

# Knowledge Exchange Expedition

-oikos International Meetings, LEAP & SM 2018-

## Introduction

oikos LEAP and Spring Meetings took place in Barcelona, Spain in March. It was a great opportunity to talk about the Knowledge Exchange Expedition directly with the chapters' members, kick off some new processes, understand the interest of the community and expose perspectives from emerging countries more on the topic tackled during the international meetings (Tourism and Mobility). A lot of the explanation have been done during informal conversations, in addition to the two scheduled sessions (a workshop and the project fair).

Potential collaborations between chapters, with partners from emerging countries and new processes within oikos could come out of it in the future.

## **oikos community is looking forward to the diversity of experiences and pure knowledge**

To fit the Spring Meeting theme, the topic of the workshop was on the state of sustainable Tourism and Mobility in the world. The workshop attracted an incredible diversity of participants: out of 11, 8 nationalities were represented (plus one more if moderator counted) from 3 continents. Participants were from oikos Baku (Azerbaijan), oikos Edmonton (Canada), oikos Pune (India), oikos Moscow (Russia), oikos Tbilisi (Georgia), oikos Vellore (India), oikos Vienna (Austria), oikos Warsaw (Poland) and one other participant from Sweden with the moderator being originally from oikos Reims (France). In oikos it is not rare to have so much variety of people for this number of participants in a workshop. Conclusion number 1: this diversity of oikos members shows that oikos community looks for 'Knowledge Exchange' to get other perspectives on a topic. They want to get access to knowledge which is difficult to get.

The workshop was extremely rich in terms of exchanges and reactions. Participants understood how interesting it was to get inputs from others. It particularly showed the potential for chapters to work together on local projects. Conclusion number 2: by contacting/working with chapters from other continents/countries, a chapter will bring another dimension to its local events/projects. People got new insights and perspectives, which are difficult to get without talking to someone from the country.

In terms of feedback (8 out of 11 gave feedback), 7 thought it was either good or loved it. Only one expressed reservations due to the lack of pure and deep knowledge and learnings to take back home, as it was more an exchange of experiences between non-specialist people on this topic. Conclusion number 3: a mix of personal experience exchanges and deep knowledge is necessary to have a great impact for participants to really integrate different approaches on a topic and create a 'wow effect'.

To prepare the workshop chapters and faculty members from India and Africa have been contacted ahead, with answers from them each time. Conclusion number 4: it shows the community is ready to help each other in their projects/events by sharing content on a topic even if they are not specialist of it and/or do not run a project/event on the same topic. Any chapter could contact any other whatever the continent or country to get insights on a topic from a different perspective.

## **oikos community is looking forward to seizing opportunities and getting inspired**

The project fair was made to explain the Knowledge Exchange Expedition purpose and encourage knowledge exchange within the international community. The goals were multiple: seeing if the community was interesting in collaboration with emerging countries actors in the field of sustainability by suggesting different projects to individual members and chapters with potential partners, knowing which chapters are working on topics that are also tackled by chapters from emerging countries to connect them to foster exchanges, and giving free space to enable any member to express him/herself which sustainable topics members are interested in to get emerging countries perspectives.

Conclusion number 1: In terms of specific needs to answer, some members were interested in getting specific contacts from India on a specific topic (like sustainable fashion for instance), others were more interested in getting internship opportunities in emerging countries and needed guidance. Conclusion number 2: In terms of knowledge, some members would like to know about which emerging countries integrate sustainability in specific sectors like in their business model in the banking sector and how. Others are more interested in knowing how differently/similarly emerging countries integrate sustainability practices in their everyday life comparing to developed countries and how emerging countries could replicate some of the actions taken in other emerging countries. Someone suggested to create a project to promote sustainability in emerging countries.

Those exchanges demonstrate a need from the oikos community to build a bridge in terms of knowledge and concrete actions between emerging countries themselves and emerging countries/developed countries to learn from each other. Opportunities are everywhere and they want to seize them.

## **Cross-continental collaboration is a key for leveraging local projects**

By listening to chapters' activities and issues throughout the international meetings, some connections between chapters from different continents can be done for them to exchange on similar topics they worked on and issues they are facing. And so to: leverage their local events/projects, enable local members to collaborate with members from different cultural background, get new perspectives to solve problems. Since the meeting some chapters working on similar topics like sustainable finance, smart city, sustainable week, energy audit, social entrepreneurship, etc have been put in connection. They now have to decide if they want to seize that new opportunity or not. Future will say...

Contact Knowledge Exchange Expedition: [clementine.robort@oikos-international.org](mailto:clementine.robort@oikos-international.org)

Link: [www.oikos-international.org](http://www.oikos-international.org)