

# A Future Earth for Future Generations?

## Open letter to DKN Future Earth from early career scientists in Germany

---

*Att: Deutsches Komitee für Nachhaltigkeitsforschung in Future Earth DKN*

The below signatory early career scientists are excited to see that the first 10 years of the Future Earth (FE) initiative has been launched. We are very pleased to see a long-term integrative research effort to address global environmental change and the sustainability of human society. We strive to parallel an international effort of young scientists<sup>1</sup> to the international FE science steering committee with this open letter to our, national DKN Future Earth.

In particular we welcome the goal of FE to:

*"...engage a new generation of diverse researchers from all regions."*<sup>2</sup>

To succeed in this important mission we feel there are a number of clarifications that should be made regarding the goals of involving young scientists and how their involvement will be initiated and sustained. We acknowledge that Future Earth is probably the most visionary outline for how global sustainability science can be conducted at a national and global level. It is therefore all the more important that this grand vision is supported by clear steps for the engagement of a new, diverse generation of scientists. In the spirit of Future Earth's transdisciplinary approach we believe the work to develop these next steps should be carried out through collaboration between the national and global FE science community and early career scientists.

We suggest eight concrete steps that can help promote the overall goal of initiating and sustaining the involvement of early career scientists in FE:

- 1) Integrate early career scientists into the DKN Future Earth as full members as soon as possible (e.g. a representation of the FE early career scientist network), and encourage the integration at the global, continental and other national levels
- 2) In parallel to 1), initiate a broader dialogue between German early career scientist organizations and the DKN Future Earth
- 3) Allocate core FE funding for the involvement of early career scientists in Germany and abroad
- 4) Encourage the DKN Future Earth to work for explicit funding mechanism for early career scientists to do innovative, interdisciplinary and cutting-edge work within the framework of FE
- 5) Make it an explicit goal to have early career scientist represented at all DKN Future Earth events
- 6) Recruit a team of skilled early career Future Earth science ambassadors to communicate Future Earth to the broader community
- 7) Initiate broad outreach to the youngest spectra of science students via highly publicized debates where scientists address sustainability issues in an open and constructive dialog.
- 8) Make use of online communication platforms to reach the nationally and globally distributed community of researchers and to reach all of the above stated goals

# A Future Earth for Future Generations?

## Open letter to DKN Future Earth from early career scientists in Germany

---

Because Future Earth is a ten year initiative, engagement of early career scientists from the start carries the greatest potential to produce longer-term academic impact and returns on investment. Future Earth has the opportunity to put global change and sustainability science higher on the agenda of younger generations, and promote the growth of a truly transdisciplinary approach among young scientists to tackle these critical issues, but it requires that the overall goal to engage early career scientists is followed up with action from the onset. Thus, the DKN Future Earth can set a “best practice” example for other national and international levels of Future Earth of how to involve the next generation of FE scientists in this truly inspiring scientific adventure.

Sincerely yours,

List of signatories

Antje Bruns (Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin)

Simon Burandt (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg)

Sonja Deppisch (HafenCity Universität Hamburg)

Daniel Lang (Leuphana Universität Lüneburg)

Simon Meisch (Eberhard Karls Universität Tübingen)

Moritz Remig (Institute for Advanced Sustainability Studies, IASS Potsdam)

Martin Wilmking (Ernst-Moritz-Arndt Universität Greifswald)

.....

<sup>1</sup>Open Letter: A Future Earth for Future Generations? Letter to Future Earth from young researcher organizations. [http://www.sverigesungakaademi.se/download/18.765ed0b614373537481af9/1389888152792/FutureEarth+Young+ScientistsPetition\\_onlysignatories\\_115.pdf](http://www.sverigesungakaademi.se/download/18.765ed0b614373537481af9/1389888152792/FutureEarth+Young+ScientistsPetition_onlysignatories_115.pdf)

<sup>2</sup>Reference: Future Earth: Research for global sustainability. A framework document by the Future Earth Transition Team. [http://www.icsu.org/future-earth/media-centre/relevant\\_publications/future-earth-framework-document](http://www.icsu.org/future-earth/media-centre/relevant_publications/future-earth-framework-document)