

## Final Report - ecoLogo project

(ecoLogo is a funded project of the Higher Education Academy's Education for Sustainable Development Project and ran between 23/07/06 and 31/07/07)

### *Progress and resolution*

The project has been successfully completed and **ecoLogo** is now established on the web as a visual and social bookmarking site (<http://www.ecoLogo.net>). Workshops and conference sessions confirm a deal of interest in the product of the project, which will take time to settle into use in pedagogy and develop in its own right. The project has enabled a visual appreciation of sustainable development (SD) to be raised as a visual culture project and has aroused considerable interest from colleagues.

The project was originally modelled at undergraduate level but this was ambitious and the outputs reflect a great deal of staff and contractor time. They needed a greater involvement in CSS than it seems they have and their project management skills were not available to the project but rather acquired by it. Students have, however, been fully involved and integral to the project development. It has been of great benefit to the Graphic Design course at University College Falmouth and will become of more use across Graphic Design courses over the coming year as the dissemination strategy works through the web. It has also enabled a strong interactive relationship to evolve with a local contractor, a very useful outreach and 3<sup>rd</sup> strand element of the project.

We were able to launch the beta site at an institutional day devoted to SD, where it received a great deal of interest and critical acclaim. A number of other institutions have expressed interest and will be interacting with the site in the coming months (Somerset CAT (Graphic Design), UoPlymouth (CSF), UoKingston (BA Architecture), UoExeter (MSc Sustainable development)).

### **Outcomes**

#### Tags

The original project proposal foresaw the need for an originating set of tags to provide a framework for populating the site and developing the user experience. Early on a decision had to be made about the vocabulary driving the CMS (content management system), and it was decided to use free vocabulary. The result is that the site is wholly user-driven, which will require ongoing moderation, but gives the greatest scope for giving users agency, in true Web2.0 fashion. The tag cloud – its shape, density, constituents – is the understanding that users of the site have generated.

#### Philosophical twist

This has given the project a profound philosophical twist. If it is not a priori possible/desirable to suggest what SD is, then the development of the CMS tags or user categories become definitional for the clarification of the concept. This increases the research driver in the user experience as activity on the site and making sense of the various links there becomes a contributing factor in the site's overall development of an understanding of SD. This folksonomy approach has become the hook which the project author is using to drive the disseminative and reflexive outputs of the project. His talk 'Chasing the lost folksonomy of sustainability' was presented at the ESD conference in Bradford in 2007 to present the site and this feature of its development.

#### Colleague response

At a number of fora, the site has generated a great deal of interest, being a fully functioning Web2.0 space for direct pedagogic use. As a designed piece (thanks to level2 student inputs), it has also been much appreciated.

## **Future**

### Ongoing inputs

As part of the support and in the development of the site, a large number of urls have been accumulated which need placing on the site. This will be ongoing over the summer. The Graphic Design course has indicated that it will continue to support the project.

### Collaboration

Several courses have already indicated their interest in pursuing the use of the site in pedagogic settings. The author aims to develop a set of guideline or context briefings to assist in pedagogic integration. The author is already committed to holding a variety of workshops with colleagues at the start of the autumn term encouraging take-up of membership and use of the site.

Meeting with colleagues at the Bradford ESD conference, it emerged that complementary developments have been in train at UoPlymouth. The author will be exploring the use of L&T funding to establish whether the two developments should seek to collaborate in some way.

### Outputs

The author gave a research salon to iRes, UCF's interactive research group, based on the folksonomy questions raised by the project. This has led to a further invitation to work with the group and explore the value of the site. ([http://www.ires.org.uk/news/20\\_06\\_07.htm](http://www.ires.org.uk/news/20_06_07.htm))

The author is proposing to write up the project as a case study for the HE Academy's Art, Design, Media Subject Centre.

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