

Environmental management of sustainable university campuses

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Abstract

The environmental crisis, pattern of unbridled consumption associated with intensive production model in natural resources usage provokes deep transformations in Nature, as well as the mindset of green thinking and acting, bringing enlightenment to Sustainable Development concept. For instance, the afore mentioned topic becomes the global agenda. This scenario is not apart from universities: this fact does not apply only including environmental subjects in curricula, but also in rethinking campuses daily operations and their adaptation to sustainability parameters. In this sense, the present article aims to discuss the relevance of including the environmental dimension in management action plan on university campuses, pursuing a convergence with main governmental and nongovernmental recommendations. Therefore, this bibliographic research, in qualitative and exploratory basis, intend to present a global environmental state of art towards a Brazilian viewpoint.

Keywords

Environmental Management, Sustainability, Higher Education

1. Introduction

An increasing number of organizations are convinced that it is a good business to seek guarantee the future of their companies by incorporating principles of sustainable development into all their operations. Today, it is a fact that there can be no long-term economic growth unless it is sustainable. From that moment on, it is becoming clear that Higher Education Institutions should also be part of this discourse in favor of sustainability, developing technology and sensitizing and training human material to meet environmental demand and assuming a sustainability attitude in its operations (Tauchen, 2007).

Higher Education Institutions should not be away from this challenge, for by not using their combined forces to help solve emerging problems of global society, they will be ignored in the awakening of change (International association of universities, 1993 apud Tauchen, 2007, p.55).

The challenge begins with simple recognition of the need to consider incorporating principles and criteria of environmental management into university campuses in Brazil and worldwide. Despite being among the main research and training environments of professionals in the field, there is also a lack of resonance among school administrators, at least for the time being.

It should be noted that the Federal Government, through the Ministry of Environment's (MMA) Secretariat for Institutional Articulation and Environmental Citizenship, has sought to promote, through the adoption of the Environmental Agenda in Public Administration (A3P):

Raising the awareness of public managers on socio-environmental issues, encouraging them to incorporate principles and criteria of environmental management into the routine activities of public administration, through the promotion of actions that demonstrate the rational use of natural resources and public assets, adequate management Of the residues generated, the quality of life in the work environment, the minimum environmental impact and maximum comfort for users in construction, sustainable bidding actions/green purchasing, and the process of continuous training of public servants (MMA, Environment Ministry, 2009, p.9).

The Environmental Agenda in Public Administration - A3P - is a program created by the Ministry of Environment in 1999 as a response of public administration to the need to address serious environmental issues, such as: to spend less energy and water to maintain the facilities, generate the minimum waste, to purchase products that cause less harm to the environment and to promote decent working conditions. That is, the organization should stimulate conscious consumption, combating waste and social and environmental responsibility.

Thirteen years later, the indication of A3P is observed as one of the programs to be developed to comply with Normative Instruction n. 10 of 2012, which establishes rules for elaboration, by public administration, of Sustainable Logistics Management Plan (PLS). This plan allows public organizations to establish practices of sustainability and rationalization of expenses and processes (Solar, 2013).

In this sense, the objective of this article is to discuss the relevance of environmental dimension inclusion in management actions on university campuses, seeking a convergence with the main governmental and nongovernmental recommendations. Methodologically, it is classified, as regarding its nature, as a basic research, where the focus is to produce knowledge to understand the evolution of the theme, and as regarding its objectives, it fits as exploratory research, providing greater familiarity with the subject and descriptive, which Aims to describe the characteristics of the phenomenon studied. Regarding research procedures, he chose to use bibliographic research (GIL, 2012).

2. Sustainability

The economic, social, cultural and environmental dimensions are organized in a systematic way in the concept of sustainability, which points to a configuration that allows society to express its greatest potential in the present, while preserving biodiversity conditions and ecosystems indefinitely for the society. This systemic view adds the need to prevent human activities from interfering with the natural cycles of the planet, preserving the natural capital that will be inherited by future generations. In this sense, sustainability aims to achieve and maintain the quality of life, both in times of availability and lack of resources, through actions based on cooperation and solidarity between peoples and future generations (Portal da sustentabilidade, 2017).

Sachs (2009) puts social dimension ahead of the environmental one in terms of importance in the attempt to highlight sustainability faces, often perceived "only" as environmental. According to him, social sustainability stands out as the very purpose of development, a view corroborated by the realization that a social collapse would precede an environmental catastrophe. Next came the cultural dimension. The environmental one would be a consequence of

the previous ones, and the economic, is necessary, but never a previous condition of the others. These would follow political sustainability, fundamental to the reconciliation of development with the conservation of biodiversity, and the sustainability of the international peacekeeping system - once modern wars, as well as genocidal, are echoed - and the common heritage of humanity.

3. Sustainable Higher Education Institution: concept foundation

Before presenting this concept, it is important to give a brief history about important events and declarations for sustainability implementation in higher education.

Higher Education Institutions (HEI) have a fundamental role in the dissemination of sustainable development, especially when incorporating environmental values and practices, both in the disciplines taught and in the administration of their physical structures (Feres & Antunes, 2007).

Increasingly, universities are called upon to play a leading role in Education for sustainability:

- They have a high concentration of critical mass, creativity and technological potential that can be channeled into environmental innovations. The main asset present at the University is knowledge, and its organization is focused on the production, transmission and diffusion of it.
- They form the future professionals, leaders of opinion and potential leaders of social institutions.
- They can offer a practical testimony of what is preached in teaching, research and university extension. The University should practice what it teaches, to set an example even on the challenges of environmental change.
- Students consider that studying at a university whose campus has environmental responsibility and commitment to sustainability is a positive differential in their training (Layrargues, 2011, p.3).

The first statement referring to sustainability in higher education was the Stockholm Declaration (1972). This document established the need to implement environmental education already in primary school through adulthood, in order to incorporate in the people, companies and community the sense of responsibility regarding the protection and improvement of the environment (Organization des nations unies pour l'education, la science et la culture, 1973 apud Madeira, 2008).

As a reflection of this conference, UNESCO held the Tbilisi Conference in 1977 in Georgia, which became a conceptual framework in defining the purposes, objectives, basic principles and strategies for the development of environmental education (Intergovernmental conference on environmental education, 1977).

In Belgium, in 1979, the University Association for the Environment emerged to bring together universities interested in environmental problems and to promote an exchange of information, forming a think tank and in 1988 the Conference of European Rectors Europe in cooperation for sustainability (Layrargues, 2011).

Later in 1990 an international conference was held in Talloires, France, bringing together 22 university leaders concerned about environmental degradation. These leaders aimed to assess universities role in creating a sustainable future (Calder & Clugston, 2003 apud Madeira, 2008).

From this conference came the Talloires Declaration, which consists in establishing a commitment assumed by universities leaders to achieve environmental sustainability in higher education. The challenge for universities was to promote sustainability not only through education, but also in operations research and services provided to the community (Madeira, 2008).

The Talloires Declaration was signed by almost 200 universities from more than 40 countries (in January 2011), among them the Brazilian universities, the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (PUC-RJ), the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul (UFRGS) and the Federal University of São Paulo (UNIFESP). Its signature represented several benefits at the institutional level, such as:

1. The institution becomes part of the international network of universities and colleges committed to building a sustainable future;
2. Provides motivation for the entire campus community regarding environmental and sustainability initiatives;
3. It is a compromise through which the institution can be evaluated over time (Talloires network, 2017).

In 1991, the Halifax Declaration was signed by representatives of the Association of Universities of Canada, the International Association of Universities (UAI) and the University of the United Nations, which comprises about 33 universities from ten countries (Layrargues, 2011).

In 1992, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (ECO-92), held in Rio de Janeiro, resulted in Agenda 21. In its chapter entitled "Education, Training and Public Awareness", the document refers to the Priorities of higher education on sustainability, such as: the development of transdisciplinary curricula, scientific

research on sustainability, and the formation of a network of organizations and individuals involved that promotes environmental awareness (United nations department of economic affairs and social, division for sustainable development, 2007 apud Madeira, 2008).

The 15th Congress of the Association of Commonwealth Universities in 1993 launched the Swansea Declaration, which aims to:

1. Encourage universities to seek to establish and disseminate a clearer understanding of sustainable development - development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the needs of future generations and to encourage the most appropriate sustainable development principles and practices at local, National and global, consistent with their missions.
2. Emphasize current generation's ethical obligation to overcome those resource utilization practices and those diffused circumstances.
3. Highlight the university's ability to teach and practice sustainable principles, to increase environmental interest, and to increase understanding of environmental ethics between faculty, students, and the general public.
4. Cooperate with all segments of society in developing practical measures to effectively review and reverse those current practices that contribute to environmental degradation.
5. Encourage universities to review their own operations to reflect sustainable best practices (Layrargues, 2011, p.15).

In February 1994, the 1st Earth Campus Summit was held, with the participation of some 120 American universities and 29 universities from other countries. The result of the Summit was the Campus Blueprint for a Sustainable Future, which makes suggestions to higher education institutions to work towards an environmentally sustainable future (Campus Earth Summit, 2007 apud Madeira, 2008). The Campus Earth Summit conference pointed out the main characteristics of a sustainable university (Madeira, 2008, p 57):

1. The main priority is environmental sustainability;
2. Environmental knowledge is integrated in its most relevant disciplines;
3. Organizes opportunities for students to study campus environmental issues as well as locations;
4. Perform environmental audits on campus;
5. Establish environmentally responsible purchasing practices;
6. Actively seeks to reduce waste produced on campus;
7. Supports students seeking environmentally responsible careers.

The University Charter for Sustainable Development of Copernicus Program, in September 1994, was signed in Geneva by 196 universities. The following principles stand out (Layrargues, 2011, p.16):

1. Institutional Commitment
2. Environmental Ethics
3. Education of University Officials
4. Environmental Education Programs
5. Interdisciplinarity
6. Dissemination of Knowledge
7. Work Networks
8. Partnerships
9. Continuing Education Programs
10. Technological Transfer

The International Network of Students for Environment and Sustainable Development (RIEMADES) was created in 1995 at the 1st International Congress of Universities for Sustainable Development by a university community motivated by the commitment to assume the movement propellers role in search of sustainability . To do this, it is necessary to:

(...) introduce pilot waste management programs in universities and their environment, including waste reduction, reuse, recycling and treatment; work together with national and local governments to make universities a center for research, discussion, training and dissemination of sustainable technical alternatives (Layrargues, 2011, p.27).

During 1998 UNESCO conference in Paris, the "Declaration on Higher Education for the 21st Century: Vision and Action", which, in its Article 1, already emphasizes the promotion of sustainable development and improvement of society as the central mission and value of higher education institutions should be preserved, strengthened and expanded. Following this, in 2002 UNESCO adopted the Education Decade for Sustainable Development, beginning in 2005 and ending in 2014, reinforcing the objective of promoting and improving the integration of education for sustainable development into educational strategies and development plans. Action at all levels and sectors of education in all countries (UNESCO, 2007 apud Madeira, 2008).

During Rio + 10 in 2002, eleven major international education and science organizations convened in Johannesburg to sign the Ubuntu Declaration on Education, Science and Technology for Sustainable Development. They urged educators, governments and other stakeholders to "review school and university curricula and programs to better address the challenges and opportunities of sustainable development" and "develop permanent mechanisms to provide teachers with information on Progress in scientific and technological knowledge relevant to sustainable development" (Layrargues, 2011, p.57).

In 2008, there was a regional movement to organize a collaborative work among Latin American universities on sustainability, known as the Latin American Meeting of Sustainable Universities (LAMSU). Several Brazilian universities participated in this first movement. Also in 2008, the III National Conference on the Environment encouraged universities to be examples of sustainability, implementing:

Institutional policy of environment for the care of people with special needs; integrating solid waste management; treatment of generated effluents, mainly in laboratories; permanent afforestation programs with native and fruit plants; creation of environmental preservation areas on campuses; preparation and implementation of a solid waste management plan for health services; insertion of the environmental dimension into the curricula of degree programs in order to achieve the objectives of national policy, state and municipal environmental education policies (Layrargues, 2011, p.54).

In Italy, in 2011, an international alliance was established among 17 universities to leverage new academic evidence in teaching about Sustainable Development (Layrargues, 2011). More recently, at the RIO + 20 Conference, the signatory countries "have renewed their commitments to sustainable development ... promising to promote an economically, socially and environmentally sustainable future for our planet and for present and future generations." (UN, 2012). In order to foster discussion about the relevance of Higher Education Institutions as naturally privileged environments for discussion on the theme, RIO + 20 provided the document "Sustainable development and education". In the aforementioned document, a total of 260 major universities from around the world made a commitment to incorporate the premises of Sustainable Development into teaching, research and their own management and organizational activities. This action inspired the creation of the "Declaration for Higher Education Institutions", aiming to guide the "Principles for Responsible Management Education" (PRME) initiative.

In summary, the document discusses the relevance of creating and maintaining university curricula that teach and encourage the incorporation of Sustainable Development principles, as well as fostering scientific research that seeks the development, adaptation, diffusion and transfer of knowledge, with special emphasis on Based on innovative technologies. In a complementary way, guidelines were also drawn for incorporation of good practices in daily operations of campus activities carried out; the initiative "Green our campuses". The heart of document suggests (United Nations Organization, 2012):

- I) reduce the ecological footprint through energy, water and efficiency of material resources in our buildings and facilities;
- II) the adoption of sustainable purchasing practices in our supply chains and catering services;
- III) providing sustainable mobility options for students and teachers;
- IV) the adoption of effective programs for waste minimization, recycling and reuse;
- V) promoting more sustainable lifestyles.

Therefore, it is considered that a sustainable university is one that demonstrates to student how he/she must understand the environmental degradation, as well as stimulates him/her to look for environmentally sustainable practices while at the same time sensitizing them to the real injustices (Madeira, 2008).

An interesting definition is also found in Pennsylvania State University's Sustainability Indicators report (Penn State Green Destiny Council, 2000), which points out that a sustainable college or university should provide a longevity perspective, and whose core values include respect for Natural processes, the concern to live within planetary boundaries, the accountability of total costs and civic responsibility.

4. Higher Education sustainability case study

Given the importance that higher education must have in the development and implementation of sustainability, the main efforts made in its journey toward a sustainable future are presented. The application of environmental management in an educational institution has the function of minimizing and controlling, as well as avoiding environmental problems, internal and external to the institution. Tauchen and Brandli (2006) conclude that the benefits of an EMS are diverse and among them the following stand out (Tauchen and Brandli, 504, 2006):

- a) savings from increased productivity and reduced consumption of energy, water and record materials;
- b) the establishment of conformities based on compliance with environmental legislation, thus reducing the risks of the institution incurring penalties or generating environmental liabilities;
- c) the evidence of responsible practices and the improvement of the institution's external image;
- d) the generation of research opportunities.

However, it is verified that its systematics is still poorly structured, especially in primary and secondary schools in Brazil. In addition, there is a clear qualitative differentiation between the practices implemented by Institutions of Elementary, Middle and Higher Education (Feres & Antunes, 2007).

The initiatives in environmental management observed in primary and secondary education institutions, which represent the largest portion of educational institutions in Brazil, are closely associated with specific environmental education practices and, in some cases, the implementation of programs to rationalize the consumption of Water and electricity, generally focused on cost reduction and student awareness (Feres & Antunes, 2007).

According to Tauchen and Brandli (2006), although they represent only 0.5% of the total number of Higher Education Institutions in Brazil, HEIs have great potential for generating significant environmental aspects. This is in line with what Tauchen and Brandli (2006) establish as significant agents for the implementation of an EMS in these types of institutions.

Among them is the fact that colleges and universities can be compared to small urban centers, involving various activities of teaching, research, extension and activities related to their operation, such as bars, restaurants, lodgings, convenience centers, among other services. In addition, a campus needs basic infrastructure, such as water and energy supply networks, sewer and storm drainage and access roads (Tauchen & Brandli, 2006).

Because they are directly involved in research and development of processes and technologies, universities in general have more structured environmental management programs. However, even in these institutions, the adoption of systematic and comprehensive environmental management practices is still recent (Feres & Antunes, 2007).

The most sustainable actions that appear in an EMS in an educational institution are the control of water consumption (and its reuse) and the selective waste collection program, followed by the training and sensitization of the students. Tauchen & Brandli, 2006). In addition, the environmental impact of environmental audits is not limited to environmental auditing (to demonstrate nonconformities) and the diagnosis of direct or significant impacts to the environment.

However, Ribeiro et al. (2005) argue that the existence of barriers to a possible implementation of environmental policies is very common, among which the following can be highlighted: a) the absence of information from society about practices Sustainable development; b) non-valuation of the environment by several employees of the organization; and c) non-perception of the university as a potential source of pollution.

In many studies it is clear that, for the proper functioning of environmental policy, the participation of all individuals is paramount, and especially of the Higher Administration of IE. It will guarantee the profound transformations to be undertaken. But this participation does not happen in a totally spontaneous way; It needs to be stimulated. Thus, in order for an EMS to become effective and be incorporated by all the individuals involved, it is necessary that an environmental education program accompany the whole process of implementation and execution of the system, aiming at its continuity. It is the environmental education program that will foster the development of positive behaviors with respect to the environment and its rational use (Butzke et al., 2002).

For Barbieri (2011), environmental education should stimulate people to be solutions and not just denunciations, although these should be the first attitudes in the face of social and environmental disorders. It should also produce changes in your own behavior, for example by changing your eating habits.

The universities began to insert the environmental theme in their management schemes from the sixties. Initial experiences emerged in the United States, concurrently with promotions of professionals in the environmental sciences, which spread throughout the 1970s. Already in the 1980s, the most specific policies were for waste management and energy efficiency. During the 1990s, global environmental policies were developed, bringing together all types of organizations (Tauchen & Brandli, 2006).

Dias (2006, p.50) points out in his study carried out at the Catholic University of Brasilia that the referential framework adopted in the environmental education project is based on the guidelines of the National Environmental Education Policy (Law No. 9.795 / 99) stating that:

(...) this policy is based on the recommendations of the Great Intergovernmental Conferences on Environmental Education, promoted by Unesco - UNEP, through its International Environmental Education Program (Tbilisi, 1977, Moscow, 1987) corroborated at the UN Conference on Environment and Development (Rio - 92), Conference on Human Sustainability (Rio + 10, Johannesburg, South Africa, 2002) and the Environmental Education Program of the Ministries of Environment and Education, as well as the Board of Education IBAMA (Education in the Environmental Management process) (Brasil, 1999, nonpaged).

In this sense, the proposal of National Curricular Guidelines for Environmental Education, sent to the National Council of Education - CNE, emphasizes, in its item III, sustainability and points out six fundamental points:

- I. Promotion of the sustainability approach in its multiple aspects, through a compulsory interdisciplinary curriculum / discipline / projects that promote the study of environmental legislation and environmental management knowledge, according to the baccalaureate, technology, specialization and extension of institutions Public and private institutions of higher education aimed at training professionals working in different areas.
- II. Promotion of research aimed at the construction of instruments, methodologies and processes to approach the environmental dimension that can be applied to the integrated curricula of different levels and modalities of education.
- III. Evaluative monitoring of the incorporation of the environmental dimension in higher education in order to subsidize the improvement of pedagogical projects and the elaboration of specific guidelines for each one of its scopes.
- IV. Encouragement and stimulation of research and extension in the themes related to environmental education.
- V. Encouraging the promotion of educational materials that serve as reference for environmental education in the different levels of education and teaching and learning modalities.
- VI. Participation in continuing education processes and in the service of teachers (Ministry of Education, 2017, page 22).

In this way, there is no denying the role of the university, highlighting, besides the formative character for the emancipation and exercise of citizenship, "to act as a promoter and articulator of debates that contemplate the various aspects of social life and lead to Proposals capable of improving the living conditions of the community "(IPES, 2001 apud Sousa et al., 2011, p.5).

In spite of all that has been said, the cases of environmental management found in universities in Brazil and in the world are, in most cases, isolated practices in circumstances in which the institution is already in operation.

In November 2009, PUC-Rio launched its Environmental Agenda, created by the Interdisciplinary Nucleus of the Environment with the participation of 40 professors from all departments of the university. The goals were divided into seven topics (Biodiversity, Water, Energy, Atmosphere, Materials, Waste and Environmental Education) to be implemented in up to ten years (Layrargues, 2011).

The Federal University of Viçosa, in the middle of 2009, through the Commission of Toxic, Chemical, Biological and Radioactive Waste and Disposal, made available the service of collection of hazardous waste. Special collectors have been installed in several buildings, where lamps, batteries and batteries can be deposited. Laboratory waste and fluorescent lamps were sent to the Commission on a scheduled basis. The collected material will be stored in a warehouse at the university and then collected by a specialized company for proper disposal (Layrargues, 2011).

In September 2010, the employees of the University of the State of Pará (UEPA) participated in an action to promote a culture of socio-environmental responsibility and environmental valuation (Layrargues, 2011).

One of the important Brazilian university examples that implemented an EMS is the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos (UNISINOS) with the adoption of the "Green Campus" project, as well as being the first university in Latin America to be certified according to ISO 14.001 (Tauchen & Brandli, 2006).

Another important example already cited was the Environmental Education Program developed by the Catholic University of Brasília (PEA-UCB), whose general objective is to incorporate the socio-environmental dimension into the actions of UCB, in favor of human sustainability. In addition, the PEA-UCB has been benchmarking several Brazilian companies. One of them is Centrel S.A., an environmental protection company of the Camaçari Petrochemical Complex, which holds the ISO 9000, ISO 14.001, OSHAS 18,000 and other certifications (Dias, 2006).

The University of São Paulo, for example, has developed three programs for environmental management in its university campuses: the PURA-USP, the Efficient Energy Use Program (PURE-USP) and the USP Recicla, Focused on solid waste management. The health area of the State University of Campinas (UNICAMP) has a Program for the Management of Radioactive, Biological and Chemical Waste. In addition to the presence of an Environmental Ethics Commission with the objective of analyzing and issuing opinions for the final destination of the residues resulting from the research projects developed at the University, mainly technical alternatives aimed at the replacement of sanitary equipment (Feres & Antunes, 2007).

The University of the United Nations in Tokyo, Japan, adopted environmental commitments and policies for sustainable development, and was certified by ISO 14.001 (Layrargues, 2011). Ribeiro et al. (2005 apud Tauchen & Brandli, 2006) report that Mälardalen University in Sweden also implemented an EMS and was certified by ISO 14.001. Also from this perspective, the project "Ecocampus", which is an environmental management system directed to universities, was started in Europe.

In Portugal, in 1998, the Green Campus project implemented an Environmental Management System at the Faculty of Science and Technology / Universidade Nova de Lisboa (FCT / UNL), the first Portuguese Higher Education Institution with a certificate of environmental management. It all started with the first environmental survey of the campus, initiated by a group of students of the Degree in Environmental Engineering in the field of "Audit and Ecogestion" (Layrargues, 2011).

The University of Waterloo, Canada, was considered a case of good sustainability practices in higher education. This university created a very strong environmental policy through the constitution of a commission in 1990, the Watgreen Committee, whose objectives were to promote environmental activities on campus and act as a consultative body for the government (University of Waterloo, 2007 apud Madeira, 2008).

According to Weenen (2000 apud Madeira, 2008), some of the key measures adopted at the University of Waterloo were successful: campus-wide promotion of policies to use alternative energy and reduce energy consumption; The establishment of trade agreements with environmentally responsible companies through what they have called "eco-shopping"; And all isolated parts of the campus have been replaced by natural landscape and native plants.

5. Final Considerations

In spite of the extensive debate about adequacy to Sustainable Development premises in university campuses, the results are still far from ideal. Advances are necessary because the logic of their relevance lies in the fact that higher education institutions are, in essence, fertile spaces for the emergence of ideas, followed by experimentation and discussion. In this virtuous cycle, the main challenge has been shown to be the incorporation of attitudes that have convergence with the premises of environmental "good practices" in the day-to-day operation of university campuses. The bulk of such an argument is associated with the fact that it is in these spaces that most people form who organize and direct institutions in society.

Given the fact, it is flagrant the lack of concrete and efficient attitudes, in addition to its dissemination, aiming at the rescue of values and the creation of new ones, attuned to a new global ethic. In this sense, the various instruments of environmental management are gaining momentum, such as the process of environmental education that has a preponderant role in the viability of these attitudes, insofar as it depends on the awareness that man is an integral part of the environment; In addition to environmental licensing, certification, improvement of environmental laws and mechanisms of popular participation, which are conducive to a harmonious conjunction between environmental preservation, social responsibility and economic development, is the well-known Sustainable Development.

Taking into account the profusion of environmental initiatives in the last decades and the documents that emerge from their discussions, it is important to note that the Institutions of Higher Education play a central role in the tireless search for a fairer society that promotes environmental sustainability, Through the articulation of discussions about a less intensive development model in the use of natural resources and based on a more conscious consumption.

Dias (2006) reveals that the academic institutions, catalysts of intellectual metabolism, still react in a timid way; However, their practices reveal a self-centered, fragmented and disconnected vision of society's real socio-environmental challenges. Therefore, in order to naturalize the relevance of environmental question in the perception of individuals, more important than to offer an academic formation on the subject, it is necessary to promote an environment in which this experience is experienced at all levels of university community.

The parameters that distinguish a Higher Education Institution as a sustainable are a relevant contribution in seeking excellence. However, there are lack information for their implementation and better integration within the

administrative and operational routines of higher education institutions. In this sense, understanding that this discussion does not end easily, we seek to contribute with reflections that, in synthesis, point to the need to understand that the results need to be perceived, not only in the economic effects directly related to the campuses, but in a more profound and in the long run, to naturalize the commitment of the university community regarding the results of its present environmental actions and their impacts on the future of the planet and the next generations.

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