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Author

RALPH, Meredith (STUBBS, Wendy)

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Abstract

Universities play a fundamental role in addressing global environmental challenges as their education, research and community involvement can produce long-lasting environmental effects and societal change. By demonstrating best practice in their operations, research and teaching, universities have both multiple and multiplier effects on society. For universities to comprehensively address sustainability, a 'learning for sustainability' approach needs to be embedded across every aspect of institutional operations in a synergistic way. Using semi-structured interviews, this research explored the factors that influence the integration of sustainability into the operations, teaching and research activities of universities in Australia and England. The research found that individuals, committed to the goal of a more sustainable world, play a vital role in the success of integrating environmental sustainability into universities. The factors critical to enabling universities to undertake the transformational changes necessary to embed environmental sustainability into all university areas included: a strong policy environment, resourcing of strategies, and encouragement of leaders and

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environmental sustainability advocates. Educating and building the awareness of university staff of the importance of environmental sustainability to future generations was key to a successful strategy.

(HRK / Abstract übernommen) Stubbs, Wendy, E-Mail: wendy.stubbs@monash.edu