

500 researchers in a virtual conference on sustainable development

On July 13th – 15th this year, Mid Sweden University will host the 27th annual ISDRS international research conference. The conference will bring together more than 500 researchers from all over of the world in the field of sustainable development. This year's theme is Sustainable development *"How can we accelerate work towards the global sustainability goals in Agenda 2030 in times of crisis?"* which includes economic, social and environmental perspectives.

"This year's virtual conference due to the pandemic. We are looking forward to host this event and I hope it will be a conference that gather researchers from all over the world. It will be a great opportunity to exchange knowledge and develop the research together in good ways although it's digital," says Hans-Erik Nilsson, dean of the Faculty of Science, Technology and Media at Mid Sweden University.

The conference was originally scheduled to be held in Los Angeles, but the organizer declined due to the pandemic, and the question therefore went to Mid Sweden University and to Professor Volker Mauerhofer who is a member of ISDRS.

"Almost 90 researchers are track chairs of the thematic sessions during the conference, 12 of them comes from Mid Sweden University. Research in climate change, ecosystem services, energy, production, consumption, sustainable cities, socio-economic aspects and sustainability for low-income economies are some topics that will be covered", says Catrin Johansson, professor and sustainability coordinator of Mid Sweden University.

ISDRS 27th international conference is expected to gather researchers from more than 40 countries; Brazil, Australia, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Malaysia, Mozambique, Taiwan, the United States and the United Kingdom, among many other countries around the globe. To this date, 400 researchers have submitted abstracts, summaries of their research topics. About 500 – 1000 participants are expected to register to this digital conference.

"We offer researchers from low-income countries to participate at a discounted price in the conference and are looking for partner companies that can finance participation for some of the researchers who do not have the financial means to pay to participate", says Catrin Johansson.

The conference lasts for three days and will be broadcasted from a studio at Mid Sweden University's campus in Östersund. Most of the researchers participate remotely and give their lectures online. As an interactive part of the conference, a PhD

workshop is arranged before the conference with workshops to provide extra support to 60 doctoral students in each research area.

“ We are now starting the review process of all submissions that will be quality reviewed by the research leaders for the thematic tracks. It is of course a challenge to create a good program with opportunities for interaction in a digital form, but we hope to be able to develop a clear program where participants can choose between sessions so that everyone can get as much as possible from her participation,” says Catrin Johansson.

The forest industry company SCA supports the conference with partnerships that finance the participation fee for eight researchers from low-income countries.

Normally, study visits and guided tours are included in the conference program. This year, the organizers hope instead to be able to offer virtual guided tours and study visits in the research environments at Mid Sweden University.

Read more about the conference: <https://2021.isdrsconferences.org/>
ISDRS stands for International Sustainable Development Research Society.

Specially invited speakers include:

- **Professor Jeffrey D. Sachs**, Sachs is a University Professor and Director of the Center for Sustainable Development at Columbia University. He is President of the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network and a commissioner of the UN Broadband Commission for Development.
- **Professor Hans Bruyninckx**, Executive Director, European Environmental Agency - EEA.
- **Marcos Regis da Silva**, Executive Director of the Inter-American Institute for Global Change Research (IAI).
- **Åsa Persson**, Research Director and Deputy Director at the Stockholm Environment Institute, (SEI)

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