

Open access: boon, burden, and trap

Contrasting issues in North and South

Prof. Dr. Doris Wastl-Walter
Institute of Geography and Vice-Rectorate Quality
University of Bern, Switzerland

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Research for sustainable societies – the role of universities

Session 4: Accessibility of scientific research results

Open Access, sustainable development, and international careers

- > OA: **boon** for research for sustainable development
 - Overcomes unequal access to knowledge (justice)
 - Increases exchange between science and society (participation)
 - Promotes creativity and rapid response (innovation + solution-orientation)
 - Enables young scientists to publish and network early (promotion of careers)

 - > OA: **burden** for institutions and individuals
 - Requires new legal arrangements: publishing companies are multinationals!
 - Requires new and costly IT platforms where universities resist open source
 - Is expensive for journals and authors: from reader-pays to author-pays model
 - Requires new quality criteria, maybe also new review process

 - > OA: **trap** for young researchers, especially in the South
 - “Predatory” publishers and journals
 - Very high costs (usually not included in project budgets)
 - OA journals often lack disciplinary and thematic profile
 - Often low impact factor, especially for interdisciplinary journals
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What we are doing about it



- > Swiss platform for sustainable development research
 - www.swiss-sdr.ch
 - Enrolment for Swiss researchers and other Swiss stakeholders, but information accessible to all
- > Sustainable Development at Universities programme
 - www.sd-universities.ch (50% funds from the universities)
 - Major boost factor for sustainable development in training and student projects
- > OA Repository for Univ. of Bern («BORIS»)
 - Encourage uploads (at least of postprints)
 - Button for ordering PDF version «for personal use»
- > Ad-hoc platforms and open source software for North-South and South-South collaboration at interdisciplinary centres of excellence
 - Google docs; Zotero, Mendeley; Skype
- > Awareness raising
 - In scientific writing training
 - In inter- and transdisciplinary training
 - In mentoring