

**The contribution of Geography teachers
to Education for Sustainability.
A case study.**

1. THE RESEARCH PROJECT

The main aims of this research are:

- **To investigate what Geography teachers can contribute to Education for Sustainability**
- **To make recommendations as to how “ESD” can be incorporated into the Spanish Geography Curriculum**

2. THE PAPER

The results of the first part of the research, which is focused on part of the first objective:

***what Geography teachers
can contribute to Education
for Sustainability?***

3. METHODOLOGY

- Qualitative Research based on Collaborative Research
- 8 geography teachers participate and contribute in workshops with their experiences and thoughts

4. FINDINGS

The first focus group interview dealt with the concept of sustainability trying to answer three main questions:

- **What does sustainability mean to you?**
- **What knowledge do you think you have on sustainability?**
- **What does it mean to educate for sustainability? ?**

4.1. WHAT DOES SUSTAINABILITY MEAN TO YOU?

- The difficulty and the vagueness of the concept and its definition.
- There are different perspectives of sustainability:

“sustainability is being ideologically instrumentalized”.

“independent as to how to do it, what is important is to work for sustainability”.

4.2. WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE ON SUSTAINABILITY?

The knowledge the teachers have related to sustainability is diverse:

- **Wider knowledge:**
 - ecologist,
 - green schools
 - personally implicated with sustainability.

4.2. WHAT KNOWLEDGE DO YOU THINK YOU HAVE ON SUSTAINABILITY? (II)

- **More limited knowledge about sustainability: this topic isn't their main worry**

“the prevalent trend of today's society is unsustainable and sustainability is nothing more than an utopia”.

4.3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EDUCATE FOR SUSTAINABILITY?

- *“This kind of education has to develop skills to the students for action and participation;*
- *“It is necessary for teachers to have a wide knowledge of the locality;*

4.3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EDUCATE FOR SUSTAINABILITY? (II)

- *“It requires research on environmental problems that are taking place in the locality, and the outcomes presented by the students must have social relevance, that is to say, it must be seen as service learning, because while forming the students as critical citizens it helps the community to achieve sustainability, etc.”.*

4.3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EDUCATE FOR SUSTAINABILITY? (III)

- *“Because we are over worked we can not produce teaching materials;*
- *We find that if outside agents such as the council or private educational companies offered these materials, we feel it could be feasible;*

4.3. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EDUCATE FOR SUSTAINABILITY? (IV)

- *Education for Sustainability has to impregnate the whole school and there must exist a project in common;*
- *We teachers need to have facilities to access to professional development programs”.*

5. CONCLUSIONS

- They think this is important for them as Geography teachers and/or for Geographical Knowledge;
- They have been sufficiently exposed to Sustainability theoretical frameworks;
- They think doing this is feasible, or they know how to do it;
- The school context management encourages them;

5. CONCLUSIONS (II)

- Teaching materials are related to Sustainability.
- They are personally concerned about the need for Sustainability;
- They are involved in external projects that provide motivation;
- They are involved in educational research concerning Sustainability.

THANK YOU

