



## Subject: Driving Sustainability Through Education (Part I)

17 November 2011

Dear Friends,

Education is at the heart of everything we do at Natural Capitalism Solutions, as it's the only way we can scale the work we do. It's the only way we can change how business is done around the globe fast enough to make a difference.

This email is the first of three to showcase how NCS uses education to drive implementation of sustainability and why we need your support now more than ever.

### Part One: The Madrone Project

If you're on our email list you already know that Hunter is one of the world's most prolific sustainability educators. She's taught at hundreds of schools across the world in the last 35 years, from Oxford, Cambridge, and Harvard to community colleges, and high schools. Despite her efforts, her creation of new education models, and tireless lecturing, there's simply not enough time or Hunters in this world to educate the next generation of sustainability leaders by ourselves. Furthermore, in a digital world, the entire model of education has to shift, from pricey, elite enclaves to empowering learners to find even better solutions and take responsibility for their education and for implementing solutions to the crises facing us.

*The current model of education is broken. In a world of 7 billion people, only a tiny minority can afford a traditional degree program. To get the kind of sustainability education Hunter provides, even that privileged minority has to take on heavy debt. Graduates with loans from the class of 2010 owe a record-high average of \$25,250 and student debt now exceeds credit card debt. Solving the greatest challenges of our time requires connecting people all over the world to first class sustainability education. NCS is working to break the mold of traditional education and enable students the world over to access the world's sustainability thought leaders affordably.*

#### 2011 Higher Education Engagements:

Hunter joined the faculty at [Bainbridge Graduate Institute](#), and is helping create the new MBA in sustainability to launch at Bard College in NYC fall 2012.

NCS created the Sustainability Leadership and Implementation Certificate at the [University of Denver](#)

Hunter and other NCS staff members have taught at over 30 schools including:  
Arizona State University,  
Colorado State University,  
University of Colorado,  
Columbia Business School,  
Kellogg Business School,  
Lipscomb University,  
Mills College,  
University of Tampa,  
University of Adelaide, and  
Vassar College.

#### Big problems need bigger solutions!

Natural Capitalism's [Madrone Project](#) is a fore-runner of what tomorrow's education will become. Working with leading academics, web-based learning experts, and sustainability experts, it will bring well-produced online micro-classes featuring the best thinkers and implementers from around the world to tablets and smart phones. The Madrone Project will do for sustainability what [Khan Academy](#) has done for mathematics.

No university can provide students with the full diversity of content being developed by practitioners around the world, but a web-based video library—accessible anywhere the way songs are downloaded—can. The Madrone Project will leverage the best minds advancing the field and bring their expertise to global audiences.

The Madrone Project will deliver online micro-classes in sustainability, designed for the modern digital attention span and curated to deliver high-quality content. These micro-classes will be linked using an ordered network (click here to learn more about [ordered networks](#)), allowing users to see how one topic relates to many others, one degree of separation away, two degrees, etc. Students can then pursue their passions through the network, designing curricula that fit their needs. By aggregating micro-courses into a comprehensive body of knowledge they could receive university credit. Several educational institutions from Bainbridge Graduate Institute to Vassar have expressed great desire for these materials.

Click on the video below to watch Hunter's TED-x presentation about The Madrone Project.



Like [TED talks](#), which command thousands of viewers each day, Madrone Project micro-classes will be affordable, or (if sponsored) free and downloadable to an iPad or smartphone “app.” Students will self-organize using social media to engage in ongoing conversations with professors and students around the world.

### **The Madrone Project will revolutionize sustainability education.**

Making this project a success requires marshalling a diversity of resources, including time and money. Natural Capitalism is seeking financial support to launch the first phase. This includes filming and producing 50 hours of content, recruiting university partner(s), developing a web application, and securing additional funding to complete the project by early 2013. If you would like to support the Madrone Project or any of Natural Capitalism Solutions’ work [click here](#).

While the Madrone Project is the future of sustainability education, NCS is also at the cutting edge of today’s sustainability education practices. Stay tuned to learn how we are using innovative web-based tools to enable our corporate clients to engage and motivate their employees, empowering small businesses to implement sustainability, and how you can be a part of it.

Thank you for your continued support.

Cheers,  
Toby



**Next in this education series:**  
Part II: Engaging Employees  
Part III: Reaching Small Businesses