Sustainability Science requires a new approach

The global adoption of the UN Sustainable Development Goals provides a new framework for conducting sustainability research and implementing results. Whether research aims at improving the food system, urban system or the energy and transport system, the input of many different academic fields is required to find a way to manage these systems effectively.

Thus research into solutions for sustainable development relies on new collaborations that transgress traditional academic borders. Universities therefore have to develop new approaches to teaching, research and communication that mobilise new collaborations within, as well as to and from the university. The purpose of the Sustainability Science Centre (SSC) is to facilitate this development.

In collaboration with Copenhagen Business School and the Technical University of Denmark, the SSC has developed two courses in sustainability challenges open to all master level students at the three universities, to promote cross-disciplinary skills and collaboration at an early research stage.

Internationally, much research is focused on quantifying the magnitude and supply of the Earth’s resources and the services available to support the development of human societies (e.g. Planetary Boundaries). Research also supports the development of political and social mechanisms to use resources wisely.

The Planetary Boundaries
A safe operating space for humanity


Design: Oikos

Sustainability Lectures (open to the public)
sustainability.ku.dk/sustainability-lectures

Project Portal
sustainability.ku.dk/studies

Catalogue of sustainability research/teaching at UCPH
sustainability.ku.dk

Young Researchers’ network
for master students, PhD students and postdocs within the Oresund Region, addressing grand challenges
www.odysus.net

Contact
You can reach the SSC at sustainability@science.ku.dk

Follow us on twitter @Sustain_UCPH

and on facebook.com/sustainUCPH

The SSC receives support from
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Stimulating evidence-based societal discussion on sustainability has been a major focus for UCPH since 2009 with its Sustainability Lectures. The SSC hosts 6-8 lectures per year. They provide the public with insights from international as well as Danish leaders in issues relating to sustainability challenges.

The purpose of the SSC is to develop and cultivate synergies between activities anchored in the different disciplines as well as to provide a point of access for members of society external to the university.

Centre activities
The SSC provides physical as well as virtual platforms where researchers and students from different disciplines can meet and develop initiatives relating to sustainability. Examples include Sustainability Lectures, workshops, new cross-disciplinary courses, a web based project portal for students, and the Young Researchers Network, ODYSUS.

The SSC is the contact point for the UCPH membership of UN’s Sustainable Development Solutions Network, SDSN. We have taken a leading role in establishing a Danish node for the SDSN and form part of the Nordic node, thereby strengthening the active international research network for UCPH with regard to sustainability research.

Through our advisory group comprised of representatives from the business sector, the SSC is also able to offer exciting contacts for developing new research and student projects.

Global food production is facing new and increasing demands, not just to sustain a growing population but also to develop into a greener and less resource demanding industry.

Research at UCPH is leading in the field of food processing technology and intelligent water reuse. This includes new ways to utilise raw materials more sustainably, for example, through refinement of plant based proteins. Furthermore, food associated energy requirements of cooking and cooling are reduced with newly developed fermentation processes.

The Social sciences provide the economic, legal, and organisational tools that can drive societal transition.

The humanities provide knowledge about the barriers and opportunities – for instance cultural, historical or psychological - for engaging citizens in the societal transition to sustainability.

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Environmental health is a key area of global health research. Human health and the quality of life depend on global and local ecology and the way it is managed.