

Rethinking the Talloires Commitment

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Overview

- Introduction to Talloires Declaration
- Draw from some themes in the literature
- Examine the Declaration in light of these understandings
- Ideas for extending the Declaration

The Talloires Declaration

(pronounced Tal-whar)

- 1990, 22 university heads declared the urgency of need for action toward sustainability (they met in Talloires, France)
- Important, guiding, document for many universities
- A rallying point for sustainability efforts



UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY SYDNEY

UNE

THE UNIVERSITY
OF NEW ENGLAND



UNSW



ANU

THE AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL UNIVERSITY

40
YEARS

1968 - 2008
UNIVERSITY OF
CANBERRA



MONASH University



BOND
UNIVERSITY



Southern Cross
UNIVERSITY

A new way to think



University of
Western Sydney



THE UNIVERSITY OF
MELBOURNE



University of the
Sunshine Coast

Queensland, Australia



CHARLES STURT
UNIVERSITY

The Talloires Declaration (con't)

- Commits to
 - Setting example with uni operations
 - Educating for environmentally responsible citizenship
 - Fostering environmental literacy amongst students and staff
 - Involving external stakeholders as well

The Talloires Declaration (con't)

- Underlying theme of information exchange and awareness raising
- Much boils down to 'knowing about'

Action

- Gap between knowledge and action
- In definition of education for sustainability

Recursive link

- Linking inner and outer
- Identity and worldview
- Maintained in conversation

Transformation

- Perspective transformation
- Recognise worldview
- Rethink assumptions

Socially critical skills

- Analyse the social structures and the implicit power
- Recognise historical prejudices
- Objectivism and neutrality of scientific paradigm implicated in environmental problems

Social setting needed

- If we want to sustain new 'internal' patterns, we need social structures that nurture them
- The conversational settings in which commitment grows
- Crossley – a participation with others in a practice

Social setting needed

- Working together on real projects builds relational network
- Social movements are recognised as places of experimentation



Okeover Community Garden

What sort of a life do we want to live?

- Asking this with others
- Deliberative democratic interaction
- Experiencing democratic formation



Experiencing democratic formation

- The social practice of guiding our society
- This deliberation also fosters the policy network

Policy formation

- The discourse dimension of public policy
- Informal policy networks
- Influencing policy by attending to networks of conversations



<http://www.christchurch-carrental.co.nz/images/christchurch-carrental-summner.jpg>

There are many valuable points in the Talloires Declaration

- Innovative
- Crossing disciplinary and institutional boundaries
- Affirms the need to work with communities and other organisations
- A reorientation of universities towards sustainability

But ... its limitations

- Still hampered by 'sustainability as knowledge' concept,
- Does not adequately recognise the social dimension
- Nor the need for skills in fostering cultural and organisational change

How complement or append the Talloires Declaration?

- Focus more on:
 - Social situations where students can participate with others in 'practice' of sustainability
 - Involvement with real problems
 - Socially critical/analytic skills
 - Informal network of dimension of policy formation

In addition to 'knowing about' -

commitment

transformation

Social/cultural
change

identity

participation

