The next steps for S&T for sustainability

Jill Jäger

Initiative on Science and Technology for Sustainability (ISTS)
Sustainability Science

• Friiibergh, Sweden, October 2000
  (Sustainability Science - Core Questions, Research Strategy, Infrastructure)

• Regional Workshops
  • Abuja, Nigeria, November 2001
  • Chiang Mai, Thailand, February 2002
  • Bonn, Germany, March 2002
  • Santiago, Chile, March 2002
  • Ottawa, Canada, March 2002
ISTS

• Expanding and deepening the research and development agenda of science and technology for sustainability

• **Strengthening the infrastructure and capacity** for conducting and applying science and technology for sustainability

• **Connecting science and policy** more effectively in pursuit of a transition toward sustainability
European Science Open Forum,
Stockholm, August 2004
http://sustainabilityscience.org

European Science Open Forum,
Stockholm, August 2004
Science and Technology for Sustainable Development

• Consensus Report and Background Document, Mexico City Synthesis Workshop on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development, 20 - 23 May 2002
• Organised by ICSU, TWAS and ISTS
• Published in „The Rainbow Series“

European Science Open Forum, Stockholm, August 2004
S&T for sustainable development - Goals

• S&T for SD is for achieving social goals, solving problems, empowering people, and promoting social learning.
• The social goals vary for different groups in different places (what is to be developed, what is to be sustained, in what relation, for how long?)
• Basic goal: to advance fundamental human and social needs while protecting the earth’s life support systems and biological diversity.
S&T for sustainable development - focus

• At the local level

• Need to explore alternative pathways, evaluate options, learn from successes and failures
and a focus on....... 

• Socio-ecological systems

• Place-based interactions

• Complexity, cross-scale linkages, uncertainty, time-lags etc
Sources of knowledge

• Classical disciplinary knowledge from natural and social sciences

• Knowledge generated endogenously in particular places

• „Learning forums“
Candidates for an Agenda on Underlying Conceptual and Methodological Questions - from the regional workshops -

- Adaptiveness, vulnerability and resilience

- Sustainability in complex production-consumption systems

- Institutions for linking science and decision-making across scales (comparative case studies across regions)
Consortium on Science and Technology for Sustainable Development

- Initial partners: ICSU, ISTS and TWAS
- Initial discussions: 2002

- Ad Hoc Advisory Group for the Consortium established 2003. Report due at the end of 2004 – to advise on expanding the Consortium, an agenda for the next 10 years, the funding challenge etc
Maintaining the momentum...

• Funding from the David and Lucile Packard Foundation
  • Two focussed „Partnership Team“ efforts to link knowledge with action in emerging areas of sustainability science (vulnerability/resilience; consumption/production systems)
  • Science-Practitioner Dialogue to catalyse significant increase in the quantity and effectiveness of knowledge/action partnerships for sustainability
And some more next steps

Roundtables on harnessing science and technology for sustainable development

Africa (series to start in 2005)

Arab Region (February 2005)
Moving to a Roundtable Format

- Participation of a broader group of stakeholders, including development practitioners, private sector, ngos etc
- Discussions rather than presentations
- „Fostering the next generation“
- Network-building
Thematic Priorities of Arab States Roundtable (1)

• Consistent with the Millenium Development Goals

• Relevant to the Arab States, while recognizing that details will differ within the region according to local realities
Thematic Priorities of the Arab States Roundtable (2)

• Challenges: enhancing economic growth, relieving poverty and enhancing human capital
• Problems: water deficits, desertification and biodiversity loss
• Cross-cutting issues: governance and policy for science and technology
Next steps

• Document the progress in sustainability science since 2000
• Concentrate more on large-scale comparative studies of major sustainability issues (e.g. vulnerability/resilience, consumption/production systems, governance and institutions) with a focus on knowledge-action linkages
• Partnerships, funding