2022 ISCN Conference

Sustainability Reporting – from Niche to Backbone

9 June 2022
Omar Kassab, ETH Zurich
In 1987, ETH Zurich was the first European university to establish a Department of Environmental Systems Science, laying down an important cornerstone for long-term engagement.

Today, sustainability is relevant in all departments of ETH Zurich. The university has become an international excellence and reference center for sustainability research that incorporates the principles of sustainable development.
The Evolution of Sustainability Reporting at ETH Zurich:
From Niche …
Our approach / «secret» over the years: **Focus on the Process, not only on the Product**

**Multi-Stakeholder-Process**

While engaging a multitude of stakeholders (100+ people from the community involved) can be somewhat complex, it excellently fosters:

- Discussion
- Awareness
- Visibility
- Commitment

for **sustainability** at the institution.
Stakeholder Interviews: Discuss *expectations*, raise *awareness*!

«I thought sustainability was *only* about environmental issues»
Nachhaltigkeitsbericht 2019/2020
Bisher nicht im Fokus

Effects on biodiversity and ecosystems
Effects on local communities
Data security
Indirect economic impacts
Governance
Compliance
Funding through third parties
Health and security
Waste water

Our approach / «secret» over the years:
Appreciate people, give them a voice!
Wait a minute:
Is that really an meaningful reporting practice?
In 2021/2022: **Evaluation** of the university-level reporting portfolio

Some of the fundamental comments:

- We need to **better align** out reporting processes
- **We should better use the SDGs** in our reporting
- **We really liked the monitoring system of the sustainability goals**
- Putting **people first** is just the right thing to do
- Sustainability is a **strategic theme**. It should gain more visibility!
- We need **integrated thinking** for diversity and sustainability
So what’s next? Integrated Reporting.
Sustainability: No longer just a niche topic, …but a backbone!
Survey on Sustainability Reporting at Universities

9 June 2022
Working Group on Reporting
What happened so far

In 2020:
Survey on the Times Higher Education (THE) Impact Ranking

Times Higher Education Impact Ranking: A catalyzer towards more sustainability in Universities?

ISCN/Benchtech August 2020
What’s coming next (in Summer / Autumn 2022):
Survey on Sustainability Reporting at Universities

NEW SURVEY COMING UP

What is the aim of this survey?

– Provide overview of the landscape and strategic prioritization of sustainability at universities worldwide.

– Increase awareness:
  – of the range of practices used by universities for sustainability reporting.
  – for opportunities and potential impacts of sustainability reporting.

https://www.leadquizzes.com/blog/survey-topics-and-ideas/
What’s coming next (in Summer / Autumn 2022):
Survey on Sustainability Reporting at Universities

We will roll out the survey in the comings weeks and we would appreciate your participation!