Practice What You Preach?
Assessing the Potential for Inclusive Sustainability Management at Maastricht University

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Acknowledgements

There is no good unless you do it.

Erich Kästner.

To embed sustainability effectively into the institutional culture of a higher learning organization, a critical mass of change agents is needed that are willing to devote their energy, resources and time to this organizational re-steering process. Thanks to their long-term engagement in grassroots greening operations or justice movements, many of them have converted themselves into experts for sustainability questions and therefore form a vital cornerstone of any higher education sustainability campaign. Giving them a say constitutes the clearest demonstration of an organization’s disposition towards sustainability.

I was glad to see that the University of Maastricht counts on a considerable number of such “sustainability champions”, each of them working hard towards the greening of this institution. In fact, this thesis could not have been realized without the encouraging support of these “sustainability champions”, who were willing as well as ambitious to share their insights and expertise with me. This goes first and foremost for all participants of the UM sustainability stakeholder session, namely Josephine Jakisch, Conrad-Schmidt-Bens, Maja de Bruijn, Nathalie Ummels, Sven Bayens and Alexandre Staff-Varela.

I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Niko Roorda, representative of the Dutch National Foundation for Sustainable Higher Education (DHO). He did not only reply instantly to any question I mailed to him, but also offered me to drop by at his office in Tilburg, where I had the chance to interview him concerning the Dutch experience with sustainability management in higher education.

Last but not least, special thanks go to my thesis supervisor Robert Bauchmuller for having an open ear to all my worries and questions concerning this thesis, for his patience for reading the first draft and for his constant and immediate feedback. I could not have thought of a better type of cooperation and I wish him all the best for the successful conclusion of this PhD.
Summary of Findings

This thesis originates from the research ambition to analyze the current state of affairs of UM sustainability management from an organization perspective. The core question underlying this study therefore goes as follows: *Do the current organizational conditions of sustainability management at Maastricht University have the potential to convert this university into a sustainability champion?*

On the basis of the literature review and field work done, this thesis arrives at the conclusion that progress in this field (i.e. sustainability management) is greatly compromised by the nature of the prevailing organizational conditions (current structures, processes, and attitudes), converting the UM into a sustainability laggard. The slow movement made is mainly ascribed to the lack of a diverse core of stakeholders (including the respective decision-making authorities) who coordinate their actions and jointly take advantage of a window of opportunity. So far, most suggested measures have to wind their way through the complex, top-down UM decision-making regime with little space for bottom-up involvement. During a stakeholder panel session dating back to November 2007, it was argued that ambitious projects and small-scale greening initiatives had either come to a halt at a very early stage or were still struggling very hard to obtain a critical mass of attention and financial back-up (panel session, 2007). On the other hand, the session indicated that student groups had also failed to use existing reporting channels to the respective decision-making entities and also to improve communication between them in order to prevent a duplication of efforts.

Notwithstanding this rather pessimistic sounding assessment, this is not to say that there is no potential for improvement. For instance, the UM’s pronounced interest in obtaining accreditation of sustainability efforts by the NederlandseVlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO) for at least one of its faculties and/or study programs serves as an indication that decision-makers have come to appreciate the value of SD as a strategic planning concept in higher education. The strive for official recognition and reputational power might unleash the critical level of top-down support needed to mainstream current efforts and take further action in this field. With more and more colleges and universities committing themselves to the environmental imperative and incorporating SD into their organizational culture (e.g. by
issuing a sustainability policy or creating a sustainability coordination office), it is unlikely to assume that the UM will remain passive in this field.
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1 Introduction

"Then I say the earth belongs to each generation during its course, fully and in its own right [...] no generation can contract debts greater than may be paid during its own existence".

Thomas Jefferson, 1789.

Sustainable Development\(^1\) has been said to constitute one of the biggest challenges of the 21\(^{st}\) century. The desire of creating a state of socio-economic and ecological richness in all spheres of life that can be maintained at a certain level indefinitely doubtlessly moves the heart of everyone aware of the fact that current consumption patterns might deprive future generations of their means of existence if status quo prevails. The idea of the earth as a giant common pool resource that becomes irrevocably exhausted due to free access and unrestricted demand for finite resources is no longer perceived as a meaningless stupidity, but as a threatening reality, as was highlighted in the IPCC fourth Assessment Report\(^2\) released in September 2007. Climate change, biodiversity loss, increased dependence on non-renewable natural resources and heightened levels of poverty and inequality are all factors that are inevitably correlated with the decline of quality of life, and that require an immediate response and action.

Within this process of re-steering society towards a future generation that no longer carelessly deals with depletive resources, higher education institutions occupy a critical position. As models and facilitators of change, they face profound responsibilities to acquaint their students with the capacity needed to adopt a sustainable way of doing things, individually and collectively. And colleges and universities are taking this challenge seriously: approaches may vary from the environmentally friendly institution that develops sets of guidelines and principles to be taken into consideration for all on-campus operations, to the point of designing totally new institutions, or the re-adjustment of mission and management of an existing university in the quest for sustainability (Van Weenen, 2000). Despite these numerous efforts, however, there is only a small number of universities that

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\(^1\) Henceforward also called SD. “Sustainable development” and “sustainability” will be used interchangeably. For further information on the terminology used, see also Chapter 3.

\(^2\) IPCC stands for International Panel on Climate Change, which is an international body concerned with measuring and assessing the climate change from a scientific point of view. The IPCC has contributed immensely to public understanding of the dangers of global warming, particularly in western countries.
have truly and veritably reached progress towards translating the promises made into reality (Bekessy et al., 2007). But why do some higher education institutions convert themselves into leaders in sustainability while others are not addressing environmental and interrelated social and economic issues in a significant manner? Is there any recipe for bringing about success and if so, what are the ingredients?

1.1 Sustainable Development at the UM

The exploration of prevailing organizational conditions for sustainability management at Maastricht University (UM) constitutes the core research ambition of this study. Sustainable development as a strategic planning concept in HE gained monumentum when in April 2007, the so-called UM “Durzaame Ontwikkeling” inventory was internally published for discussion. Among other things, this documentation of existing programs, initiatives and administrative frameworks on sustainability issues at the UM came to the conclusion that progress towards sustainability within the university would be impeded by fragmented, uncoordinated sectoral approaches; besides, the authors diagnosed considerable lack of central commitment to maintain and enhance sustainability-related activities (UM sustainability inventory, 2007). In this respect, the inventory states the need of mainstreaming current initiatives and projects as a prerequisite for betterment.

Acknowledging the ambition articulated by the Executive Board (College van Bestuur) to turn sustainability into one of the UM’s management priorities, this study seeks to assist the respective decision-making authorities and everybody else engaged in this institutional steering process in improving this institution’s performance. Towards this ends, a framework for assessing the organizational conditions of infusing HE with sustainability will be developed, aiming at uncovering the factors and processes that peer institutions deemed critical for reaching progress towards integrative SD-management. In this respect, it is important to bear in mind the organizational distinctiveness of colleges and universities: even though they share many commonalities with other organizations, they are

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3 In the absence of clear-cut and straightforward quality criteria for measuring campus sustainability efforts, it seems pretentious to call a sustainability initiative “significant” or “successful”. On the other hand, my literature review has shown that there is almost consensus about sustainability in HE circles on how a sustainable campus should look like (see for instance, the ULSF homepage), so “significant” and/or “successful” are used to indicate that the respective university has come close to my ideal of the sustainable institution (see Chapter 3).

4 Duurzame ontwikkeling binnen de Universiteit Maastricht, internal document number FD/MdB/MV 07.0946

5 The original text says: “Het CvB verzoeken DO als één van de speerpunten van de UM te benoemen.”
decidedly unique. Like other institutions, they are characterized by hierarchical systems and structures. Officials face specific sets of responsibilities, decision-making and consultation processes and a bureaucratic administration in charge of daily routine procedures. However a set of particular features such as their goal ambiguity, client service, task complexity, professionalism, administrative values and environmental vulnerability (Baldridge et al., cited in Sporn, 1999) make them look quite distinct from business firms. As will be argued later on, this uniqueness plays a crucial role within this study in regards to comprehending decision-making processes for issues such as sustainability.

1.2 Research Question and Learning Goals
The core ambition of this thesis is to delve into the organizational conditions for inclusive sustainability management\(^6\) and in turn opine about the potential for organizational change within the University of Maastricht. The research question therefore goes as follows: *do the current organizational conditions of sustainability management at Maastricht University have the potential to convert this university into a sustainability leader?* It is important to bear in mind, however, that in order to provide an answer to this question, a number of other issues deserve attention, the most important ones being provided below:

1. Exploration of critical determinants of sustainability in higher education, resulting in my own definition of the “sustainable institution” (Chapter 3);
2. Assessment of the distinctiveness of the university as an organizational entity, thereby focusing on potential implications for sustainable development as a strategic planning concept in higher education (Chapter 4);
3. Delineation of factors and/ or processes have either been deemed beneficial or detrimental for SD- management in HE via case-study review that is embedded in a modified version of Michael Shriberg’s organizational change-framework (Chapter 4);
4. Evaluation of the current state- of affairs of UM- sustainability- management by means of applying the five-level model (Chapter 5; see also Chapter 2 for further explanation on the model).

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\(^6\) The concept *inclusive* will be elaborated on in Chapter 3 of this study.
On the basis of my findings, this study culminates in a set of recommendations to be shared with anyone interested in turning this institution into a forerunner of an economically, socially and environmentally sound management.

1.3 Limitations of Study
As was previously argued, this study originates from the ambition to shed more light into the organizational conditions of higher education institutions that are held to enhance institutional transformation towards more coherent and inclusive sustainability management. Unfortunately, apart from Michael Shriberg’s extensive study on leaders and laggards among American colleges and universities (see also Chapter 4), there was no systematic analysis of (advantageous) organizational settings in the literature consulted for this thesis. To mitigate the negative effects of this situation, I systematically reviewed those case-studies that shared a similar focus (i.e. exploring leverage for organizational change within a particular institution) and added the insights to my framework.

There is also information scarcity when searching for key documentation with regards to external influences on the university agenda, that is the extent to which HE decision-making regimes are shaped and influenced by external pressures such as SD policy guidelines- and/or recommendations and review by peer institutions. Due to these circumstances, this study concentrates on internal factors such as the analysis of stakeholder groups or the existence of environmental leadership. Also, as qualitative research, this study might be to a certain extent biased towards the grassroots level by having a small sample. An overrepresentation of bottom-up activists such as UM decision-makers intends to outweigh parts of such potential small sample bias. Further research needs to increase the sample size and address in more detail the financial and organizational implications of some of the policy recommendations that evolve from this first-stage research.

Finally, considering that this study relies mainly on information sources in English language, it might not cover the complete discussion on sustainability in HE as discussed in Dutch. However, thanks to my interview with Mr. Niko Roorda, representative of the Dutch National Foundation for Sustainable Higher Education (DHO), I was also able to obtain more information on the current state of affairs of Dutch sustainability management.
1.4 Outline of Paper

Chapter 2 sets out the theoretical and methodological framework for the study. Chapter 3 discusses the challenge sustainable development poses to the organization and management of colleges and universities, thereby pointing out to the critical dimensions of the sustainable institution. Chapter 4 deals with the organizational uniqueness of HE institutions; furthermore, it identifies organizational conditions that favor or inhibit change towards institutional transformation. Chapter 5 presents the UM case study, which assesses the institution’s sustainability-related plans and activities, current organizational conditions and also contains reference to the strategic outlook of SD management. Chapter 6 concludes by a set of policy recommendations based on my particular findings.
2 Methodological and Theoretical Framework

The particular methods used during this study can be classified according to four different categories: (1) action-oriented research on UM-sustainability activities, bringing in a broad range of research instruments such as sustainability questionnaires, interviews and stakeholder discussion panels; (2) literature review on SD in higher education as well as adaptive university structures, organization science and behavioral theory in order to explore the motivational factors and environmental influences that shape the shift towards sustainable development; and finally (3) case-study research that documents the experiences of other universities when institutionalizing sustainability within higher education, thereby particularly focusing on critical components of promising policy frameworks, obstacles and opportunities experienced and lessons learnt.

In addition to this, an adapted version of Mandy Tew’s five-level model is presented, which will later on provide the basis for assessing the current state-of-affairs of UM-sustainability efforts. Last but not least, this chapter concludes with a delineation of the AISHE-model that shall serve as a guideline and source of inspiration for designing a policy framework for SD in the UM-context.

2.1 Action Research

Considering the practical implications this study might have in terms of accommodating UM-stakeholders with new insights in the steps and procedures necessary to meet the objectives defined in the sustainability strategy plan, the research design chosen parallels with action research. Latter term was coined by Kurt Lewin\(^7\) (1946), who depicts this research technique as a comparative research process involving a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action and fact-finding about the result of the action.

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\(^7\) According to Lewin (1946), action research is a comparative research process involving a spiral of steps, each of which is composed of a circle of planning, action, and fact-finding about the result of the action.
Due the particular constraints inherent to this study, two important phases of the action-research cycle had to be excluded from my research design, namely the steps of taking action and policy implementation, that is reacting to the policy recommendations laid out of this study and integrating them into the university’s professional practice. The cycle can be closed, however, if this thesis contributes towards encouraging pro-active UM-policy makers to use the findings of this thesis as a valuable input for future actions in the field of SD.

2.1.1 Action Research in the UM-Context

In the backdrop of SD in the UM-context, I considered a collaborative approach essential to get an overview on the various attitudes and opinions on the desirability of change for sake of estimating the potential for concrete policy action in the field of UM sustainability management. In the run-up of the final writing phase of this study, several interviews with (key) stakeholders were conducted. Besides, a brainstorming session on sustainability efforts in the University –of Maastricht- context with various student groups and a UM-representative (Mrs. Maja de Bruijn) was organized to broaden my knowledge of past and current activities.\(^8\) Towards this ends, an email was sent to Josephine Jackisch, member of Sisum as well as of Maastricht Environmental Platform (UM) who in turn forwarded the

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\(^8\) A comprehensive overview on the panel sessions and interviews (including participants) that were conducted in the realm of this study can be found in the appendix.
invitation to the subscribers of the UMP- online newsletter. Furthermore, a reference to the meeting was made in an internal email to UM staff members.

Given limited access to relevant policy documentation on latter issue (i.e. SD management at our university), these question sessions were considered important to delve into the different perspectives, convictions and attitudes of the persons that were somehow engaged in the process of rendering the university more sustainable. These get-togethers also provided the different parties with an opportunity to obtain more information about other individuals active in this field and exchange their points of view. Some of the participants were contacted a second time in order to check for the validity and completeness of information given.
### Participants in the Stakeholder Panel, 22/11/2007

- **Maja de Bruijn** (environmental officer), from *UM facilitaire dienst*.
  **Sustainability mission**: energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, awareness-rising

- **Conrad-Schmidt-Bens**, from *the Studentworkforce*.
  **Sustainability mission**: empowerment, environmental sustainability, quality of live

- **Alexandre Staff Varela**, from *MGSOG*
  **Sustainability mission**: -

- **Josephine Jakisch**, from *SISUM/ UMP (Maastricht Environmental Platform)*
  **Sustainability mission**: all-encompassing sustainability policy, awareness-rising

- **Nathalie Ummels**, from *Centre of European Studies*
  **Sustainability mission**: -

- **Sven Bayens & Thomas** from *novUM*
  **Sustainability mission**: Sustainability as a new priority concept on the UM’s agenda

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Table 1: participants of the sustainability panel session. A more comprehensive description of participants and student groups can be found in the appendix of this study.
2.2 Literature Review

The main themes featuring in the literature input for this study can be sorted out into four different categories: (1) the more general discussion on sustainability in higher education; (2) theories on the organizational culture of universities; (3) analysis of primary resources such as the UM-sustainability inventory, international charters- and declarations on the subject matter, auditing procedures on SD; and (4) a case-study review on other universities that had published their experiences in the field of bringing education and research in alignment with the principles put forward by SD in HE.

The University as an Organization

In regards to organization culture in the realm of higher education, special mentioning goes to Barbara Sporn’s in-depth analysis of *adaptive university structures*, in which she highlights the university’s distinctiveness as an organizational entity and the respective implications in terms of decision-making, leadership, complexity of mission, etc. Information on organizational dynamics was complemented by literature stemming from various academic disciplines such as behavioral sciences, strategy and organization theory. It should be stressed, however, that most of the findings stemming from organization theories research cannot easily be transferred to the university context, given its distinctiveness from a business organization (Sporn, 1999).

Sporn’s *adaptive university structures* proved useful in terms of providing me with a basic understanding of the university as an organizational entity, but the challenge remained to embed the information given in the sustainability- in HE- context. Help was sought from case-study review (see also below), where some authors elaborated on the institutional implications of their institution’s greening movement (see, for instance, Sharp, 2002). It is noteworthy, however, that most of them failed to address this issue systematically (see also the subpoint *case-study review*).

Primary Sources

Primary sources such as the AISHE- handbook on sustainability measurement in higher education, a broad range of sustainability charters- and declarations, accreditation guidelines, sustainability questionnaires and last but not least the UM- sustainability inventory elaborated by SISUM in collaboration with Mrs. De Bruijn constitute another
source of key literature (a more detailed listing of primary material used as point of reference can be found in the Bibliography section of this study).

The AISHE-handbook was an intriguing depiction of a process-oriented approach to sustainability assessment and a powerful demonstration of how policy makers live up to the challenge of making progress in this field measurable. It improved my understanding of quality assessment tools (such as scenario-building), but left me with some doubts regarding the comparability of sustainability performances across campuses and even across departments⁹.

Using the UM sustainability inventory as an information resource and object for analysis was to a certain extent problematical given its informal and sketchy nature. Several policy measures had to be double-checked during the UM action research or supplemented with additional information.

Case-Study review

Case-study methodology is a well-used and appropriate research tool in studies of sustainability in higher education (Corcoran et al., 2004). As a study of practice, a case study encompasses the reflective analysis:

“[… ] of all the players, or practitioners, involved directly, or indirectly, in the innovation. Further, it is a study of the practitioner’s actions and the theories they hold about their actions. Improvement in practice occurs when practitioners confront their existing theories (and others) and in so doing engage in theory-building to bring about change” (Corcoran et al., 2004, p.11, quoted in Adomssent, 2007).

The cases which were incorporated in the assessment provided me with valuable insights into the dynamics that underlie SD in HE. There are several electronic journals available which contain contributions on the subject matter, examples being the Journal of Cleaner Production, Higher Education Quarterly, Higher Education Policy and Ecological Economics. Also, there is one electronic information source, the International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education, which is exclusively dedicated to addressing issues of SD in a higher education environment. In this spirit, it abounds with reflections on the

⁹ This aspect will be taken further in the fifth chapter.
progress made by other universities with ongoing sustainability projects, thus constituting an interesting source of information in the run-up of this study.

Many of these case-studies pursued the overall goal of identifying barriers, obstacles and resistance to change while at the same time stressing the potential gains from incorporating sustainability into curricula and physical university operations, their experience can be easily translated into change strategies that may help other education institutions to successfully put the issue of sustainability on the agenda. Unfortunately, these case-studies suffered from one serious drawback, that is they provide very little systematic guidance to potential change agents about what steps to take and procedures to follow to meet the challenges of sustainability. What caught even more my attention was the fact that hardly any scholar spent research efforts to the motivational forces that need to come together for an HE institution to follow the path of sustainability, and even if this is only done in noncommittal terms by subscribing to a sustainability charter- or declaration and leave it at that. Remedy was sought by borrowing from Shriberg’s framework for organizational conditions (Chapter 4).

2.3 Assessment Frameworks used

2.3.1 The Five Level Model

Over the years, policy makers, education researchers and sustainability practitioners have worked hard to develop principles, strategies, actions, and tools for providing a better understanding and feedback on sustainable development in higher education. Their work has brought about astonishing achievements- such as the availability of auditing instruments for measuring corporate social and environmental responsibility in learning institutions. However, due to differences in scope, scale, intent and comprehensiveness of the various ideas and frameworks, disagreement regarding their merits quickly enters the picture, raising serious questions on how to best apply them (MC Donald, 2005, Robert et al., 2002; cited in Tew, 2005). This is particularly the case when conducting case-study analysis, where the researcher deals with a set of unique, complicated relationships that can only be understood in the context in which they are embedded (e.g. the UM).

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In regards to planning in complex environments, the five-level model has been said for provide the organizational clarity needed to discover the relationships between the tools used for sustainable development and initiatives such as the Ecological Footprint, Natural Capital, TNSF, Factor 10, Sustainable Technological Development, UNEP/Cleaner Production and Zero Emission (Tew, 2005). The model which forms the backbone of this thesis is a modified version of the one developed by Mandy Tew (2005). She used the criteria and concepts of the previously mentioned five-level models to create an assessment framework for the area of higher education. Given that her model had been utilized for evaluating the quality of an already existing sustainability policy, I chose to change two of the suggested categories to make sure they could be applied to the UM that still does not have any firm policy in place. In the following part, I will explain briefly the different categories and will shortly elaborate on how the model is used to complement this study.
1) **Understanding of Sustainability.** This level seeks to shed light into the university’s understanding of what SD implies in the higher education context and how this is translated into practice. Particular attention will be devoted to the use of sustainability terminology in primary sources as well as the question which pillar of SD is given priority and whether the attempt is made to ensure that sustainability “stands on three legs”. In the original framework, this category was called *system-awareness* in order to see which principles were used in a sustainability policy that underpin the functioning of the system (e.g. biogeochemical cycles, ecological interdependencies of species, societal exchange...
with, and dependence on the ecosphere). Considering that so far, the UM does not have a policy framework for sustainability management in place that could provide the basis of analysis for this level, I decided not to look at the UM’s system awareness, but instead analyze how the concept of SD is dealt with in UM-documentation.\footnote{Please refer to Chapter 5 for further information.}

2) **Success or objective level.** The second level aims at identifying principles for a favorable outcome of planning within SD. This category is not that straightforward as it may seem at first sight, given that the stakeholders involved in the process of providing the UM with a more sustainable outlook may have very different perceptions of what success entails. For sake of simplification, this thesis will primarily focus at how the authors of the sustainability-inventory and Mr. Postema (UM Vice Chancellor) envisage success in the field of SD.

3) **Strategic level-Action level.** The third level plays another important role in the current-state-of affairs assessment. It attempts to uncover and scrutinize the actions put forward in the process to reach a favorable outcome in the university system (such as recycling, switching to renewable energy). The assessment of the current state of affairs by looking concrete measures taken as well as suggestions for further actions proposed by the UM sustainability inventory will help to determine whether the UM qualifies as sustainability leader or laggard.

4) **Communication level.** The fourth level looks at the availability and functioning of communication mechanisms to ensure that dialogue between the various stakeholders flows smoothly. Communication plays a key role within the entire assessment framework, as will be argued later on.

5) **Tool level.** The final level of this model assesses the instruments in place for monitoring and auditing. The original framework by Mandy Tew sought to sort the tools for SD into three subgroups, namely 1) **system tools** for measuring and providing status of and impacts (or reduced impacts) on the system as a consequence of strategically planned actions (e.g. audits, environmental impact assessment, student enrolment figures); 2) **strategic tools** in order to assess, analyze, and report the relevance of actions to the plan (e.g. indicators of compliance with sustainability principles, etc.); and finally 3) **capacity**...
tools that help people learn about each of the five levels in order to build capacity to better understand and plan (e.g. training workshops, teambuilding exercises, recruitment and reward policies) in a complex system (Tew, 2005). Given the usefulness of this categorization, I will adopt the same approach when applying the model to the UM-context.

2.3.2 Organizational-Conditions-Assessment Framework

In order to determine elements and processes that have been deemed critical for steering higher education institutions (and in particular the University of Maastricht) towards institutional transformation, a framework was needed that would structure the analysis and literature findings on strategic change. Inspiration for latter (i.e. framework) was provided by a survey produced by Michael Shriberg (2002b). His PhD research provided a survey on organizational conditions in US colleges and universities that aimed at the identification of “sustainability champions” and “laggards”.

In total, I borrowed four questions from the original framework, namely 1) the identification of organizational conditions that are conducive to on-campus sustainability, 2) composition of stakeholder groups, 3) barriers and problems experienced when addressing the sustainability imperative in HE and 4) finally possible organizational implications of an inclusive management approach. Due to time constraints as well as information scarcity, his other four questions (strongest rationales/ motivations for campus sustainability efforts (5); contribution of different methodological approaches to the analysis of campus sustainability (6); what distinguishes stronger efforts from weaker ones (7) and finally the extent to which colleges and universities have succeeded in moving toward sustainability (8)) remained largely ignored by me.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Literature References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q1: Which organizational conditions are most conducive to on-campus sustainability?</strong></td>
<td>Sammalisto &amp; Davidson, 2005; Shriberg 2002b; Tew 2005; Barlett et al. (eds.), 2004</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q2: Who is most effective in driving sustainability?</strong></td>
<td>Lozano, 2006; Velazquez et al., 2005; Sharp 2002; Gudz, 2004; Moore et al., 2005;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Carpenter 2002</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q3: What are dominant barriers to moving colleges and/or universities towards sustainability?</strong></td>
<td>Velazquez et al. 2005; Lozano 2006; Karabell, 1998</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q4: What are possible organizational implications of an inclusive approach?</strong></td>
<td>Moore et al., 2005; Pittman, 2004; Barlett et al. (eds.), 2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Literature overview on the assessment for organizational change.

I used the resulting question-framework as a means to structure and guide me through the case study and literature review on sustainability movements in higher education. In total, the insights from 12 different field- studies were considered and argumentative support was also sought in strategic change- documentation and other related literature sources.
3 Sustainable Development in Higher Education

People are the common denominator of progress. So (...), no improvement is possible with unimproved people, and advance is certain when people are liberated and educated. It would be wrong to dismiss the importance of roads, railroads, power plants, mill and the other familiar furniture of economic development (...). But we are coming to realize that there is certain sterility in economic monuments that stand alone in a sea of illiteracy. Conquest of illiteracy comes first.


If John Kenneth Gailbraith, the author of the above quotation, had written his late nineteen-fifties bestseller on the shaky foundations of American economic prosperity at the dawn to the 21st century, he surely would not have missed a reference to the fact that economic well-being usually comes at a high price, namely the (irreversible) destruction of natural capital. Besides, Gailbraith certainly would have included “sustainability” or “sustainable development” into his literacy perception (i.e. sustainability literacy), that is a person’s capacity to determine whether an action or information is sustainable in a local context, at a particular time, or in the larger societal context (Finnish Ministry of Education, 2007). As such, sustainability literacy is needed to make people reflect critically about the consequences of excessive ecosystem exploitation due to profit-seeking behavior and encourage them to safeguard the life-maintaining properties of this planet by taking individual and collective action.

Sustainability literacy cannot be achieved without education for sustainable development. And education is ideally provided by an institution – be it of private or public nature – that has sufficient skills and knowledge to acquaint the learning community with the subject matter. Out of all the education institutions society counts on, which is the most promising one for educating the leaders of tomorrow? This chapter is built on the premise that higher education institutions in particular play a critical role in terms of laying the foundations of a sustainability-literate society. By their special mission in teaching and training, by their rich and increasingly extensive experience in conducting inter-disciplinary research, and by their fundamental nature as engines of wisdom and sagacity, colleges and universities have the capacity to push the advancement of human development.
As a consequence, it does not sound surprising that expectations run high with regards to higher education institutions as the most suitable disseminators with their mission, vision and strategies in education and research (Lukman & Glavic, 2006). In many cases however, progress has been slower than it was hoped: even though there have been some institutions that pro-actively pursued plans of action to successfully promote sustainability initiatives, while others have ceased to continue at an early stage (Velazquez et al., 2006). How to ensure then that sustainability becomes deeply engrained in the university culture? What are the ingredients of an inclusive approach? Probably, the best way to start is to work towards a definition of the sustainable university, so that HE policy makers have a roadmap which helps them to improve the effectiveness of their potential or of their current endeavors through the identification of strategies and opportunities within the field of SD.

In this spirit, Chapter 3 proceeds as follows. First of all, some essential background information on the more general concept of sustainable development will be given, which is mainly meant as a guideline for those not being acquainted with its theoretical foundations. Secondly, I will explore the link between sustainable development and education, whilst pointing out to the tremendous importance latter plays in terms of providing people with the abilities and qualities they need to adopt a more critical reflection on their interaction with the environment. In the final part, it will be shown what determines an inclusive SD-management approach, culminating in a definition of the sustainable institution.
3.1 On the Concept of Sustainable Development

Sustainable development as a policy concept dates back to the early and mid 1980s and was meant to come to terms with the widening gap between accelerating environmental deterioration due to human activities and concerns about human development issues (Robinson, 2003). The idea of sustainable development had already begun to take shape under the powerful influence of the environmental literature of the 60s, 70s and 80s, such as 1962 bestseller *Silent Spring*, in which the author Rachel Carson unmistakably highlighted the interconnections between the environment, economy and social well-being. The arguments and concerns raised in this early debate on sustainable development led to the emergence of two conflicting parties, namely the conservatives and the preservatives. Even though both groups acknowledge the necessity of taking concrete action to preserve the biological integrity of ecosystem services, they disagree on how this should be accomplished. At the heart of their discord lies the so-called environmental paradox, which in the broadest sense of its meaning can be described as the mismatch between infinite human wants and finite natural capital stocks (Williams & Millington, 2004).

The first school mentioned here, (i.e. the conservatives, also referred to as weaker sustainability- advocates), argues that in order to meet the needs of further generations and let them enjoy the same or even more quality of living, it is indispensable to expand natural capital stocks. This can be done in a number of ways such as developing renewable resources, creating substitutes for non-renewable resources, formulate policy initiatives which provide special incentives and rewards for those adjusting production to more environmental-friendly technology, and carrying out more research on alternative energy sources (Williams & Millington, 2004). By contrast, the preservatives or stronger-sustainability-advocates claim that only by means of limiting our material wants, the biological cohesion of the earth’s life-supporting functions can be maintained. Unlike the weaker sustainable development approach which is rather anthropocentric (human-centered), their perception of sustainable development is ruled by bio-centric egalitarianism (inter-species equity that recognizes non-human or biotic rights. Towards this end, their objective is to ensure that the basic needs and desires of all are met through the pursuit of self-reliance and an inward-looking approach (Williams & Millington, 2004).
3.1.1 Sustainability or Sustainable Development?

Disagreement is also widespread in terms of terminological issues. The tendency to talk of sustainability instead of sustainable development stems from a concern raised by environmental non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and environmentalists who argue that “development” is an implicit allusion to economic growth, thereby overlooking the need for more substantial, structural changes of today’s society which constitutes the actual challenge behind the phenomenon (Robinson, 2005). By contrast, “sustainability”-advocates claim that economic growth is only desirable if it respects the finiteness of natural capital stocks and puts faith into humans to reduce their material wants.\(^\text{12}\)

Notwithstanding these opposing views, people soon came to realize that sustainable development called out for “(…) the need to look beyond short-term environmental consequences and face up to the institutional changes required to create society that would be able to stay indefinitely within environmental limits (Robinson, 2005)”. This relatively limited understanding of sustainability was soon amplified by Brown (1981), who extended the existing framework by referring to its social dimension.

\(^{12}\) As was argued in the introduction, For the purpose of this study, these two terms will be used interchangeably.
Politically speaking, the term gained prominence by the Brundtland Report (UN Commission on Environment and Development), leading to the recognition that the vast and complex issue of human development and the containment of environmental deterioration had to be addressed and got under control simultaneously (Brundtland Report, 1987). It was exactly this argument which made out the strength of the Brundtland Report in the sense that it stressed the inextricable connection between safeguarding the world’s ecosystem whilst fuelling economic growth in the poorest regions of and the earth. Yet, the report was heavily criticized for putting far more emphasis on the promotion and enhancement of human development than the demand for biological integrity (Hove, 2004).

3.1.2 Concerns and Criticisms
In the absence of a clear-cut, commonly agreed-upon definition, it does not sound surprising that the different conceptions and meanings assigned to what has been coined sustainable development rather reflect political and philosophical deliberations than a scientific theory. Due to its elusiveness, the concept has said to be quite prone to hypocrisy and so-called “cosmetic environmentalism” in the sense that sustainability vocabulary has been misused to justify actions or procedures that by no means comply with environmental or socially justifiable minimum standards, thus highlighting the urgent need for unequivocal measurement criteria (Robinson, 2005). On the other hand, its “constructive ambiguity” makes this phenomenon quite attractive in the sense that it provides stakeholders and
policy-makers with an excellent opportunity to suit sustainable development to their own needs and interests (Robinson, 2005).

What does this mean for our understanding of sustainability? First and foremost, it is, unlike, say, climate change, an inherent problem-driven rather than scientific concept – notwithstanding the importance of scientific analysis when addressing real-life problems such as biodiversity loss or habitat destruction. In the end, it is an inherently normative view of human behavior, and negotiation over preferred futures, roots in real world problems and very diverging sets of values and moral conceptions (Robinson, 2005). By no means, however, its inbuilt ambiguity and elusiveness should be taken as a pretext to walk away from the responsibility people face towards the environment and their fellowmen. Therefore, new forms of social learning are needed to accommodate economic wants with what nature can provide for.

3.2 Sustainability in Higher Education Context

Education for sustainable development became an issue in (inter-) national policy making ever since the Conference on United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UCED), usually referred to as the World Summit, when in total 178 nations came together to seek common solutions to the world’s ills. The overall policy ambition stemmed from the motivation to set the course for SD around the world. Among other things, the conference resulted in a declaration and comprehensive action plan, Agenda 21, which was meant as a global action-plan for all areas of SD with national policy implications, sustainability literacy in education being one of them (www.un.org). In the subsequent UN Conference on Sustainable Development, which was held in Johannesburg in 2002, the implementation of the resolutions produced at the World Summit were examined, with special attention being paid to Agenda 21. Apart from reaffirming their desire to attain the Millennium goals, which had been called into being in 2002 as a pro-active response to the negative consequences of globalization, the Summit stressed the significance of regional cooperation and implementation of policy goals in the field of sustainable development. As an outcome, the United Nations General Assembly declared the time span between 2005-2014 a Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (Finish Ministry of Education, 2007).
The Decade is meant as a lifelong learning process, engaging all possible spaces of learning, formal, non-formal and informal, from early childhood to adult life. In particular, it aims at the re-orientation of educational approaches – curriculum and content, pedagogy and examinations, whereas spaces for learning comprise non-formal learning, community-based organizations and local civil society, the workplace, formal education, technical and vocational training, teacher training, higher education educational inspectorates, policy making bodies, etc. (www.portal.unesco.org).

Even though the makers of the UN Decade for Sustainable Development in Education state that the decade is directed towards “[…] everyone, at whatever stage of life they find themselves”, it goes without saying that within this educational re-orientation process with global consequences, Higher Education institutions play a critical role in terms of building the knowledge, skills, and attitudes for the leaders of tomorrow and influencing greater society (Filho, 2002). It therefore does not surprise that the call for sustainability matches perfectly with the Higher Education goal of molding and shaping generations of students that take their responsibility towards maintaining the integrity of this planet seriously.

3.3 Towards a Definition of the Sustainable HE Institution

In their reflections on the core obligations of colleges and universities that commit themselves to the cause of sustainability in HE, Richard M. Clugson and Wynn Calder (1999) argue that an institution bears the threefold mission of helping students to explore the root problems of ecosystem destruction, assisting them in finding solutions that minimizes environmental degradation and teach them to behave towards their fellow men in a socially and ethically sound manner. It goes without saying that any such commitment implies deep structural changes for the institution’s organizational outlook, such as incorporating a reference to SD in the mission statement, infusing education with sustainability principles, re-orienting environmental on-campus operations towards ecologically acceptable standards, etc.

Expectations for colleges and universities to turn their promises into practice run high, given their special role to fill as the institutions with the critical capacity, the influence over the professions and societal activities, and the contact with the younger generation needed to trigger off a shift in our attitude to nature (Berry, 1996; cited in Corcoran, 2004). In an attempt to help them wind their way through the obstacles and moments of perplexity,
Clugson and Calder (1999) identify seven areas in HE which according to their reasoning play a crucial role for making sustainability a long-lasting priority in the institution’s organizational culture.

1) *The written statements of the mission and purpose of the institution and its various units express their philosophies and commitments.* This category does not only allude to the signature of (inter-) national sustainability in HE declarations that have been called into being over the last decades; it also refers to the use of sustainability terminology in (in-) official university documentation, public- and press relations and last but not least, the HE institution’s mission statement.

2) *The college or university appropriately incorporates the concepts of sustainability into all academic disciplines and in liberal arts and professional education requirements, as well as into faculty and student research.* In order to ensure that commitment to SD does not amount to a mere lip service, HE institutions should strive towards infusing curriculum design with the insights gained from study fields such as ecological economics, sustainable systems development, corporate social responsibility, etc., in order to set the critical parameters for sustainability literacy.

3) *A major shift from the current academic paradigm lies in a conscious reflection of the role of the institution in its social and ecological systems.* Acknowledging that universities and colleges are reliant on a complex infrastructure, which in turn is highly exigent on the environment, students should be given the opportunity to acquaint themselves with how the campus operates in the ecosystem (e.g. contribution to sustainable economy; how the institution views and treats its employees, etc.).

4) *Since research and teaching are the fundamental purposes of academic institutions, knowledge of sustainability is a critical concern in the hiring, tenure, and promotion systems.* This premise coincides with the insights gained from various case studies in the field of SD in HE, which almost unanimously came to the conclusion that the availability of an incentive scheme would be of great help to stimulate research and teaching activities on the subject matter. More specifically, the authors expect the institution to: a) reward faculty members’ contributions to sustainability in scholarship, teaching, or campus and
community activities as well as b) provide staff members with the opportunity to participate in (advanced) training courses.

5) The institution has an “ecological footprint.” In its production and consumption the institution follows sustainable policies and practices. This challenge addresses mainly an HE institution’s environmental management office or the respective administrative authority in charge of licensing sustainable building construction- and renovation practices, ecological food supply and the purchase of fair trade products; the diffusion of CO₂ reduction practices and the use of emission control devices only to name some of them. Furthermore, decision-makers should attempt to integrate and mainstream these operational practices into the educational and scholarly activities of the school.

6) Institutional support and campus student life services that emphasize certain practices. There are many different possibilities for HE decision-making entities to encourage and strengthen the strive towards campus-wide sustainability, some examples being sustainability-related scholarships, internships, and job placements; regularly conducted HE-auditing procedures for SD, the creation of an office for sustainability affairs, etc.

7) The institution is engaged in outreach and forming partnerships both locally and globally to enhance sustainability. Colleges and universities, which are striving towards converting themselves into sustainability champions, should be eager to unconditionally share and disseminate their good practices in the field of SD with other learning institutions and/or private partners across the planet, thus contributing to the creation of a worldwide sustainability network.

The considerations as provided above lead me to my personal definition of the “sustainable” institution. Recalling the title of this study (Practice what you preach? Assessing the Potential for Inclusive Sustainability Management), a SD- approach in HE deserves the connotation “inclusive”, if the institution fulfils the following criteria:

A higher education institution shall be called sustainable, if there is widespread agreement among different stakeholder groups that the college or university has successfully dealt with its mission to ingrain service, teaching and research with sustainability. More
precisely, this means that in terms of environmental management, the institution demonstrably strives for eco-efficiency and furthermore checks upon the social compatibility of operational decisions across all different scales on a regular basis. Interdisciplinary sustainability research and teaching is a firm ingredient in the institution’s educational culture, so that both staff and student are well aware of the responsibility they face towards maintaining and enhancing the biological integrity of this planet. Pro-active behavior in sustainability-related activities is supported and encouraged by the HE institution’s decision-making bodies; besides, communication between top and bottom flows without major obstacles (such as long waiting times for consultation). Last but not least, the institution forms part of a broader sustainability network, which enables it to share and disseminate its own good practices in the field of SD with other learning institutions and/or private partners across the planet.

Interest in getting active in re-steering HE institutions towards the path of sustainability has been high (a phenomenon which becomes particularly evident from studying the figures of subscriptions to international sustainability in HE –declarations; see also Chapter 4 of this thesis), but as previously mentioned, universities (and colleges) have had a relatively low success rate when it came to turning their promises into reality (Bekessy et al., 2003; cited in Bekessy et al., 2007; Velazquez, 2006). This aspect deserves more attention: at first sight, it may seem that learning organizations in general HE institutions in particular should have the financial and structural means to successfully cope with the challenge of sustainability, but all case-studies analyzed for this thesis indicate that this process of institutional re-orientations is by no means straightforward. After all, which factors are to be held responsible for the low performance among many higher education institutions when it comes down to move beyond verbal commitments and fill the promises and made with deeper meaning? And what is the “secret of success” of those that have converted themselves into sustainability champions? According to the particular findings of this thesis, the answer to these questions can at least partly be found when paying attention to the higher learning institution’s organizational culture, which constitutes the research focus of the following chapter.
4 The Organizational Distinctiveness of HE Institutions

Universities have developed a deep cultural assumption that it is necessary to preserve the image of rationality, at all costs of organizational survival. It is worth noting that universities are one of the oldest types of institutions in the world. During hundreds of years of organizational evolution the image of rationality has been a successful strategy that it was taken for granted until it has even “dropped out of awareness”. This makes it extremely difficult and potentially dangerous to address.


In the above quotation, Leith Sharp (2002) takes up Senge’s concept of system archetypes\(^\text{13}\) (i.e. the myth of rationality) and applies it to the context of sustainability in higher education. According to his reasoning, failure to comprehend these archetypes that are often deeply ingrained into the organizational culture result in a fix-the-problem-mentality instead of investigating what lies at the heart of dilemma. The myth of rationality greatly inhibits change in a learning organization for spreading the conviction that latter has attained the highest possible levels of functionality and that potential drawbacks must be accepted as an inevitable constraint of the system (Sharp, 2002). In this spirit, the myth renders institutional analysis difficult and burdensome, because any change of status quo would bring along sacrifices in time, energy and resources which staff is usually reluctant to provide. Against this backdrop, Sharp contends that the approach to greening universities has possibly become victim of the rationality myth in the sense that policy makers within the college or university are uneasy to challenge the current state of affairs, given their fear that costs may outweigh the benefits (e.g. the expenses that accrue from the purchase of new technological equipment versus energy savings).

What makes universities adhere to the myth of reality? Which factors prevent them from breaking out of the old, incrusted structures and grant more priority to sustainability management? This chapter is going to argue that the answer to these questions needs to be sought in understanding the organizational distinctiveness of HE institutions, which constitutes the second learning goal of this study. Like other bureaucratic organizations,

\(^{13}\) According to Senge (quoted in Sharp, 2002), system archetypes are simple stories that are told all over again in the realm of an organization, no matter whether they are “correct” or not. They represent system patterns that shape many organizational responses.
colleges and universities have goals, hierarchical systems and structures, and yet—as will be explained further below—, they exhibit a number of unique characteristics that shape the way their decision-making regimes operate. Only after having understood the special nature of HEs and having dealt with the potential consequences for sustainability management, it makes sense to proceed with the identification of organizational conditions and processes that HE researchers such as Michael Shriberg or David Carpenter deemed critical for steering colleges and universities towards inclusive SD management.

Towards this ends, this chapter is organized as follows: section 4.1 section starts with delineating the organizational nature of HE. In this context, some reasons will be provided why an analogy with business firms is considered inadequate by organizational theory researchers (e.g. Barbara Sporn and Robert Birnbaum). The organizational particularities will also be applied to the context of sustainability management in higher education. The third and last part of this chapter is concerned with exploring processes and organizational conditions that have been held decisive on-campus sustainability efforts into a success movement. The four research questions asked in this context and in particular the findings will provide the ground for the discussion on organizational change in the UM-context, which constitutes the research focus of the subsequent chapter.

4.1 Exploring the Organizational Uniqueness of HE institutions

4.1.1 Non-Profit Nature & Dualism of Control

At first glance, it might seem that higher education institutions share so many commonalities with business enterprises that they may be readily compared to them: both are in competition for customers, earn their own revenues, employ staff and, in many systems, buy and sell property. So what is the crucial difference between them? Prominent early analysts (such as Carter 1965; Kaysen 1960) highlighted that the main point of divergence is their non-profit nature, which means that research in the realm of higher education should be carried out and education should be provided regardless of financial profitability. To quote Peter West, secretary to the University of Strathclyde, United Kingdom:

*Universities function in a ‘trust market’ in which people do not know exactly what they are buying and may not discover its value for years. The product is sold at less than the cost to produce it and the value of the produce is enhanced by the quality of the people who*
purchase it. Compared to business firms, universities have multiple and conflicting goals and intangible outcomes. Staff is motivated by idealism rather than profit.

Higher education institutions are also characterized by two systems of control, each of them performing a different set of tasks and duties (Sporn, 1999). In general, administrative staff is expected to comply with the operational requests of faculty and students as effectively and efficiently as possible, so that faculty may focus on the core mission of the organization, which is teaching and research (Sharp 2002). This dualism of control does not often result in tensions in terms of organization management and control, which increases with resource scarcities and concerns about the institution’s continued existence (Bess 1984, Birnbaum 1989; Dill 1992; Dill 1992b; Müller-Böling 1997b; Sadowsko and Backes-Gellner 1992; all cited in Sporn 1999).

In terms of sustainability management, Sharp (2002) argues that the dual management structure of colleges and universities may have a detrimental impact on sustainability activities, particularly whenever support for more engagement in this field is one-sided and/or lacks a critical mass of support: for instance, administration staff who wish to show a greater level of environmental responsibility often find themselves blocked by faculty who wish to maintain control, but have little understanding of campus operations and associated environmental implications (Sharp, 2002). It might as well be the case that potential change agents are mainly concentrated in faculty, but given that they lack substantial support from top decision-making authorities in charge of administrating the university, their effort to bring about change may be doomed to fail right from the outset. This is ever more preoccupying if failure to get more engaged in these issues accrues from malfunctioning communication mechanisms which render cooperation between these two organizational units difficult. In particular, too much influence of administration undermines the goals under which the organization has been established and endangers conditions under which knowledge can be created and institutionalized (De Boer 1998; Etzioni 1964; Kogan 1999, Trow 1994; all cited in Sporn 1999), implying that without administrative support, sustainability-related management is highly unlikely to take root in the HE institution’s organizational culture.

4.1.2 Goal Ambiguity
As was indicated by the above quotation, HE institutions are said to have ambiguous, multifaceted goals as one of the major characteristics that target very diverse groups of external
and internal constituencies (Sporn, 1999). These findings have been confirmed by different scholars who sarcastically commented that “people seem to feel that universities should be doing almost everything (Baldrigde, 1983; cited in Sporn, 1999)”. So what are colleges and universities expected to do? In the introduction to this thesis, it was argued that high quality teaching, research and service, facilitated by efficient and effective administration form part of the institution’s core mission. And yet, whenever latter is translated into goals, they are stated in such a broad manner that they are often contested when it comes to taking action. At first sight, the high level of abstraction allows for agreement among faculty and administration, but at the more operational level, disagreement arises. This tension between generally formulated policy intentions and the necessity of translating them into practice may help explain the prevalence of meaningless rhetoric in academic speeches and statements (Baldrigde, 1983).

Goal ambiguity in sustainability management may stem from the fact that proposed actions lack clearly indicated deadlines as well as a detailed description of the policy measures envisaged. Even if universities and/or colleges succeed in going beyond the extensive use of sustainability rhetoric, they may still fail to provide for feedback mechanisms (such as auditing for sustainability), which ensure a continuous quality improvement of suggested actions and procedures. To make things worse, it may also happen that sustainability-related policy goals contradict themselves and place the respective authorities in an awkward position when having to decide on which one ranks first: financial sustainability, for instance, may run counter to environmental sustainability when it turns out that the envisaged action is highly attractive in economic terms, but ecologically not feasible. The standard three-pillar approach, which puts equal weight on all three sectors embraced by sustainable development, is of little help in this context.

Given the complexity of academic and administrative goals and little agreement on priorities and measures of goal achievements, it is hard to develop coherent and consistent mission statements on sustainable development (Meppem & Gill, 1997). Often, the extensive use of sustainability terminology in policy- and mission statements is used to do justice to the moral commitment higher education face in educating people, but the lack of clear guidelines and deadlines for action indicates that the good intention to become active in this field is not accompanied by concrete measures. This is clearly exacerbated by the fact that sustainable development as such is a highly elusive concept and the attempt to fill it with meaning constitutes a real challenge for policy makers (Meppem & Gill, 1997).
4.1.3 Client Service

People from all kinds of societal enter higher learning institutions with the overarching goal of receiving good education that helps them to have better chances on the employment market (Barbara Sporn called universities ‘people processing institutions’). Given this servant-client relationship, customers will almost by definition try to influence the decision-making process on issues which they consider important (Baldridge, 1983; cited in Sporn, 1999). The trend towards increased market orientation in both Europe and the United States underscores the importance of client service (Sporn, 1999), translating into internal policies to support departments, schools, and faculty who bring in external funds and serve clients as well.

Despite extensive literature research, no key documents could be identified that dealt with the issue of client pressure in terms of campus greening efforts and the diffusion of sustainability literacy in education. This is particularly the case if the term “clients” does not only embrace students, but is also meant to include companies and enterprises that provide a certain set of services (such as catering) to colleges and universities. Speaking in more general terms, researchers coincide in their findings that students play a central role in promoting on-campus sustainable development (Tew 2005; Shriberg 2002b; Adomssent & Michelsen 2007; Sharp 2002; Pittman 2004; More et al. 2005; Lozano 2006). For instance, Sharp (2002) argues that he witnessed the tendency among students to engage in short-term activities that aim to rise profile of certain issues and sometimes to embarrass the university if top decision-making promises are not followed by action. In this spirit, the political power of students forms an extremely effective catalyst for institutional transformation. And yet, whether their efforts are crowned with success depends on a range of other critical determinants (such as the financial feasibility of the proposed action), some of which will find further elaboration in section 4.2.

4.1.4 Task Complexity

Faculty in academic institutions is required to manage a complex agenda, covering teaching, research and service, whereas administration mainly focuses on management and leadership issues that are centered around hierarchy, control, and accounting (Sporn 1999; personal communication with Mr. Postema). The complexity of tasks is conditioned by external influences in the sense that colleges and universities serve clients with diverse needs that all request for an answer. Task complexity is also exacerbated by the fact that expertise is often dispersed within the institution with no road map available on how to
access it (Sporn, 1999). Consequently, if at times colleges and universities are not really conscious of what they are attempting to do, they consequently do not know how to take action, either (Baldrige, 1983).

When reflecting on how universities may facilitate progress towards mainstreaming their sustainability efforts, Leith Sharp (2002) maintains that the multi-structured, complex nature of higher education institutions constitutes one of the main burden which prevents sustainability management to take root in the organizational culture. Furthermore, the demand for systemic change is often further compounded by the fact that many universities are engaged in extensive growth policies that try to attract more students and give way to more research opportunities. In that sense, it will not come as a surprise that even the most ambitious institution will face a considerable trade-off, if ambitious sustainability plans coincide with growth trends, which may completely offset environmental gains. To quote Sharp (2002, p. 133):

“If we do manage to get the environmental imperative on the agenda of university decision makers, it is often seen as a later arriving competing priority that will have to wait its turn to be addressed- and who knows when this will be.”

Sharp focused his analysis on a higher education institution that was already highly ambitious in the field of sustainability management. It is important to bear in mind, however, that there is also a number of colleges and universities that are well-aware of the call for more environmentally responsible and socially justifiable decision-making, but have neither the tools nor the knowledge needed to implement policy measures within this field. In this respect, it should also not be overlooked that sustainability usually only constitutes one aspect among many others on the educational as well as operational agenda; and the question whether HE leaders will dedicate their efforts to the promotion of SD, depends on whether it constitutes a priority to them or not.

4.1.5 Environmental Vulnerability
Especially in the age of globalization, environmental pressures have a huge impact on public education and educational administration. Among other factors, the changing world economy, decline of confidence in the welfare state, and adverse social trends are said to constitute strong pressures for change in the organization and performance of education systems (Boyd, 1999). The consequences of this changing environment mirror on the micro
level in the sense that particularly in the westernized world, higher education institutions are ever more scrutinized by the people they serve. However, increased influence by external parties compromises not only the operating autonomy, but it also makes higher educations lose some control over the curriculum, the strategic goals and their daily operations (Baldridge et al., 1977, p. 6).

External pressure for more sustainability considerations in colleges and universities constitutes another decisive factor for causing a paradigm shift in the higher education management, even though the scope of impact depends on a variety certain conditions, such as existing policy measures in this field, government guidelines, the issue of peer review and -with regards to the micro-level- the institutional capacity to adapt or resist environmental changes. Moreover, the specific national context in which the respective institution is embedded converts itself in a crucial determinant whether fertile ground is provided to sustainability efforts (see, for instance, Sammalisto & Arvidsson, 2005). For instance, the formulation of national strategies has induced many HE institutions to take the imperative for more sustainability seriously and design policy measures meant to raise the environmental performance of the organization. However, despite these promising tendencies, the current state of knowledge of HE researchers does not permit the formulation of any reliable prognosis on the impact these policy recommendations and guidelines have in terms of stimulating HE institutions to infuse their three core missions with sustainability considerations (Wright 2002).

As a consequence, much more investigation in this field is necessary before a critical assessment of environmental forces in the realm of sustainability in higher education can be made. So far, most research ambitions have solely focused on reporting best practice cases, but in order to quantify this phenomenon, more attention needs to be dedicated to the interplay of, e.g., national policy actions such as curricula prescriptions, teaching recommendations, environmental compliance standard, etc. and the institutional response of higher learning institutions.
4.2 Section Recap: Revisiting the Myth of Reality

At the beginning of Chapter 4, it was argued that higher education institutions often fall victim to the myth of rationality, which renders institutional progress difficult and burdensome. Also with regards to sustainability management, this “unwritten law” of clinging to the status quo has serious consequences in the sense that greening the university may become a burdensome and nerve-wrecking process. As a consequence, the first ambition of this Chapter was to explore this myth by means of looking at five distinctive features (Goal ambiguity, client service, task complexity as well as environmental ambiguity; see Sporn 1999) of HE institutions and the respective implications for SD management. The resulting analysis provides the following important lessons:

- Like other bureaucratic organizations, colleges and universities have goals, hierarchical systems and structures, but diverge in terms of their non-profit nature (i.e. education is provided and research is carried out regardless of financial profitability) as well as their dual control system, namely faculty and administration.
- With regards to sustainability management, the dual management structure might have a detrimental impact on sustainability activities, particularly whenever support for more engagement in this field is one-sided and/or lacks a critical mass of support among faculty and/or administration members (Sharp, 2002).
- **Goal ambiguity** is present in HE sustainability management in so far that proposed actions in this field often lack clearly indicated deadlines as well as a detailed description of the policy measures envisaged. It might as well be the case that latter are not viable in financial terms, thus reinforcing the myth of rationality.
- **Client service** also plays a role, since the client groups “students” will almost by definition try to influence the decision-making process on sustainability issues which they consider important.
- **Task Complexity** impedes SD efforts due to the lack of a single observation point from which university-college wide changes can be programmed or implemented. Also, the extensive growth politics in which many HEs are involved might simply offset any environmental gains.
- Sustainability agendas are to a certain extent determined by external factors (“environmental vulnerability”) such as peer pressures by neighboring institutions or national policy guidelines and/or recommendations.
Whether the myth of rationality is to stay depends to a great extent on the interplay as well as on the strength of the categories mentioned above, which ultimately decide on the success or failure of any HE greening operation.

4.3 Organizational Conditions for Sustainability Management

Having pointed out to the organizational distinctiveness of higher education institutions, this study continues with delineating organizational elements and processes that the case study literature\(^{14}\) deemed critical for steering the respective college or university towards inclusive SD management. As was argued above, the very nature of colleges and universities as conservative organizations with strong bureaucratic barriers to change (Shriberg, 2002b) probably constitutes one of the biggest challenges when it comes to proposing concrete policy measures in this field. The previously discussed dualism of control, goal ambiguity, complexity of tasks, etc. can cause true headaches to those who have dedicated their time and resources to the cause of sustainability. Therefore, the principal question is: which factors and/or processes are said to be beneficial or detrimental for bringing about strategic change?

In his PhD dissertation *Sustainability in U.S. Higher Education: Organizational Factors Influencing Campus Environmental Performance and Leadership*, Michael Shriberg (2002b) examined distinctive characteristics of more than twenty American colleges and universities that had subscribed to the Talloires Declaration\(^{15}\) in order to identify characteristic gaps between current American HE institutions (both “leaders” and “laggards”) and his vision of the “sustainable” higher learning organization. Towards this ends, he reviewed and linked literature in the areas of organizational change (largely from corporate research), HE management, and sustainable development, corporate environmental & social responsibility and transformational leadership (Shriberg 2002b, cited in Tew, 2005). This thesis borrows from his research framework to structure and guide through the case study- and literature review on sustainability movements in higher education. In total, four questions were considered, namely the identification of

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\(^{14}\) A list of the names of researchers consulted for this part can be found at the end of Chapter 2.

\(^{15}\) The Talloires Declaration (TD) is a ten-point action plan for incorporating sustainability and environmental literacy in teaching, research, operations and outreach at colleges and universities. It has been signed by over 350 university presidents and chancellors in over 40 countries (January 2008; [www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires.html](http://www.ulsf.org/programs_talloires.html)).
organizational conditions that are conducive to on-campus sustainability, composition of stakeholder groups, barriers and problems experienced and finally possible organizational implications of an inclusive management approach. These questions will surface again in chapter five, when the potential for strategic change at Maastricht University will be discussed.

Q1: Which organizational conditions are most conducive to on-campus sustainability?

(a) Strong predictors

In light of the first criterion mentioned, namely image-seeking behavior, recall Sammalist and Arvidsson’ argument that “[colleges and] universities are becoming ever more aware of their image toward the outside world, given that the preconditions of their existence are rapidly changing and the competition for students is assuming a global dimension (2005, p. 29)”.

Therefore, HE Institutions which aim to improve their external and internal image are likely to pay greater attention to on-campus sustainability, given that change agents manage to link an institution’s desire to become nationally or internationally recognized with their own change efforts (Shriberg, 2002b). Shriberg’s findings also maintain that (US) institutions might be more successful in improving their sustainability performance when being characterized by a liberal orientation. In order to determine this criterion, the universities participating in Shriberg’s survey had to classify their political orientation according to one of three given categories- progressive, liberal and conservative (due to the impossibility of conducting a similar analysis, this category will be ignored when assessing the potential for change in the UM-context). Finally, the last “strong predictor” mentioned in his framework is “building off past successes”, by which he means the capacity of colleges and universities to use past achievements in the field of sustainability management to dedicate present resources (such as time, energy, financial resources, etc.) to future policy efforts. Given that the determination of this criterion is only possible with a tangible measurement procedure (such as a sustainability questionnaire which is handed out to the respective authorities or a systematic review of policy documents), “building-off past successes” will also be excluded from the subsequent examination of organizational efforts in the UM.

(b) Weaker Predictors

In regards to weaker predictors, Shriberg (2002b) found out that transformational leaders may only have a decisive impact on the institutional steering process if it is embedded in an
organizational climate that is not only characterized by collaborative decision-making structures, but which also guarantees top-level support to change agents. Ethics and morality (i.e. the identification with ethical rationales) may motivate a HE institution to set the sails for institutional transformation, but even strong ethical convictions do not automatically have to culminate in taking concrete action, hence ethical deliberations merely constitute a weaker predictor (Shriberg, 2002b). Also, demographic conditions such as size, location, degree levels offered, tuition and control as well as public- or private ownership turned out to be of little explanatory power in terms of facilitating strategic change towards institutional sustainability.

**Q2: Who is most effective in driving sustainability efforts?**

Irrespective of the fact that each campus sustainability initiative is unique in terms of circumstances, interests and opportunities, strategic change literature is remarkably consistent in outlining the need for at least one charismatic individual, who dedicates his time and energy to the cause of SD (in the literature, he is often called “sustainability champion”). For instance, Lozano (2006, p.793) argues that: “(...) the SD Champion is to be at the forefront and to be the link between the innovator and the organization.” On the other hand, Lozano asserts that not too much emphasis should be placed upon leadership, attitudes and to work towards SD and make it part of their culture and system.

In regards to the question whether a bottom-up or top-down approach is rather effective in driving on-campus sustainability, the answer provided by the majority of case studies for this thesis asserts: *neither nor!* For sustainability considerations to take root in the institutional culture, enlightened individuals from across all levels are needed, regardless of their relative influence on decision-making procedures (see, for instance, Gudz, 2004). However, Carpenter (2002) argues that senior involvement is crucial, this being due to two reasons: first, it allows senior executives to factor the university’s environmental program into wider management issues. Second, through participation, senior will be confronted with the financial, social and environmental costs and benefits; this will reinforce the importance of such initiatives and result in the continued support of the executive.

**Q3: What are dominant barriers to moving colleges or universities towards sustainability?**

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16 Beispiel geben, warum SD eine ethnische Frage ist
In 2005, Luis Velazquez et al. released the results of their extensive literature review on published and unpublished articles, conference proceedings, university reports, books, and website documents on barriers to change. The time frame of their study was from 1990-2002, but in some cases, references dating back to the time before 1990 were also taken into consideration. For the purpose of this thesis, I sorted them into three broad, although sometimes overlapping categories: (1) personal opposition, (2) organizational/institutional resistance (including the economic implications of maintaining an on-campus sustainability project) and (3) insufficient understanding of the concept of sustainable development as such as well as the practical implications that result from this lack of knowledge. The three dimensions are also graphically depicted on page 45.

With regards to the first category (personal opposition), lack of awareness, interest, time involvement and the unavailability of training courses are said to constitute the considerable barriers when trying to steer an HE institution towards sustainability. Lozano (2006) adds conservatism or unwillingness to change among staff members to this category: “change (towards sustainability) creates extra work in addition to the ‘day to day’ activities” (Lozano, 2006, p.791). Besides, the authors argue that in Latin American universities, it seems that machismo also affects SD efforts in the sense that women experience a lack of confidence in leading an initiative, so that they have to invest more energy, time and resource than their male colleagues (Velazquez et al., 2005).

Resistance to change is also deeply ingrained in the organizational structure. As an inherently conservative institution that offers few opportunities for new paradigms (Karabell, 1998) and little opportunity for consensus-finding, sustainability champions often solely target their efforts at one building or academic department (Velazquez, 2005). The researchers also assert that insufficient support from university administrators, lack of interdisciplinary research, operational problems when running a sustainability project as well as the need for more rigorous regulations and sustainability policies are other factors that keep initiatives from flourishing. Institutional change is also impeded by the lack of financial resources for sustainability-related projects, thus also jeopardizing future endeavors. The unavailability of performance indicators also constitutes an obstacle to institutional transformation, but given that a lot of policy research is being carried out in the field of sustainability indicators- and assessment in the realm of higher education, it is reasonable to assume that this picture has changed over time.
Last but not least, poor understanding of the concept of sustainable development as well as the actions that follow from it contributes to the fact that top decision-makers are still reluctant to infuse their operational procedures with sustainability-considerations. Apart from the lack of standard definitions and concepts, people also complained about the hesitancy of industry and companies to share information about sustainability practices with higher education institutions (Velazquez, 2005). Latter aspect leads to another important barrier, namely the lack of opportune communication, which crosscuts all three of the previously mentioned dimensions. Without properly working communication mechanisms
between the different departments and faculties, change agents have no road map to guide them through unforeseen problems, so that information can get stuck in one department.

Q4: What are possible organizational implications of inclusive sustainability management?

Possible ways to integrate sustainability into the institutional culture as well as to mainstream current efforts include the establishment of a sustainability task force in charge of stimulating community involvement, developing environmental plans and overseeing constant quality improvement. The University of British Colombia, for instance, has a Campus Sustainability Office in place with the primary focus on planning, design and operations, as well as a role in staff, faculty and student education about sustainability (Moore at al., 2005). This task force may be of temporary or permanent nature, depending on the specific needs of the respective institution. It might as well be the case that the task force becomes solely responsible of coordinating sustainability-related activities, whereas environmental management is dealt with at a different department. Universities and colleges that are keen on improving the environmental literacy of staff and students, but which do not dispose of the knowledge needed for doing so may seek external assistance by institutes or organizations engaged in sustainability related research and teaching (as will be shown in the subsequent chapter, this is the case of the University of Maastricht, which collaborates with the ICIS institute on sustainability issues).

There are many other ways to improve the environmental performance of an institution by means of making SD a firm part of the organizational culture. It is important to bear in mind, however, that organizational change naturally grows out of past and current efforts of a particular institution (Pittman, 2004) so that there will always be aspects that just apply to this context and may not be easily transferable to others.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Findings</th>
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| **Q1:** Which organizational conditions are most conducive to on-campus sustainability? (Findings by Michael Shriberg) | **Strong predictors**  
  - Image-seeking behavior  
  - Collaborative decision-making structure (formal & informal)  
  - Political orientation => could not be determined  
  - Building- off past successes=> could not be determined  

**Weaker predictors**  
  - Transformational leadership  
  - Ethics and morality  
  - (Demographic conditions) |
| **Q2:** Who is most effective in driving sustainability efforts?                   | **Diverse core of Stakeholders**  
  With support from top leaders – grassroots leaders can drive campus sustainability by acting in a coordinated manner and taking advantage of conducive organizational conditions as well as providing or capitalizing on a “spark” or “catalyst” (Shriberg, 2002b) |
| **Q3:** What are dominant barriers to moving colleges or universities towards sustainability? | **Many different barriers to campus sustainability, such as...**  
  - Lack of funding  
  - Lack of time  
  - Lack of high level support  
  - Lack of sustainability- related knowledge |
| **Q4** What are possible organizational implications of an inclusive approach?     |  
  - Adaptation of mission statement  
  - Sustainability policy  
  - Sustainability literacy courses for staff and students  
  - Interdisciplinary teaching  
  - Sustainability „task force” or even the establishment of a sustainability bureau which contributes towards the spread of sustainability- related information across the various faculties, facilities communication between the various stakeholders and engages itself in continuous quality improvement (e.g. via auditing) |

Table 4: Assessing the potential for change in higher learning institutions.
5 UM Sustainability Management

Universities and equivalent institutions of higher education train the coming generation of citizens and have expertise in all fields of research, both in technology as well as in the natural human and social sciences. It is consequently the duty to propagate environmental literacy and to promote the practice of environmental ethics in society (...). To achieve these aims and fulfill their basic mission, universities are urged to make every effort to subscribe to and implement the principles of actions set out below.


On October 19, 1993, the Copernicus Charter was signed on behalf of Professor Dr. H. Philipsen, former dean of Maastricht University (SISUM sustainability inventory, 2007). The Charter was created by the conference of European Rectors (CRE), nowadays called Association of European Universities (www.iisd.org/educate/declarat/coper.htm). Latter document highlighted the need for a higher education sustainability statement that could be readily applied to the context of over 500 universities in the 36 countries, which the CRE represented. Apart from appealing to all higher education institutions to convert themselves into leaders in developing sustainable societies, the Charter reiterated the importance acknowledging the vulnerability of the environment that should ultimately culminate in the adoption of a new mindset of environmental values within the higher education community (Wright, 2002).

Among the key areas promoted in the Charter, weight is put on the promotion of sustainability literature in order to fill the gaps in the present literature available for students, the dissemination of environmental ethics among teaching staff, students and the public, as well as the encouragement of partnerships & networks for knowledge exchange (Copernicus Charter for Sustainable Development, 1993). When discussing the issue of environmental literacy, the Charter explicitly states that universities should not only encourage environmental responsibility among students, but also make sure that the same norms and values are being passed on to staff and all individuals forming part of the university network.

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17 Copernicus stands for “COoperation Programme in Europe for Research on Nature and Industry through Coordinated University Studies”.
The signing of the COPERNICUS University Charter for Sustainable Development in 1993 as a response to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro marked a significant step in raising consciousness within the European universities about the necessity of taking action in the field of sustainable development to maintain the integrity of this planet for future generations. So far, the Charter enjoys significant popularity in higher education institutions: in November 2007, 326 signatories in more than 36 countries were registered on the official Copernicus webpage (http://www.copernicuscampus.org).

Notwithstanding the great success the Copernicus-project had in terms of making a moral appeal to university leaders to promote environmental awareness within their sphere of influence, it important to bear in mind that legally speaking, a charter is non-binding by its very nature, so compliance with the principles laid out takes place on a purely voluntary basis. About fourteen years later after the creation of the Copernicus Charter, a team of researchers operating at RMIT University (Melbourne, Australia) assessed the impact and value of non-binding agreements and declarations in achieving sustainability within pessimistic conclusion that universities have had a very low success rate in running true to the promises made (Bekessy et al, 2007). Their main argument was that signing key declarations amounted to a clear demonstration of commitment from universities and an excellent vehicle to generate public support for the paradigm shift, but given the absence of compliance mechanisms and quality assessment, universities have hardly been held accountable for failing to take action in the field of sustainable development in higher education (Bekessy et al, 2007).

The question in how Maastricht University has successfully coped with the principles laid out in Copernicus goes hand in hand with the research ambition of this thesis, which seeks to determine whether the current organizational conditions of UM sustainability management have the potential to convert the institution into a forerunner in this field. In this respect, this thesis continues as follows: first of all, an overview of national policy activities in the field of SD will be given. Secondly, I will elaborate on sustainability efforts within the University of Maastricht, thereby paying specific attention to existing courses and ongoing research on sustainability, faculty and administration engagement, service, student initiatives and networking. In a third step, I will apply the five-level model (see also Chapter 2 for a general description of the model) to the UM in order to determine what remains to be done on behalf of the UM-administration to convert itself into a
“sustainability champion”. The application of the five-level model also serves to prepare the ground for my discussion of the potential for organizational change at Maastricht University, which constitutes the fourth and final objective of this chapter.

5.1 External Factors
The way an HE institution interacts with the environment shapes the process and outcome of its decision-making regime (Sporn, 1999). For instance, Baldridge (1977) contends that the stronger the external pressure, the less autonomous colleges and universities are in determining the curriculum, the goals and the daily operation of the institution. Baldridge’s statement coincides with one of the assumptions made when carrying out the fieldwork for this study, namely that the political climate in which HE sustainability actions are embedded affects the way the learning institution deals with the subject matter.

5.1.1 Determining the national political Climate of SD efforts
In terms of the national political climate in which sustainability activities are carried out, Niko Roorda asserted that for the time being, there are no laws or regulations requiring the Dutch educational institutions to include sustainable development into education, research or operational procedures (email communication, September 2007). As such, the whole process of Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) in higher education is bottom up in the sense that Dutch universities and the university colleges (the 'hogescholen') work towards ESD on their own initiative. Yet, Roorda asserted that there is a national strategy for ESD, aiming not only at formal education (primary, secondary and higher education) but also promotes life long learning via the program 'Leren voor Duurzame Ontwikkeling' ('Learning for SD”). In light of its non-binding character, this action plan is mainly meant to stimulate HE institutions for taking action and raise ideas (www.senternovem.nl).

So far, the response to this challenge has been positive: in the Netherlands, a lot of universities and hogescholen are working hard on incorporating SD into their core obligations (personal communication with Niko Roorda, 2007). In this spirit, the presence of peer review might also play a considerable role in encouraging colleges and universities to improve their environmental performance and thus augment their institutional reputation. Recalling the argument raised by Baldridge et al. (1983; quoted in Sporn, 1999) that higher education leaders believe mostly in the concept of peer review for an objective evaluation of their accomplishments, it is worth investigating in how far this applies to sustainability management as well. For instance, in his analysis of campus recycling programs, Lonsbury
(2000, cited in Shriberg, 2002b) purports that institutions of higher education are highly sensitive to environmental programs in peer institutions, and thus aim at maintaining a positive image by emulating these programs. However, much more empirical testing needs to be conducted in order to test the hypothesis in how far peer performance creates a climate of national competitiveness which fuels sustainability agendas of other institutions.

5.2 Overview on Current State of Affairs
The following section provides an update on existing courses and ongoing research on 1) sustainability issues, 2) faculty and administration engagement, 3) service, 4) student initiatives and 5) networking. The overview given below stems from an inventory elaborated by the student organization SISUM/ UMP in collaboration with Mrs. Maja de Bruijn, employee at the UM’s facility services (Facilitaire Dienst) in charge of environmental affairs. The policy measures described therein will be critically assessed in section 5.3 via the application of the five-level model.

The inventory does neither pretend to be complete, nor does it claim to provide a balanced view on sustainability endeavors that would put equal weight on each of the above identified pillars (i.e. environmental operations, service, research and teaching) of sustainability management in higher education (Mrs. De Bruijn, personal communication). The informal and succinct nature of this policy document rendered the evaluation of current UM sustainability actions (see sub point 5.3) quite difficult in the sense that is could not always be determined whether courses, research, environmental operations and stakeholder group-activities deserve to call themselves “sustainable”. As a consequence, it is recommended to base a UM SD strategy on a better informed inventory.

5.2.1 Environmental Management
Maastricht University has an environmental license system for on-campus operations in place, which means that all suggested interventions need to be controlled and approved by the office for environmental affairs at the UM facility services. Resource use efficiency in terms of water, energy and paper savings as well as the use of 100% chlorine-free paper ranks high on the UM environmental agenda, and the strive for adopting more environmental responsibility has recently culminated in an energy regime shift towards the purchase of power for all university buildings from exclusively green energy suppliers. This

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18 As was argued at the beginning of Chapter 3, SD is a highly concept that can be interpreted in many different ways. The absence of a commonly agreed definition makes SD prone to idiosyncratic interpretations.
environmental achievement is worth mentioning in the sense that according to Mrs. De Bruijn, there is no other university on Dutch territory, which has carried out a similar policy (De Bruijn, personal communication). In regards of sustainable water use, the UM counts on two buildings that dispose of a so-called grey water circulation system (Uns 40 and Uns 60), ensuring that rainwater as well as water stemming from residual flows are reused for the toilet flush. Furthermore, a note on sustainable building practices waits for approval by the Coördinerend Beraad Bedrijfsvoering (CBB).

Apart from that, the inventory stresses that buying decisions need to be in alignment with the ecological principles laid out in the general purchase policy, which contains an extra chapter on the environment. For 2008, a target indicator of 10% organic food purchase for the catering service has been suggested.

Before moving on to research and teaching, it remains to be said that there is a number of other sustainability-related undertakings which are exclusively planned and/ or carried out on faculty-level, such as the adoption of “sustainability”- house rules to be respected by all employees working at the ICIS institute and well as a second-hand store where international students may purchase furniture and electrical equipment from previous student generations (Centre for European Studies). Some other measures in the field of sustainable development have been proposed (a student initiative at the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance, for instance, showed interest in obtaining expert’s advice on more energy efficiency for the new building), but no deadlines are specified.

5.2.2 Research and Teaching
Maastricht University provides for a multitude of sustainability-related courses. To begin with, The Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences offers a course on “European Environments” as well as a minor in globalization and inequality (SISUM inventory). Sustainability-oriented research at latter faculty is being carried out in the realm of the Qualirma-quality of life project which formulates policy recommendations for government, business and civil society (www.unimaas.nl). Several courses are also available at the University College Maastricht, such as “sustainable development- and introduction”, “Globalization, Environmental Change and Society”, “Globalization and inequality and “Hands on Sustainability”, all being developed and provided by staff members of the ICIS Institute. In regards to the Faculty of Economics and Business administration, students
are free to pursue a course in Ethics, Organization and Society; furthermore, research opportunities on sustainability are being offered at the European Centre for Corporate Engagement (ECCE).

The International Centre for Integrated Assessment and Sustainable Development (ICIS) has been charged with coordinating the sustainability courses at both Maastricht University College as well as the Maastricht Graduate School of Governance (MGSOG). At ICIS, researchers of various national backgrounds conduct theoretical, empirical and policy-relevant research on the complex issues facing the planet and its inhabitants (www.icis.unimaas.nl). Graduates enrolled in the Master program in Public Policy master at the MGSOG may choose a four-month specialization track in sustainable development organized and carried out by ICIS. At the Law Faculty, literacy in sustainability is being passed on to the students participating in the “Corporate Social Responsibility Course”; however, this offer will probably be replaced by the course “International Environmental Law” in the upcoming year of 2008. Research options on (social) sustainability are available at the Maastricht Centre of Human Rights, whereas these options are concentrated in the three broad areas of international human rights law, criminal law and women’s rights law.

The Maastricht Economic Research Institute on Innovation and Technology (UNU/MERIT) offers a great variety of research programs covering various economic, technological and innovative aspects of sustainability with more than fifty researchers involved. Last but not least, MUNDO is the unit within Maastricht University that facilitates cooperation on education exchange with Africa, Asia and Latin America. Ever since its foundation in 1997, MUNDO has been collaborating with universities and other educational institutions on improving the quality of educational programs by means of - mostly large scale- collaboration projects that are designed to strengthen institutional capacity building, thereby paying particular attention to sustainability-considerations. Projects embrace activities like staff development and staff exchanges, technical assistance, workshops, fellow-ships, research cooperation, infrastructural development, etc (www.mundo.unimaas.nl).
5.2.3 Sustainability related- student groups & networking

There is a wide range of sustainability-related student initiatives operating in the University of Maastricht-context, but their ranking of social, economic and ecological priorities as well as their level of commitment in sustainability issues differs. For instance, not all of them make explicit reference to the ecological dimension of sustainability, and instead orientate their activities towards the promotion of the social side of sustainability such as peace- and conflict management issues as well as the encouragement of intercultural exchange.

In the field of environmental sustainability in the university context, the University Environmental Platform (UMP; also referred to as SISUM) has recently attracted most attention. Its dual mission consists on the one hand in re-designing university operations according to more environmental-friendly criteria, and on the other hand in raising respect for the environment among all students and staff (SISUM inventory, 2007). Towards this ends, it has formed alliances among committed students from different faculty backgrounds that operate on a project basis in order to elaborate strategies and work on solutions with regard to improving the environmental performance of the university. The Studentworkforce for Sustainability and Development constitutes another UM- student initiative that contemplates the creation and diffusion of awareness and respect for sustainability in daily life as being one of their core missions. Furthermore, they focus on the issues of empowerment, intercultural dialogue and quality of life, which they address in weekly activities for (non-) members as well as conferences, debates and festivals.

In terms of (predominately) social engagement for sustainability, Amnesty International Maastricht Students (AIMS), Side By Side as well as Maastricht University Students Twinning a North Ghanaian Hospital (MUSTANGH) are of equal importance like the previously mentioned student groups. However, their scale and scope of activities offered as well as the (geographical) area of engagement differs. For instance, AIMS endeavors to increase human rights awareness within Maastricht University and Hogeschool Zuid while maintaining a system of subgroups that focus on specific issues. A similar objective is pursued by Side by Side, which concentrates on conflict resolution and peace management, the main area of interest being the Israel-Palestine conflict. MUSTANGH is a non-profit organization, led by a board of six students from Maastricht Faculty of Health, Medicine and Life Sciences that enables qualified medical students an 18-weeks internship at an hospital in Ghana during the last years of their studies, whilst providing knowledge,
financial and material support to this hospital in an attempt to foster and strengthen the public health system in Ghana.

Support for making sustainability a long-lasting priority in UM-affairs also comes from the student parties and NovUM. Among other things, both have expressed their advocacy to a sustainability approach in UM decision making, arguing that UM administration and staff should pay greater attention to the issue via integrating sustainability considerations into their daily routines. The role of NovUM is considered important, because some of their representatives are simultaneously members of sustainability-related working groups (such as the fair-trade coffee student initiative) and carry the ideas and insights gained during the working sessions to the council meetings. Ideally, they constitute a bridge between the student organizations without explicit UM-affiliations and weaker contacts to the official UM decision-making authorities. Nonetheless, as became evident from the panel session on November 22, this communication channel has hardly been used so far.

Opportunity for information exchange and creativity spill-over within and between student groups is provided at various occasions throughout the year such as the Ragweek, whose modern version is known in Maastricht ever since 2001 (SISUM Sustainability Inventory, 2007). Student organizations (study-, sport- and student associations) and individuals organize a full week of activities and workshops in order to raise money for charity purposes. Another possibility for getting together is Tafelstraat 13, which serves as an open house for students of the UM and their colleagues in Maastricht.

5.2.4 Strategic outlook 2008-2010

When evaluating the current state-of-affairs of existing efforts- and undertakings, the inventory argues that progress towards sustainability within the university is clearly impeded by fragmented, uncoordinated sectoral approaches as well as considerable lack of central commitment to maintain and enhance sustainability-related activities (UM inventory, 2007). More precisely, the report unmistakably states the need of mainstreaming current initiatives and projects as an important impetus for reaching progress on gaining official accreditation of efforts provided by AISHE (Auditing Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education). In this context, awareness raising and policy making- and implementation have been deemed to already constitute two core components of the UM-sustainability movement (UM sustainability inventory, 2007) and should furthermore be
extended to international project planning. The practical implications of this policy suggestion are not further specified.

In terms of awareness rising among staff and students, a publicity campaign on hands-on sustainability in the university context shall be planned and executed by the end of 2008; furthermore, the university administration intends to include a reference to sustainable development into their strategic program for 2011-2014 (Mr. Postema, personal communication). Besides, an AISHE audit (Auditing instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education) provided by the Dutch Network for Sustainable Development (DHO) is to be requested. Furthermore, the university intends to gain official recognition on the achievements made in the field of sustainable development by the Nederlands-Vlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO). A positive feedback would entitle the participating faculty or study program to utilize the term ‘special characteristic: sustainable development’ in official documentation.

The inventory also states that staff and students shall not only be aware of and deeply committed to the cause of sustainable development in UM higher education, but they shall also be actively involved in the steering process of infusing service, education and teaching with sustainability considerations. To this ends, further training on sustainability literacy shall be provided for faculty and administration employees by the respective UM decision-making bodies. Last but not least, all faculties and administrative entities are expected to have drafted their own commitment list via participatory decision-making, thus clarifying the obligations that fall within the scope of corporate environmental and social responsibility as well as identifying leverage of further improvement.

With regard to environmental management, the UM strives to obtain a place among the top five universities on Dutch territory with the lowest energy consumption. University-wide measures such as the installation of motion detectors in toilets, double-sided printing, energy-saving bulbs, sustainable building practices and the opening of a second-hand store (UM- kringloopwinkel) shall help to facilitate progress towards more energy efficiency. In an attempt to ensure that UM food purchases are in conformity with environmental standards and socially justifiable working practices, the UM buying department shall bring their purchase decisions in alignment with the recommendations issued by SenterNovem,
an agency of the Dutch Ministry of Economic Affairs that promotes sustainable development and innovation (www.senternovem.nl).

Figure 4: UM Sustainability Management at a glance.

5.3 Application of the Five-Level Model

Having provided the reader with an overview on UM sustainability efforts, it is of interest to assess in how far Maastricht University complies with the previously given definition of the sustainable institution (see Chapter 3). The five-level model serves to critically review the current state of affairs by structuring the various dimensions involved. Given the scarcity of (official) sustainability documentation, potential knowledge gaps in the model were filled by reviewing the case-study material gathered during the action-research phase of this study such as the stakeholder interviews. As previously argued, the subsequent analysis shall assist me in exploring the potential for strategic change in the UM (see end of this chapter).
Level 1: System Understanding

What is the UM’s understanding of sustainable development?

According to Andre Postema, UM Vice Chairman and in charge of internal management issues, sustainability depicts “a way of life that guarantees a long-term relationship with the environment” (2007, personal communication). A similar point is made by the UM sustainability inventory (2007, p. 1), which states that

“Sustainable Development is a concept which encompasses ecological, economic and social considerations; not only for this but also for future generations. Sustainable Development aims at creating a balance between these three components. It is a broad term that comprises all kinds of development - no matter whether of technical, economic, ecological or social nature-, which contribute towards maintaining a long-term relationship with the environment. Sustainable Development is also represented by the so-called triple P: people, planet and profit, which represent the social, ecological and economic dimensions of this expression. Sustainable Development implies that people sincerely strive towards reaching these three Po’s, so that they can unfold in harmony with each other.”

The above quotation indicates that the UM is aware of the three-layered nature of sustainable development (economy, environment and social interaction). It is also worth mentioning that apart from describing the concept as such, the citation contains a reference to the importance of taking action, that is sustainability can only be reached if people are not only aware of the responsibility they face towards nature and their fellowmen, but also act accordingly. Unfortunately, no other policy document could be identified which would have elaborated on the UM’s awareness of the system (i.e. organization within society within the biosphere). Taking into consideration that universities as multi-structured, complex systems depend on a broad range of ecosystem services, it would have been desirable to see a statement on the socio-ecological complexity as well as about the system complexity within the university.

Level 2: Vision- Success

What is the UM’s Vision of Success (i.e. what would be favorable outcome of planning in the realm of sustainability endeavors)?

Regrettably, the inventory does not contain any explicit statement on or reference to the UM’s vision of success. According to Mr. Postema, the UM perception of success is rather
classical in the sense that it pursues the dual objective of increasing the institution’s environmental performance and furthermore strives towards disseminating sustainability literacy among staff and students. Besides, the inventory’s mentioning of performing (at least one) sustainability audit and to obtain official accreditation by the NVAO indicates that the UM institution indeed seeks to strengthen its reputation in this field. Whereas these ambitions point into a specific direction, they clearly lack further specification at this stage.
Level 3

(A) Action- which actions are taken in the domain of sustainable development?

As was indicated in section 5.2, Maastricht University has incorporated sustainability-considerations into service, research and teaching, but in how far it has been successful in doing so, remains the focus of the action-level.

Environmental Management

At first glance, it seems that the environmental imperative is taken very seriously. Thus, the UM has an environmental licensing system in place which strives towards the diffusion of sustainable procurement- and building practices, considerable energy savings as well as the exclusive purchase of green energy. Nevertheless, there is a lot of space for improvement. For instance, it would be desirable to inform staff and students about the environmental consequences of their actions (such as energy losses when leaving the computer switched on all day) and encourage them to more environmental-friendly behavior. Stickers on photocopy machines that propagate double-printing as well as little notices in public toilets to switch off the light when leaving the room are not enough to bring about the desired change in people’s attitude towards nature. It can be observed that these recommendations and hints are often simply overlooked by the people they are targeted at (i.e. students). Consequently, if the UM pursues a leadership role in environmental management, it must ensure that campus sustainability is not reduced to ecological efficiency, but goes hand in hand with a high degree of environmental literacy among staff and students who practice what they have been taught.

The absence of binding targets in building practices and procurement affairs has been justified with the lack of an “infrastructure for sustainable production” (Postema, 2007) – an argument which is comprehensible, given the aforementioned elusiveness and pervasiveness of the concept as such. More precisely, a gap is witnessed between the level of concreteness of policymakers are expected to deliver when drafting their policy recommendations in the field of SD and the answers they are able to deliver. A similar “dilemma” was confronted in the UM, when in a sustainability note addressed to the University Council in 2005, Unicatering expressed its desire to assume a leadership position in sustainable food procurement among Dutch catering services on the condition that the UM would comply them (i.e. Unicatering) with binding targets (Leidinggevenden Unicatering, April 2006). In the end, however, no decision could be met concerning this
petition, so that this policy suggestion was dropped (email communication with Josephine Jackisch, 2008). It can be argued though that the fact that policy-makers are still struggling with giving concrete meaning to this phenomenon should not be taken as a pretext for remaining passive in this field, but should stimulate the respective UM-decision-making authorities to devote their time, energy and resources to carry out further investigations on the environmental and social compatibility of their purchase decisions. This deliberation will surface again in the policy recommendations part.

Research and Teaching

The extensive list of sustainability-related courses and research opportunities offered emphasizes the UM’s ambition to provide its students with the knowledge and skills they need to make this world a better place to live in. Also in this context, a word of caution seems indispensable, given that there still is considerable disagreement among the research community when an action, product or process may bear the label “sustainable” (Robinson, 2005). For instance, is it correct that a course on ethics and morality may claim to be SD-oriented even though the environmental and economic dimension is totally dismissed? And does a research project that deals with “sustainable systems design” deserve to call itself sustainable even though the measures suggested are not viable in economic terms? To put it differently, how do we deal with courses that fail to address or balance out all three dimensions? As long as no quality benchmarks and/or curriculum prescriptions are in place, it remains a challenge to judge in how far research and teaching impart sustainability knowledge.

It has not yet been possible to determine the extent to which interdisciplinary sustainability teaching has become reality in the UM-context. An interdisciplinary approach implies that instead of focusing one single discipline, teaching staff should attempt to integrate other subjects as well in search of a common methodological approach and theoretical fundament (Roorda, 2001). Educating students in sustainable development does not necessarily require the obligatory participation in a course on the subject matter; the same level of literacy may be achieved if teaching staff sets out to complement their curriculum with insights from other academic backgrounds in search for a synthesis of the disciplines involved. Towards this ends, the broad field of sustainable development shall serve as a source of inspiration and steering instrument in order to ensure that sufficient attention is being paid to issues such as ecological integrity, social fairness and economic welfare. There is already a
considerable amount of educational literature available which contains guidelines and recommendations on how the interdisciplinary approach works in practice (Roorda, personal communication 2007), so that university employees who are still struggling with how to integrate sustainability considerations into their teaching may seek assistance by educational establishments that have already gained considerable expertise in this field (such as the Dutch Network Duurzaam Hoger Onderwijs).

Student groups – Networking

Also at the UM, student groups have been organizing themselves to address the issue of sustainability. As was previously argued by Leith Sharp (2002), the very existence of these initiatives depends on the emergence of committed students who share their passion for environmental protection and social justice and decide which activities can be jointly undertaken to address these issues. These people usually experience financial difficulties, have deficient knowledge on how the university is run and how to gain access to the main decision-making authorities. According to the insights gained during my panel session with representatives from sustainability-related stakeholder groups, Maastricht University is no exception to this rule. Conrad Schmidt-Bens, for instance, PhD researcher at UNU-Merit and co-founder of the student workforce for sustainability and development, asserted that particularly small-scale student organizations would be having a hard time to obtain financial back-up to guarantee their survival, whereas fraternities that are economically well-off anyway enjoy a privileged position. Besides, UM decision structures were deemed elitist and almost inaccessible for grassroots groups, wishing to see their issues on the university agenda as well. Whereas the intention of this paper is not to judge on the democratic nature of the UM decision-making regime, it is noteworthy that there was such a high level of agreement among student groups that more needed to be done on behalf of the UM to improve the collaboration with the UM Board in order to build team learning capabilities and work jointly on sustainability-related issues.

(B) Strategy- which strategy and/or process is envisaged to reach progress towards sustainable development?

In an interview dating back to December 10 2007, Andre Postema explained to me that in 2008, the UM board intends to reach agreement on a number of policy actions which have been proposed in this field, namely the launch of a Sustainability Charter, the finalization of
short- and long term measures to be taken in this field and finally the inclusion of the therein resulting sustainability strategy into the UM strategic program 2011-2014.

For the time being, the only source of documentation which contained a strategic outlook on the sustainability agenda, is the above quoted UM sustainability inventory. Even though latter document provides the reader with a rough idea on actions and procedures envisaged to strengthen the UM’s performance in the field of sustainability management, the question is to which extent the measures put forward reflect serious policy ambitions. In this respect, Barbara Sporn’s aforementioned “goal ambiguity” is clearly evident in the program: formulations are vague and elusive (“a note for sustainable building practices waits for approval by the CBB”), deadlines for planned actions are not further specified and certain issues such as financial support for small-scale student initiatives are not mentioned. Besides, the suggested measures are biased towards the environmental imperative (e.g. double printing, motion detectors on all toilets, green power, exclusive purchase of environmentally-friendly paper, etc.). It goes without saying that the suggestions aimed at improving the environmental performance are also taken to the highest level of concretion, whereas policy measures in the field of sustainability literacy demand further specification (“Employees and students are caught up in the fact that the UM has made advances in the field of SD”19). The catch phrase “interdisciplinary sustainability education” is completely missing in the framework, despite of the previously stressed importance of infusing HE research and teaching with the subject matter.

Given the non-binding nature of the strategic outlook given in the inventory, the analysis cannot be taken very far. Thus, whether the measures put forward will be complemented by more concrete guidelines and/or binding and whether they will be translated into reality or not ultimately depends on a mix of factors such as the degree of high-level commitment and the interplay of internal with external pressures that cannot be determined by this study.

**Level 4: Communication- Network**

*How does communication on sustainability issues work within the university?*

In the panel session, the lack of central reporting mechanisms that link the university’s central decision-making authorities with the student sustainability network was held to

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19 The original document states: “Medewerkers en studenten zijn doordrongen bij het feit dat de UM een naam op het gebied van duurzaamheid hoog te houden heft […]”.
constitute one of the core explanations behind the institution’s slow progress in the field of sustainability management. More specifically, I had the impression that ever since previous attempts to gain critical support among the UM-decision-making authorities for sustainability-related projects and initiatives failed, student groups become more and more skeptical of whether they can expect any top level assistance. For instance, Josephine Jackisch from SISUM (2007, personal communication) asserted that so far, responsibility for taking concrete action would have always been played back to the proponents who do not have the financial or authoritative means to translate the suggestions made into practice. Along this perception of widespread pessimism and disillusion, some individuals would not even inform themselves about the various options available to take a stake in the UM decision-making regime, given their fear that their request would fall on deaf ears anyway (sustainability panel session, 2007).

The above also implies that transformational leadership as one of Michael Shriberg’s predictors for organizational change cannot unfold, since it is not embedded in a collaborative decision-making regime which brings together the different stakeholders engaged in this process and listens to their concerns. Recalling that change agents may only have a decisive impact on the institutional steering process if the organizational climate is characterized by decision-making structures that guarantee top-level support to their efforts, it is understandable why communication has proven so burdensome and complicated.

Also within the student community, communication works far from perfect: people tend to focus on their own working group- or project whilst paying only marginal attention to other student initiatives that may pursue a very similar set of goals. In regards to the UM sustainability discourse, poor coordination between these groups as well as the absence of a platform for communication and collaboration could not only result in a duplication of efforts but may also prevent the student community to gain the critical mass needed for gaining high level support for their policy ambitions. Furthermore, it seems that only a very few people make use of the opportunity to communicate themselves with student representatives of the university council, which serves as the critical junction between the grassroots level and the UM’s decision-making authorities. However, in an interview dating back to 5 December 2007, Josephine Jackisch explained that communication with novUM

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20 Among other things, participants alluded to the Copper Campus discussion, when various environmental stakeholder groups set out to boycott this building project)
on sustainability issues has undergone slight improvements thanks to the participation of novUM representatives in sustainability-related student initiatives who carry the ideas and insights gained from the working sessions to their own meetings, thus ensuring that sustainable development is placed high on their agenda and eventually brought up in the council meetings. Which course this new form of cooperation will take remains to be seen.

**Level 5: Tools-Evaluation & Feedback**

*Are there any policy measures in place or suggested which ensure continuous quality improvement of current actions?*

There are – apart from the environmental licensing system– no quality assessment tools used or evaluation mechanisms in place which may provide the respective authorities with a feedback on their actions and create leverage for continuous quality improvement. The UM intends, however, to perform an AISHE sustainability audit\(^{21}\) which would qualify as a system tool\(^{22}\) (Sustainability Inventory, 2007).

AISHE is very interactive in the sense that it requires the direct involvement of decision-makers and those affected by decisions in measuring performance. Workshop participants are encouraged to describe desired future states of performance, and to define implementation plans on how to reach these future states. It is an excellent example of a process-oriented approach to sustainability assessment (Shriberg, 2002a), but since the results rely entirely on the subjective experiences of those participating in the workshop, the ability to compare sustainability performance across campuses and even across departments is limited\(^{23}\). At all events, it would be desirable to see this instrument complemented with capacity tools (e.g. training workshops, teambuilding exercises, recruitment and reward policies) that help staff and students learn about each of the five levels in order to build capacity to better understand and plan in a complex system (Tew, 2005). The sustainability-awareness campaign (faculty-wise, students develop their own sustainability-house rules) scheduled for 2008 is a step into the right direction, given that this intention culminates in concrete action.\(^{24}\)

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21 More information on AISHE can be found in the appendix to this study.
22 According to Chapter 2, a system tool measures and provides status of and impacts on the system (i.e. the UM)
23 For further details, please consult: [www.campusdurable.org](http://www.campusdurable.org)
24 According to Mr. Postema (personal communication, 2007), the UM-Board still needs to decide on the content of sustainability programme, which will not happen before February 2008.
Table 5: the five-level- model applied to the University of Maastricht.
5.4 Assessing the UM’s Potential for Organizational Change

After having applied the five-level model to the UM, the main research question underlying this study can finally be addressed: Do the current organizational conditions of sustainability management at Maastricht University have the potential to convert this university into a forerunner in this field?

On the basis of the literature review (primary and secondary sources) correspondence, questionnaire responses and last but not least the UM Sustainability inventory, the conclusion evolves that in terms of sustainability management, the UM’s adaptive capacity is greatly compromised by the nature of its organizational conditions (current structures, processes, and attitudes), converting itself into a sustainability laggard. The average performance (at least partly) stems from the lack of a diverse core of stakeholders (including the respective decision-making authorities) who act in a coordinated manner and jointly take advantage of conducive organizational conditions as well as providing or capitalizing on a “spark” or “catalyst”. So far, most proposed actions have to wind their way through the complex, top-down UM decision-making regime with little space for grassroots involvement, so that it does not surprise that many ambitious projects and small-scale greening initiatives have either come to a halt at a very early stage or are still struggling very hard to obtain a critical mass of attention and financial back-up (panel session, 2007). On the other hand, student groups have also failed to use existing reporting channels to the respective decision-making entities and also to improve communication between them in order to prevent a duplication of efforts.

Proactive top-level commitment is also needed when it comes to infusing all taught disciplines with sustainability-related knowledge. The UM sustainability inventory gives a promising overview on ongoing research and teaching in the broad field of SD, but it is not clear in how far the subject is ever touched upon in an interdisciplinary fashion by other academic programs offered at the University of Maastricht.

And yet, the above criticism does not mean that there is no potential for betterment. For instance, it should be taken as a positive sign that the UM was among the first colleges and universities that signed the Copernicus charter. Although it was previously argued that the UM is lagging behind with converting itself into a “sustainability champion”, this expressed readiness to act shows that the UM does care about the challenge of SD, just as much as it
cares about its reputation as one of the leading higher education institutions on Dutch territory (www.unimaas.nl).

Also, the UM’s pronounced interest in obtaining accreditation of sustainability efforts by the NederlandseVlaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO) for at least one of its study programs and/or faculties should be taken as a clear signal that decision-makers have come to appreciate the value of SD as a strategic planning concept in higher education. The strive for official recognition and reputational power might unleash the critical level of top-down support needed to mainstream current efforts and take further action in this field. Besides, following Baldridge’s argument that the performance of HEs is influenced by peer review\textsuperscript{25} (see also pp.37-38), the outlook for more emphasis on inclusive sustainability management is not as negative as might seem at first glance. With more and more colleges and universities committing themselves to the environmental imperative and incorporating SD into their organizational culture (e.g. by issuing a sustainability policy or creating a sustainability coordination office), it is unlikely that the UM will remain rather passive in this field.

Change seldom comes over night, but is often the result of careful and time-consuming deliberations and discussions among various groups of stakeholders. However, internal demands by staff and students as well as external forces such as the issuing of policy guidelines- and recommendations, national strategies, the diffusion of action plans for sustainable development in education and the availability of sustainability indicators and auditing instruments contribute to the fact that more and more colleges and universities are slowly but steadily making progress in this field. (Sammalisto & Arvidsson, 2005). Why should institutional transformation not be possible for our institution?

\textsuperscript{25} In this context, Lonsbury (2000, cited in Shriberg, 2002b) argues that institutions of higher education are highly sensitive to environmental programs in peer institutions, and thus aim at maintaining a positive image by incorporating sustainability-considerations into their routine operations.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Question</th>
<th>Findings</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q1:</strong> Which environmental factors may accelerate progress towards SD?</td>
<td>• The UM’s role as a forerunner for other HEs&lt;br&gt;• “Soft power” through national policy recommendations &amp; guidelines&lt;br&gt;• Possibility that peer pressure is exerted by other “sustainability champions” in Dutch higher education which might fuel UM-sustainability-efforts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q2:</strong> Which of Michael Shriberg’s predictors for organizational change apply to the UM?</td>
<td>• Image-seeking behavior could prove beneficial for accelerating progress in this field&lt;br&gt;• Deficient collaborative decision-making structure (sustainability management is almost exclusively top-down)&lt;br&gt;• Transformative leadership cannot unfold due to insufficient high level support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q3:</strong> Who drives sustainability efforts in the UM context?</td>
<td>• Student groups very active in sustainability promotion, but coordination of efforts and more high-level support needed!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q4:</strong> What are the dominant barriers to moving the UM towards sustainability?</td>
<td><strong>Many different barriers to campus sustainability, such as...</strong>&lt;br&gt;• Highly deficient communication&lt;br&gt;• Lack of top-level support&lt;br&gt;• Lack of funding&lt;br&gt;• Lack of “sustainability-infrastructure” (A. Postema)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Q5:</strong> What are possible organizational implications of an inclusive approach?26</td>
<td>• Sustainability literacy courses for staff&lt;br&gt;• Interdisciplinary teaching &amp; Research&lt;br&gt;• Sustainability “task force” which among other duties will be charged with mainstreaming the current approach and also improve communication between the different&lt;br&gt;• Creation of an internet platform for information exchange&lt;br&gt;• Set up an incentive system for outstanding engagement</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Table 6: assessing the potential for organizational change at the UM

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26 This question will be addressed in the policy-recommendations part.
6 Policy Recommendations

Having concluded with the analysis of UM sustainability-activities, this chapter deals with the policy recommendations. As was argued elsewhere in this study (i.e. Chapter 2), some elaborated in the panel session with representatives from stakeholder groups and interviews with Josephine Jackisch from SISUM and Niko Roorda from DHO. Others were inspired by strategic change stories of those HE institutions that had experienced similar difficulties like the UM (e.g. lack of top level support) and were now eager to disseminate their experiences among their peers. For sake of increasing the explanatory value of the suggestions provided below, it is recommended that the UM administration critically reviews them and seeks solutions to the issues which could not be sufficiently addressed by this study. 27

Finally, it is important to offer one additional note of caution: all policy measures have been designed for the short-run, that is they should be realized within a time span that does not exceed three years. Even though an all-encompassing sustainability policy would be advantageous in terms of mainstreaming the institution’s current approach in sustainability management, the case-study findings put forward in the paper conveyed the impression that a policy framework would meet little response as long as SD does not constitute a priority on the UM-decision-making agenda. Besides, for a policy framework to be meaningful, much more in-depth research would have to be conducted on the matter of the organizational consequences of latter including the financial implications and the assignment of responsibilities among staff- and students. Still, I would like to stress that for SD to take root in the UM’s organizational culture and to ensure its incorporation into all routine operations, the elaboration of an inclusive sustainability policy would be the next logical step and should be targeted as a long-term measure.

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27 See also: Suggestions for further research, pp. 77-78.
**Level 1- Understanding**

- **Sustainability literacy for staff:**
  According to Parkin *et al.* (2004, p.9), the sustainability literate person:
  (1) understands the need for change to a sustainable way of doing things, individually and collectively
  (2) has sufficient knowledge and skills to decide to act in a way that favors sustainable development; and
  (3) is able to recognize and reward other people’s decisions and actions that favor sustainable development.

When providing courses in SD literacy, priority should be placed upon indicating to teaching staff how this knowledge may be integrated into their teaching methods.

- **Promote understanding of how the University works within the system!** Internships and study placements abroad are recommended to students as opportunities to gain real world experience. But why must students always leave the campus to gain this experience? Following the example set by the University of British Columbia, students could be granted the opportunity to study the UM campus (e.g. analysis of the food catering system) and make recommendations. The reports would be published on the webpage of the sustainability platform and would furthermore be submitted to the respective decision-making authorities for further review (UBC, 2004).
Towards a vision of the sustainable university…

- **Sustainability Vision**: the crucial starting point of any SD initiative should be the agreement of a Sustainable UM- vision! As was argued by Gudz et al. (2004), designing a sustainability office may not be the best reflection of the institution's commitment to building a sustainable future. The university’s transition to sustainability needs to be a shared vision (Senge, 1990), which is ideally developed through dialogue (University of British Columbia, 2004) with various stakeholder groups.

Suggested participatory tool: the Delphi method. “The focus of the Delphi technique is to obtain the most reliable consensus of opinion among a group of individuals through a series of questionnaires interspersed with controlled feedback. The traditional Delphi technique responds to the identified weaknesses of individual face-to face encounters” (Wright, 2006, p. 763)
**Towards an all-encompassing strategy for SD...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Assignment of responsibilities</th>
<th>Financial implications</th>
<th>Reference/Contact details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ICIS Commitment List</strong>: all faculties draft their own commitment list in a participatory way. The list defines the shared commitments and agrees on further points of improvement (Source: UM/ SISUM inventory; personal communication with A. Postema)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Curriculum re-design</strong>: all faculties develop educational action plans to teach SD in an interdisciplinary way. Inspiration for doing so can, for instance, be sought from the homepage of DHO (Duurzame Hoger Ontwikkeling Onderwijs). The respective decision-making bodies should also make sure that research and teaching activities are sufficiently visible to current and prospective students</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Homepage of DHO <a href="http://www.dho.nl">www.dho.nl</a></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sustainability Coordinator</strong>: Suggestion to appoint a sustainability relations coordinator in charge of mainstreaming existing sustainability projects; this person should also be responsible of facilitating communication between the various stakeholders (Source: Mrs. Maja de Bruijn, stakeholder panel session 2007)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>See, for instance, <a href="http://www.sustain.ubc.ca">www.sustain.ubc.ca</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
• **Brochure:** A yearly published promotional brochure for public display to promote the UM as a sustainable environment including its recycling facilities, fair trade policies, recent initiatives, SD-related teaching, etc. (Source: SISUM Inventory; stakeholder panel session)

• **Sustainability fund** for student initiatives is established, whereby student groups can apply through the SSC for support for activities that aim at promoting SD at the UM (Source: SISUM Inventory, stakeholder panel session 2007)

*Added by author.* access to current support channels should be made more transparent and accessible: there are already funding schemes available, but students must be familiar with them (e.g. via publishing an explanatory note on grant/support schemes on the university’s homepage

Furthermore, the UM is encourage to conduct more research on **sustainable procurement standards**. Bearing in mind that environmental interest groups have been quite active in this field (see, for instance, the ecoplan initiative which sells organic food to students), the UM is recommended to profit from their vast knowledge. This information exchange could also happen against the backdrop of the *Sustainability!-get togethers.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Small grant style, ranging from 100-800; per project</th>
<th>LHUMP homepage <a href="http://www.lhump.nl/links.php">http://www.lhump.nl/links.php</a></th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Senternovem <a href="http://www.senternovem.nl">www.senternovem.nl</a></td>
<td>Student Service centre (SSC): <a href="http://www.ssc.unimaas.nl">www.ssc.unimaas.nl</a></td>
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</table>
Towards better communication between stakeholders…

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Assignment of responsibilities</th>
<th>Financial implications</th>
<th>Reference/contact details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Sustainability!-Get-Together (2 times per year)</strong> this meeting shall constitute the direct link between the UM's grassroots groups and top decision-making authorities. A small group of faculty, staff and student representatives get together and discuss sustainability-related issues such as identifying strategic opportunities, establishing and maintaining the subject as a high priority. Note: For sake of improving between the different stakeholder groups, the university must behave proactively instead of playing responsibility back to student groups (Source: Interview with Josephine Jackisch, SISUM)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Wikimaas <a href="http://www.wikimaas.org">www.wikimaas.org</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <strong>Sustainability Platform (internet).</strong> Staff and students collaborate in the set-up of an online platform for UM sustainability management. Ideally, a link to this platform should be published on the official UM-webpage, containing information on sustainability-related student groups, UM Sustainability Agenda, Past &amp; current achievements, Project support/ financial back-up, contact persons, external network.</td>
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### Level 5- Evaluation-Feedback

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<th>Description</th>
<th>Assignment of responsibilities</th>
<th>Financial implications</th>
<th>Reference/ contact details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Towards constant quality improvement...</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>4000:- plus travel and accommodation expenses for AISHE consultants</td>
<td>Mr. Niko Roorda <a href="mailto:Niko.Roorda@dho.nl">Niko.Roorda@dho.nl</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>AISHE audit</strong>: At least one faculty participates in an AISHE audit(^{28}) and drafts its own action plan to set clear targets for the future. A preliminary quickscan on the current state of affairs can be done by the ULSF (university leaders for a sustainable future) questionnaire or the LHUMP (het studenten netwerk voor duurzame ontwikkeling) checklist (UM/ SISUM audit)</td>
<td></td>
<td>AISHE homepage: <a href="http://www.dho.nl/AISHE">www.dho.nl/AISHE</a></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- <strong>Annual Sustainability Report</strong>: staff and students yearly review SD performance and agree on strategies for improvement. This could take place in the framework of the sustainability get-togethers</td>
<td></td>
<td>ULSF homepage: <a href="http://www.ulsf.org">www.ulsf.org</a></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

\(^{28}\) More information about AISHE will be provided in the appendix of this study.
6.1 General Remarks
At all stages, proactive top-level commitment constitutes the critical determinant for translating the principles laid out in the Copernicus Charter into practice. What is needed for the administration is to link current endeavors to central decision-making authorities, evaluate sustainable principles, thinking and action into all aspects of university management. Besides, an annual sustainability report should be developed to address the areas of: planning, design, land-use, communication, interdisciplinary sustainability teaching, etc. In terms of mainstreaming current efforts, a shift of mind is needed in order to comprehend the actual capacity of change agents to influence systemic change and also to keep current endeavors alive.

The above policy suggestions highlight that re-orientation towards more coherent and inclusive sustainability management does not have to be expensive: apart from the AISHE audit, most recommendations are expected to have minor or even no financial implications. What they do require, however, is a sacrifice of time, motivation and creative minds that reflect willingness to search for innovative, straight-forward solutions that are cheap and easy to implement.

6.2 Suggestions for Further Research
In light of the particular restrictions of the case-study analysis, some issues did not receive the attention needed to enhance the reliability and generalizability of this study. This goes first and foremost for the subject matter of adaptive university structures and the respective implications for sustainability management. Considering that only very little research has been conducted in the field of organizational change –one outstanding exception being Michael Shriberg’s aforementioned framework for institutional transformation-, the explanatory power of the assessment was compromised by the lack of qualitative as well as quantitative analysis. Therefore, further examination by others is considered indispensable to ultimately determine their significance. Towards this ends, it is recommended to carry out investigations on the interplay between internal and external pressures that operate in the realm of higher education and the institutional response.

Also with regards to my study of sustainability initiatives at the UM, a lot of questions have arisen through the process of inquiry that deserve more thought and careful analysis. In view of environmental vulnerability, it would be interesting to investigate in how far it is correct to assume that the issue of peer pressure (in the sense that the university compares its performance to HEs which have made a name for themselves in the field of SD) is very effective in speeding
progress towards organizational change. Linked to this aspect is the question in how SD constitutes a strategic planning concept in the realm of higher education, which augments the reputation of the institution. A last recommendation for further study would be to determine in how far the UM has lived up to Niko Roorda’s demand for interdisciplinary teaching and research, thereby (ideally) including all study programs offered.
**Literature**

**Books and Journals**


**Primary Sources**


SISUM (April 2007). *Sustainability Inventory*, Maastricht.


More information on the following primary sources can be found in the appendix to this study:

- Interview and email correspondence with Niko Roorda from DHO
- Interview with Andre Postema (10/12/2007)
- Notes on panel Session with UMP-members (22/11/2007)
- Interview with Josephine Jackisch from SISUM

**Internetpages**

- Webpage of the University of Maastricht. Available at: [www.unimaas.nl](http://www.unimaas.nl)
- Webpage of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF). Available at: [www.ulsf.org](http://www.ulsf.org)
- Webpage of Wikimaas. Available at: [www.wikimaas.org](http://www.wikimaas.org)
• Webpage of the UN Decade of Sustainable development in Higher Education. Available at: http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=27234&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

• Maastricht University Centre for international Cooperation in Academic Development (Mundo). Available at: http://www.mundo.unimaas.nl/mundo.html

• Webpage of het studentennetwerk voor duurzame ontwikkeling (LHUMP). Available at: www.lhump.nl.


• Webpage of the Nederlands-Flaamse Accreditatieorganisatie (NVAO). Available at: www.nvao.net.


• Webpage of Senternovem. Available at: www.senternovem.nl.


All sources have been retrieved from the World Wide WEB on 04/01/08.
Appendix

- Duurzame ontwikkeling binnen de Universiteit Maastricht (Internal document number: FD/ MdB/MV 07.0946), April 2007
- Auditing Intrument for Sustainability in Higher Education (AISHE)
- Interview with Josephine Jackisch from SISUM (05/12/07)
- UM Stakeholder Panel Session (22/11/07)
- Interview with Mr. Andre Postema (10/12/07)
- Sustainability Questionnaire, Niko Roorda (DHO) (29/10/07)
Duurzame ontwikkeling binnen de Universiteit Maastricht

Inleiding

Duurzame ontwikkeling (DO) is een concept waarin ecologische, economische en sociale belangen bij elkaar komen, voor zowel de huidige als de toekomstige generaties. Duurzame ontwikkeling is de eis om een evenwicht tussen deze drie basisconcepten te vinden. Het is een breed begrip, en omvat alle ontwikkelingen - op technisch, economisch, ecologisch of sociaal vlak - die bijdragen aan een wereld die efficiënter, zuiniger en op lange termijn meer continu omgaat met de aarde. Duurzame ontwikkeling wordt vaak voorgesteld door de drie P's (triple P): people (mensen), planet (planeet) en profit/prosperity (winst/welvaart), die staan voor respectievelijk de sociale, ecologische, economische dimensies van het begrip. Bij duurzame ontwikkeling moet men ernaar streven om deze drie P's (ofwel: natuur, samenleving en economie) harmonieus met elkaar te laten werken.

Duurzame ontwikkeling (DO) leeft in de maatschappij bij het kabinet Balkenende IV en binnen de Universiteit Maastricht. Studenten en medewerkers hebben in dit kader initiatieven ontwikkeld maar nog nooit zijn deze initiatieven gebundeld. Sterker nog de initiatieven zijn vaak alleen bekend in het kleine kringetje van de initiatiefnemers. Daarbuiten heeft men er geen weet van.

Sinds eind 2006 kent de Nederlandse Vlaamse Accreditatie organisatie (NVAO) twee bijzondere kenmerken dat wordt toegekend aan opleidingen die iets speciaals hebben waarmee ze zich onderscheiden. Naast ‘duurzame ontwikkeling’ (SD) is ‘internationale oriëntering’ erkend als bijzonder kenmerk. Daarvoor is een Duurzaam Hoger Onderwijs keurmerk met twee sterren vereist via een AISHE-audit.

Deze notitie beoogt een drietal zaken:
• Een overzicht geven van zaken die binnen de Universiteit op het gebied van DO ontwikkeld zijn, of nu ontwikkeld worden (zonder daarbij de pretentie te hebben volledig te zijn);
• Het CvB verzoeken DO als één van de speerpunten van de UM te benoemen.
• Een overzicht te geven van de acties die op het gebied van DO op korte en op middellange termijn uitgevoerd kunnen worden.
Stand van zaken m.b.t. duurzame ontwikkeling anno april 2007

Onderwijs
- UM heeft een aantal bachelor vakken duurzaamheid en gaat in 2008 starten met een master duurzame ontwikkeling (ICIS, FH&S);
- UM heeft als ‘groene vakken (sections)’:
  - FdEWB: Course Ethics, Organization and society (Harry Hummels)
  - FdCW: European Environments (Jens Lachmund)
  - FH&S: Minor globalization and Inequality (Chris Leonards)
  - FH&S: Sustainable Development-an introduction (Bas Amelung)
  - FH&S: Globalization, Environmental change and Society (M. Huynen)
  - Hands on Sustainability (P. Valkering)
  - Binnen de master Public Policy and Human Development is een track Sustainable development (4 vakken).
  - FdR: Corporate Social Responsibility (Christine van Basten-Boddin)
  - International and European Environmental Law (Marjan Peeters) (masterblok)
  - Tevens: Milieurecht (masterblok)
  - Omgevingsrecht (bachelorblok).

Onderzoek
- FdCW: Qualirma research project (René Gabriels, Wiebe Nauta)
- FdEWB: European Centre for Corporate Engagement
- FH&S: ICIS 15 onderzoekers (Pim Martens) Maastricht Graduate School of Governance/PhD programmes (Chris de Neubourg)
- FdR: Research school Ius commune, research group transboundary environmental law, ruim 8 onderzoekers, en leerstoel internationaal en vergelijkend milieurecht (Michael Faure)
  - The Maastricht Centre for Human Rights (Fons Coomans, Unesco Chair in Human Rights and Peace)
  - FdR/ Metro is lid van de IUCN Academy of Environmental Law
- UNU/Merit: Veel onderzoek (Luc Soete)

Facultair beheer
- ICIS heeft binnen de capgroep een commitment van alle medewerkers over een achttaal huisregels m.b.t. duurzame ontwikkeling (zie bijlage 1);
- School of Governance:
  - gaat een enquête houden bij medewerkers en studenten om de wenselijkheid van DO in hun omgeving te checken;
• wil advies van een expert over hoe zij het gebruik van energie, water en papier kunnen reduceren;
• UNU/Merit staat in de startblokken

**Beheercentraal**

(Do is op dit moment alleen op het gebied van milieu concreet. Het sociale aspect dat wel in het Maatschappelijk Verantwoord ondernemen zit is niet zichtbaar. Er worden geen integrale afwegingen gemaakt.

- UM heeft de milieuvergunningen op orde;
- UM heeft een MilieuManagementSysteem op centraal niveau waarbinnen per beheerseenheid een op maat gesneden milieuzorgsysteem geldig is;
- UM heeft de Meerjarenafspraak (MJA2) m.b.t. energie-efficiency ondertekend;
- UM heeft een MilieuManagementSysteem op centraal niveau waarbinnen per beheerseenheid een op maat gesneden milieuzorgsysteem geldig is;
- UM heeft de Meerjarenafspraak (MJA2) m.b.t. energie-efficiency ondertekend;
- UM heeft in de algemene voorwaarden van inkoop een hoofdstuk milieu;
- UM heeft voor specifieke producten waarvoor een (Europese) aanbesteding nodig is een separaat hoofdstuk milieuweisen;
- UM heeft in 2 grote panden (Uns 40 en Uns 60) een grijs-water circuit (opvang regenwater en restwater demiwaterproductie voor gebruik toiletspoeling);
- Het (kopieerpapier is chloorvrij gebleekt.
- UM heeft als prestatie-indicator 10% aandeel ecologische producten in mensa’s in 2008;
- UM schenkt Eco-coffee in de coffeecorner;
- UM heeft de INK omarmd: (onlangs is stap 3 bereikt, stap 8 staat voor Maatschappelijk Verantwoord ondernemen);
- De nota duurzaam bouwen UM ligt gereed ter accordering van het CBB;
- Hoofd inkoop geeft als privé-persoon in Nederland gastcolleges over duurzaam inkopen.

**Andere initiatieven**

- Mundo: via Mundo werkt de UM samen met hoger onderwijsinstellingen in Afrika, Azië en Latijns Amerika. Doel van deze samenwerking is deze partnerinstellingen in staat te stellen beter onderwijs te geven en innovaties in hun onderwijs door te voeren. Daarbij worden steeds relaties gelegd met algemene ontwikkelingsdoelstellingen zoals de Millennium Development Goals van de VN en wat hoger onderwijs daaraan kan bijdragen. Duurzame ontwikkeling vormt daarbij ook steeds een belangrijk aandachtspunt.
- Ter gelegenheid van de 15e verjaardag organiseerde UM een forum met daarin onderdeel: The politics of sustainability and the politics of Europe
- Centre for European Studies: alle bruikbare artikelen van buitenlandse studenten die slechts 1 trimester in Maastricht studeren, worden naar de kringloop gebracht.
- Studenteninitiatieven: (niet volledig)
  - UMPM/SISUM. Het universitair Milieuplatform en het studenten initiatief voor een duurzame universiteit)
Conclusie stand van zaken
Veel enthousiasme over het onderwerp DO bij alle faculteiten. Er wordt op dit gebied behoorlijk veel gedaan, maar erg versnipperd en niet gecoördineerd. Er is behoefte aan centraal commitment en een centrale bundeling en stimulering van activiteiten. Op het gebied van DO wordt op het gebied van onderwijs, onderzoek en beheer zodanig gewerkt dat een aanvraag van het bijzonder kenmerk voor DO bij de Nederlandse-Vlaamse Accreditatie Organisatie (NVAO) gewenst is.

Gewenste situatie in 2010
Bewustwording en beheer zijn de 2 peilers van een duurzame UM.

Op het gebied van bewustwording
UM heeft in haar strategisch programma duurzame ontwikkeling staan;
- In het curriculum van alle 1stejaarsstudenten is een interfacultair blok DO opgenomen;
- UM scoort bij de NVAO op het gebied van DO
- Medewerkers en studenten zijn doordrongen en actief betrokken bij het feit dat de UM een naam op het gebied van duurzaamheid hoog te houden heeft, ze zijn betrokken bij het proces om de UM duurzamer te maken;
- In internationale projecten of samenwerkingsverbanden wordt DO een peiler;
- Er is een duurzaamheidsfonds voor studenten initiatieven;
- Op UM niveau wordt de voortgang van DO bewaakt en gecoördineerd

Op het gebied van beheer (auf der administriven Ebene)
- UM heeft een project DO
- UM behoort tot de top 5 van de Nederlandse Universiteiten wat betreft het laagste energieverbruik/m2.
- De UM koopt 100 % groene stroom in;
- Er is een AISHE-certificaat met 2 sterren verkregen
- Bij alle nieuw- of verbouw wordt de nota ‘duurzaam bouwen’ als uitgangspunt genomen;
- De afdeling inkoop hanteert voor 50% van de producten de menukaarten van SenterNovem (conform de doelstellingen van de semi-overheid);
- Op beheersniveau worden er DO-huisregels opgesteld op basis van de huisregels van ICIS;
- Het (kopieer)papier dat de UM gebruikt is 100% milieuvervriendelijk;
- Alle printers en kopiers kunnen dubbelzijdig printen;
• In alle toiletten zijn aanwezigheidssensoren;
• Er wordt door studentenorganizaties een interne UM-kringloopwinkel opgericht waarbij buitenlandse studenten hun huisraad kunnen kopen en verkopen.
**Acties die daartoe op korte termijn (eind 2008) uitgevoerd dienen te worden**

**Op het gebied van bewustwording**
- Project DO-UM wordt opgestart;
- Aanpassing missie UM;
- Een AISHE-audit wordt aangevraagd en uitgevoerd;
- In het jaarverslag 2007 komt een hoofdstuk DO;
- Er wordt gestart met een interfacultair blok DO;
- Via de milieuwerkgroepen die er decentraal zijn wordt aanvullend per vakgroep commitment verkregen van medewerkers en studenten die zelf betrokken worden bij het proces;
- Een voorlichtingscampagne DO waarin medewerkers en studenten gestimuleerd worden mee te denken en mee te doen.

**Op het gebied van beheer**
- Energiebesparingsplan moet worden opgesteld;
- Inkoop geeft inzicht (Einsicht geben) over concrete consequenties van duurzaam inkopen, CBB neemt daarover een besluit;
- Voor eind 2007 moet het besluit over groene stroom genomen zijn;
- In contract met Océ wordt het kringlooppapier opgenomen;
- Centraal wordt er alleen nog gerecycleerd papier ingekocht;
- Via Centre for European studies en wordt de interne UM-kringloopwinkel opgericht die door studentenverenigingen wordt gerund;
- In de toiletten worden, daar waar effectief, aanwezigheidssensoren aangebracht.
Introduction to the "Auditing Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education" (AISHE)29

Sustainable development in higher education

Since the Rio Declaration in 1992 governments, companies and higher education institutes started to realise that a shift towards a sustainable society is possible, only if sustainable development is incorporated as a serious issue into the curricula of all higher education institutes. In 2002 in Johannesburg a decade "2005-2015" for education for sustainable development was adopted to underline education as a key-agent for change.

But how to develop education that gratifies these high commands, that takes into account the desires of future generations. Sustainable development is a global challenge, crossing borders of countries and continents. Many Universities see sustainable development as a challenge for all their activities. By signing charters like the Copernicus- or Talloires declaration they committed themselves to integrate the principles of sustainable development into education, research and operational management.

AISHE and auditing higher education curricula

The Dutch Committee for Sustainable Development and Higher Education (CDHO) took the initiative to develop an auditing instrument called AISHE (Auditing Instrument for Sustainability in Higher Education). With this instrument, the integration of sustainable development as a theme in higher education curricula can be measured and improved. AISHE is the first instrument focussing on sustainable development and education. Other instruments exist for environmental management like ISO 14001 and EMAS. The AISHE instrument is based on the EFQM-model (European Foundation for Quality Management).

AISHE and quality improvement

Although many Universities want to integrate sustainable development as a theme into their education they ofthen do not know how to do it in practice. By examining all aspects of the curriculum with an AISHE -audit a list of at least 20 substantial targets will be produced to change the curriculum towards sustainable development.

Outcome of an AISHE audit

An AISHE audit will offer:

- insight into the state of the art of the integration of sustainable development into curricula
- at least 20 substantial targets for quality improvement
- support by teachers and students to integrate the principles of sustainable development into education

Procedure

The procedure of an AISHE audit is as follows:

A faculty or study board, dean or coordinator decides to audit a study programme;
At least one coordinator or study manager, ten teachers and three students are committed to attend the full AISHE-audit;
A full AISHE-audit takes two meetings of half a day, two separate days or one full day;
During the first meeting the AISHE consultants explain the audit and afterwards all participants fill in a list of 20 criteria;
During the second "consensus" meeting all personal scores are discussed;
The first step of the second meeting is to reach consensus on the present situation with respect to sustainable development, the second step is to explore the desired situation and to formulate actions for improvement;
At the end of the meeting 3 to 5 items are selected as priorities;
All results of the meeting are typed directly into the AISHE-computer programme and the results are accessible through bright and comprehensible diagrams.

Besides the minimum audit the AISHE-team offers a few extra options. Quite often participants do not have a clear idea about sustainable development. It is recommended to organize a few meetings on the basic principles of sustainable development before the first AISHE-audit takes place. After an audit the AISHE-team can offer extra tools to support the implementation of the plans put forward during the audit. It is highly recommended to audit the curriculum again after about 1 or 2 years (to take note of the results established).

The AISHE consultants

Two AISHE-consultants do the AISHE audit. The consultants are teachers or coordinators working within a University and trained by the AISHE-team. The AISHE-team is coordinated by the foundation for sustainable development in higher education in the Netherlands. Teachers and university staff who are interested to join the AISHE-consultancy are invited to contact us. Each year at least one training will be organized.

The costs of an AISHE-audit

A full AISHE-audit will be about € 4000 plus travel and accommodation expenses of the AISHE-consultants. The University organizing the audit is responsible for the invitation of the participants, meeting rooms and other facilities.
The 20 criteria of AISHE

On this page you find the 20 criteria of AISHE, divided in 4 catagories Plan, DO, Act and Check.

For each criteria we formulated 5 stages of quality, starting at stage 1 by activity oriented to total quality in stage 5. You find a descriptions of each stage in the report.

== Plan ==

1. Vision and policy
   1.1. Vision 
   1.2. Policy 
   1.3. Communication 
   1.4. Internal environmental management 

2. Expertise
   2.1. Network 
   2.2. Expert group 
   2.3. Staff development plan 
   2.4. Research and external services

== Do ==

4. Educational goals and methodology
   3.1. Profile of the graduate 
   3.2. Educational methodology 
   3.3. Role of the teacher 
   3.4. Student examination 

== Check ==

5. Education contents
   4.1. Curriculum 
   4.2. Integrated Problem Handling 
   4.3. Traineeships, graduation 
   4.4. Speciality

== Check==

6. Result assessment
   5.1. Staff 
   5.2. Students 
   5.3. Professional field 
   5.4. Society

== Act ==

Description of the AISHE model

The AISHE-method is based on a model for quality management, developed by the European Foundation for Quality Management, and enhanced by the Institute for Dutch Quality Management (INK). For this reason, it is called the “EFQM-INK model”.
In the EFQM-INK model the idea is that organizations can be in one of several development stages with respect to a number of criteria. The model defines five of these stages.

The original EFQM-INK model has been developed to be used in commercial companies, for instance in industry. By a group of Dutch Universities for Vocational Education an adaptation has been designed, suitable for Higher Education (see: HBO Expert Group (1999)). Instead of themes concerning production processes, in the educational version themes are described concerning educational processes. It is this model, which may be called “EFQM-HE”, which has been chosen as a basis for AISHE.

The criteria to which these five development stages are applied are of various natures. For instance, there are themes like the organization policy and the strategy; human resourcement; management of processes; and the achieved results.

In the AISHE method, 20 different criteria are defined. They are clustered in five fields of attention. Following the EFQM model, these are put together in three categories, based on the first three of the four parts of the “Deming Circle” for quality management: “PLAN” - “DO” - “CHECK” - “ACT”.

Tools

By each criteria we formulated tools. These tools can be used to formulate new activities. You find existing tools, best practices, tables or literature suggestions.
Interview with Josephine Jackisch from SISUM, 05/12/2007.

1) What do you know about previous endeavors to kick Sustainability on the UM-Agenda (including a short description of stakeholders)?

2) Why, according to your own experience and based on what you have been told from previous generations engaged in this issue, have these attempts failed to make sustainability a long-lasting priority in university affairs?

3) Who according to your point of view needs to be convinced on behalf of the UM board to ensure that more attention is being paid to the cause of sustainability in higher education?

4) Could you give a brief description on how communication between sustainability-related organizations and the UM-administration have worked out so far? Given that your impression on the quality of communication channels is rather negative, what could be done to compensate for this deficiency?

5) Anything else?
Interview with Mr. Andre Postema (10/12/07)

Personal Details

1) What is your job title?

2) What is the scope of duties that go with your position (including a brief characterization of scope of influence in UM decision-making procedures)?

3) What role has been assigned to you in regards to the UM- sustainability initiative?

Sustainability Efforts in the UM- Context

4) Speaking on behalf of the University of Maastricht, what is your understanding of sustainability and which responsibilities go with it?

5) What is the UM’s vision of success (i.e. the identification of principles for a favorable outcome of planning within the sustainability endeavors)?

6) In the sustainability inventory dating back to April 2007, the authors (i.e. SISUM & Maja de Bruijn) argue that the notion of sustainability should be incorporated in the UM’s strategic outlook 2007-2010. Besides, an AISHE-audit should be carried out in order to increase the UM’s environmental performance. In how far do these goals reflect “serious” policy ambitions by the UM?

7) Why do you think, have previous efforts failed to kick Sustainability onto the Agenda? To put it differently, which factors need to come together in order to translate this project into practice in this particular organizational climate (e.g. which parties still need to be convinced on the validity & relevance of this endeavor; what about the financial aspects, etc.)?

8) Are there any other “concrete” policy endeavors in the field of UM-sustainability management which are not explicitly mentioned in the sustainability inventory? If yes, what would be the organizational consequences?

Designing a Sustainability- Framework for the UM

9) In how far does a sustainability policy constitute a priority for the UM?

10) How would a sustainability-policy be carried out in practice? Would there be one policy or an assembly of several ones?

11) If you had a major stake in deciding on the contents of this policy, which core elements would you like to see incorporated? What would be the time frame?

Miscellaneous

In my meeting with several sustainability subgroups represented in the UM Environmental Platform (UMP), one of the major lessons learnt was that communication between the different parties as well as vis-à- vis the UM administration is highly deficient. What do you think needs or can be done to remedy this situation and facilitate understanding between the various players involved in this process?
Appendix

Sustainability in Higher Education:

Interview with Niko Roorda (DHO) 29/10/07

1) How do you define a successful sustainability initiative? How do you recognize it?

2) In the email you sent to me you provided me with the names of some “sustainability champions” in Dutch higher education. What made you recommend these universities (p.e. high score on the AlSHE sustainability audit)?

3) Do you think it is recommendable to have a nationwide sustainability ranking system and what about the feasibility of such an action?

4) According to your own experience, what constitute the major obstacles for sustainability initiatives to take deep root in university management and teaching?

5) When reviewing the sustainability efforts conducted by American higher education institutions, I was surprised to find out that many university homepages have not been updated ever since three or even four years. It seems that the issue as such has had its best time, and only the craze for global warming, exemplified by the stunning success of Al Gore’s unconventional truth had the potential to push it again on the university agenda. Do you think that Dutch sustainability endeavor also runs the risk of falling on deaf ears once oil has been poured on troubled water?

6) [Personal interest] Do you think that basic training in sustainability literacy (e.g. in form of a one month’s sustainability skills training) should become obligatory for everyone attending a Dutch HE-institution?

7) Notwithstanding the university’s strive for reducing the institutional footprint and enhance overall eco-efficiency, how far do you think can a university go to stimulate ecologically sound behavior? Where are the limits?

8) Do you think it is possible measure behavioral change in students? What would be your measurement criteria?