Is sustainability sustainable?
NO!
YES! What to do?
YES! How to help?

Politically incorrect questions about sustainability

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Outline

1. Is sustainability sustainable?

2. NO!

3. YES! What to do?

4. YES! How to help?

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Definitions

Classic

Develop today (consume the today ressources) without compromising tomorrow's development (availability of ressources).

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Develop today (consume the today ressources) without compromising tomorrow's development (availability of ressources).

Remark 1

Development is not only needs driven, but also value driven (wants).

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Remark 1

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Remark 2

Sustainability vs Resilience vs Vulnerability.
Commons: is it a tragedy?

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Development?

- Should we develop further?
- Should we just maintain?
- How fair is that?
- Should we redistribute (some development and some maintenance)?

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Today

- Who establishes the today "development" needs?
- Who establishes the admissible wants?
- Should we satisfy all needs?
- What does satisfying needs mean? Allowing the less endowed to reach the better endowed or allow all to increase their endowment (and share)?

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Tomorrow

- Who establishes the tomorrow needs?
- How do we know what we need tomorrow? Of course some needs are "known", but many are only partially known or totally unknown.
- At what horizon all needs are "unknown"?
- How much today's needs and values bias our vision about tomorrow's needs and values?

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What is wrong?

- Why common wisdom and common sense do not imply sustainability?
- Why consumer's behaviour and market organisation do not imply sustainability? Or they do?
- What are we doing today which is not sustainable and why we do it?
- Why people/consumers/actors/agents should change their behaviour?

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No sustainable sense ...

Should we change our notion and model of growth and development? Should we change our concept of sustainability?

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No sustainable sense ...

Should we change our notion and model of growth and development? Should we change our concept of sustainability?

For instance: instead of trying to satisfy ill defined or unknown needs we could try to enhance and or design capabilities.

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Human environment Needs

Usual needs:

- transportation/logistics
- food supplies
- health and security
- education and culture
- shelter (water, power, sanitation, telecom etc.)
- waste management.

New needs:

- inclusion
- citizenship

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Real and Virtual Space

- Where human environments end? And where "non" human environments start?
- How do we differentiate/separate two human environments?

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Frontiers

Geographical and physical boundaries vs virtual spaces and territories. Real and virtual communities.

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Design

How do we redesign needs, communities, services and organisation?

What are we looking for?

- consuming less ressources for the services we get today?
- using the same ressources, but for more (and new/different) services?
- what about less services?

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Time and Uncertainty

- How values are going to evolve?
- How to study preferences and values over time and how to model them?
- How to decide in flexible (but at the same time robust) way?
- What flexibility and robustness mean?
- Real Options. Scenario Building.

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How to help?

- How to construct evidence?
- How to construct legitimation?
    - About doing something sustainable
    - About doing something better?
    - About doing something new?

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Indicators/Indexes/Measures

- Meaningfulness
- Usefulness
- Legitimation
- Life Cycle

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Big Data and Policy Analytics

- Huge data bases about citizens'/users' behaviour
- Direct: surveys, pols, elections, use of services
- Indirect: phones/apps, internet, social networks
- How to make sense of these for policy design?
- How to distinguish strong and weak signals?
- How to distinguish weak signals from noise?

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Information Challenges

- Information Sharing
- Information Fusion
- Argumentation
- Information Privacy

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Citizens' Science

How to consider the three main sources of information:

- citizens and advocacy groups
- experts' knowledge
- political and/or strategic vision

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Participation

- Who, how, when participates in designing policies?
- Who decides about who, how and when?
- Who decides and manages the agendas?
- Is participative decision making sustainable?