

---

## 5. Mapping and System Thinking

One of the most useful and easily adopted tools to use in teaching and the study of complex sustainable development issues are the concepts system thinking and curriculum mapping concepts. These concepts are especially handy in higher education when used to clarify the shared understanding and multidisciplinary and transdisciplinary issues in education and research, and joint cooperation of members of a working team or study circle. In most cases, concept mapping can help participants to understand and clarify not only their own knowledge building but also the constructions of knowledge by other members of the study group. With this digital tool for concept mapping one can, it is possible to share information and understanding with others and find put subtle connections among courses and applications. In the current project, the concept of curriculum mapping has been used a specialized tool called Unit-based Sustainability Assessment Tool (USAT). USAT This sustainability assessment tool was developed for use in the Swedish/Africa International Training Programme (ITP) on 'Education for Sustainable Development in Higher Education', and complements the UNEP Mainstreaming Environment and Sustainability into African Universities (MESA) 'Education for Sustainable Development Innovations Programmes for Universities in Africa' materials

(available on [www.unep.org/training/mesa/toolkit.asp](http://www.unep.org/training/mesa/toolkit.asp)). It is designed to assess sustainability at universities. The tool focuses on the different functional units in a university (e.g. departments, research units, management units etc.), and how they are integrating sustainability concerns into their core functions of teaching, research and community engagement and university management operations. Using a unit-based assessment tool allows for 'building the picture' of the whole, as well as concentrating on specific units as required (e.g. concentrating on one department etc.). This framework allows for the integration of sustainability thinking across the different units of the university and creates possibilities for sustainability issues to be managed within functional units, as well as through a broader systemic framework. (details in Appendix 3).