

FIRST CALL FOR PAPERS

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
on

RELIGIOUS STUDIES and THEOLOGY EXPLORING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: CHALLENGES for HIGHER EDUCATION

Thursday 27- Friday 28 September 2007

SCOPE

The purpose of this conference is to bring together scientists, lecturers and others interested in the relationships between theology, religious studies and sustainable development. The conference aims at sharing research themes, fieldwork and best-practices in order to develop and stimulate interdisciplinary and intercultural education for sustainable development and vice-versa. Furthermore the aim is to stimulate sustainable development as a subject for research and education in theology and religious studies. Critical analyses of and reflection on the idea of sustainability from the perspective of theology and religious studies are also welcome.

The current debate on sustainable development could be highly enriched if more attention would be paid to different underlying values, assumptions and opinions and the deeper, religious underpinnings in our cultures. It is here that assumptions on virtue and vice, truth and beauty are rooted. Whether they belong to the institutionalized world religions or to informal spiritual movements, all religions – even atheism - nurture worldviews that build on certain assumptions on the nature of things, such as the essence of life, mankind and nature. Knowledge about the religious or spiritual motives and forces driving development could sharpen our view on how to articulate sustainable development and incorporate it in research and education in the disciplinary field of theology and religious studies. This knowledge should generate further questions to direct our search for a more sophisticated understanding of the concept of sustainable development.

CONTRIBUTIONS

You are cordially invited to submit contributions for the following categories:

- I. In search of good educational *themes* of sustainable development from different religious perspectives
- II. In search of good educational *practices* in sustainable development from different religious perspectives

As for Category I, the following – not exhaustive - list of themes could serve as an example:

1. Teaching sustainability from a mono-religious perspective (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Indigenous Spiritualities, Christianity, etc.);
2. Sustainability Issues in Interreligious Dialogues;
3. Towards New Interdisciplinary and Transdisciplinary Approaches;
4. Working with the Earth Charter: how does it inspire religious teachers and researchers?
5. Working towards the Millennium Development Goals on:
 - a. *Eradication of Poverty and Hunger (MDG 1)*
 - b. *Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women (MDG 3)*
 - c. *Biodiversity and Environmental Sustainability (MDG 7)*

Under Category II, the same themes are addressed but then from the angle of case studies in education: which majors, topics, courses, field studies et cetera provide inspiration for teachers all over the world to incorporate sustainable development in their curricula?

IMPORTANT DATES AND PROCEDURES

15 January 2007: Second Call for Papers 31 March 2007: Deadline for Abstracts 31 May 2007: Deadline for Papers	Abstracts should not exceed 750 words (1 page A4) and are to be sent to: d.teboekhorst@science.ru.nl . All contributions will be reviewed by a scholarly Review and Selection Committee before acceptance.
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PROCEEDINGS AND BOOK PUBLICATION: Proceedings of the conference will be published on the Conference website as well as in print. Best case material will be compiled and published as an international disciplinary review on Theology, Religious Studies and Sustainable Development. Cooperation with international scientific journals is currently being investigated.

VENUE (provisional): Conference Centre *De Holthurnse Hof*, Berg en Dal (near Nijmegen), Netherlands. www.holthurn.nl

CONFERENCE ORGANIZATION: Centre for Sustainable Management of Resources (CSMR),
Radboud University Nijmegen - Faculty of Science

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