

WHOLE EARTH?

Aligning human systems and natural systems



Eden Project

comments

WHOLE EARTH? launched at the Eden Project and at 20 universities across Europe in autumn 2015. Each university hosting the exhibition is encouraged to send the banners on to a partner university in Africa, Asia or South America. This second roll-out is happening now at majority world universities and colleges, and is being lined up for extensive tours in each country.

What follows is a selection of responses to WHOLE EARTH? from students, tutors, teachers and environmental campaigners. If you would like to host the project on your campus, please get in touch.

Mark Edwards, Hard Rain Project

mark@hardrainproject.com





Lloyd Timberlake, Tim Smit and Mark Edwards at the Eden project launch

Photograph: Therese Severinsen

WHOLE EARTH? deals with the urgent need to make peace with nature. Mark Edwards and Lloyd Timberlake have done a wonderful job showing how human beings can be natural partners with nature. Hard Rain showed in a very realistic way the problems but here we have the solutions, the hope and the possibility for change.

Jan Eliasson

Deputy Secretary-General, United Nations



Mark Edwards, Joan Walley and Jonathon Porritt, Keele University

WHOLE EARTH? is a modern day Bayeux Tapestry – a visual monument of the environment that offers solutions to the problems of climate change and poverty. More importantly, it shows how students and universities everywhere can play a leading role in making society more sustainable.

Joan Walley

Chair of the House of Commons Environmental Audit Select Committee 2010–2015

Chair of the Aldersgate Group



Science Park Technichus,
Härnösand, Sweden

We launched the amazing WHOLE EARTH? exhibition at our welcome week student fair – and it was seen by 10,000 students in one day. We had to move it because so many people were crowding around it.

It is utterly amazing, visually stunning, and all sorts of people are commenting on it to us. It has really raised the profile of the issues of climate change and poverty in particular, and highlighted what different disciplines can do to contribute to creating a better future.

We all sometimes struggle to get sustainability stories to the top of the agenda, but today the University has made the WHOLE EARTH? exhibition its main front page picture with a lovely associated story. That sort of profile really does give reassurance, to those who work so hard, that it is all worth it. And you cannot travel through the University without seeing at least one of the trail images...

I know the other Unis who have launched it have had similar positive responses. If there is anyone who has not yet gone for it – I think all of us who have done so would say – go for it. It is well worth it.

Chris Willmore

Bristol Green Academy Academic Lead



University of
Seychelles



It is vital that students have a voice in the debate about our future. WHOLE EARTH? gives us the opportunity to connect students around the world and create a huge constituency to bolster the resolve of governments to take the difficult, long-term decisions that underpin security for young people alive today and their children.

Piers Telemacque

NUS Vice President



Lund University,
Sweden



Canterbury
Christ Church University

I study 'Sustainable Businesses' at Canterbury Christ Church University which is hosting WHOLE EARTH? exhibition. I have to admit I walked past it without reading it until my tutor sent us all out to look at it and write an essay on the issues it presents. Then I got it: the impact MY plastic, MY meat, MY waste paper is making to the planet that is keeping me alive. Then I felt anger toward the people I saw as role models who never taught me about sustainable development.

What's good is that the exhibition doesn't just show problems, it shows what my generation – and universities – can do to bring about real change. Now I'm going to campaign to make those changes.

Sadie Barton

Student, CCCU, Kent



Royal Botanic
Gardens, Kew

I am a teacher from France who took a group of secondary school students to Eden Project. Thank you so much for the WHOLE EARTH? exhibition. It left us deeply moved. It talks to you directly as an individual with a conscience, while at the same time giving you a global context.

The first brilliant step is the link to Hard Rain. Mark Edwards' photographs illustrate each line of Bob Dylan's song, 'A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall'. This is the perfect way to combine a poet's visionary approach together with a photographer's realistic art, in order to show the state of the planet and human society at this critical time. Not only this, it then goes on to illuminate how everything we learn in history, geography, biology etc can (and should) be understood in a new perspective, set against the crucial changes we are undergoing.

I've waited all my life for something like WHOLE EARTH? It really supports our work as teachers. Over the past 15 years, we've been trying to open our students' eyes to what is unfair and unsustainable, and to show how Human Rights are central to the well-being of every individual.

The role of students, even at a young age, is changing too: they help develop sustainable projects at home and abroad. This year my students have produced 'Carbon Blues', a musical they wrote which will tour schools in France and which shows the urgent need to move to low carbon technologies. We're educating tomorrow's adults, and WHOLE EARTH? exhibition gives us all the depth of understanding we need to make the right choices.

We will continue to work with Mark Edwards' photographs and Lloyd Timberlake's questions from the exhibition and explore how technology, engineering, and farming – together with art and architecture – can produce better communities and more secure lives for our students and for future generations. Thank you.

Annick Durand

Collège George Sand



Anglia Ruskin University

Anglia Ruskin University and Cambridge University came together to exhibit **WHOLE EARTH?** on Parkers Piece, a public Green Space and major thoroughfare in the centre of Cambridge. Mark Edwards, Joan Walley and Quinn Runkle helped us to launch the event by facilitating an inspiring discussion between students and staff from both Universities as well as members of the public. During the two weeks it was displayed we analysed the social media responses to our Cambridge exhibition and others being displayed at the same time. These demonstrated a variety of deep felt concerns for the environment and the need to do something about it, and provide a powerful mandate for us to continue our education for sustainability work.

We have also been re-using the exhibition, giving it to schools in the area who have used it to stimulate lesson topics and to get students to think about the role they can play in creating a better future. The topics the exhibition portray have been raised and discussed across the curriculum, in science, geography, citizenship, history, art, English and others, and we will be continuing to use the exhibition with other schools to raise awareness of the role all students can play in creating a better future.

Alison Greig

Director of Education for Sustainability

Anglia Ruskin University



Kerala University,
India

*Photographs:
Namitha Lal*



Why should we come and see **WHOLE EARTH?** exhibition? Well, dear friends, this is the reason.

An elephant came into our room some years ago. He was just a baby then; we didn't take any notice. Now he has grown and fills the room, but we continue to pretend he is not there.

Do forgive the story, but this is what we have been doing globally with our environmental issues. Even when we seem to pay them some attention, it's like giving a dying man endless first aid, when what he needs is radical surgery.

Can we reach out across the globe, to rich and poor, educated and uneducated, of every colour, whatever our beliefs, and support young people everywhere in making a more secure and just world?

That is why **WHOLE EARTH?** exhibition ends with a question mark. It shines a spotlight on the problems we'd rather not acknowledge; more than that: it helps set out a road map to "align human systems and natural systems". And it poses the question: Can we?

This is important. This is really important. Encourage your students to come, and your teaching and non-teaching colleagues too. Let's all make a difference.

Dr. Lal C. A.

Kerala University, Department of Botany



Lund University,
Sweden

WHOLE EARTH? Sweden

WHOLE EARTH? in Sweden followed in the footsteps of Hard Rain, which was launched at a lively public meeting at the Almedalen 2011 political festival by Minister of Aid and Development Gunilla Carlsson. Moved by images of disharmony, many visitors wrote to Hard Rain Project (HRP) – and to politicians, demanding solutions to align human systems and natural systems. The result is WHOLE EARTH?.

The Swedish International Development Cooperation (Sida) funded the exhibition's tour to 13 university cities. Students studying sustainable development took school students around the display, bringing the message to the next generation. Sida also funded an additional display, produced by HRP with commissioned photographs from Magnum's Chris Steele-Perkins, showing the practical steps each location had already taken toward a more sustainable society.

The current edition of WHOLE EARTH? was shown during autumn 2016 at four Swedish universities. The Association of International Affairs at Umeå University organised monthly WHOLE EARTH? events during the spring semester which were live-streamed, building interest in the launch of WHOLE EARTH? throughout the university.

At Mid University in Sundsvall and Östersund, the exhibition's four-week display was highly acclaimed by students and media. At KTH it attracted over 2,000 external visitors as well as students and staff, and generated a series of high-profile talks. KTH also hosted a concert, "Stormvarning" ("Storm Warning"), featuring Swedish band Crying Day Care Choir and including a discussion panel with KTH researchers and Göran Finnveden, Vice President for Sustainable Development, which attracted a large audience.

Two of the Swedish displays are now with universities in Africa, and one in Indonesia. Teachers Without Borders have agreed to take the project to their network of schools and universities in 184 countries.

Dag Jonzon

Hard Rain Project, Sweden

WHOLE EARTH? has had a really big impact at Canterbury Christ Church University. We launched the exhibition last September with a visit and open lecture by the author Michael Morpurgo who captivated his audience by reading selections from his children's stories to make some really meaningful points about current environmental challenges. At the same time, a dedicated edition of the University magazine Inspire was circulated to all academic staff and other members of the University. This proved an excellent way to involve colleagues, including those from the support services who began to engage with the sustainability agenda with real enthusiasm.

During the autumn the exhibition was displayed at campuses in other parts of Kent. Cohorts of students from a range of disciplines studied the banners as part of their courses. Individual staff, ranging from support assistants to a Pro Vice Chancellor, also engaged with it in considerable depth. This has given a very significant boost to the work of the Sustainability Office and done much to promote a culture in which sustainability is visibly part of our academic endeavours, pushing it higher up the agenda. Additionally, the Inter Faith Council organised a special debate in which speakers from four major world religions outlined their particular beliefs and attitudes towards the environment. We felt that, as a Church of England foundation, Christ Church might have a special contribution to make in this respect.

This year we have begun to use the exhibition in different ways. In January the banners were shipped to India where we organised an international symposium with the University of Kerala – one of our partner universities. The exhibition is due to tour a number of other Indian institutions over the coming months and is clearly generating considerable interest. In Kerala, for example, the University's deputy Vice Chancellor has taken a personal interest in what is happening.

Back in Canterbury, WHOLE EARTH? was the focus of a special event organised jointly by the Women's Staff Network and student Feminist Society in March. This involved a creative writing workshop and resulted in a poetic response which is being used to generate a long-lasting legacy artwork. The possibility of a musical event is now being considered. Artistic and creative responses seem to be particularly effective ways of using the banners. We are also beginning to involve local schools and introduce the banners to teachers and pupils from partnership schools.

Supporting websites

<https://cccu.canterbury.ac.uk/whole-earth-project/whole-earth-at-christ-church.aspx>

<https://cccusustainability.wordpress.com/2015/11/02/sgo-sustainable-media-how-journalism-can-help-to-save-the-world/>

<https://cccusustainability.wordpress.com/2015/11/05/sgo-sustainable-education-building-a-better-future-from-the-ground-up/>

Stephen Scoffham

*Visiting Reader in Sustainability and Education
Canterbury Christ Church University*



Michael Morpurgo
Photograph: Jason Dodd



Greenwich University

We have been working with Institute of Education colleagues and students to use the exhibition with primary school children. We have trained university students to guide primary school students around the exhibition and then undertake two or three activities with them, depending on their age and the time available. While viewing the exhibition, children are encouraged to think particularly about what the photos mean to them.

A3-size laminated images from the exhibition, with white space around the image, are laid out on the floor, and the children each get one “dot” sticker to stick on the photograph that had the most meaning for them. Using a post-it, if they’re old enough they write a few words about what the photograph means to them. All children get one leaf-shaped post-it and write down one promise to do things differently now, then stick the ‘leaf’ on the tree banner. Leaves are left in place so this can build up over the period.

We have 368 primary school children who have undertaken this task so far. We have a short video of this.

WHOLE EARTH? has been used as inspiration for the Big Sing, and primary school children attending this event on 8th June will also undertake the above tasks. Expected numbers are around 1,500.

The exhibition is up outside our library – which is a joint County Council and university library, and therefore available to members of the public. We created a volunteering ‘book’, hung up next to the exhibition, which details local volunteering opportunities along with QR codes so that people who’ve been inspired can immediately follow this up and get involved locally.

We also held a local photography exhibition and open view, organised by students and local photographers. More here: <http://susthingsout.com/index.php/a-local-response-to-whole-earth/>

Katy Boom

Director of Sustainability at the University of Worcester



University of the West of England

On the first day of our annual Big Green Week, we held the launch of the WHOLE EARTH? exhibition which our Student Union president, the Vice Chancellor, our Deputy Vice Chancellor and Head of Operations and others attended – including key decision makers at the university. The exhibition, together with Mark Edwards’ presence and inspiring talk, enabled discussions to take place about the role of the university in meeting the challenges posed in a way unfettered by strategies and resources.

Subsequently, in an open letter, the Student Union challenged the university to address the issues raised in the exhibition. To this end we held workshops with students and staff to focus on meeting the challenges posed by WHOLE EARTH? with a view to getting some action and resolution where required before the current Student Union officers change in May 2016.

WHOLE EARTH? has been the catalyst for this and provides us with a neutral vehicle and workable structure to address issues, within the context of the passion and motivating power of its imagery and text. Thank you.

We have prepared a comprehensive response which is waiting formal ratification, prior to being displayed in digital form in key communication channels.

Vicki Harris

Sustainability Team Facilities and UWE Green Capital Co-ordinator



Royal Botanic
Garden
Edinburgh

Social media analysis: Summary

“So many truths to acknowledge and act upon”

This study, by Obehi Frances Sule (PhD Researcher at Anglia Ruskin University), set out to capture and analyse the social media response eight weeks into the ongoing display of *WHOLE EARTH?* in various locations worldwide. Almost a thousand social media users in four continents – 130 locations in 11 countries – used the hashtag #studentearth on Instagram, Twitter and YouTube to express their responses to *WHOLE EARTH?*. The 34% of respondents who were non-students came from diverse walks of life including politicians; Higher Education leaders; teachers; and people from media, energy-related and spiritual organisations.

Key findings include appraisive comments which were 100% positive, and a large proportion (mostly students) explicitly stating their support for “Aligning human systems and natural systems”. The global population and migration issues highlighted in the exhibition were the next most talked-about points. The simultaneous launch of SoS (Students Organizing for Sustainability) caught respondents’ attention, with 11% of comments mentioning the potential of this new body to influence political change. A further 9% underscored the urgent need to “change the rules” in order to reduce society’s cost to the Earth.

The full study is at [[Click here](#)].

Obehi Sule

Global Sustainability Institute, Anglia Ruskin University, Cambridge

WHOLE EARTH? was conceived and produced by Mark Edwards, who has spent his professional life documenting environment and development issues around the world. It was written by Lloyd Timberlake, an acclaimed expert in the field of sustainable development.

WHOLE EARTH? is based on the premise that the future belongs to today's young people and that students and universities everywhere can play a major role in making society more sustainable. The exhibition provides the kind of evidence students need to join the debate about their future. But it's not prescriptive – it's an invitation to students and their tutors to articulate the kind of world they want to live in. It's the beginning of a conversation, not the end – hence the question mark in the title.

Our principal partner, the National Union of Students, (NUS), has initiated a new informal alliance of student organisations around the world that launched alongside WHOLE EARTH?. SOS now has over 100 student organisations collaborating to progress their work on social responsibility and environmental sustainability. By working together on research, campaigns and communications, SOS aims to become a global voice for students on sustainability, and will create a global movement of student leaders working together for sustainability.



Hard Rain at UN Headquarters,
New York, 2010



Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh



Lalbagh Botanical Garden, Bangalore, India

WHOLE EARTH? is the successor project to Hard Rain, a collaboration with Bob Dylan. In Hard Rain each line of *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall* is illustrated with photographs that bring alive the challenges of the 21st century. Since the exhibition's launch in 2006, some 15 million people have viewed it in principal cities on every continent, at universities, and at the United Nations headquarters in New York. One of the most successful environmental exhibitions ever created, it has attracted huge public and critical acclaim along with the support and endorsement of political and environmental leaders around the world.



All photographs by Mark Edwards if not credited

Hard Rain Project

London

Mark Edwards: mark@hardrainproject.com

Scandinavia

Dag Jonzon: dag@dellarte.tv

Hard Rain Project is a charity registered in England (Registered Charity no.1153955). The underlying goal of all our work is to promote solutions that address the broad challenges of climate change, poverty eradication, environmental protection and sustainable consumption and production. We work with world-renowned artists and scientists to bring our message to a wide public through exhibitions, books, films, talks and events. www.hardrainproject.com

Patrons:

Joan Walley MP

Sir Tim Smit, Chief Executive and co-founder of the Eden Project

Advisers:

Stephen Sterling, Professor of Sustainability Education, Centre for Sustainable Futures (CSF) at Plymouth University

WHOLE EARTH? partners:



The National Union of Students is a confederation of 600 students' unions collectively representing 7 million students in the UK. We are student led and have 240 staff, of which 24 now work full time on sustainability. We are delivering our student-driven sustainability projects into 85 universities and colleges and 60 community organisations including hospitals, local authorities and other public services. www.nus.org.uk/greener.



The Australasian Campuses Towards Sustainability aims to inspire, promote and support change towards best practice sustainability within the operations, curriculum and research of the tertiary education sector.



The Umeå Association of International Affairs is a non-profit student organisation, politically and religiously impartial, which acts as a platform for discussion of global issues. Through lectures and interactive events, our goal is to disseminate and share knowledge about other countries, cultures and religious beliefs.



The Environmental Association for Universities and Colleges is a not-for-profit charity with a membership of over 220 universities and colleges, supporting sustainability within the UK tertiary education sector.



Creating opportunity for the world's poor



Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency



Student Hubs works with 25,000 students across a growing network of universities. Their mission is to transform student engagement with social and environmental challenges, supporting a new generation of active citizens to achieve positive change now and in the future.

Scientific advisor

Stockholm Resilience Centre
Research for Biosphere Stewardship and Innovation



Johan Rockström is an internationally recognised scientist on global sustainability issues. He led the recent development of the new Planetary Boundaries framework for human development in the current era of rapid global change. He is Director of the Stockholm Resilience Centre.

Contributors:

Lloyd Timberlake is an expert on sustainable development. As a writer and journalist, he has reported from more than 65 countries, mainly on environment and development issues. His articles have appeared in most of the world's newspapers. He has served the director of communications for the World Business Council for Sustainable Development, a Geneva-based coalition of about 200 of the world's most powerful companies. More recently he advised President Obama's National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling. He has written prize-winning books in his own name (*Africa in Crisis*, *Only One Earth*, *When the Bough Breaks*) and books for organizations such as the World Commission on Environment and Development and the UN Environment Programme.

He has appeared as juggler onstage with the Rolling Stones and in the House of Commons. He now lives in Washington DC and kayaks in the Chesapeake Bay.

Mark Edwards was the first photographer of his generation to specialise in photographing environment and development issues. The defining moment that set him on this track was getting lost in the Sahara desert. A Tuareg nomad rescued him and took him back to his people. He rubs two sticks together and lights a fire; they have a cup of tea, and he turns on an old cassette player. Bob Dylan sings *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*. Edwards has the idea to illustrate every line of Dylan's extraordinary lyric.

Assignments for magazines, NGOs and United Nations agencies (supplemented with stow-away trips on jumbo jets) have taken him to over 100 countries. One of the most widely published photographers in the world; his pictures are in museums and private collections and have been exhibited in galleries in Europe and the US.

He has presented the Hard Rain keynote at the United Nations headquarters in New York, to parliamentarians in Europe, the National Assembly of Cuba, IPCC scientists, business leaders and at universities around the world.

Bob Dylan is the most influential singer-songwriter of his generation. He has won numerous awards and Grammys. In 2008, he was awarded a Pulitzer Prize Special Citation for his "profound impact on popular music and American culture, marked by lyrical compositions of extraordinary poetic power". In 2013 the French government presented him with the country's highest award, the Legion of Honour.

We are deeply grateful for permission to reproduce the lyrics of *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall* which has made this project possible.



There is a tide in the affairs of men
Which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune;
Omitted, all the voyage of their life
Is bound in shallows and in miseries.
On such a full sea are we now afloat,
And we must take the current when it serves,
Or lose our ventures.

William Shakespeare,
The Tragedy of Julius Caesar

