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Sustainability Matters: Guiding Principles on Sustainability, Ecological Health, and Occupational Therapy

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Background/Rationale: In recent years, there has been increasing discussion of: the impact of human occupations on the environment and ecological sustainability; the effect of ecological unsustainability on human access to meaningful occupations; and the role of occupational therapy and occupational science in contributing towards mitigation of environmental damage and human adaptation to the fallout of the damage. These discussions led to articulation of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists position statement on occupational therapy and environmental sustainability. Subsequently, an international team was formed and charged with the task of writing a document on the principles to guide inclusion of content on environmental sustainability in occupational therapy education, practice, and research.

Learning Objectives: Participants will demonstrate an understanding of: 1) the sustainability principles document that was produced by the international team; and 2) how they can use the document to guide inclusion of the content on sustainability in their work as occupational therapy practitioners, educators, and/or researchers?

Teaching Methods: 1) Didactic presentation on the rationale, development, and sections of the sustainability principles document (20 minutes): 2) development of a plan to infuse content on sustainability in the workshop participant's work (15 minute individual activity); discussion of plans in small groups (30 minutes); Large group discussion of ideas emerging from small groups (20 minutes); conclusion (5 minutes).