

EnviroConvergeBlog 01: Towards convergence in the environmental debate

Introduction

Citation references, Paragraph and Section references are those contained in the PhD Thesis “Values and science in contemporary education: The study and impact of student orientation.” The Thesis document is available in the University of Newcastle repository, here: <http://hdl.handle.net/1959.13/1501410> (and then by clicking on Attachment01).

3.2 Towards convergence in the environmental debate

The UN has defined seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) which are benchmark goals for demonstrating environmental achievement (UNOOSA, 2020). I have identified seven discussion gaps in the environmental debate and the lessons learnt from the environmental wins have been applied to these discussion gaps. Additionally, the affected SDG has been identified for each discussion gap in Table 3.1. The objective of detailed enquiry of each discussion gap is the achievement of convergence of the respective narrative in each discussion gap. Thus, I have initiated a mechanism for bridging the divide between the opposing parties in the contemporary environmental narrative. Accordingly, this mechanism is a catalyst for the mitigation of pessimism held by students and by the general community regarding the future of the environment.

Discussion

3.2.1 Seven Gaps in the environmental narrative and in current environmental actions where the lessons from environmental wins can be applied

Gaps and inconsistencies in the current mainstream environmental discussion have been identified from an Earth system viewpoint, by the application of abductive reasoning (as described in Section 2.2.3). This approach has facilitated the identification of possible absent information and solutions regarding issues in the environmental narrative. This reasoning combined with thematic analysis of contemporary environmental documentation, have provided an understanding of the lessons and challenges in care of the environment. These gaps

potentially affect the optimism or pessimism that adults and students may feel for the future of the environment over the next twenty years. Lessons learnt from the previously discussed environmental wins can assist in the resolution of these gaps, which are shown in Table 3.1, together with the relevant Maslow's needs category and the respective SDGs with improved outcomes.

Table 3. 1 Gaps and SDGs in the environmental discussion

Gaps in the environmental narrative and in current environmental actions	Details	Maslow’s Needs. SDG(s) with improved outcomes
Environmental Gap 1.	Comprehension of the precedents contained in the long-term geo-science history. Refer EnviroConvergeBlog 02.	Safety. 13. Climate action
Environmental Gap 2.	Understanding the relevance of Indigenous stories and science. Refer EnviroConvergeBlog 03.	Social 10. Inequalities 4. Education
Environmental Gap 3.	Considering global and national population size as important variables. Refer EnviroConvergeBlog 04.	Physiological. 1. No poverty 2. Zero hunger
Environmental Gap 4.	Separation of the case for eradication of poverty from the care of the environment debate. Refer EnviroConvergeBlog 05.	Esteem. 1. No poverty
Environmental Gap 5.	Adherence to the maxim “Truth in Advertising” in the depiction of “ocean acidification”. Refer EnviroConvergeBlog 06.	Esteem. 14. Life below water
Environmental Gap 6.	Bridge the divide between Business and the Environment. Refer EnviroConvergeBlog 07.	Self-actualisation 17. Partnerships
Environmental Gap 7.	Understanding and utilising the changed role of the skeptic. Refer EnviroConvergeBlog 07.	Social. 17. Partnerships

Conclusion

The context and scenarios of these gaps are described in the following various EnviroConvergeBlogs, each containing a relevant environmental gap case.

.....