

## „Transformative Learning in Real-world Laboratories - Experiencing Inner and Outer Sustainability in Cooperative School Projects“

**The challenge:** Sustainability is primarily thought of and demanded in measurable categories, such as reducing CO2 emissions or increasing energy efficiency. However, current studies show that it is primarily inner sustainability - values, beliefs, personal awareness or social paradigms - that can have a major impact on the success of a social transformation. Students at Leuphana University in Lüneburg, Germany, worked with the approach of transformative learning in real-world laboratories at sustainability-oriented learning locations with promising results. Pupils could also benefit from this approach. It supports them in developing skills such as self-regulation, creativity, solving complex problems, cooperation and communication in order to deal constructively and sustainably with challenges and crisis situations. This is an important task of education for sustainable development.

**Our objective:** The aim of the pilot project is to transfer transformative learning in real-world laboratories from academic didactics to the interface between school and extracurricular education. Students at secondary school level are to be introduced to ecological, economic, social and cultural sustainability as practised values in an exemplary and participatory manner as part of class excursions to nature parks. They can experience these values first-hand at an extracurricular, natural learning location, reflect on them for their own living environment and incorporate them into their everyday lives.

**Implementation of the pilot project:** In order to achieve this main objective, the Bund für Bildung e.V. is working intensively with the education teams of nature parks in Germany, Spain and Estonia as well as with teachers with regional links to these learning centres. In a workshop lasting several days, they familiarise themselves with the approach of external and internal sustainability and jointly test methods of transformative learning in real-world laboratories. The aim of the workshop is (1.) to familiarise participants with the approach and the associated working methods, (2.) to assess the added value of the approach for the target group of students from their own perspective and to reflect on their specific teaching experiences in nature parks and schools and (3.) to actively participate in the development of a real-world laboratory format, which will then be tested with guidance and specialist support and together with pupils at one of the project partners' nature parks. Further cooperative testing by participants of the workshop in regional co-operations between schools and nature parks are desired and will be conceptually supported by the Bund für Bildung e.V.. In a concluding workshop, experiences and suggestions for optimisation will be exchanged and narratives for orientation for future real-world laboratories will be created. Possibilities for further co-operative development of the educational project will be discussed.

**Perspective:** Based on the experiences (narratives) and feedback (evaluation) of the participating target groups (education teams, teachers and students) in the pilot project, the following products can be jointly developed, tested and optimised in the future: (1.) further training for teachers and education teams at nature parks, (2.) preparation and follow-up materials for teachers planning an excursion, and (3.) a guide for education teams at nature parks that enables them to independently adapt real-world laboratories to their specific needs and requirements. In this sense, the envisaged pilot project could lead to a more comprehensive Erasmus+ project with various extracurricular learning locations (in addition to nature parks, also art parks, nature gardens, activities by nature conservation organisations, etc.) for implementation and transfer of the approach.

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