

THREE BARRIERS AND FOUR OPPORTUNITIES FOR POLICY AND BUSINESS IN ORDER TO ADVANCE MORE SUSTAINABLE SOCIETIES

SEMINAR 2, DAY 2, MORNING WORKING SESSION ON:

- POLICY/GOVERNANCE MODELS AND
- BUSINESS/CORPORATE MODELS OF THE FUTURE

The morning session centered on how leadership and systems can and must change in order to advance sustainable societies for the long term.

Specifically, participants were asked to address two themes: Firstly how politics and business can become the most important driving force advancing sustainable societies. Secondly, if they thought we need to make systems changes (e.g. democracy, representation, global co-operation etc. or in the economic system, in organizational models, or market models) in order for the political world or the corporate world to contribute to advancing sustainable societies?

Participants discussed these questions in pairs and wrote their answers on a board for everyone to see and discuss in plenum. The complete written responses can be seen in the two tables on the next page. Some of the major themes that came up were the following.

BARRIER #1: SHORT TERM THINKING

Arguably, one defining dimension to leadership is the ability to focus on long-term strategic issues letting more immediate actions be determined by long-term objectives rather than spending all energy on tactics and muddling through. Many participants are worried that there is a pronounced shortage of this ability and that the scene is dominated by short-term thinking. Some explanations point to the structural conditions that leaders face. In politics they are things like the media and voter concerns, and in business it is a focus on share prices and quarterly earnings that make leaders focus on short term gain to the detriment of longer-term objectives.

Still, leaders themselves are not free of blame. After all, another defining dimension to leadership is the ability to, well, lead rather than follow.

BARRIER #2: LACK OF HOLISTIC THINKING

A leader is responsible. Not just for achieving immediate political, organizational or business goals as well as serving the voters or shareholders that employ her. She is also responsible for the wider implications of her actions and decisions, i.e. how do they affect people in and around the

organization, how do they impact and interplay with the community, society, the global, nature etc. But these aspects are often given too little attention which is a serious barrier to making leadership be a driving force for sustainability.

BARRIER #3: INTEREST-DRIVEN OUTLOOK

Leadership can be difficult because of resistance to change from vested interests. These, almost by definition, are rooted in past conditions, and, as the saying goes, the future has few lobbyists. Businesses, industries, shareholders, voting blocks, consumers, media – all have vested interests and are able to organize effectively in order to pursue them. If these interests gets too narrow and solely self driven in focus, they risk being a barrier to transformative progress. One risk is that sustainability is seen as a threat rather than an opportunity.

OPPORTUNITY #1: ROOM FOR ACTION

Several participants pointed out that we can actually do something. That we can make a difference. We can decide. We can act locally. We can create green jobs as a solution to the crisis (which otherwise acts as a barrier to leadership). As one contribution has it: "Courage and leadership". Such sentiments are an expression of confidence in the capacity for action, both in politics and in business. It may not be easy, but it is possible. Also, it is seeing change as opportunity rather than threat is a way to go – notably seeing sustainability as a business opportunity.

OPPORTUNITY #2: BE GENEROUS!

Being generous is an attitude, not a preconceived plan; a mode of being which puts one outside one's self. When we are generous, we offer more of ourselves to all our relationships. As such, being generous can support a richer, more effective common practice of everyday life, business and politics. What if being generous was our default action in all human interactions; always to give rather than to take? What if generosity leads human action rather than personal rights? Let us consider what we supply to the system rather than what we demand from it. The practice of being generous can train us in the art of acting as we want to instead of because as we have to.



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OPPORTUNITY #3: WE DON'T HAVE TO AGREE

We cannot expect to all contribute to solving global crises in equal measures. Lets allow and support those who want to make positive change to simply start right away. Nature would never be as unreasonable as to suggest that all species contributed to their respective ecosystems in equal measures (relative to size and population). Nature doesn't agree and doesn't even try to. Nature simply creates in order to feed itself or another part of nature. There is no one law of nature, but many. As Special Global Advisor Climate Change and Sustainability KPMG, Yvo de Boer, stated at the Green Growth Leaders Conference, Copenhagen

2011: "The issue is not whether we agree or not, but rather whether our respective targets are ambitious enough!"

OPPORTUNITY #4: THE FUTURE MARKET PLACE

Business can act effectively as a first-mover and have room for changing behaviors, investment, R&D patterns etc. One way of encouraging and spreading sustainable business practices is to rely on officially sanctioned codes for sustainability. Another way is to get started, for those who wait (under the guise of not being able to agree on legislation or codes) will be the losers of the future sustainability market place. Those who don't wait, will create and lead future markets.



Q1: LEADERSHIP

“How can governance/political actors or business/corporate actors become the most important driving force advancing sustainable societies? Please identify the two main barriers and the two main opportunities” (numbers indicates the most important, prioritized by the participants in each group when allowed to choose only one barrier and opportunity).

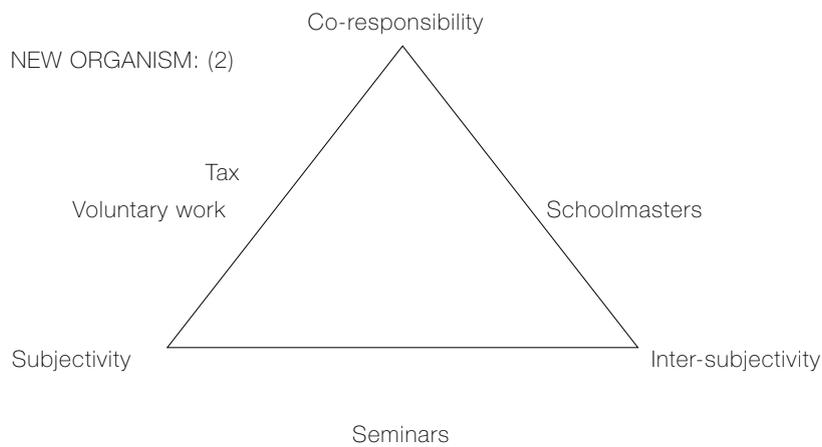
	MAIN BARRIERS	MAIN OPPORTUNITIES
Q1 – Policy and governance	1 - Focus on current definition of economic growth (4) 2 - Resistance can be created towards concrete change, e.g. limits to car traffic 3 - Traditional alliances (prevents positive action). Politics/business/civil society/public (all stuck) (1) 4 - Profit driven media/journalists – hunting dogs rather than watch dogs => useless political dialogue 5 - Lacking sense of community in society (solidarity) 6 - Shortsighted block policy (2) 7 - The need to renounce material goods for the voters	1 - Politicians could create national and international conditions for sustainable development (1) 2 - Green jobs as solution to crisis (1) 3 - Progressive alliance + universal alliance (1) 4 - Universal federal structure 5 - More enlightened parliaments/system of governance (less spin, more and better qualified inputs from different fields of expertise (e.g. philosophy, science, etc.) => needs to be formalised by way of feedback forums, e.g. designed/headed by a cross-political committee. (2) 6 - The farsighted vision which leads to greater happiness, and which is measured regularly (1) 7 - Focus on positive elements and long term
Q1 – Business /corporations	1 - The crisis 2 - Lack of holism (1) 3 - Short term profit goals create tensions, inhibit creativity (4) 4 - Fixed pie view of the world overlooks synergies 5 - Fear of the unknown 6 - Short term thinking (1) 7 - Lack of interconnectivity/systemic knowledge (1) 8 - Sustainability is not seen as business opportunity (2) 9 - Sustainability is not incorporated in the business model and organisational design at a global scale 10 - Not a clear picture of what is the role of business in society (1) 11 - The perspective (on operations/impact) is too narrow (not holistic) 12 - Get over the acceptance of best-practice model 13 - Sustainability department on fringe of business	1 - We can decide 2 - Act locally (2) 3 - Create a culture that excites our higher thinking capacities 4 - Developing new business models that entice responsibility (2) 5 - Creating well-being and purchasing power 6 - Influence politicians and each other 7 - Courage and leadership 8 - Short decision making processes 9 - Make use of their connect-co-creation cultures (1) 10 - Manage and improve the whole life-cycle (2) 11 - Redefine life-cycle in order to go from linear to circular (3) 12 - Burning platform! 13 - Make sustainability department core business

Q2 : SYSTEM CHANGE

Do you think we need to make systems changes in order for governance and political actors (democracy, representation, global co-operation etc.)/businesses and corporations (capitalism, purpose of the company, corporate world, new global institutions etc.) to contribute to advancing sustainable societies? (numbers indicates the most important system change, prioritized by the participants in each group when allowed to choose only one system change).

NEEDED SYSTEMS CHANGES

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| Q2 –
Policy and
governance | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - EU: Change decision-making process from unanimous to majority voting on green taxes (1) 2 - WTO: Environment issues cannot be overruled (accounting for protectionism) by trade issues (1) 3 - Globally: Strengthen UN, resources, power. Possibilities to decide changes for overall common good without all countries participating (1) 4 - Democracy: We want it. Need to be modernized in order to involve the individual, as the individual has been given too much room. Rethink welfare system to involve rather than exclude responsibility (3) 5 - Democratic infrastructure in Europe and the world (citizen-to-citizen approach) (2) |
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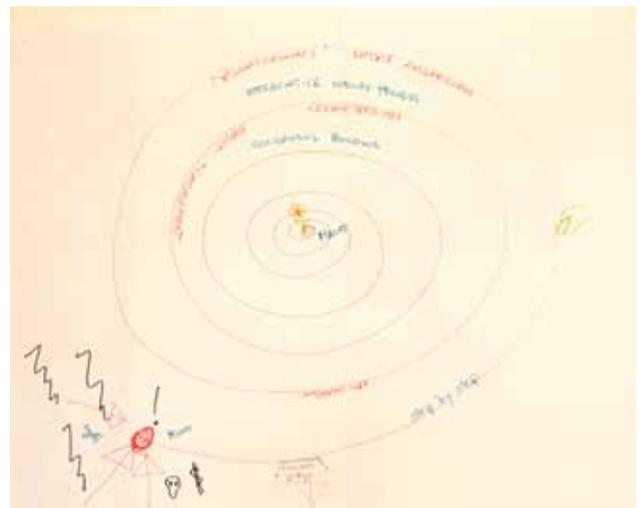
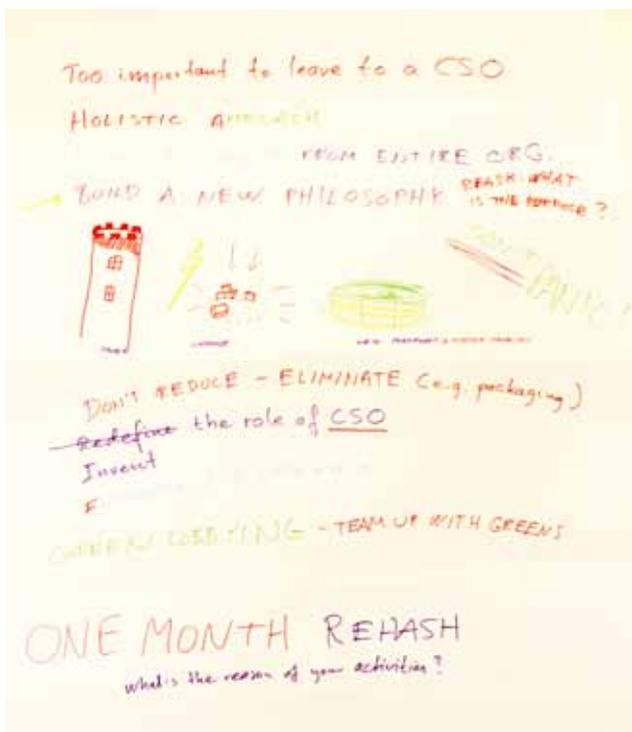
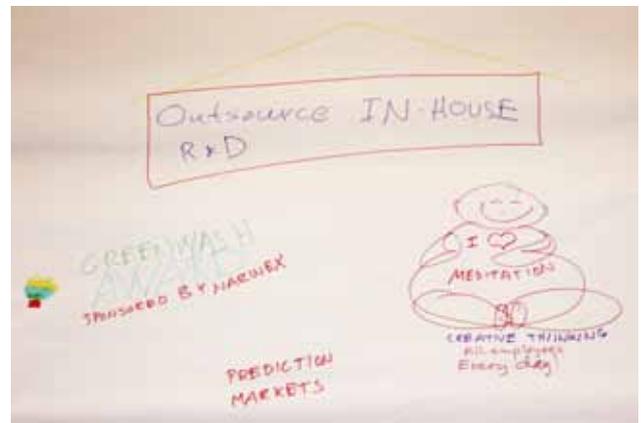
Potential: Authenticity + Networks

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| Q2 –
Business
/corporations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1 - New accounting systems: Include both internal and external costs (4) 2 - Taxation system: (2) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise taxes on things you want <u>less</u> of (e.g. carbon) - Lower taxes on things you want <u>more</u> of (e.g. employment) 3 - Don't reward inefficiency via subsidies 4 - Smart trials: Companies teach companies 5 - Global discussion on the roles, interplay and responsibilities of government, civil society and business 6 - New global financial system (1) 7 - Rethinking democracy globally so we can actually make the right, needed decisions on a fair basis 8 - Stock exchange: Change from baving like casinos and return to their original function 9 - Charter/codex for corporations - supported by the UN, ASEAN, EU, etc. to include working towards creating sustainable societies (with profit), protecting local communities (1) 10 - A new cooperative possibility/offer at the market (consumption + meaning) 11 - Change architecture of international institutions (World Bank, IMF, UN) (3) 12 - Beyond GDP: New criteria for measuring wealth, performance, ... 13 - Go from micro => to macro economics (1) 14 - Go from "river" to "lake" economy (tap into ongoing material assets!) |
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PHOTOS: STINE SKOTT OLESEN



WORKSHOP ON ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGNING



ORGANIZATIONAL DESIGNING. In the afternoon of the second day of the seminar, Professor Daved Barry and Associate Professor Stefan Mezig, Copenhagen Business School, did a workshop on organizational designing. After having read the case story, small groups of participants created the models shown above. This session was followed by a plenum debate. You can watch part of this debate in the video from the second day of the In100Y-seminar #2 at www.in100y.dk