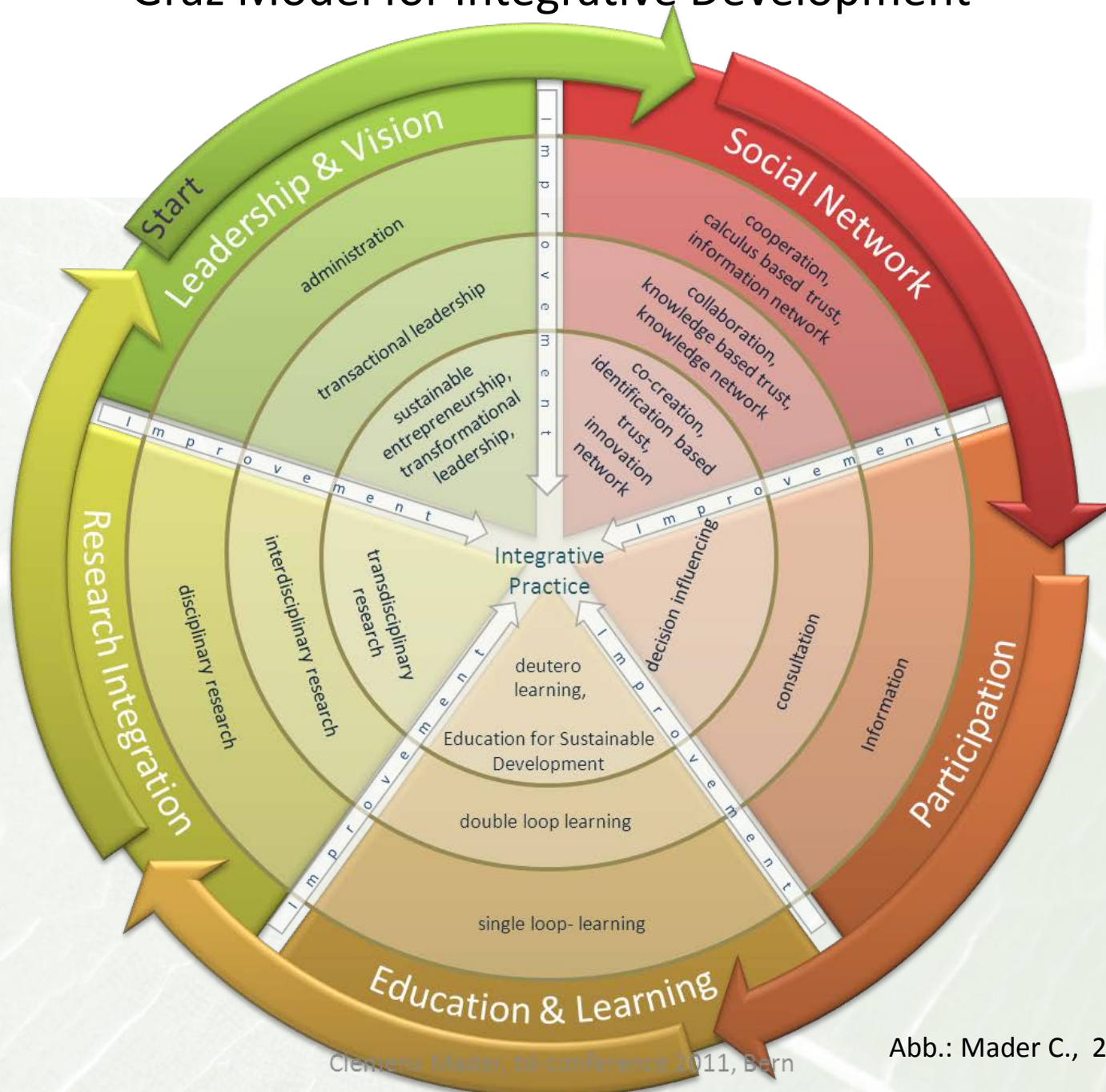
Online reporting portal

- Adopted to Graz Model for Integrative Development (GMID)
- Three forms to complete online
 - RCE basic data
 - RCE management information (according to GMID)
 - RCE project form (according to GMID)
- Assessment of entry data

Storytelling format

- Students interviewing RCEs
- Semi-structured interviews
- Personal insight
- Experience exchange

Graz Model for Integrative Development



RCE Assessment – Outcomes 2011

The following RCEs have been evaluated:

Evaluation form and story (in red)

- RCE Oldenburger Münsterland
- RCE Saskatchewan

Evaluation form (in yellow)

- RCE Nizhny Novgorod
- RCE Greater Sudbury

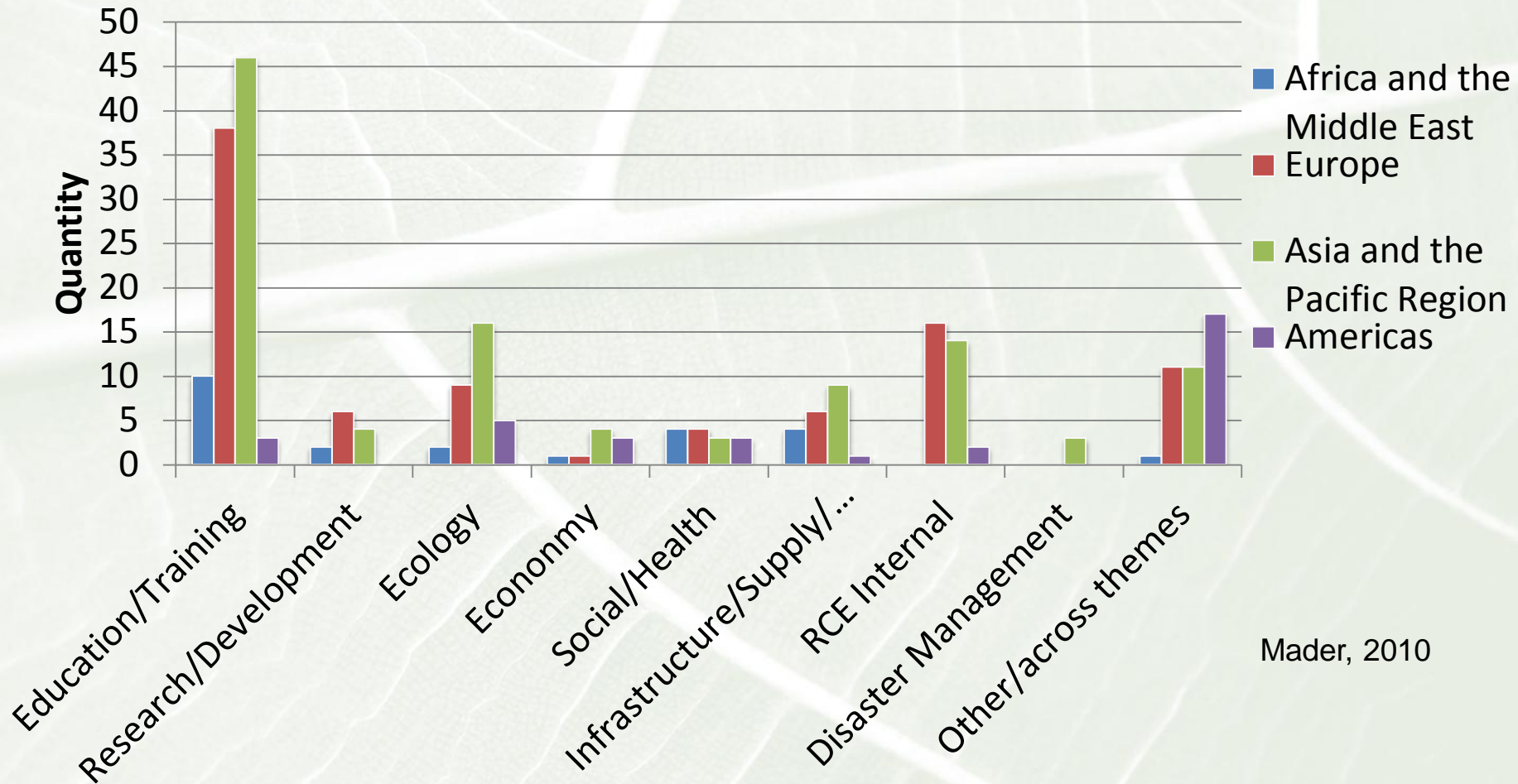
Story (in blue)

- Advisor to the European RCE community
- RCE Tongyeong
- RCE Denmark
- RCE Açores
- RCE Bogotá
- The RCE Makana and Rural Eastern Cape
- RCE Rhine-Meuse
- RCE Graz-Styria
- RCE Samara



RCE Assessment – Outcomes online portal

RCE Project Topics with respect to Continents (n=259, 2009)



Mader, 2010

RCE Assessment – Outcomes - GMID

- Individual RCE level
 - Analysis of reporting forms.
 - Providing an overview on actions and stakeholder/citizen involvement
- Global RCE network
 - Providing progress report of global initiative (projects, actors, active/passive RCEs,...)

	First Level	Second Level	Third Level
Vision and Leadership	Administration University of Aarhus first contact institution, coordinator and most responsible	Transactional Core decisions taken by chairing committee of 7 persons, each representing a subgroup	Transformational Altering leadership in projects, possible change in roles of all RCE partners
Social Network	Cooperation Speeches on conferences, information pamphlet, web presence	Collaboration Networking with science unit and Nature science techn. centre for shared goal of ESD promotion	Co-Creation Establishment of new networks due to RCE's inspiration; mutual influence theory-praxis
Participation	Information Website, conferences, communication platform, reports	Consultation Discussion rounds with teachers; RCE cooperation on EU level	Decision influence Mostly by RCE members, population more consulted
Education and Learning	Single-Loop Feedback on any project to RCE network	Double-Loop Half yearly meeting of whole community, reflect and adapt strategy and vision	Deuteron Approach Facilitator for ESD in Denmark, but short existence of RCE to evaluate this level
Research Integration	Disciplinary Carried out by the different RCE partners in their own field of expertise	Interdisciplinary Cooperation research by different universities, or RCE partners working in field of ESD	Transdisciplinary Most projects carried out by different RCE partners together, allowing mutual learning and interaction with various competences



RCE Bogotá

Mader, 2011

RCE Assessment – Outcomes

Storytelling approach

Story telling

- Stories easy to read
- Sufficient information
- Facts and figures
- People behind RCE
- Learnings communicated

A Lighthouse on the Volga River

Interviewing Andrey G. Kirillov - RCE Samara, Russia

15th April 2011

2011: not even experts in the field of sustainability have managed to agree on a univocal, clear-cut definition of 'Sustainable Development'. No wonder many people around the globe, if they have heard about such a term at all, don't really know what it refers to. Is it a way of making firms expand? Is it perhaps about green cars and bio-food? Or does it have to do with tree hugging? While

In a few words...

- ❖ **WHO:** Andrey G. Kirillov – RCE Coordinator
- ❖ **WHERE:** RCE Samara, Russia – Acknowledged 2007
- ❖ **SD AREAS:** Architecture, Immigration, University
- ❖ **KEY PARTNERS:** Academies, University, Professorial Union
- ❖ **TOP 3 INITIATIVES:**
 - Social adaptation of migrants
 - Introduction of SD in lectures

the understanding of sustainable development as the linkage of social justice, environmental preservation and economic growth in the long run has been gaining momentum in the last years, it is a concept that many are still not familiar with. Additionally, different regions, countries or communities may be on different levels of awareness about the

topic, which is also due to the cultural, economic, political situation and the challenges that specific places have to face.

And that is why Andrey is so determined about the importance of the role of education in raising awareness about 'устойчивое развитие' ('sustainable development', in Russian).

Andrey G. Kirillov, 33, Associate Professor of English at (SSUACE), and since 2010 Coordinator of RCE Samara, feels that in Russia not many people are aware of the concept of sustainability, and many of those who are may think it is solely about the

environment. According to him, even less widespread, "almost



Samara State University of Architecture and Civil Engineering

Outlook

- Further development of forms and questionnaire for online reporting
- Expansion of storytelling approach
- Combination of quantitative and qualitative data
- Analysis of progress by time
- Reflections on what / whom assessment is serving for



THANKS FOR YOUR ATTENTION!



Contact: Dr. Clemens Mader

Tel: 0316 380 8895

Web: www.rce.uni-graz.at

Mail: clemens.mader@uni-graz.at

