Editorial Introduction

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Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) responds to the intertwined challenges of climate change, inequality, and resource scarcity by fostering education that connects knowledge with action. Within higher education, ESD emphasizes cultivating competences that prepare individuals to navigate and address these complex realities collaboratively and critically. This issue of Futures of Education, Culture, and Nature frames interdisciplinarity as a pivotal approach to enriching this endeavor, bridging diverse perspectives, and fostering holistic engagement.

Interdisciplinarity offers an approach that negotiates between the rigidity of siloed disciplines and the overly simplistic notion of "breaking down silos." So-called 'silo thinking' in ESD has often been criticized for isolating knowledge and hindering the ability to address interconnected challenges. However, disciplines offer invaluable intellectual traditions and methodological depths contributing to meaningful inquiry and learning. Rather than dismantling these structures entirely, interdisciplinarity seeks to soften the boundaries between them, enabling dialogue and the integration of diverse perspectives. This approach respects the integrity of individual disciplines while fostering collaboration and innovation, presenting interdisciplinarity as a dynamic process that adapts to the complexities of sustainability education.

The articles in this issue address practical, theoretical, and interdisciplinary aspects and challenges related to ESD in higher education through the SustainComp project. The SustainComp project exemplifies how interdisciplinary ESD can be advanced through applied research in higher education. Funded by the Erasmus+ program, the project integrates diverse disciplinary perspectives to foster sustainable competences through a 10 ECTS interdisciplinary curriculum. This curriculum includes various modules concerning sustainable diets, resources, inequality, sustainable consumer behavior, gender, health, and sustainability. The modules attempt to address the multifaceted nature of sustainability challenges by integrating cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral learning, demonstrating how interdisciplinarity can enrich and transform educational practices.

The issue opens with an *Introduction to the SustainComp Project*, which outlines the project's aims, methodologies, and collaborative structure. This article situates SustainComp within the broader context of ESD in higher education while also offering insights into the conceptual foundations and processes that guided its development. It sets the stage for a deeper exploration of interdisciplinary approaches in the subsequent contributions.

The following articles examine various aspects of the SustainComp curriculum and its implementation. *Sustainable Diets: A Submodule in the SustainComp Curriculum* explores how blended learning and student-active tasks enhance competences related to sustainable diets.

In *Use of COIL in Learning About Gender Equality and Sustainable Health*, the potential of Collaborative Online International Learning to foster intercultural competence is discussed, with a particular focus on addressing gender equality within ESD frameworks.

Resources, Inequality, and Sustainability – Integrating Language and Science Teaching in ESD highlights how interdisciplinarity connects language and science education to address questions of inequality and sustainability. *Integrating Sustainable Consumer Behavior in Higher Education* investigates how project-based learning fosters critical thinking and meaningful engagement with sustainability practices. Together, these articles illustrate the richness and potential of interdisciplinary teaching in fostering transformative educational experiences.

The issue then moves to *Interdisciplinary Perspectives on ESD*, which explores interdisciplinarity as both a guiding principle and a methodological approach. In addition to its focus on interdisciplinarity, this article delves into the theoretical underpinnings of various complementary approaches to ESD, emphasizing how these frameworks contribute to the richness of educational innovation in higher education. This article synthesizes insights from the SustainComp project, demonstrating how interdisciplinary frameworks connect diverse disciplines and enrich cognitive, socio-emotional, and behavioral impacts. The article also reflects on the project's successes and challenges, highlighting its relevance and adaptability to broader higher education contexts.

This issue underscores the intersection of academic inquiry and practical implementation in fostering sustainable competences by framing explorations in ESD in higher education through applied research. The collection of contributions also highlights the transformative role of interdisciplinarity in shaping future forms of Education for Sustainable Development.

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Except for the article *Introduction to the SustainComp Project*, which has undergone editorial review, all other contributions in this issue have been subjected to a double-blind peer review process.

Further information about the SustainComp project, including additional resources and updates, can be found on the project's website: https://sustaincomp.splet.arnes.si/.