



Thematic Cluster proposal for the 10th WEEC Conference - Bangkok 3-7 November 2019

Patterns of Complexity in an Anthropocene Environmental Curriculum

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We want to analyze how an experimental curriculum in Environmental Education in the era of Anthropocene requires a multi-disciplinary and a multi-scale approach. Through the presentation of examples and case studies, we intend to show how an environmental thinking framework has to include simultaneously:

- a focus on local approach and on the implementation of small scale interventions, aimed at empowering small agents and local minorities;
- a focus on the realization of macro actions, planned in top-down perspective, and effective on a global scale.

The capability of upscaling and downscaling within the same thinking framework characterizes the patterns of the theory of complexity, in particular reflecting self-similarities and recursive behaviors presented by multiscale systems. Environmental education in fact reveals itself as a complex topic, where multiple patterns of specific localities and macro complexities coexist and converge.

At the same time, the Anthropocene we are supposedly living in calls for a strong multidisciplinary approach. No methodology or traditional field of research alone can make sense of the Anthropocene multiple environmental controversies. Anthropocene is both a fully natural and fully cultural construct.

The practice of ethnography typical of anthropological research is particularly fitted to identify and highlight small-scale contexts, and to pinpoint the role of local actors, minority groups and marginal societies, but it shows some limitations when confronted to quantitative information and big data, that are at the basis of all the environmental knowledge in the making. A productive pattern for an Anthropocene Environmental Curriculum has to be able to embrace heterogeneous methodologies and knowledge sources, and at the same time build the epistemological texture where uneven data can dialogue and develop.

The *thematic cluster* calls for papers that describe both local and global scale case studies in Environmental Education, projected in an Anthropocene theoretical framework, questioning and challenging it in its potentialities. The cluster welcomes all interventions where the strong interdependence between ecosystems and social systems typical of the Anthropocene emerges clearly, and it is used profitably to exemplify multi-scale thinking and multi-disciplinary approaches.