



# The Roundtables Are Back!

## Re-Energising the Sustainability Education Round Tables

– Green Building 60L – Thur 1<sup>st</sup> Nov, 2007

### **REPORT ON FINAL SUMMARY SESSION- Questions 3 and 4**

Key general questions helping to shape the RoundTable

*What have we learnt since the last Round Table series & what can we now share?*

*What are the best arrangements now for engaging with practitioners?*

*How we can all become more effective and coordinate our efforts?*

Specific questions that the Round Table participants considered:

- 1. What have been key achievements in recent years & what are the key issues?**
- 2. Of the previous Round Table SMART ways, what have we achieved, what needs to be adapted, and what needs to be added to or changed?**
- 3. What types of support do sustainability education practitioners now need?**
- 4. Should the Round Tables continue? What areas of focus should Round Tables consider in the near future?**

**SUMMARY OF MAJOR THEMES – see details of wording in Q3 & Q4 responses**

- High level support for RoundTables to continue

Support needed for:

- Professional development across: evaluation, facilitation, strategic planning, integration of social & environmental themes & multiple outcomes
- Clarification of most effective learning & change, and documentation of what works
- Building community of practice, collaboration, leadership & positive support
- Resource hubs & professional communication, incl. shared best practice & refereed journal articles directly linking frameworks & practice
- Reaching under-represented groups incl. youth, multicultural, etc

RoundTables to focus on (in addition to the above):

- Clarifying relationship of advocacy to learning & change & how to work with people & achieve effective & rapid directional change
- Developing shared frameworks for evaluation and for agreed approaches to learning & change
- Ways to reconcile/ combine effective methods for learning & change with the need for urgent action & meeting targets
- Ways for sustainability educators to best inform & influence decision/policy makers
- Clarifying funding & other support needed for sector-based development of learning & change

Organisational Issues for RoundTables:

- Develop clear vision/Mission & clear purposes for Round Tables – incl. need for urgent change
- Each RoundTable to have clear focus & outcomes
- A youth oriented Round Table – to build involvement of young professionals
- Clarify what relationship is of Roundtables to Professional Development

- Development/redevelopment of Smart Ways (from previous RoundTables) or their replacement
- DETAILS OF RESPONSES FROM GROUPS – ONE PRIORITY ISSUE PER GRP

***Q4a. Should the Round Tables Continue?***

There was unanimous support for continuation of the Round Tables, as judged from a show of hands at the Round Table, and feedback during and after the Round Table

***Q3. Support Needed for Sustainability Facilitators***

Key needs for support included (in no particular order):

PD/training on data gathering techniques – Linked to PD for Evaluation and other key elements of PD [see below] – VERY HIGH NEED

- ways to build the case for learning & change programs & best ways to achieve learning & change – so that we know what is most effective, as well as getting feedback for continuous improvement

Building a strong Community of Practice – facilitators connected together

Leadership – lots happening – need for collaborative, informed leadership to draw threads together & coordinate

- linked to -

Resource Hubs – to coordinate professional information & action

- includes internet access/hub – currently Round Table has no clear internet presence

Combination of communication of information & ideas as well as welcoming in approach (as felt at Nov 1 Round Table)

- linked to -

[Strategies & techniques to] bring new people to the fold and including them, sharing & communicating what we are doing and what we would like to do: including regions (under-represented), multicultural groups & other under-represented groups

Reach youth – deliberate strategies to involve young people in future Round Tables – perhaps a specific R/T initiative for youth

Professional Development for learning & change (including behaviour change), including:

- evaluation techniques

- facilitation skills

Bringing together collective [knowledge &] experience, finding ways to:

- support each other

- at the same time share information & resources

- achieve multiple outcomes

## ***Q4b. What Round Table Should Focus On / How Round Tables Should be Organised***

### ***FOCUS ON (see also points made under Q3):***

Processes for evaluation

- including [integration of social] indicators e.g. for well-being

Agreed / shared / coordinated frameworks for evaluation and for agreed / coordinated approaches to learning & change

Look at / include focus on global perspective: for example, look for ways to reconcile/combine methods for learning and change that we know work with the need for urgent action

Being strategic rather than incremental [in applying learning and change] => focus on developing more effective / efficient / rapid / larger scale methods

[Explore / clarify / further develop ] relationship between advocacy & strategic planning : how to plan for effective capacity building and change, engaging with people and at same time carry /put forward/advocate for clear notions of what change is needed

[Importance of focusing on ] innovation & planning – getting clear about what we want to achieve through learning & change

Clarify how educators can best influence decision/policy makers – research, networking, advocacy, relationships, etc. – using what we know about learning & change & applying these to shift policies & decision-makers

Clarify funding & other support needed for sector-based development of learning & change – and help to showcase/illustrate/explain what behaviour change is, what models are effective & what models to use for particular circumstances

Need to clarify if and how education should be separated /coordinated from action/advocacy for sustainability – how can learning & change best contribute to action & advocacy for the current and upcoming environmental emergency  
- what does effective learning & change look like now we are in dangerous climate change & there is urgent need for action

### ***ORGANISE ROUNDTABLES THROUGH/BY:***

Vision/Mission/Manifesto & Targets/Clear Purposes for Round Tables

[- perhaps clarify strategic plan for Round Tables – what we want to achieve through Round Tables in long term, intermediate term, short term]

Include need for urgent action in manifesto/mission [see also below]

A (at least one) youth oriented Round Table [note: pleasing to see that a significant number of younger people have signed up to be on R/T working group]

Professional Development for change [incl. behaviour change] – clarify what relationship is of PD to Roundtable – see above?

- Where and how does Round Table sit in relation to learning & change, professional development? Use Roundtable to identify, clarify/recommend and help coordinate development of PD

### **Three key general areas of focus for RoundTables were suggested:**

Identifying & scoping professional development – in the broadest sense

One example: What are best approaches to evaluation to pursue in PD – who needs what types of evaluation PD, & how might this be best organised & resourced?

Advocacy – as appropriate for key needs for learning & change to foster sustainability

One example: Action climate change is now urgent: what part should advocating targets and strategies have as part of learning and change programs, across organisations and sectors?

Getting ‘sorted’ issues relevant to learning & change

One example: how to combine advocacy messages and techniques with capacity building, learning and change drawing on trusted relationships, etc.

### **Other key issues relating to RoundTables**

Consider framing Roundtable issues / areas of focus around Questions as alternative /supplement to SmartWay statements

For each RoundTable: clear themes / clear outcomes – so at beginning outcomes are clear and at end it is clear to what extent outcomes of RoundTable have been reached or at least seriously considered

In framing Smart Ways or equivalents – develop these with clear intentions in mind about implementing these [so that they are realistically able to be implemented rather than pie in sky / generalisations

[Or] Draw distinctions between Roundtable aspirations and strategic targets

[- original Smart Ways were trying to make statements about what was realistic and achievable – but in retrospect some Smart Ways were more realistically focused than others]

Peer review of [practice –based] articles– for magazines – to develop higher levels of professional frameworks and practices