



**ECONOMY FOR THE COMMON
GOOD INTERNATIONAL
CONFERENCE**
4TH EDITION

ECGIC 2026

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS



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Program Overview

Wednesday, 10.06.2026 - Morning Sessions

Time	Room 1+2	Room 3+4+5
	<p>Consumer Behavior / Education & Research</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Matthias Lederer</i></p>	<p>Agriculture & Food</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Roland Menges</i></p>
11:30 – 11:50	<p>Consumers in the Economy for the Common Good - Development of an Evaluation Framework</p> <p><i>Christoph Harrach, Sarah Pinno, Christian Einsiedel</i></p>	<p>Golden Rules of Business Ethics and the Common Good: Virtue and Personalism in Sustainable Food Systems</p> <p><i>Yating Tian, Qeis Kamran, Patrick Baretto</i></p>
11:50 – 12:10	<p>Polis Can Depolarize its Participants! But Not Significantly?</p> <p><i>Florian Wagner</i></p>	<p>Forest Governance in Valais: A Historical Analysis Using the CIS Framework</p> <p><i>Noemi Imboden, Stéphane Genoud</i></p>
12:10 – 12:30	<p>Redefining Sustainable Marketing Research: Empirical, Quantitative, and Theoretical Superiority</p> <p><i>Qeis Kamran, Patrick Baretto</i></p>	<p>SSbD Framework for Circular Economy Business Models Based on Agricultural Waste</p> <p><i>Fernando Castelló-Sirvent, Pablo Pinazo-Dallenbach, Pascual Cortés-Pellicer, Vanessa Roger-Monzó</i></p>



13:30 – 13:50

Unveiling Research Trajectories
and Knowledge Gaps in the
Circular Economy: A Multi-Method
Bibliometric and Topic Modeling
Analysis (1981-2025)

Qeis Kamran, Patrick Baretto

Scenario Modelling of Forest
Governance in Zermatt Using a
Qualitative System Dynamics
Approach

Noemi Imboden, Stéphane Genoud

13:50 – 14:10

Transforming Economics Education
through Circular Economy and
Sustainability Principles

*Hammna Jillani, Hesan Zahid,
Mojmír Sabolovič*



Wednesday, 10.06.2026 - Afternoon Sessions

Time	Main Hall	Room 1+2	Room 3+4+5
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16:00 – 16:20	<p>Framework and Strategies for the Deployment of Artificial Intelligence in Public Welfare Organizations</p> <p><i>Maximilian Schultz, Franziska Hauer, Sonja Haug, Karsten Weber</i></p>	<p>Evaluating Post-Growth Value Creation in Enterprises: A Scoping Review</p> <p><i>Jonneke de Koning, Kaj Morel, Jos Bijman</i></p>	<p>A Comprehensive Wellbeing Assessment in Cost-Benefit Analysis: A Review of Flood Adaptation Case Studies</p> <p><i>Anoek van Tilburg, Kees van Ginkel, Jan Brusselaers, Wouter Botzen</i></p>
16:20 – 16:40	<p>Sustainability Benefits for the Business Manager's Mindset: Strategic Framework for Understanding Positive Impact</p> <p><i>Jose Carlos Ramos, Natalia Cugueró-Escofet, Ricard Espelt</i></p>	<p>Ethical World Trade - Economy for the Common Good on a Global Level Framework</p> <p><i>Brigitta Herrmann</i></p>	<p>The Dynamic Interplay of Economic, Institutional, and Transportation Factors in Cross-Border Employment</p> <p><i>Carmen-Raluca Spataceanu, Dominic Scholze, Maren Martens</i></p>



<p>16:40 – 17:00</p>	<p>Human Dignity in Different Economic Models Compared to the Economy for the Common Good</p> <p><i>Thomas Schiffelmann</i></p>	<p>Ecocide, A Lens on Declining Sustainability Infrastructures and Their Environmental and Human Impacts, and Rebuilding within Just Transitions</p> <p><i>Chelsea Mandrigues, Zaid Alkhairi</i></p>	<p>Common-Good-Oriented Participation and Individual Behavior in Circular Regions (CoRe-Lab)</p> <p><i>Michael Henke, Roland Menges, Michael Hahn</i></p>
<p>17:00 – 17:20</p>	<p>Social Value Generated by the Labor Inclusion of Vulnerable Youth: The Hispaled Case</p> <p><i>Bárbara Calderón Gómez-Tejedor</i></p>	<p>Re-evaluating the Unsustainable German Material Footprint towards a Sufficiency Oriented Demand-side Reduction</p> <p><i>Nicolas Ehrhardt, Manuel W. Bickel, Christa Liedtke</i></p>	
<p>17:20 – 17:40</p>	<p>Futures at Work: Labor Unions' Viewpoints on Employee-Level Social and Environmental Sustainability</p> <p><i>Stef van Dongen</i></p>	<p>Commons-Governed Automation as Material Infrastructure for an Economy for the Common Good (Video)</p> <p><i>Eduardo César Garrido Merchán</i></p>	



Thursday, 11.06.2026 - Morning Sessions

Time	Room 1+2	Room 3+4+5
	<p>Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Lisa Ranisch</i></p>	<p>Boundaries & Post-Growth / Agriculture & Food</p> <p><i>Session Chair: Roland Menges</i></p>
10:00 – 10:20	<p>How to Break Free from Self-Fulfilling Mental Models in Complex Business Problems?</p> <p><i>Oliver Huffman</i></p>	<p>Applying the Doughnut Economics Framework to California</p> <p><i>Franziska Raedeker</i></p>
10:20 – 10:40	<p>Reporting Requirements in the Transition from the ECG Framework to the ESRS VSME</p> <p><i>Erika Obermayr, Josef Baumüller</i></p>	<p>Unifying Sustainability and Democracy: Building a Network of Transition Coordination Platforms</p> <p><i>Peter Bootsma, Jacqueline Hofstede</i></p>
10:40 – 11:00	<p>Beyond Profit: Redefining Business as a Vehicle for the Common Good (Video)</p> <p><i>Adina-Iuliana Deacu</i></p>	<p>Targeted Groundwater Protection Through Digital Precision Agriculture</p> <p><i>Martin Mittermayer, Ludwig Hagn, Josef Stangl, Johannes Schuster, Kurt-Jürgen Hülsbergen</i></p>
11:00 – 11:20	<p>How to Design Products for Circular Economy? When w∞d.ii Meets the EConGOOD Business Canvas</p> <p><i>Robert Böker, Hartmut Schäfer</i></p>	<p>Möhren und Marillen: Rethinking Food Waste at the Local Level to Improve the Circular Economy (Theatrical Dialogue)</p> <p><i>Thomas Culhane, Katrin Puetz</i></p>



Thursday, 11.06.2026 - Afternoon Sessions

Time	Main Hall	Room 1+2	Room 3+4+5
	Regional Transformation & Resilience <i>Session Chair: José Carlos Ramos</i>	Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies <i>Session Chair: Alexander Herzner</i>	Education & Research <i>Session Chair: Julia Kreppmeier</i>
15:00 – 15:20	A Vision for Landshut 2045 <i>Katharina Anna Schlecht, Stefanie Mennle, Saskia Rimat, Philipp Specht</i>	Doughnut Economics for Regenerative Business Design <i>Nelly Rahimy, Annekatrin Meißner, Suleika Bort</i>	Sustainability Education as Aim across the Institution and its Programs <i>Sabine Spangenberg</i>
15:20 – 15:40	Economic Viability and Social Robustness of Intentional Communities: A Case Study <i>Maartje Visser</i>	A Balanced Scorecard Development from the Perspective of the Common Good Economy <i>Wolfgang Gehra, Sabine Thiele, Kim Klein</i>	Example of Good Practice: W(u)eShare-Participate Through Involvement - Swap Cupboards on University Campus to Promote Social Interactions <i>Timo Stiller</i>



<p>15:40 – 16:00</p>	<p>Driving the Transition towards a Common Good Region: A Social Entrepreneurship Initiative by Kempten University of Applied Sciences</p> <p><i>Lisa Gebler, Marina Bergler</i></p>	<p>Integrating Committed Engineering and the Economy for the Common Good into the Design of an Organizational Management Model for BIC Companies in Colombia</p> <p><i>Sandra Milena Bonilla Cely</i></p>	<p>A Curriculum for Common Good Economics</p> <p><i>Sophie Friedl</i></p>
<p>16:00 – 16:20</p>	<p>Readiness as Enabling Conditions: Operationalizing the Social and Solidarity Economy through the Ready Communities Model</p> <p><i>Chad Renando, Kerry Grace</i></p>	<p>Matter, Process, Structure – A Living Systems Approach to Designing Organizations and Projects</p> <p><i>Kathy Otto</i></p>	<p>Learning experience for a Fair and Sustainable Economy</p> <p><i>Carina Kamptner, Petra Isepp</i></p>
<p>16:20 – 16:40</p>	<p>Rail Infrastructure for the Common Good in Germany: How Political Ambitions Play Out in Practice</p> <p><i>Dominic Jung</i></p>	<p>ESG + C2 Quality System</p> <p><i>Víctor Fernández Morales</i></p>	



16:40 – 17:00

How Can Psychology
Contribute to Societal
Transformation?
Insights from Doing
Participatory Action
Research

Nilima Chowdhury



Friday, 12.06.2026 - Parallel Workshop Sessions

Time	Main Hall	Room 1+2	Room 3+4+5	Room at Stadtwerke Amberg
10:30 – 12:30	<p>The “TAPAS Gallery” Project - Highlighting Future-Fit Economic Models</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Christian Felber</i></p>	<p>Systems Thinking: The Nature of Complexity and How to Solve Complex Problems (for the Common Good)</p> <p><i>Facilitator: Oliver Huffman</i></p>	<p>Task Democracy Experiment</p> <p><i>Facilitators: Peter Bootsma, Jacqueline Hofstede</i></p>	<p>Building Transformation: From Conference Dialogue to Collaborative Action</p> <p><i>Facilitators: Ruhul Amin Noel, Maria Pusoma, Gabriele M. Murry</i></p>



Wednesday, 10.06., 11:30 – 11:50

Consumer Behavior

Consumers in the Economy for the Common Good - Development of an Evaluation Framework.

Christoph Harrach, Sarah Pinno, Christian Einsiedel

The Economy for the Common Good (ECG) presents a normative and integrative paradigm that embeds sustainability and democratic values in economic practice. It is primarily known for its contributions to organizations' sustainability reporting. Beyond this, the ECG as a social movement also addresses the role of consumers in transforming the economic system. Although initial ECG-assessment tools for individuals are available, consumer aspects have been considered only unsystematically. To address this gap, this study examines how consumer behavior can be systematically assessed in line with the ECG Matrix. It is structured in two parts. First, the existing frameworks are analyzed qualitatively following Boateng et al.'s (2018) methodology. Second, building on these findings, a new comprehensive set of items is proposed. For this purpose, Geiger et al.'s (2018) Sustainable Consumption Behavior (SCB) Cube is adapted by integrating ECG values and relabeling its consumption phases in line with established purchasing phases. The resulting ECG Consumer (ECGC) Matrix captures both attitudinal and behavioral aspects through a proposed set of 54 items. Although further testing is required, the framework and scale provide a foundation for future empirical research and practical application. In doing so, this research contributes to resolving existing methodological limitations at the intersection of consumers and the ECG Matrix, while also advancing broader research on the attitude-behavior gap in sustainable consumption.

Keywords: Economy for the Common Good, Consumer Behavior, Sustainable Consumption, Attitude-Behavior Gap, Item Generation, User Practices, Self-Assessment Tests, Scale Development



Wednesday, 10.06., 11:30 – 11:50

Agriculture & Food

Golden Rules of Business Ethics and the Common Good: Virtue and Personalism in Sustainable Food Systems

Yating Tian, Qeïs Kamran, Patrick Baretto

Contemporary debates on the circular economy increasingly recognize that sustainability cannot be achieved through technical efficiency and resource reuse alone, but requires a robust ethical foundation guiding production and consumption. Building on virtue ethics and realistic personalism, this paper explores how business ethics can be integrated into the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) framework, with a particular focus on sustainable food systems. The guiding research question examines how the Personalist Principle (PP) and the Common Good Principle (CGP) can provide an ethical foundation for the ECG, and how these principles are manifested in everyday food-related practices.

Methodologically, the study adopts a hybrid qualitative approach, combining theory synthesis with a phenomenologically informed focus group study involving conscious consumers. This approach enables a dialogical connection between normative ethical theory and lived moral reasoning. The empirical analysis aligns participants' reflections with the five core ECG values – human dignity, solidarity, ecological sustainability, social justice, and democratic participation.

The findings indicate that ethical food consumption is primarily experienced as a person-centered and virtue-based practice, closely linked to health, quality, and care for the self, while simultaneously expressing solidarity with producers and concern for ecological limits. Participants articulated ethical action through practical virtues such as prudence and temperance, balancing moral aspirations with constraints related to price sensitivity, availability, and convenience.

Overall, this study contributes to the ethical foundations of the circular economy by demonstrating how virtue ethics and personalism can bridge normative theory and empirical practice, conceptualizing food systems as moral ecosystems oriented toward human dignity and regenerative, common good-based economies.



Keywords: circular economy; virtue ethics; Economy for the Common Good; sustainable food systems; personalism



Wednesday, 10.06., 11:50 – 12:10

Consumer Behavior

Polis Can Depolarize its Participants! But Not Significantly?

Florian Wagner

Surveys in society reveal that polarization is considered a problem that may be growing. At the same time, people who are using digital media platforms are exposed to algorithms and platform designs that are conceptualized to capture user attention instead of moderating discussions or promoting deliberation. Polis-like tools are tools for deliberation support, which allow mapping participants' opinions on a large scale and concluding the collected data. Tools like Polis are increasingly used as an opinion basis for citizens' participation or in finding common ground in platform-independent online discussions on a national level across the world. In this paper, the connection between (de-)polarization and Polis is being examined. For this study, two types of political mass polarization are measured: Opinion polarization and affective polarization. Those can be measured through agreement or disagreement on what participants think about a certain topic or feel towards a certain group of people. It is done through a pre-survey of the participants, who will continue participating in the Polis conversation, and a post-survey. Through a polarization index, the data will be analyzed. The hypothesis states that participants will be less polarized than before. The (in)significant changes in opinion and affection, combined with the consistent reduction in polarization across all questions, suggest that the intervention may have a depolarizing effect.

Keywords: depolarization, polarization, polis



Wednesday, 10.06., 11:50 – 12:10

Agriculture & Food

Forest Governance in Valais: A Historical Analysis Using the CIS Framework

Noemi Imboden, Stéphane Genoud

Valais, an alpine canton in Switzerland, has a long history of community-based forest management that provides a rich case to examine governance transitions. The local forest has evolved through phases of local self-governance, state intervention, recovery, and modern challenges of underutilization. This study applies the combined Institutional Analysis and Development–Social–Ecological Systems (CIS) framework to analyze the historical trajectory of forest governance in Valais from the 19th century to the present. We combine numerous documents, records, and prior studies to reconstruct how institutions, technologies, and ecological conditions co-developed. We identify four major phases of governance change: [1] a traditional commons regime, [2] early cantonal regulation, [3] national regulation leading to ecological recovery, and [4] a contemporary era of multifunctional management. We trace how key action situations, such as communal resource-use decisions and government policy interventions, were shaped by evolving resource system conditions, resource units, actors, and the governance system. The results show a transition from severe 19th-century overuse to successful reforestation by the mid-20th century, followed by new issues of underuse and changing societal demands. The analysis highlights the importance of early intervention, polycentric governance, adaptive actor roles, and integrating ecological, technical, and social capacities. These insights inform current policy by emphasizing proactive management and collaborative, multi-level governance to balance forest conservation with sustainable use under climate change.

Keywords: commons; forest management; Valais; CIS framework; historical institutional analysis



Wednesday, 10.06., 12:10 – 12:30

Education & Research

Redefining Sustainable Marketing Research: Empirical, Quantitative, and Theoretical Superiority

Qeïs Kamran, Patrick Baretto

Background: This work establishes the field-defining analysis of sustainable marketing through unmatched empirical scope (40,384 articles spanning 25 years), state-of-the-art computational methodology (Latent Dirichlet Allocation + Multiple Correspondence Analysis), and comprehensive theoretical synthesis – setting the definitive benchmark for methodological rigor and thematic completeness.

Empirical Superiority: The 3-30 times larger corpus than previous reviews reveals paradigmatic transformation from defensive compliance to transformative systems change. The 50-topic taxonomy provides 2.5 times greater granularity than existing classifications, enabling unprecedented research positioning precision.

Theoretical Foundations: Anchored by foundational works (Kemper & Ballantine, 2019; Belz & Peattie, 2012; McDonagh & Prothero, 2014; Felber, 2015), this framework synthesizes marketing theory, sustainability science, and Economy for the Common Good into an integrated meta-theoretical understanding of disciplinary evolution.

Impact: Unifying temporal trajectory analysis with actionable implications for curricula, policy, and strategic management provides direct guidance for resource allocation and transformative innovation aligned with sustainable development imperatives. This study establishes the foundational standard for sustainability marketing scholarship through superior empirical comprehensiveness, quantitative sophistication, and theoretical integration.

Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis, Circular Economy, ESG Integration, LDA Topic Modeling, Sustainability Marketing



Wednesday, 10.06., 12:10 – 12:30

Agriculture & Food

SSbD Framework for Circular Economy Business Models Based on Agricultural Waste

Fernando Castelló-Sirvent, Pablo Pinazo-Dallenbach, Pascual Cortés-Pellicer, Vanessa Roger-Monzó

This document presents the EMNECiARA Research Project (Entrepreneurship Based on Circular Economy Business Models for the Use of Agricultural Waste), funded by the Valencian Government (CIGE/2024/219). The objective of the project is to transform a problem of agricultural waste into a vector of sustainable territorial development and strengthening of the rural productive fabric. The potential of rice straw and grape stems in the Valencian Community, in Spain, as a basis for new circular economy business models is analyzed. Based on the environmental and socio-economic problems posed by their current management, the research proposes reconfiguring these waste streams into strategic resources for bioenergy, biomaterials, high-value biocomposites, and solutions for regenerative agriculture. It is suggested that this waste stream be reconfigured as a strategic resource for the regional bioeconomy, utilizing the Safe and Sustainable by Design (SSbD) framework to design circular business models and analyze double materiality. Methodologically, it is structured into various phases, including territorial and waste characterization, the identification and prioritization of business models, their comprehensive evaluation through a safety and sustainability framework throughout the life cycle, and a double materiality analysis that simultaneously considers environmental, social, and economic risks and opportunities. The use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) is incorporated for the processing of qualitative information, the exploration of scenarios, and the development of communication materials. The expected results include a manual of good practices, proposals for technically, economically, and socially viable business models, as well as scientific and outreach contributions aimed at open science.

Keywords: circular economy; rice straw; grape stems; agri-food waste; Safe and Sustainable by Design (SSbD)



Wednesday, 10.06., 13:30 – 13:50

Education & Research

Unveiling Research Trajectories and Knowledge Gaps in the Circular Economy: A Multi-Method Bibliometric and Topic Modeling Analysis (1981-2025)

Qeïs Kamran, Patrick Baretto

The transition toward a sustainable circular economy represents a critical paradigm shift in contemporary economic thought with profound implications for achieving the common good. This study systematically analyzes 42,990 peer-reviewed articles published between 1981 and 2025 using advanced computational methods. Employing Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) with 50 topics and Multiple Correspondence Analysis (MCA), we map thematic clusters, quantify emerging subfields, and identify persistent knowledge gaps.

Results reveal exponential publication growth with output doubling every three years since 2012. Fifty semantically coherent topics emerged, organized into five meta-clusters based on exclusive dominant-topic assignment – each document assigned to the single meta-cluster corresponding to its highest LDA probability topic, ensuring counts sum to the total corpus (N=42,990): Climate Resilience & Environmental Systems (24.0%, n=10,318), Industrial Ecology & Technological Innovation (25.6%, n=11,006), Supply Chain Design & Logistics (16.0%, n=6,882), Policy & Governance (18.5%, n=7,949), and Sectoral Applications (15.9%, n=6,835).

Dominant themes include industrial symbiosis (n=1,332), circular production systems (n=1,159), and product design for circularity (n=1,088). However, critical gaps persist in socio-behavioral research (<1%), Global South contexts, political economy analysis, social justice dimensions, and Economy for the Common Good (ECG) perspectives. The virtual absence of degrowth and postgrowth frameworks – alongside insufficient engagement with common good metrics and democratic governance models – represents a significant epistemic blind spot with direct relevance to the ECGIC 2026 conference mandate. This multi-method synthesis provides evidence-based guidance for research prioritization, curriculum development, and policy intervention toward ecologically regenerative and socially equitable economic systems.



Keywords: Bibliometric Analysis; Circular Economy; Degrowth; Economy for the Common Good; Knowledge Gaps; Sustainability Transitions; Topic Modeling



Wednesday, 10.06., 13:30 – 13:50

Agriculture & Food

Scenario Modelling of Forest Governance in Zermatt Using a Qualitative System Dynamics Approach

Noemi Imboden, Stéphane Genoud

The alpine forests of Zermatt, Switzerland, are communally owned and managed as a critical forest commons providing ecosystem services such as avalanche and rockfall protection, biodiversity habitat, and renewable resources. However, these protective forests face mounting challenges from socioeconomic shifts and intensified climate disturbances. In this study, we adapt the Social– Ecological Systems (SES) framework and qualitative system dynamics modeling approach to analyze Zermatt’s forest governance under three possible future scenarios: [1] Stabilizing Management via Subsidies, [2] Worst-case climate disturbance scenario, and [3] Cooperative Financing through Payments for Ecosystem Services (PES). A causal loop diagram (CLD) is developed to map feedback structures in the forest governance system, and scenario outcomes are assessed in a comparative, qualitative manner. Results indicate that continued public subsidies can help maintain forest protective functions in the short term, but a scenario of intensified climate impacts would undermine forest health and protective capacity without adaptive measures. By contrast, a PES-based cooperative management scenario, wherein local stakeholders support forest conservation, shows promise for creating a resilient feedback loop that secures sustainable funding and incentivizes proactive stewardship. We discuss how each scenario alters the dynamic balance between forest condition, natural hazard risk, and institutional capacity, highlighting the need for integrated governance strategies. The study demonstrates the value of an SES-oriented system dynamics approach for understanding forest commons management and informs policy by comparing conventional subsidy-driven management with innovative, collaborative financing under climate change pressures.

Keywords: Commons forest management, feedback loop, scenario modelling



Wednesday, 10.06., 13:50 – 14:10

Education & Research

Transforming Economics Education through Circular Economy and Sustainability Principles

Hammna Jillani, Hesan Zahid, Mojmír Sabolovič

This conceptual paper proposes a structured framework for integrating Circular Economy (CE) principles with Sustainability Education (SE) pedagogy within the economics curriculum. While sustainability has increasingly gained attention in higher education, economics programs often remain grounded in linear growth paradigms and marginal treatment of ecological constraints. Drawing on a structured literature synthesis, this study identifies key CE content dimensions (e.g., life-cycle thinking, circular business models, resource efficiency) and aligns them with established sustainability competencies and transformative pedagogical approaches. The resulting dual-dimension framework systematically connects what to teach (CE principles) with how to teach (SE pedagogy) to support competency-based curriculum transformation rather than additive course inclusion. The paper contributes by clarifying the theoretical integration between CE and SE within economics education and by proposing an exemplary curriculum architecture to operationalize this transformation. The study contributes to the literature by synthesizing circular economy theory and sustainability education pedagogy into a unified conceptual model that clarifies how sustainability competencies can be operationalized within economics curricula. The framework provides a foundation for future empirical validation aligned with global sustainability objectives.

Keywords: Circular economy education, Sustainability competencies, Economics curriculum, Education for sustainable development



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:00 – 16:20

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Framework and Strategies for the Deployment of Artificial Intelligence in Public Welfare Organizations

Maximilian Schultz, Franziska Hauer, Sonja Haug, Karsten Weber

Artificial intelligence (AI) has recently become widely accessible through the public availability of large language models, fundamentally altering how organizations engage with digital technologies. While AI has long been researched and applied in commercial and governmental contexts, little is known about how non-governmental organizations (NGOs) engage with these developments. As key actors of civil society, NGOs operate under conditions of limited resources, strong normative commitments, and high accountability requirements, which shape both the opportunities and constraints of AI adoption.

This paper examines the conditions and strategies for the use of AI in public-interest-oriented organizations, focusing on NGOs in Germany. It draws on data from the research project Artificial Intelligence in Non-Governmental Organizations (KINiro), conducted between 2023 and 2025, using a mixed-methods design. The empirical basis includes a scoping review, exploratory qualitative interviews, a nationwide quantitative survey ($n = 343$), and ten in-depth expert interviews across different fields of NGO activity.

The findings show that most NGOs are still at an early stage of engaging with AI. Current use is largely limited to low-threshold applications such as text generation, translation, and research support. AI adoption is predominantly driven bottom-up by technology-savvy staff and remains weakly institutionalized. Key barriers include limited time, financial resources, digital competencies, and unresolved governance issues, particularly regarding data protection and responsibility. At the same time, NGOs perceive significant potential for efficiency gains and workload reduction.

Overall, the study demonstrates that AI functions less as a purely technical innovation and more as a catalyst for organizational and cultural transformation. Successful implementation depends



on leadership support, iterative experimentation, competence building, and the development of enabling governance structures aligned with public-interest values.

Keywords: Artificial Intelligence, Common Good, Digitalization, Digital Transformation, Sustainability



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:00 – 16:20

Boundaries & Post-Growth

Evaluating Post-Growth Value Creation in Enterprises: A Scoping Review

Jonneke de Koning, Kaj Morel, Jos Bijman

The transition towards a post-growth economy necessitates that enterprises engage in post-growth value creation. However, there is limited clarity on what post-growth value creation entails and how it can be effectively evaluated. Existing non-financial performance measurement instruments, which focus on corporate sustainability, partially align with post-growth principles but diverge in key areas. One such corporate sustainability performance measurement instrument, the B Impact Assessment, developed by B Lab to certify benefit corporations (B Corps) (B Lab, 2025), is illustrative for this ambiguity. While some authors consider B Corps to be aligned with post-growth philosophy (Hankammer et al., 2021; Khmara ; Kronenberg, 2018), this alignment is questionable. A core tenet of postgrowth business, for instance, is treating profit as a means rather than an end (Hinton ; Cornell, 2020). Yet the B Impact Assessment does not evaluate how profits are utilized, whether reinvested, distributed as dividends, or allocated to executive compensation (Raval, 2023). This raises the question which existing sustainability performance measurement instruments are suitable for assessing post-growth value creation, and to what extent do they align with post-growth principles?

This study aims to clarify how post-growth value creation can be evaluated at the enterprise level. Given the limited systematic knowledge in this area, an exploratory scoping review was conducted following the protocol from the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI), which aligns with PRISMA-ScR standards and ensures a structured, transparent, and reproducible approach (Peters et al., 2022). To ensure comprehensive coverage, literature was sourced from three databases: Scopus and Web of Science (multidisciplinary), and EconLit (economics-specific).

The findings reveal overarching trends in post-growth performance measurement, including the scope, nature, and distribution of studies. A thematic analysis assesses the compatibility of key instruments, such as the Common Good Matrix, ESG (Environmental, Social and



Governance) frameworks, the Global Reporting Initiative, and the B Impact Assessment, with post-growth principles. By examining the dimensions, sub-dimensions, and metrics, the study evaluates the alignment of these instruments with post-growth value creation. These insights contribute to a deeper understanding of post-growth enterprise practices and inform the development of a tailored evaluation instrument suited to post-growth contexts.

Key words: beyond growth, post growth business, post-growth value creation, evaluation, performance measurement



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:00 – 16:20

Regional Transformation & Resilience

A comprehensive wellbeing assessment in cost-benefit analysis: a review of flood adaptation case studies

Anoek van Tilburg, Kees van Ginkel, Jan Brusselaers, Wouter Botzen

As flood risks are increasing as a result of climate change, the need to implement more climate adaptation measures is growing. Since a wide range of climate adaptation measures are available, cost-benefit analysis (CBA) is frequently used to support decision-making. In principle, CBA seeks to maximize social welfare. However, in practice, cost-benefit analyses tend to focus on easily monetized, direct effects, often overlooking equity and intangible effects such as mortality or biodiversity. This narrow focus could skew the outcomes towards grey (engineered) flood measures over green measures, hence affecting the optimality of the social welfare outcomes of CBA.

This study systematically reviews 97 academic case studies applying cost-benefit analyses to flood adaptation. The aim is to assess how comprehensively these CBAs assess wellbeing. Using a structured framework of 30 criteria, we evaluate the coverage of wellbeing across five dimensions: intangible and indirect flood risks, co-effects of adaptation measures (both trade-offs and synergies), distributional impacts, stakeholder participation, and uncertainty.

The reviewed cases predominantly focus on coastal and riverine floods, as opposed to urban floods. Moreover, green and gray adaptation measures are covered more extensively, with fewer cases analyzing soft and preparedness and recovery measures. The results further show that none of the case studies scored more than 50% of total possible points, highlighting the limited comprehensiveness of CBAs. Cases scored the best on inclusion of temporal distributional effects, for instance through the use of long time horizons and multiple discount rates, as well as on indirect flood risks, and social and ecological co-effects. In contrast, cases score low on stakeholder involvement and sensitivity analysis on intangible effects. Furthermore, few studies include non-temporal distributional effects such



as applying equity weights or disaggregating outcomes for different social groups, regions, or species. Moreover, few studies use local data to monetize intangible risks and co-effects, instead relying on data from other contexts. Additionally, the majority of studies including co-effects assess positive effects (synergies), while few address trade-offs of adaptation measures.

To better incorporate wellbeing in CBA, we recommend presenting outcomes in a disaggregated format, applying more sensitivity analyses on intangible effects and discount rates, involving stakeholders in the set-up of the analysis, and including a wider range of adaptation measures in the assessment. By doing so, cost-benefit analyses will likely provide more policy relevant outcomes that enhance wellbeing and avoid maladaptation and unjust outcomes of climate adaptation



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:20 – 16:40

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Sustainability Benefits for the Business Manager’s Mindset: A Strategic Framework for Understanding Positive Impact

Jose Carlos Ramos, Natalia Cugueró-Escofet, Ricard Espelt

Managers increasingly face sustainability through ESG reporting and compliance requirements, yet they often struggle to translate sustainability into business-relevant value, particularly in Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs). This paper develops and validates a strategic framework that reframes sustainability as a portfolio of business levers linked to tangible and intangible organizational benefits. Building on the “business case for sustainability” literature, we first conducted a systematic review of academic and practitioner sources to identify and codify sustainability benefits in managerial language. This produced an initial catalogue of 29 benefits organized into six value domains: cost reduction; increased productivity, increased value capture, protection of value and assets, better business strategy and governance, and positive social and environmental impact. The framework was then refined through an expert co-creation workshop (November 2025) with 13 managers, consultants, and sustainability practitioners, who improved terminology, added missing levers, and provided practice-based examples. Key refinements included reframing “increased productivity” as “boosting organizational performance,” shifting “protection” to a more proactive “strengthening of value and assets,” and incorporating new levers such as waste management and optimization, environmentally sustainable supply chains, sustainability leadership, and improved financial conditions. Finally, a pilot survey with 10 managers subject to sustainability reporting obligations assessed the relevance of 44 lever–benefit pairs (1–7 scale), supporting the perceived comprehensiveness of the framework. The discussion further classifies 34 levers by expected results and implementation applicability, identifying “quick wins” that combine high impact with high feasibility, and highlighting areas where adoption barriers persist.

Keywords: Business Levers, Corporate Resilience, Economy for the Common Good, ESG, Managerial Strategy, Sustainability, Value Creation



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:20 – 16:40

Boundaries & Post-Growth

Ethical World Trade - Economy for the Common Good on a Global Level

Brigitta Herrmann

Ethical world trade represents the international dimension of the Economy for the Common Good. Christian Felber, Brigitta Herrmann, and Jürgen Knirsch have written a peer-reviewed working paper titled: “A New Paradigm for the EU’s Global Trade Strategy: Ethical World Trade and the Economy for the Common Good.” The proposal is to replace both the system of free trade—which comes at the expense of the climate, the environment, and human rights—and the current orientation of trade policy toward geostrategic interests practiced by some countries (which also has very negative effects on the common good) with an Ethical Trade Zone within the framework of the United Nations (United Nations Ethical Trade Zone, UNETZ). This would make trade a means to serve the actual goals: sustainable economic development, human and labor rights, food sovereignty, climate and biodiversity protection, tax and distributive justice, cultural diversity, gender equality, and peaceful international cooperation.

Key points of the proposal are:

- Ethical protective tariffs
- Equal opportunities for poor countries
- Obligation to maintain balanced trade balances
- Decision-making sovereignty of member states regarding further regulations in line with the goals of the United Nations
- Ecological human rights
- Size limits for global players, obligation to common good balance sheet

The research project based on the proposal for ethical world trade, which is being presented here, pursues two main objectives. On the one hand, it involves examining the relationship between ethical tariffs and a theory of international justice, as well as analyzing the desired and potentially undesired effects of introducing ethical tariffs and addressing how these undesired



effects can be avoided. Second, it aims to develop a strategy for putting the concept of ethical world trade into practice with the participation of as many stakeholders as possible. Suggestions and contributions from interested parties regarding both aspects of the research project are very welcome.



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:20 – 16:40

Regional Transformation & Resilience

The Dynamic Interplay of Economic, Institutional, and Transportation Factors in Cross-Border Employment

Carmen-Raluca Spataceanu, Dominic Scholze, Maren Martens

Cross-border labour mobility in the German-Czech border region embodies the intersection of economic integration, social cohesion, and ecological sustainability. Focusing on the Bavarian-Czech borderlands, this study explores how economic incentives, transport infrastructures, and institutional frameworks interact to sustain commuting and shape its sustainability potential. The research applies a qualitative, reflexive thematic analysis of semi-structured expert interviews conducted in 2025 with actors engaged in Czech-German cross-border cooperation. Combining deductive and inductive reasoning, it captures how structural constraints and local agency jointly configure commuting practices.

Findings show that cross-border employment has evolved into a normalised, long-term component of regional labour markets, grounded in social trust and economic interdependence. However, mobility remains heavily dependent on private car use due to limited public transport and infrastructural deficits, revealing structural rather than behavioural causes of unsustainable commuting. Firms and municipal actors emerge as pragmatic co-governors who mitigate these gaps through shared transport initiatives, fuel subsidies, and cross-border coordination. These bottom-up strategies complement and partially compensate for fragmented top-down governance.

Interpreted through the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) framework, the results highlight the importance of shared responsibility among companies, municipalities, and commuters in balancing economic viability with ecological objectives. The study contributes context-sensitive insights into cross-border mobility governance and outlines pathways toward more sustainable, resilient, and socially inclusive regional development in Central Europe.

Keywords: Cross-border employment, Economy for the Common Good (ECG), Labour market integration, Regional cooperation, Sustainable mobility



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:40 – 17:00

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Human Dignity in Different Economic Models Compared to the Economy for the Common Good

Thomas Schiffelmann

Global ecological degradation and rising social inequality challenge the normative foundations of contemporary economic systems. Climate change, biodiversity loss, precarious employment, and widening wealth gaps reveal structural tensions between growth-oriented market paradigms and the protection of fundamental human rights. Although alternative economic models propose more sustainable and socially just frameworks, no systematic approach evaluates them against legally codified standards of human dignity. This paper develops a criteria-based comparative framework grounded in international human rights law, particularly the normative foundations of the United Nations and the European Union. Human dignity is conceptualized as a multidimensional principle and operationalized into six dimensions: non-instrumentalization, autonomy, equality, participation, protection from exploitation, and ecological preconditions of life. Using structured qualitative comparison, the study examines major economic paradigms, including classical capitalism, Marxian political economy, Rawlsian justice theory, the capability approach, commons governance, Doughnut Economics, and the Economy for the Common Good. The findings show significant divergence in how these models interpret and institutionalize human dignity. While several integrate partial elements, the Economy for the Common Good most comprehensively embeds dignity within corporate governance and performance metrics. The paper introduces a normative evaluation matrix and advances the foundation for a dignity-centered economic paradigm aligned with planetary boundaries and binding international human rights standards.

Keywords: Human dignity, economic ethics, European Union, United Nations, Economy for the Common Good, Doughnut Economics, cooperative economy, sustainability



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:40 – 17:00

Boundaries & Post-Growth

Ecocide, A Lens on Declining Sustainability Infrastructures and Their Environmental and Human Impacts, and Rebuilding within Just Transitions

Chelsea Mandrigues, Zaid Alkhairi

We are graduate students from the University of South Florida, specializing in Global Sustainability and International Affairs, concentrating on climate adaptation technologies, water resources, refugee services and sustainable business and development. We believe that resilient people deserve resilient technologies. This presentation and paper examines ecocide as a framework of environmental and human rights violations that requires sustainable measures, environmental and social justice, and environmental protection to rebuild a world that safeguards food, water, and energy systems for vulnerable populations. Catastrophic events in our recent existence led to critical endangerment of life in all forms. We challenge this. This study adopts a mixed methods approach of qualitative research, policy analysis, and lived scientific method application in building sustainable solutions.

Collectively, we have worked on initiatives, such as solar panel water heaters, biodigesters, recycled coral reef restoration, fabric-concrete for building structures, hydroponic and aquaponic shipping container farms for water and energy efficiency, as well as food sovereignty. These projects are for the intention to build sustainable praxis in resource depleted regions, sites of environmental and social disasters, and refugee camps. We believe that sustainable solutions are critical to the survival and rebuilding of a population and environment post-ecocide. When applied with a just transition lens, a shift away from extractive and exploitive economies toward a regenerative society for rebuilding spaces can protect both people and the planet.

The systematic and intentional destruction of a land to eradicate a people via agriculture depletion, key water resource destruction, forced displacement, and destruction of key institutions has lasting impact. The presentation and paper proposes integrating ecocide into the Rome Statute as a fifth crime against humanity and outlines a collaborative toolkit for NGOs, policymakers, and academic institutions to advance legal recognition and advocacy. Additionally, it introduces pathways for post-ecocide sustainable recovery, grounded in



indigenous knowledge, decentralized food-energy-water technologies, and equitable resource governance.

By bridging legal innovation, sustainable practice, and indigenous, community-centered resilience, this work seeks to catalyze interdisciplinary collaboration toward protecting ecosystems and human rights. This ensures food, water, and energy security, and supports just transitions in regions facing environmental violence and resource deprivation, in alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.



Wednesday, 10.06., 16:40 – 17:00

Regional Transformation & Resilience

Common-Good-Oriented Participation and Individual Behavior in Circular Regions (CoRe-Lab)

Michael Henke, Roland Menges, Michael Hahn

In this paper, we present a transdisciplinary research project that combines the resource-economic approach of the Circular Economy with the participatory, economic-democratic concepts of the Common Good Economy. Our Climate Future Lab is developing a transdisciplinary network in peripheral rural regions to implement resource- and climate-friendly solutions under the umbrella of the Circular Economy (CE) model. We investigate how common-good-oriented participatory processes influence individual behavior and, through these behavioral mechanisms, contribute to more circular economic practices. Our multi-year project combines two elements. First, it develops specific scientific insights into the CE from various disciplinary perspectives (psychology, behavioral economics, business administration, computer science, and engineering). The solutions developed in this process do not remain confined to the academic sphere, but are instead integrated into a participatory and testing process that serves as a transdisciplinary interface: Together with regional partners, we organize a series of regional Common Good Conventions in which regional stakeholders identify areas for action and assess potential solutions and applications. By systematically integrating scientific analysis with participatory experimentation, the project goes beyond the one-directional application of research findings and functions as a real-world laboratory for generating new theoretical insights. The project is already conceptually and institutionally developed, but will not launch until autumn 2026. Accordingly, this paper focuses on the project's conceptual framework and its expected analytical contributions. In addition, the project provides a structured setting for examining interactions between academic research and the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) movement. Our Climate Future Lab brings together stakeholders from academia, business, civil society, and regional government in a collaborative research and learning process aimed at advancing empirically grounded knowledge on participatory approaches to circular economic transformation.



Keywords: Circular Economy, Common-good-oriented governance, Circular behavior, Digital platforms for circularity, Peripheral rural regions



Wednesday, 10.06., 17:00 – 17:20

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Social Value Generated by the Labor Inclusion of Vulnerable Youth: The Hispaled Case

Bárbara Calderón Gómez-Tejedor

This paper presents a methodological proposal for measuring the social value generated through the labor inclusion of vulnerable youth, based on the case study of Hispaled, a social enterprise operating in the energy efficiency sector. The analysis is framed within the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the 2030 Agenda, with a particular focus on SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 4 (Quality education) and SDG 1 (reduced poverty).

The methodology combines desk research with qualitative and quantitative approaches. It includes focus groups with young employees, interviews with staff and stakeholders, and the use of the AROPE index (At Risk of Poverty or Social Exclusion) as a proxy for material well-being. The evolution of each participant is assessed from program entry to exit, quantifying improvements in material conditions, autonomy, and emotional well-being. The proposal also estimates the economic value of increased self-determination through the cost of training received, and the emotional well-being through the difference between expected income at entry and potential income upon program completion. Finally, a social return ratio is introduced, relating the total social value generated to the additional costs incurred by the insertion company—such as support staff and non-productive training hours. This ratio offers a replicable tool for social economy organizations seeking to rigorously assess and communicate their impact.



Wednesday, 10.06., 17:00 – 17:20

Boundaries & Post-Growth

Re-evaluating the Unsustainable German Material Footprint towards a Sufficiency Oriented Demand-side Reduction

Nicolas A. Ehrhardt, Manuel W. Bickel, Christa Liedtke

The current environmental footprint of humankind is not sustainable. While growing economic performance achieved in the short or middle term unprecedented wealth for humankind, there still is a massive performance gap between social provisioning systems (common good or well-being for all) and ECGIC 2026 ISBN 978-80-261-1363-8 (print) to the transgression of long-term safe operating space on fundamental relevant earth system functions, the so-called planetary boundaries. As socio-metabolic research shows, efficiency or consistency measures like the circular economy alone are insufficient for a global sustainable level of material use. Thus, sufficiency-based and demand-side reduction of material footprints are as essential as they are for climate change mitigation. This conference paper presents a re-evaluation of German material footprint analysis based on a consumption-based, bottom-up online survey with more than 65,000 entries. The study illustrates the present material footprint for different consumption categories (based on aggregate life-cycle assessments) and links global material extraction to individual lifestyle choices. While the first evaluation wave of the online survey showed a total average material footprint of approximately 25 tonnes per capita, which vastly differs from sustainable benchmarks like the 8-tonne approach, prior research predicts that the reduction path for material footprint will not align with sustainability goals. In this paper, a re-evaluation of the current reduction path and material footprint for the years 2016 to 2025 shows that German production–consumption systems are still not on track for a sustainable level of material footprints. In summary, this work calls for consumer protection within unsustainable consumption–production systems, providing messages for individuals and policymakers. Finally, the discussion highlights how common-good businesses could rethink the dematerialisation of business models and products through a Transition Design approach or the Material Input per Service (MIPS) framework.



Keywords: Consumption-based Accounting; Dematerialisation; Material Footprint; Resource Sufficiency; Subjective Well-being



Wednesday, 10.06., 17:20 – 17:40

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Futures at Work: Labor Unions' Viewpoints on Employee-Level Social and Environmental Sustainability

Stef van Dongen

As the social-ecological transformation permeates ever more sectors of society, workplaces present themselves as critical leverage points, with labour unions playing an essential role in shaping just and sustainable working conditions. This exploratory, qualitative research, conducted in collaboration with the Economy for the Common Good movement (ECG), investigates how unions define and practically advance both social and environmental employee-level sustainability, providing practice-informed feedback for the ECG's key methodological framework, the Common Good Matrix. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with union representatives, and the collected data was processed with an inductive thematic analysis to distil insights.

Unions frame employee-level social sustainability as a dynamic interplay of values, conditions, and mechanisms, fundamentally centred on human rights, dignity, and equity, and reflected in working conditions such as job security, living wages, and safe working environments. Environmental sustainability, though less prominent, is increasingly integrated through the independently developed “Just Transition” framework. Rather than separating the social and environmental, unions view them as inherently interwoven. However, union sustainability efforts are consistently shaped by practical and system constraints: political realities, internal member resistance, and practical limitations frequently steer towards reformist, incrementalist and system-compatible strategies over more transformative ones.

Despite these constraints, sustainability on the employee level is gaining ground in union agendas, not as a dilution of traditional labour concerns, but as their evolutionary next step. Contemporary unions emerge as both navigators and co-creators of labour sustainability paradigms as they project traditional labour ideals onto novel realities.



Key words: Labour unions, Workers, Just Transition, Labour Sustainability, Labour Environmentalism



Wednesday, 10.06., 17:20 – 17:40

Boundaries & Post-Growth

Commons-Governed Automation as Material Infrastructure for an Economy for the Common Good (Video)

Eduardo César Garrido Merchán

The Economy for the Common Good (ECG) movement proposes reorienting economic activity toward social justice and ecological sustainability. Yet a critical question remains underexplored: what material infrastructure could actually sustain such a transition at scale? This paper argues that commons-governed automation — the democratic, community-controlled deployment of artificial intelligence, renewable energy, and distributed manufacturing — provides the missing material foundation for the ECG vision.

Drawing on Elinor Ostrom’s design principles for commons governance, Ivan Illich’s concept of convivial tools, and Murray Bookchin’s insight that the form of energy sources shapes the form of power structures, we develop a framework we call “peaceful anarcho-accelerationism.” This framework identifies five interconnected layers of commons-based infrastructure: (1) decentralized renewable energy (community microgrids, energy cooperatives such as Som Energia); (2) distributed manufacturing (FabLabs, Open Source Ecology’s Global Village Construction Set); (3) AI as a common good (open-source models, federated governance, community-aligned algorithms); (4) augmented direct democracy (Decidim, Pol.is, liquid delegation); and (5) commons-based universal income derived from collectively owned automated production rather than state redistribution.

We present empirical evidence from existing initiatives — the 4 Day Week Global Trials demonstrating maintained productivity with reduced working time, Barcelona’s Decidim platform enabling participatory governance at city scale, and cooperative energy networks across Europe — to argue that the transition is not only desirable but already underway in fragmentary form. The paper concludes that the ECG’s ethical vision requires a corresponding sociotechnical program: one where automation serves abundance for all rather than accumulation for few, and



where governance of productive technology follows Ostrom's principles rather than corporate or state logics.

Keywords: Economy for the Common Good, commons governance, automation, artificial intelligence, Ostrom, convivial technology, cooperative energy, distributed manufacturing



Thursday, 11.06., 10:00 – 10:20

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

How to break free from self-fulfilling mental models in complex business problems?

Oliver Huffman

Why is it so hard to solve complex problems? How do our mental models of the problem contribute to our complex problems? And how can we break free from our mental models to find new solutions?

Huffman will describe how self-confirming and self-fulfilling mental models affect complex problems in companies and economies. He will then share emerging findings from a qualitative study on how leaders can break free from their own limiting mental models and find new solutions to complex problems as a result. He will also share what these findings suggest when solving complex societal, ecological, or economic problems.



Thursday, 11.06., 10:00 – 10:20

Boundaries & Post-Growth / Agriculture & Food

Applying the Doughnut Economics Framework to California

Franziska Raedeker

Objective

If considered as an independent nation, California would be the world's 5th largest economy – but is it providing a good life for all within the means of the planet? A largely volunteer driven nonprofit organization, the California Doughnut Economics Coalition, decided to apply

Kate Raworth et al.'s Doughnut Economics framework – which so far had been mostly applied on a global and country level, and in a different format to a city level – to the U.S. state of California. After nearly two years of research, a snapshot and deep-dive report now provide a new narrative about the purpose of the economy and a holistic set of science-based indicators that help tell that story.

Uniting 42 social and ecological indicators in a concise visual assessment of the state's performance, the report aims to serve as a compass to help orient California towards a society which meets the needs of all people within the limits of the planet. This is divided into 3 main objectives: 1) provide a snapshot of California's social and ecological performance, 2) reorient California's economic goals towards well-being and sustainability, and 3) inspire wider adoption of this framework within local governments, educational institutions, and community organizations.

Approach

We collaborated with academic, government, and nongovernmental organizations, and community groups to narrow down potential indicators. The social foundation includes 24 representative indicators in 12 categories, while the ecological ceiling includes 18 representative indicators in 9 categories. Around 50% of the indicators are documented by government agencies, 30% by NGO reports, and 20% by academic reports and peer reviewed articles.



Alongside the indicators, targets, and overshoot/shortfall, the report includes context and background, policy measures implemented in California, change over time, and a discussion of justice focusing on inequality within the state and between nations.

Results

While California is the richest state in the US, it is falling short on 100% of the social indicators assessed. Despite being well-known as a leader on environmental issues, California is overshooting 89% of ecological indicators assessed. The average social shortfall is 34% and the average ecological overshoot is 286% – an indictment of relying on GDP as the primary way to measure economic achievement, while proposing more meaningful indicators of social and ecological wellbeing in California.

Our efforts have spawned local Doughnut groups (3 currently active, 3-5 more interested), dozens of presentations to hundreds of attendees, and early partnerships with affiliates in government, academia, and NGOs.



Thursday, 11.06., 10:20 – 10:40

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Reporting Requirements in the Transition from the ECG Framework to the ESRS VSME

Erika Obermayr, Josef Baumüller

In the light of recent legal developments in sustainability reporting for small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs), the EFRAG Voluntary Sustainability Reporting Standard for non-listed SMEs (ESRS VSME) is emerging as a key element of the new European sustainability reporting regulation. With reporting requirements evolving, established frameworks, such as the Economy for the Common Good framework (ECGF), are challenged regarding their practical relevance within the new regulatory environment.

This paper explores the differences and synergies between the ECGF and the ESRS VSME to support companies currently using the ECGF in transitioning to the VSME requirements. At the same time, it is laid out how the ECGF might offer benefits for organizations that will report under the ESRS VSME in the future. The study is grounded on a literature review and a coverage analysis, retrieving data from both frameworks and identifying common disclosures.

European SMEs will most likely prioritize the ESRS VSME over the ECGF for compliance considerations. However, the ECGF remains a complementary tool ECGIC 2026 ISBN 978-80-261-1363-8 (print) 214 either for preparatory guidance or as an extension to the ESRS VSME. Thus, ultimately, the increased relevance of the ESRS VSME offers the opportunity to gain in relevance for European SMEs, and this in market acceptance, if the current regulatory developments are embraced and relevant steps are taken to open up the ECGF to the new rationale and requirements of the ESRS VSME.

Keywords: Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive (CSRD), Economy for the Common Good Framework (ECGF), sustainability reporting, small and medium-sized enterprises (SME), corporate social responsibility (CSR), ESRS VSME



Thursday, 11.06., 10:20 – 10:40

Boundaries & Post-Growth / Agriculture & Food

Unifying Sustainability and Democracy: Building a Network of Transition Coordination Platforms

Peter Bootsma, Jacqueline Hofstede

Both the global sustainability movement and democracy movements everywhere are making too little progress or experience backsliding. Consequently, in both movements signs of anxiety and stress are visible. Problem analysis in both movements, however, mainly remains within their respective paradigms, keeping combined development pathways out of sight. Meanwhile, the polycrisis is deepening and becoming existential to mankind.

The objective of this contribution is to explore an option for breaking this gridlock and for unification of sustainability and democracy. We argue that sustainability needs radical innovation of the political system, and that politics needs the urgency of sustainability to reunite society.

Methodically, our effort starts with analysing the blind spots in both movements by gathering signals from scholarly literature, practitioner projects and movement events. Next, we refine the task democracy model, as presented in the ECG 2024 congress, to connect with both movements. To further operationalise the concept, we develop a national scale action plan, in co-creation with representatives from both movements. This plan is a starting point for action research.

The result is an action plan targeted at both the sustainability and the democracy movements. It highlights blind spots, to encourage mutual understanding. The first blind spot is in the sustainability movement that constantly produces new visions to be implemented by politics. Little effort is made, however, to research why the political system did not pick up on previous ideas. The result is a loop. The second blind spot is in the democracy movement, focusing on fine-tuning the liberal democratic system of organising plurality. It routinely views sustainability as a topic to be dealt with once democracy is fixed. In sustainability issues, however, we can no longer afford to be divided. Because of mutual blind spots, neither the sustainability movement



nor the democracy movement is by itself capable of transition leadership, leaving rising discomfort and tensions in society unmanaged.

Next, the action plan calls for coordination of transitions efforts from both movements in new platforms for coordination of sustainability transitions.

These platforms interlink with existing liberal democratic governance structures and form a national network. On the scale of The Netherlands, this would include some 10,000 independent platforms, ranging from sub-local village councils and city district councils to municipal, regional and national product councils and transition chambers. The plan includes action perspectives for all change initiators within both movements. The plan further outlines a support infrastructure and a task democratic governance model.



Thursday, 11.06., 10:40 – 11:00

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Beyond Profit: Redefining Business as a Vehicle for the Common Good (Video)

Adina-Iuliana Deacu

The current climate and poly-crisis reveal the inadequacy of the dominant profit-driven business paradigm. My work aims to demonstrate how businesses can be reframed as entities that solve social issues and create social value in a financially sustainable way. The objective is to provide a practitioner-based perspective on how organizational strategies can align with the common good, moving beyond extractive models toward regenerative ones that support human potential, community resilience, and ecological integrity.

Drawing from nine years of entrepreneurial practice as founder of Tianmei’s World Academy and my current fellowship at the RIFS, I integrate insights from environmental psychology, systems thinking, and urban planning to design business models that put care, inclusivity, and regeneration at their core. The approach emphasizes: Using “environmental design” principles to create nurturing organizational cultures that enable people to thrive.

Applying conceptual tools such as the “Invisible Backpack” and “Puzzle Mindset” to uncover hidden assumptions, redistribute leadership, and foster collaboration across diversity. Developing and testing a “Personal Business Model” framework for solopreneurs and small enterprises to achieve both economic resilience and positive societal impact.

This work bridges theory and practice by grounding experimentation in lived entrepreneurial realities while remaining informed by transdisciplinary research.

The practice has yielded several concrete results:

1. A book manuscript (Beyond Profit, under review with Springer Nature) offering a paradigm-shifting framework for regenerative business.



2. Implementation of alternative organizational strategies within Tianmei's World Academy, demonstrating how businesses can operate as platforms for education, community building, and social inclusion while remaining financially viable.
3. Development of workshops and learning programs that empower individuals and organizations to design environments where the common good is embedded in everyday practice.

By presenting this contribution, I aim to share tested methods, invite dialogue on their applicability across contexts, and explore collaborations that strengthen the shared responsibility of science and practice in transforming economies toward fairness and sustainability.



Thursday, 11.06., 10:40 – 11:00

Boundaries & Post-Growth / Agriculture & Food

Targeted Groundwater Protection Through Digital Precision Agriculture

Martin Mittermayer, Ludwig Hagn, Josef Stangl, Johannes Schuster, Kurt-Jürgen Hülsbergen

Nitrate pollution of groundwater remains a persistent challenge across Europe, despite decades of regulatory efforts such as the EU Nitrates Directive and national fertilizer ordinances. A key limitation of current approaches is their reliance on uniform, area-wide regulations that fail to account for pronounced spatial variability in soil properties, yield potential, and nitrogen (N) dynamics within and across agricultural fields. This study presents a spatially explicit, data-driven framework for identifying and managing nitrate leaching risks at sub-field resolution, with the aim of improving the effectiveness of drinking water protection. Multi-year satellite-based analyses were combined with validated agronomic algorithms to assess spatial variability in yield potential, N uptake, and N surplus. N surplus were calculated at a 10 × 10 m resolution to identify hotspot zones with elevated nitrate leaching potential. The results reveal pronounced within- and between-field heterogeneity in N dynamics, 91 with contiguous high-risk zones frequently extending across field boundaries. N surplus values ranged from 0 to 80 kg N ha⁻¹. Selectively removing areas with high N loss potential (N surplus >60 kg N ha⁻¹) reduces the area-weighted N surplus by approximately 33 %, while affecting only a limited proportion of the agricultural area. High-yielding zones remain under productive use, whereas high-risk zones were identified as suitable for reduced input management or alternative land use. Overall, the proposed framework demonstrates how digital, science-based approaches can complement existing nitrate regulations by enabling targeted, efficient, and socially acceptable nitrate mitigation, thereby strengthening groundwater protection while maintaining agricultural productivity.

Keywords: Precision agriculture, Nitrogen, Nitrate, Site-specific, Groundwater



Thursday, 11.06., 11:00 – 11:20

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

How to Design Products for Circular Economy? When $w\infty d.ii$ Meets the EConGOOD Business Canvas

Robert Böker, Hartmut Schäfer

Objectives

The transformation to a sustainability requires the connection of economic systems in the spirit of the common good, corporate ethics and the circular economy. WoodenValley was founded as a start-up to promote regenerative construction in the areas of building and renovation, education and research. WoodenValley was looking for pragmatic tools and guidance to balance these aspects in their daily work. The article explains, how one of their central projects – a mobile learning space for the circular economy – was consistently designed according to the principles of the common good by applying a tool from the EConGOOD movement: the EConGOOD Business Canvas.

Approach:

This Canvas comprised the simplicity and intuitiveness of the Business Model Canvas with the comprehensiveness and value-based approach of the EConGOOD common good matrix. It enables the creation of business models to be systematically reflected on in terms of ecological responsibility, social impact, and ethical decision-making processes.

Using the $w\infty d.ii$ use case, WoodenValley demonstrates how an educational project not only contributes to the circular economy but also brings the question of business ethics to the forefront: How can decisions about partners, resources, and financing models be designed to promote the common good? In particular: How may suppliers be selected who share the values of WoodenValley and contribute to the project? How may society be addressed to reflect about circular construction? How and which educational partners may be invited to apply and promote the mobile learning space. And how may WoodenValley finance all these activities in a compatible way?



Results:

WoodenValley has developed the mobile classroom $w\infty d.ii$ that enables young people, companies, and municipalities to experience the principles of a circular economy focused on the common good.

The contribution to ECG IC addresses three central conference themes:

1. Economic systems and the common good: $w\infty d.ii$ represents an experiment in implementing values of the common good in the everyday economic system
2. Business ethics: The ECONGOOD Business Canvas makes values and responsibility visible in business decisions
3. Circular economy: The learning space itself demonstrates circular, bio-based construction and conveys these principles to schools and society

With this, we invite discussions about how circular learning spaces and business models focused on the common good can provide impetus for an economic system that respects ecological limits while simultaneously strengthening the common good.



How to Design Products for Circular Economy? When w∞d.ii Meets the EOnGOOD Business Canvas

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Summary

What if companies consistently align their offers and products with the real needs of society and nature? In other words, if they develop and distribute products that will also serve future generations? If they anchor their attitude and their striving for values in the way they work? And always take their economic resilience into account? In other words, if they build a business ecosystem with their various stakeholders that they jointly develop and carry through good and bad times?

This case study uses the example of a start-up in the construction sector, WoodenValley, to show how a product can be developed in this sense and what steps can be taken – supported by the ECONGOOD Business Canvas from the Economy for the Common Good (ECG).

Starting point

Founded in 2021, the start-up WoodenValley [1] aims to empower people and organizations to construct buildings in a climate-positive and participatory way, and thus actively contribute to a regenerative future. Their work is characterized by an orientation towards the common good and the principle of stewardship ownership.

One of the initial business areas was to teach the design principle ‚cradle to cradle‘ and the circular economy in the education sector at an early stage. The idea for this: A mobile learning space that is designed in an exemplary way in the sense of the circular economy and that can serve as an experience space at schools and other educational institutions. The name: $w\infty d.ii$.



Figure: One of the first sketches for $w\infty d.ii$, 2023

But how to finance it? WoodenValley applied for two fundings, one at local level, one at federal level. Both funding programs required proof of a business model, usually created with the Business Model Canvas [2]. But which concrete business model should it be then? How to set up a product that is also economically stable and reliable, but does not betray the ideals of the start-up and lives the vision of a jointly supported ecosystem from the very beginning? Path-harmonious – already living values at the start and anchoring them in the company's DNA?

WoodenValley would not be oriented towards the common good if they hadn't gone the extra mile here as well and set out to find a tool for business model development. And that was the brand new



ECONGOOD Business Canvas of the Economy for the Common Good [3] – and the beginning of a common good success story ...

Companies oriented towards the common good do not only aim at economic success, but also at societal impact, e.g. in ecological and/or social dimensions. Products and services must therefore be geared to the intended effect – whereby economic feasibility must be ensured.

Experience shows that entrepreneurs who apply value-oriented standards to their own activities successfully align their companies with future challenges and contributions to the common good. The ECONGOOD Business Canvas offers just the right holistic framework for it.

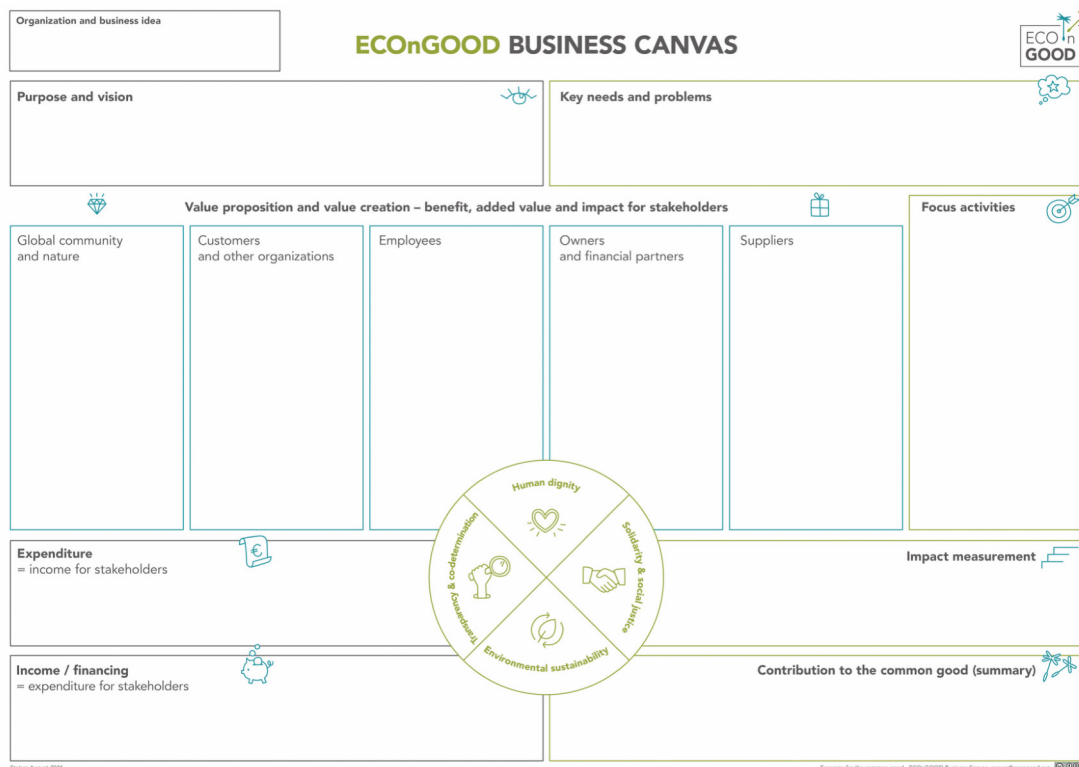


Figure: ECONGOOD Business Canvas

The Economy for the Common Good¹ canvas is a practical tool that - methodologically based on the Business Model Canvas - takes up the elements of the Common Good Matrix [4] and supports developing a business model that integrates social and ecological aspects in an almost playful way. In this way, the start-up aligns its DNA with the common good. To this end, the canvas takes a differentiated look at players from the stakeholder groups suppliers, owners and financial partners, employees, customers and other organizations, as well as from global community and nature. Whereas in classic profit-oriented companies value propositions are developed solely for the market, this tool is doing that consistently for each central player of the aforementioned groups. Entrepreneurs quickly become aware of who belongs to their ecosystem and with whom and how they can build which relationships.

Thanks to its flexibility and the range of methods that can be used, the canvas – originally developed for the start-up phase – is also suitable for use in existing companies, spin-offs, succession situations, when starting large projects and also for product development, as in this case.

¹ An economic model that takes into account central values of good cooperation in the economy and thus achieves greater societal impact, e.g. in ecological and/or social dimensions, instead of exploiting resources



Process steps in the development of the business model for wood.ii

The work with the canvas was carried out in a participatory, iterative and sequential manner at WoodenValley. The methodological kit of design thinking and agile methods were used. While the founders repeatedly checked and further developed interim results with the team, findings were already tested in day-to-day business. For this occasion, the canvas contains the "Focus activities" field - a frame to place essential next activities that can evolve from meeting to meeting during the development of the business model.

After only a few online meetings, the business model and strategy were developed and everything was documented on a MURAL board. In conclusion, the team formulated a pitch on the contribution to the common good. But that was not the end. The identified focus activities were regularly on the agenda of the team meetings and were and are being followed up and implemented.

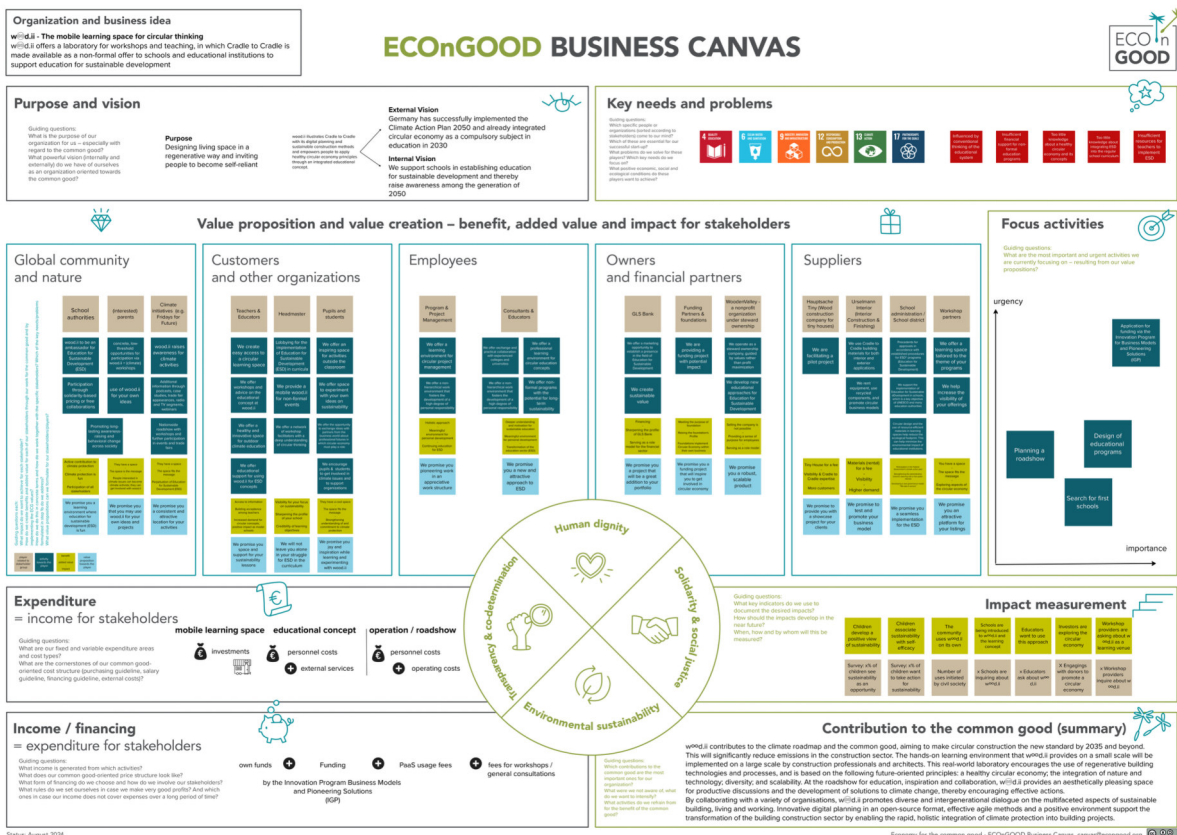


Figure: ECOOnGOOD Business Canvas „wood.ii“ (2024)

And now step by step:

The first task and typical start of working with the canvas lies in the joint precise definition of purpose and vision – in this case for the product "wood.ii". The purpose refers to the overarching framework of the start-up and its founders. We like to differentiate the vision – i.e. the guiding star of all activities – into a large, widely visible outer vision and an inner vision broken down for the team.

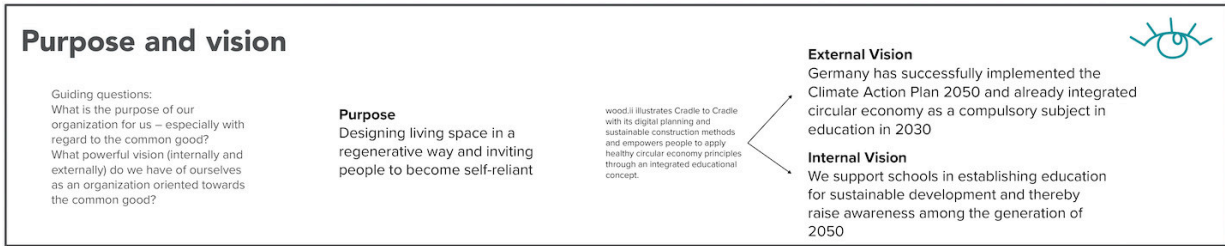


Figure: ECONGOOD Business Canvas ‚wood.ii‘, detail: Purpose and Vision (2024)

In the next step, this internal perspective is contrasted with an external perspective: What key needs and problems should the product solve? Ideally, if there are already specific stakeholders named who approach the company with their problems and needs, as in the case of wood.ii:

- Education institutions, pupils and students have too little knowledge about a healthy circular economy and its concepts
- Teachers have too little capacity to implement ESD (Education for Sustainable Development)

Once all players relevant to the product from the five stakeholder groups of the Economy for the Common Good have been identified and their needs clarified, it is time to develop a value proposition for each player. This stepwise process is illustrated by the example of suppliers for the wood.ii. First, activities are developed that are necessary from the point of view of the product/company with the respective player. These activities, which may be numerous, are clustered, weighted, examined and adapted with regard to the values of the common good orientation. Where can human dignity, solidarity and social justice, environmental sustainability or transparency and co-determination be recognized in the activities? Then, benefits, added value and impacts for each player are worked out, and finally a summary value proposition is formulated. Here, we are in the engine room of the company and develop concrete actions that create stable and thus resilient relationships. Step by step, an ecosystem is created in which the company and the product are embedded. The supplier ‚Hauptsache Tiny‘ or ‚Urselmann Interior‘ thus turn from pure suppliers to partners who contribute their expertise and own products and thus develop wood.ii further.

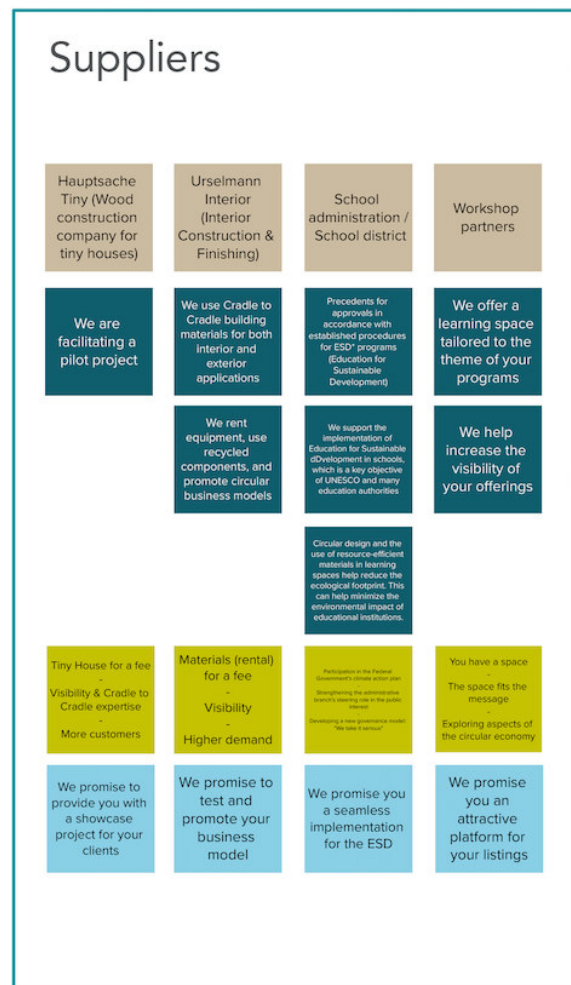


Figure: ECONGOOD Business Canvas ‚wood.ii‘, detail: Suppliers (2024)



In a next step, the ECONGOOD Business Canvas looks at the financial sustainability of the business idea. This step is not yet about a business plan, as it has to be created by banks for the granting of loans, for example. Rather, it is about how the idea will behave financially over a period of about three years. An important principle of the Economy for the Common Good is the change of perspective with the stakeholders: your income is my expenses and vice versa. In this way, the business ecosystem strengthens each other. In the process, suggestions are usually made as to which non-financial services can be exchanged.

WoodenValley already had a good compilation of the initial costs for design and construction as well as the operating costs for a first roadshow. Financing required project financing and adequate own funds. The ongoing operation is to be financed by user fees as well as consulting activities taking place in and around the w∞d.ii.

All this data is initially assumptions that must be substantiated in the course of the project. The canvas also explicitly asks for scenarios when incomes remain significantly below expectations or even significantly exceed them.

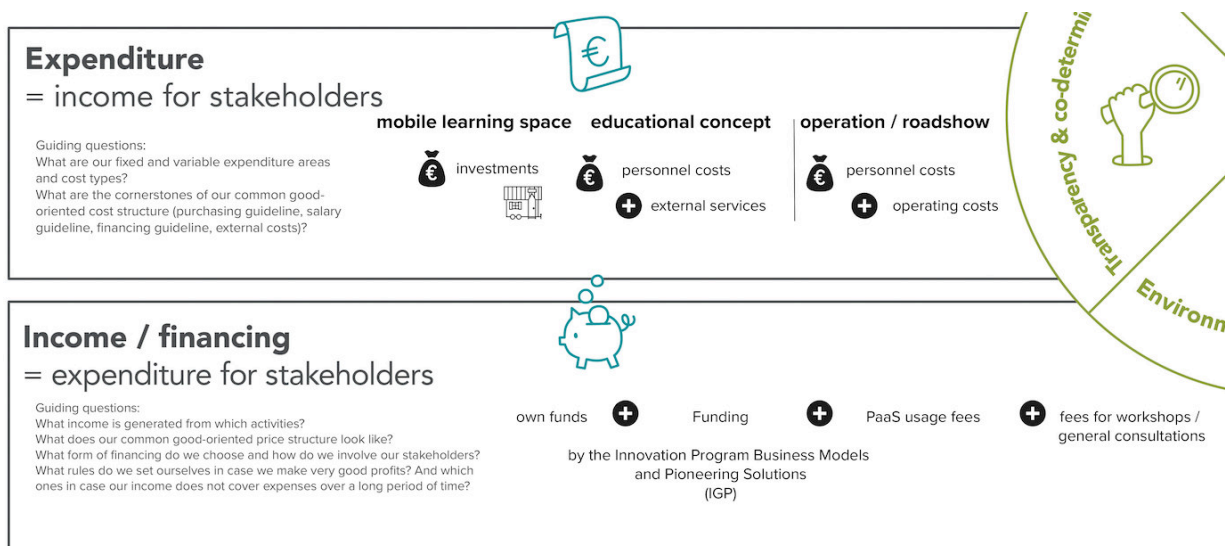


Figure: ECONGOOD Business Canvas ‚w∞d.ii‘, detail: Expenditure and Income (2024)

The last step before a summary pitch is the extraction of the effects to be achieved by the product and the clarification of their measurement. Effects can and should be possible with different stakeholders – not only in the circle of potential customers. For example, w∞d.ii wants to invite civil society to use the space for collaboration and offer funders an opportunity to deal with the circular economy. The measurement of impact and its KPIs must be defined and prepared – ideally with an impact model such as that of Phineo [5]. As with financial indicators, the assumptions must be checked regularly in order to counteract them if necessary.

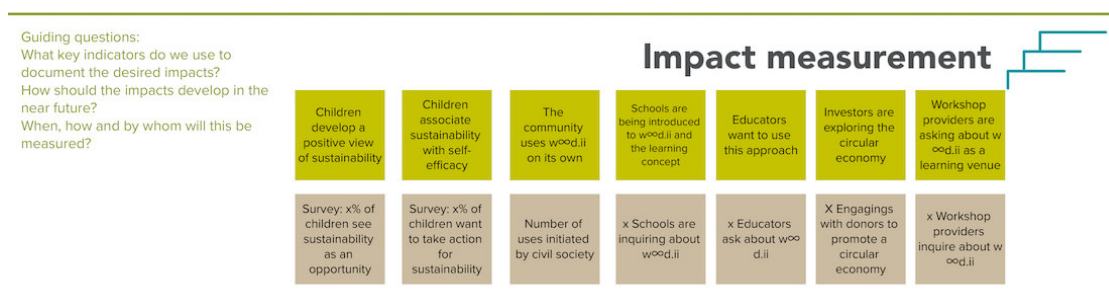


Figure: ECONGOOD Business Canvas ‚w∞d.ii‘, detail: Impact measurement (2024)



Insights from the team at WoodenValley

From a whole series of findings, the following are mentioned here as examples:

- It's about much more than filling in a canvas – it's a journey to ourselves as a team, our ambitions and ideas, possibilities and limits. Thanks to agile work, the time invested flew by and was worth it.
- And yes – even as a company oriented towards the common good with unconventional business models, you can win funding applications – we succeeded directly in doing so in two cases.
- And yes – thanks to the funding, we were able to build the first prototype of the w∞d.ii and proudly present it at the HEINZE Climate Festival in November 2024 in Berlin. On board are a number of stakeholders who have come together in the ECONGOOD Business Canvas and now have a platform for their cooperation with the w∞d.ii, because ...
- ... Stakeholders are seen as partners and addressed concretely with value propositions.
- The values of human dignity, solidarity and social justice, transparency and co-determination and, of course, environmental sustainability are reflected in numerous actions, even small ones, and are thus integrated into the business model.
- Not all of this has to be done immediately – but it is worth taking a 360-degree look at the product and documenting everything, even points that will be resubmitted for later.

Kamila Pasko and Robert Böker, the two founders, conclude: 'We don't just want common good oriented projects in the future – we want to work in a value-oriented way today. A good feeling.'



Figure: The first w∞d.ii is presented to the public, 2024



Insights for ECG Consultants

Each application of the canvas is individual, and so the conclusions and findings are always shaped by the concrete context. For the product development of woodii, we can state the following:

- Yes – the EConGOOD Business Canvas is also suitable for use with products and services.
- And yes – for people who - like the folks at WoodenValley - are brimming with ideas, the Canvas and a moderated working method offer structure and orientation.
- The results from working with the canvas become an integral part of the company's (and in this case, product's) design. And so ideas and concepts often cannot simply be traced back to the use of the canvas. On closer inspection, this is not a disadvantage, but rather valuable.
- Recursion loops give the model density and plausibility. For example, we recommend going ‚backwards‘ through the canvas and asking ‚For which activities are there actually no needs/problems? So what needs to be changed?‘ or ‚Are there activities whose effect is counterproductive to the whole?‘ or ‚Which activities with which stakeholders are primarily/secondarily important for achieving the desired results and effects?‘.
- It is essential for the success and impact of the canvas that relevant entrepreneurs and, if necessary, representatives of the stakeholder groups also participate with joy and commitment.
- A turnaround time of only a few days/weeks for the development of a business model – and in this case with a high level of knowledge and commitment of the founders and correspondingly many short interactions – is helpful. Interim results must always be well documented. To avoid getting bogged down in details, thoughts and associations must be collected in a ‚parking lot for later‘. As progress through the canvas, it is important to evaluate again and again what is essential now and what has already been sufficiently worked out for further work.
- In general, it is important to ensure that the (electronic) post-its used for documentation are labeled in a self-explanatory way and (later on) sentences are formulated and not just keywords are collected.
- A successful application of the canvas raises the awareness of the participants to the values and principles of the Economy for the Common Good. Even if these were (partially) already intrinsically present and (partially) lived before, they are now visible, communicated and debated and finally documented – in the case of WoodenValley, also published on their website.
- In this case, the creation of the canvas led to WoodenValley drawing-up its own Common Good Balance Sheet less than two years later [6] – congratulations!

Contacts

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[6] <https://woodenvalley.de/gemeinwohloekonomie-2/>



Thursday, 11.06., 11:00 – 11:20

Boundaries & Post-Growth / Agriculture & Food

Möhren und Marillen: Rethinking Food Waste at the Local Level to Improve the Circular Economy

Thomas Culhane, Katrin Puetz

This lively presentation, using performance art case studies, addresses a pressing question: How can low-income majorities in developing regions AND environmentally conscious entrepreneurs in Europe create sustainable, aid-free circular economies? In a global landscape dominated by top-down aid and hi-tech solutions that often fail to take root locally, our objective is to demonstrate a methodology that empowers communities to generate value directly from local wastes while protecting health and ecosystems.

Our approach emerges from a convergence of two practitioners: Katrin Puetz ((B) Energy Germany) and Nat Geo Explorer T.H. Culhane (Solar CITIES USA), with decades of field experience in Africa, the MENA region, and the Americas. We employ bottom-up strategies for transducing bads into goods via locally created/owned/operated/repared household; community-scale biodigesters. Built and maintained in situ, they transform all toilet; kitchen wastes locally, growing their value while eliminating disease and contamination risk; fostering microentrepreneurship.

By anchoring the water/energy/food/ecosystem service Nexus in familiar daily practices—what we call the “solar plexus” of the community metabolism Nexus—our model reframes waste as productive input, setting in motion chains of reinforcing activities. Public outreach, accompanied by song and dance at “Mohren und Marillen festivals” in Germany show how food waste can be used for cooking fuel.

Our findings show that such universally available feedstocks as kitchen scraps and sanitation wastes enable communities to think locally and act effectively. Starting small with digesters inspires confidence, embeds scientific and technical competencies and generates tangible benefits—clean cooking fuel, organic fertilizer; improved hygiene—which then catalyze investments in other sustainable practices and technologies. The process creates what we



describe as an upspiraling vortex: a virtuous cycle in which the initial circular economy intervention compounds into a broader “vortical economy” of well-being, resilience, and entrepreneurship. Rather than perpetuating dependency on external aid, this methodology establishes locally owned, locally sustained business ecosystems that embody the principles of the circular economy while directly improving public health, food security, and ecological integrity.



Thursday, 11.06., 15:00 – 15:20

Regional Transformation & Resilience

A Vision for Landshut 2045

Katharina Anna Schlecht, Stefanie Mennle, Saskia Rimat, Philipp Specht

Visions and positive narratives of the future have shown to have a greater effect on people to take action in shaping transformation than doomsday narratives as they don't paralyze but rather motivate. The city of Landshut is a medieval and cobbled old town in urgent need of transformation, e.g. adaptation against heat waves, but there is a lack of broad acceptance among residents.

The objective of the project 'A Vision for Landshut 2045' was to create a real-utopian vision for a fair, sustainable and liveable city of Landshut in 2045. The aim was to translate the often somewhat vague concepts of socio-ecological transformation into specific images for the local context. Moreover, change narratives were developed to provide ideas not only for technical solutions, but also to make social and cultural negotiation processes visible. The Economy for the Common Good ('ECG') served as a normative framework for the development of a future vision that is not geared towards profit maximisation, but rather towards quality of life and participation.

The project was carried out by four students as part of the interdisciplinary master's program 'Sustainability and Transformation' at Landshut University of Applied Sciences in cooperation with the regional ECG-group.

A combination of qualitative research, creative design and systemic analysis were applied. In a stakeholder analysis, 14 stakeholder groups were identified, including the city administration, civil society initiatives and local businesses. Guided interviews with 12 representatives of these stakeholder groups were conducted, systematically evaluated and formed the basis of the vision. In an iterative process four locations representing important aspects of Landshut and sustainable city development were chosen. The vision of the future was visualized using a combination of classic photo editing and AI-tools, accompanied by a detailed narrative. The narrative is a fictional story that guides through a city oriented towards the common good: with



consumption-free places, solidarity-based forms of housing, green infrastructure, participatory governance and an economy based on impact. These results were presented in a public event, where over 50 guests from politics, academia and civil society took part. The project was featured in the local newspaper, television, on social media and was perceived as an inspiring impetus for urban development. This project thus supports the hypothesis that positive narratives and futures visions are powerful tools to foster transformation.



Thursday, 11.06., 15:00 – 15:20

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Doughnut Economics for Regenerative Business Design

Nelly Rahimy, Annekatriin Meißner, Suleika Bort

The aim of our conference contribution is to present selected best practices, from companies such as Wildplastic or WEtell, based on the Doughnut Design for Business approach. These examples emerged from our practice-oriented research conducted for the case study workbook Doughnut Economics for Regenerative Business Design, which explores how businesses and organizations can be redesigned to contribute to societal well-being and address the shortcomings of current economic systems, in line with the conference theme, “Transforming Toward a Fair and Sustainable Economy.” Our contribution can thus be situated within the themes of future-fit economic models and organizational strategies for the common good.

Our research builds on the Doughnut Economics framework, which identifies five “deep design traits”, namely Purpose, Governance, Networks, Finance, and Ownership. It investigates how these traits can guide organizations toward regenerative and distributive practices. Each of the 14 cases examines how one or more of the five deep design traits have been implemented in practice, along with the challenges and opportunities encountered during implementation.

The central research question underlying the case studies is: “How does internal organizational structural change, based on a particularly innovative practice in one design trait, contribute to achieving the organization’s regenerative and distributive purpose?”

Further questions address the interrelations among the different design traits and, with regard to the case studies focusing on the Purpose Design Trait, specifically: “How is a regenerative and distributive purpose embedded across the overall design of the organization?”

The case studies were selected based on the following three criteria:

1. an ecologically regenerative and/or socially distributive purpose orientation,
2. a particularly innovative practice in one of the design traits, and



3. being based or active in German-speaking countries. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and public reports from 14 organizations and businesses across different sectors and legal forms.

Across the cases, we identified several patterns, such as the importance of deep and substantive community engagement and the fact that the different design traits interact with and enable one another. Importantly, the cases show that prioritizing a regenerative and distributive purpose can coexist with profit generation, provided that profit maximization is not the primary objective. Furthermore, our research highlights that systemic business transformation requires reimagining organizational design at its core.



Thursday, 11.06., 15:00 – 15:20

Education & Research

Sustainability Education as Aim across the Institution and its Programs

Sabine Spangenberg

This paper provides a case study that demonstrates an example of a higher education provider and its definition of sustainability as an institutional learning outcome and as a learning outcome across all taught degrees. The study reflects on the driving forces behind this for an American university in the UK, and as such considers the regulatory frameworks and sector recommendations of the respective commission and higher education departments in the US, and the quality and oversight bodies in the UK. The paper demonstrates the mapping of learning outcomes to educate learners with an awareness for the common good of sustainability and how the respective curricula, including Economics, were adjusted by the programme teams. Indicators for successful sustainability education are defined by programme example, and the related empirical evidence will be evaluated against the institutionally defined benchmarks. The data overview of the criteria and rubrics for the direct evidence relating to these learning outcomes are evaluated in the paper against the aim to educate learners' understanding of sustainability as a common good. Here, it will be argued that the recommendation for the integration of sustainability education by the UK Quality Assurance Agency in conjunction with Advance HE in 2021 (Education for Sustainable Development in Higher education) and the corresponding framework for student success have acted as a generator of curricula development initiatives. On a theoretical level, this case study of curricular adjustment is considered within a framework of public economics and the institutional settings for higher education as a public good. Particular reference will be made to the idea of conditional self-interest and its benefits to society as a whole. The promotion of a conditional self-interest and its social benefits will be demonstrated within an abstract framework. The framework demonstrates that a loosely guided institutional framework is conducive to generating social welfare benefits. The application of this framework to the promotion of sustainability education is set within the context of the individual and other members of society, and the individual as



part of society as a collective. The example in this case study is the generation of understanding and motivating action towards the common good of sustainability.

The paper concludes with a discussion of the comparative merits and weaknesses of US and UK higher education systems in regard to the provision of higher education as a common good and sustainability education in particular.



Thursday, 11.06., 15:20 – 15:40

Regional Transformation & Resilience

Economic Viability and Social Robustness of Intentional Communities: A Case Study

Maartje Visser

Intentional communities practice solidarity economies in daily life. By embodying ideals in daily life, they challenge hegemonic value systems, making these places incubators for alternative economies. What makes an intentional community is a group with a shared vision who live and sometimes work together. How they can exist in this hegemony is not self-evident. Therefore, research is needed to understand how these places are able to embody an alternative worldview and keep this practice alive through internal and external pressures. The aim of this research is to figure out how intentional communities become economically viable and socially robust. To investigate this, a literature review and in-depth case study were done. Data was collected in Kommune Niederkaufungen, a commune situated in a small town in central Germany. The methodology included a participant-observation approach with the intention to fully immerse in the daily practices. This meant living and working with the communards for 6.5 weeks. The web of economic practices and their embedding in the community were identified, showing how the sharing of time, material and money were managed within the community. These elements were analysed through an abductive process with the lens of weak theory. In the process of theorising, data was used as a base, while integrating this with existing literature. Four mechanisms were theorised:

1. Commoning, the collective management of common goods;
2. Maintaining transparent interactions, where and how communication takes place;
3. Balancing commitment, the interaction between self-responsibility and collective responsibility; and
4. Adaptive protocolising, the making of rules and agreements.

These aimed to concretise the economic viability and social robustness of intentional communities, though not trying to be exhaustive. The mechanisms function under the conditions



of being adaptable to change and being in relation to one another. Understanding the internal functioning of intentional communities creates opportunities to learn and make economic viability and social robustness more accessible to other communitarians. This means a next step can be to go beyond the internal functioning and research the relation of communities to external context and pressures. All these lessons can strengthen intentional communities in their embodiment of a counter-hegemony.

Keywords: commoning, participant-observation research, economic heterogeneity, adaptability, relationality, needs-based



Thursday, 11.06., 15:20 – 15:40

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

A Balanced Scorecard Development from the Perspective of the Common Good Economy

Wolfgang Gehra, Sabine Thiele, Kim Klein

The Common Good Economy Balanced Scorecard; model is based on the idea of linking the established management method of a Balanced Scorecard (BSC) with the target system of the Common Good Economy (CGE). The advantages of both concepts are combined by more efficiently integrating common good-oriented business practices into controlling. Instead of the past-oriented CGE balance sheet, this model focuses on the strategic implementation of future-oriented, common good-oriented processes within the company. In collaboration with the practical partner Regensburg Tourismus GmbH (RTG), the model underwent an initial practical test. This test examined which conceptual adjustments were necessary in the participatory development process to align RTG's strategy with the Common Good Economy orientation within the CGE BSC model. In addition, the study examined the extent to which RTG's internal terminology could be aligned with the Common Good Economy (CGE) terminology and what benefits the model could offer the company. A practical test involved an individual assessment of the fit between relevant CGE aspects and Balanced Scorecard (BSC) content. The collaboration with Regensburg Tourism GmbH demonstrated that an organic integration of both concepts is possible. For controlling purposes, the developed model allows sustainability-oriented key performance indicators to be monitored and managed at a glance, and enables the integration of common good oriented business practices into corporate management without additional effort.

The report on this promising practical test, which focused on the conception and implementation of a Common Good Economy Balanced Scorecard, was published in issue 1 of Controller Magazine in 2023. This followed research by Wolfgang Gehra and Kim Klein, which investigated the extent to which social and sustainable organizational goals, or rather the framework of the Common Good Economy, can be integrated into future-oriented corporate management systems such as a Balanced Scorecard.



After more than three years of practical experience with the application of an explicitly developed Balanced Scorecard that integrates the perspective of the Common Good Economy, a follow-up article in Controller Magazine (1/25) outlines the key findings regarding the extent to which the then promising practical test (see Controller Magazine 1/23, pp. 22 ff.) has met expectations.



Thursday, 11.06., 15:20 – 15:40

Education & Research

Example of Good Practice: W(u)eShare- Participate Through Involvement - Swap Cupboards on University Campus to Promote Social Interactions

Timo Stiller

The student project “W(u)eShare- Participate through involvement- Swap cupboards on campus to promote social interactions” is an experiment on transformation at the sustainability lab WueLAB of the Julius-Maximilians-University Wuerzburg, Germany. The objective of this transdisciplinary project is on the one hand, that students should perceive the university not primarily as a place to study but at least equally as a place of social gathering. On the other hand, the implemented exchange system should encourage the users to try out new sustainable practices of consumption. In order to achieve this, the project initially plans to install several swap cupboards on the university campus. Then, for scientific research the impact on sustainability of the swap cupboards is measured by creating a survey based on selected indicators. These indicators (intended effects) originate from the discussion paper “Konzept zum Monitoring sozialer Innovationen für nachhaltigen Konsum” (2024) published by the Institute for Ecological Economy Research (IÖW) and are supplemented by self-formulated expected effects. Both indicate effects along the three dimensions of sustainability, with financial savings, for example, being an economic indicator. Other indicators include the number of users (social dimension) or the life cycle of each item (ecological dimension). The indicators based on self-formulated expected effects ensure that the impact analysis is adjusted to the local circumstances.

Each implementation of a new swap cupboard is conducted in four phases: The first phase consists of the search for partners within and outside the university, who agree to support the purchase of the cupboard financially and to provide technical advice during the installation. In the second phase the focus is on finding suitable locations for swap cupboards on the campus. In the course of this, the following key characteristics of a suitable location are crucial: high frequency of passing students, proximity to operator for inspection and care, an outdoor location



for 24/7 access and weather protection. In the third project phase equipment for the interior is purchased.

Furthermore, the organizational layout for the interior is designed and different subject areas are labelled. An user guide and the organizational layout are visualized on posters in each cupboard. In the fourth project phase, a swap sponsor system of students and employees of the university is built to ensure frequent inspection and care of each cupboard. Simultaneously, the swap cupboards are promoted among the students and staff of the university.



Thursday, 11.06., 15:40 – 16:00

Regional Transformation & Resilience

Driving the Transition towards a Common Good Region: A Social Entrepreneurship Initiative by Kempten University of Applied Sciences

Lisa Gebler, Marina Bergler

Strengthening sustainability-oriented innovation processes has become a central task for regional transformation, especially in rural areas where ecological, social, and economic challenges increasingly demand alternative models of value creation. The Economy for the Common Good (ECG) offers a normative and practical framework that enables organisations to assess and improve their contribution to societal well-being. Building on theories of ECGIC 2026 ISBN 978-80-261-1363-8 (print) 254 cumulative causation, path dependence, and the Matthew Effect, the present study examines how self-reinforcing mechanisms can support the diffusion of Common-Good-oriented practices at the regional level.

A multi-year practice project at Kempten University of Applied Sciences (UAS) functions as an institutional catalyst for this transformation. Each year, interdisciplinary student teams collaborate with regional enterprises to prepare their first Common Good Balance Sheet, supported by academic staff and a certified ECG consultant. This structured process provides companies with a low-threshold entry into sustainability-oriented management while equipping students with competencies in evaluating ecological, social, and ethical performance indicators.

Since 2021, more than 35 enterprises and over 100 students have been part of this process. Additionally, the project has contributed to the establishment of the ECG Regional Group Allgäu, which now comprises more than 100 members and fosters visibility, peer exchange, and cumulative learning effects. Several participating companies have subsequently gained national recognition for sustainable practices, illustrating the project's transfer potential.

Overall, the initiative demonstrates how universities can act as intermediary actors that accelerate regional sustainability transitions by combining education, research, and social entrepreneurship, thereby supporting the emergence of a Common Good region in the Allgäu.



Keywords: Applied Sustainability Education, Economy for the Common Good, Regional Transformation, Self-Reinforcing Processes, Social Entrepreneurship



Thursday, 11.06., 15:40 – 16:00

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Integrating Committed Engineering and the Economy for the Common Good into the Design of an Organizational Management Model for BIC Companies in Colombia

Sandra Milena Bonilla Cely

From the economic, administrative, and engineering disciplines emerges the need to rethink contemporary economic models as alternatives to capitalism, characterized by unlimited wealth accumulation (chrematistikê), distancing itself from the Aristotelian ideal of oikonomía, understood as the prudent management of the common good. Engineering, which has historically played a fundamental role as technical support for this model with a focus on efficiency and profitability, perpetuating logics of global inequality, is currently reorienting toward perspectives that promote equity and respect for social and environmental dimensions.

In Latin America, particularly in Colombia—the third most unequal country in the world— multiple factors converge: state capture by economic elites, productivity lag, colonial and oligarchic structures, and the privilege of financial capital over social and environmental rights. This reality has configured a traditional business structure with management models coherent with the principles of the prevailing model, which have systematically neglected environmental and social dimensions. The Corporate Social Responsibility approach and sustainability discourses, created to mitigate the crisis, have been reduced to isolated, partial, and short-term actions that frequently function as marketing strategies to improve corporate image, keeping social responsibility peripheral to the core business strategy. This situation raises the urgency of analyzing new organizational management models and alternative engineering practices from sustainability and the common good perspective, proposing a model where sustainability is structurally integrated into organizational management and technical training.

Through qualitative and interpretive methodology, suitable for understanding the ethical, social, and technical dimensions that articulate alternative proposals such as the Economy for the Common Good (ECG) and Committed Engineering (CE), this study will employ: systematic documentary review to characterize and interpret the constitutive elements of ECG and CE;



content analysis to identify convergences and articulate structural components of the proposed model; and multiple case study in Colombian BIC (Collective Interest Benefit) corporations, using semi-structured interviews with managers, organizational documentary analysis, and source triangulation to validate the relevance and applicability of the model in real contexts.

This research seeks to propose an integrative theoretical-practical framework that articulates these three approaches, contributing to strengthening engineering education and sustainable business management in the Latin American context, making visible its transformative potential to reorient business management and engineering practice toward collective well-being, social justice, and environmental sustainability, thus contributing to the construction of structural alternatives to the dominant economic model.



Thursday, 11.06., 15:40 – 16:00

Education & Research

A Curriculum for Common Good Economics

Sophie Friedl

Education for sustainable development is a key for a sustainable future. But it often focusses primarily on consumer responsibility. Young people are encouraged to make more conscious purchasing decisions. However, the underlying way of thinking about, defining, and practicing economics—the structures of our economic system—is not sufficiently reflected upon. And even when a sustainable economic system is addressed in school education, it has often been as a separate addition in extra courses. Similarly, sustainable economics is often taught in higher education in niche areas, in extracurricular courses, and in specialized degree programs. However, many economic preconceptions and fundamentals that contradict a holistic, sustainable view of economics are already taught in regular economics classes: from homo economicus to simplified market models and reduced resource theories.

That is why we need a concept in the form of a detailed curriculum that systematically spells out how the aspects and perspectives of a sustainable economic system can be integrated into economic education, starting with basic economic terms and concepts. Teachers and lecturers need a comprehensive curriculum and applicable educational modules so that topics and skills related to an economy for the common good can be incorporated into political and economic education in a structured way. Both fundamental topics (e.g., behavior, resources, needs) and specific ECONGOOD topics (common good balance sheet, common good product, etc.) should be integrated into teaching and learning.

Together with teachers, the German ECONGOOD Education Sub Hub has developed an Economy for the Common Good curriculum in a three-year project. Around 30 main topics, 120 compact target competencies and 600 in more detail specified target competencies are formulated in a structured sequence. The links to existing education plans are illustrated with examples. A concise scientific summary of the topics is provided so that educators can familiarize themselves with the topics. A range of initially around 30 educational modules will be developed to



accompany the curriculum. This will enable the topics to be taught in a didactically meaningful way, i.e., in an engaging, varied, and controversial manner. The curriculum and the associated educational modules are available for use in the classroom— primarily in schools, but also at universities—as open source and free of charge. The curriculum and the first 30 associated educational modules will be published in German at the end of 2025; the curriculum itself will also be available in English.



Thursday, 11.06., 16:00 – 16:20

Regional Transformation & Resilience

Readiness as Enabling Conditions: Operationalizing the Social and Solidarity Economy through the Ready Communities Model

Chad Renando, Kerry Grace

The transition toward a fair and sustainable economy requires more than new economic models or performance metrics; it depends on the capacity of communities, institutions, and systems to act collectively on shared values. While the Economy for the Common Good and related post-growth and social and solidarity economy frameworks articulate normative goals such as dignity, solidarity, sustainability, participation, and transparency, less attention has been given to the enabling conditions through which these principles are operationalized in practice. This paper positions community readiness as a foundational mechanism for translating common-good values into coordinated action within regional contexts. Drawing on practice-based research from the Ready Communities program in two Australian regional pilot sites, the study integrates systems theory, critical realism, and actor-network theory to examine readiness as an emergent, relational construct. Empirical data include a structured expert (key informant) Readiness Index survey, longitudinal network and participation 307 records, pre- and post-conference survey data from a catalytic regional event, and systematically recorded field observations. Results demonstrate differentiated readiness conditions across five factors – clarity, connection, capability, collaboration, and advocacy – and show how strengthened readiness is associated with enhanced coordination, boundary-spanning leadership, and collective response during periods of system activation. The findings suggest that readiness functions as an enabling condition through which longer-term social, economic, and institutional impacts become possible. By making the invisible scaffolding of collective action visible and measurable, the Ready Communities model offers a replicable framework for supporting economies oriented toward the common good.

Keywords: Community readiness; Collective action; Place-based development; Regional inequality; Systems change.



Thursday, 11.06., 16:00 – 16:20

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

Matter, Process, Structure – A Living Systems Approach to Designing Organizations and Projects

Kathy Otto

The MSP(E) (Matter, structure, process – emergence) is a new analysis and design tool, based on systems theory and already has been implemented in a variety of projects.

Objectives:

- Observe and analyze projects and organizations as social ecosystems, and identify effectively the points that cause friction
- Design projects and organizations based on organic patterns in a way that creates conditions for effective work

Approach:

To achieve different results, we must employ different tools.

Traditional tools for structuring organizations and projects focus on setting goals, forming teams, and creating processes in a mechanical way. However, these often are in conflict with the organic nature of human beings and social systems.

To plan and structure for living systems, we must shift our methods and focus. Systemic science suggests moving from absolute solutions to contextual ones, emphasizing both results and processes, as well as quantity and quality. It's about creating conditions for productivity to emerge naturally, much like focusing on soil health to get healthy plants in regenerative agriculture or getting incredible teaching results by fostering self-guided study and joy in Montessori education. Applying this to organizations results in systems with motivated teams and effective production.

Through my research on organizational and project design, I've identified a pattern across different disciplines ranging from biology to social sciences that helps to see and design these conditions.



The three fundamental dimensions are: Matter, Structure, and Process, out of which a fourth one emerges. For instance, in a cell, molecules represent matter, the cell wall and organelles form the structure, and metabolism is the process, with life as the emergent dimension. In humans, for example spirit (metaphoric matter), mind (mental structures), and body (actions) lead to emotions and identity.

This pattern has been adapted to organizational analysis and design on different levels, one being values, vision, and purpose, another being members, roles and dialogue. Observing social ecosystems through this lens helps to identify points of synergy and friction, pinpointing what increases or decreases the system energy, and thus what improves or erodes conditions of work.

Results:

- Using this pattern to observe we get new insights on how a social ecosystem functions, which leads to innovative and adapted intervention strategies.
- Using this pattern to design projects and organizations helps us to design and develop a project or organization like a living organism.

I can present some use cases from my coaching and consultation practice.



Thursday, 11.06., 16:00 – 16:20

Education & Research

Learning Experiences for a Fair and Sustainable Economy

Carina Kamptner, Petra Isepp

Transforming towards a fair and sustainable economy requires more than technical solutions – it calls for a fundamental shift in how we think about economic systems. The Alternative Economic and Monetary Systems (AEMS) Summer University in Vienna addresses this need by providing an international and interdisciplinary learning environment where participants explore alternatives to the current economic and financial paradigm, grounded in both academic research and practical experience.

AEMS brings together students and professionals from around the world to examine how economic structures intersect with climate change, inequality, and global justice. The program fosters a systemic understanding of the roots of current crises while offering space for co-creating just and sustainable alternatives.

The academic course (5 ECTS) is divided into four modules:

- Foundations; Nature
- Money; Financial Systems
- Economics with Social and Ecological Values
- Social-Ecological Transformation

Participants engage with concepts such as Doughnut Economics, Circular Economy, Economy for the Common Good, Positive Money and Complementary Currencies, among others. The program goes beyond lectures to include interactive workshops, panel discussions, simulation games, excursions, reflective practices, and a group project on systemic change.

AEMS is organized on a non-profit basis by OeAD student housing, in collaboration with BOKU University Vienna and the Economy for the Common Good movement. It is supported by a broad network of academic and civil society partners, reflecting its core message: that a sustainable



economy must serve the common good. Since implementation in 2014, the program counts more than 500 Alumni in 85 nations.

Corresponding to the need for a systemic change on multiple levels, OeAD student housing organizes a second summer university “Green.Building.Solutions. (GBS)”. It focuses on sustainable practices in construction and planning, such as passive house technology, life cycle analysis of buildings, urban planning, alternative building materials and more. It also includes a group design project in a multicultural setting.



Thursday, 11.06., 16:20 – 16:40

Regional Transformation & Resilience

Rail Infrastructure for the Common Good in Germany: How Political Ambitions Play Out in Practice

Dominic Jung

Objectives

In recent years, German rail policy has increasingly emphasized the goal that rail infrastructure should serve the common good. This goal is reflected in constitutional provisions, in particular in Article 87e, paragraph 4, of the German Basic Law, which obliges the federal government to ensure that infrastructure development meets the needs of society. At the same time, pursuant to Article 87e, paragraph 3, of the German Basic Law, the federal railways are organized as commercial enterprises under private law. This results in a structural tension between business management and objectives oriented towards the common good. This contribution aims to examine how the politically formulated vision of a common good-oriented railway infrastructure in Germany is actually operationalized and to identify the challenges that arise in translating the political ambition into practice.

Approach

This contribution takes an approach that integrates legal, institutional, and transportation economics perspectives. First, the constitutional and statutory framework is analyzed, with particular emphasis on the absence of explicit legal provisions defining the concept of the common good in railway law. It then examines the establishment of DB InfraGO in 2024 as a key reform measure. It demonstrates that while the merger of DB Netz and DB Station&Service was politically justified on the grounds of serving the common good, it did not involve any substantial changes to legal or statutory provisions. In addition, the economic dimension is examined, particularly with regard to market failures in the area of natural monopolies and the design of the track access pricing system based on the full-cost principle. This is evaluated in comparison to marginal-cost-based approaches with regard to its compatibility with public interest objectives.



Results

The findings show a clear discrepancy between policy ambitions and practical implementation. The concept of the public good remains largely undefined in the railway sector and is inadequately operationalized. The establishment of DB InfraGO has to date not led to any fundamental change in the management approach, as there are no binding requirements regarding the common good.



Thursday, 11.06., 16:20 – 16:40

Common-Good-Oriented Management Strategies

ESG + C2 Quality System

Víctor Fernández Morales

Mechanism to help move from desire to efficient operation, aligning the positive impact on environmental, social and cultural matters with the corporate return in terms of governance, competitiveness and economy, adapting procedures to SMEs through the AIRE methodology so that it is practical for the entire productive fabric, democratising access to the knowledge necessary to act from within led by the organisation's own team.

Specific Objectives:

- To make the issues that make up the organization's ESG impact tangible.
- Train the organization's team to lead the operation and its outcome.
- Help create a system that allows you to act, control, measure, report and take advantage of.
- Improve the operation in a practical and viable way.
- To contribute to those who have the best impact, to obtain a better return.

Methodology:

From the triple balance of sustainability, we evolve to European terminology in the adoption of ESG, maintaining economy and governance as independent spheres, as well as extracting culture from the social sphere by having a very specific scope of application and impacts, both from the prism of organizational culture, and from its interaction with the cultural heritage of the territories and their societies. thus moving to a scorecard dominated by 5 spheres, from which a chain of 30 aspects, 120 focuses, 650 indicators, 650 objectives, 1,300 actions, 1,300 improvements on regenerative performance and 1,300 improvements on competitive performance are fitted.

Results:

After 3 years of practical work, we highlight the following data:

- + 250 projects carried out in which the ESG Quality System + C2 has been applied.



- + 3,100 professionals trained using the ESG + C2 Quality System.
- Processes implemented in 164 clients.
- 3,000 good practices implemented.



Thursday, 11.06., 16:40 – 17:00

Regional Transformation & Resilience

How Can Psychology Contribute to Societal Transformation? Insights from Doing Participatory Action Research

Nilima Chowdhury

Theoretical background: The Inner Development Goals (IDGs) are a framework for thinking about the psychological foundations required for societal change. Developed by a group of sustainability experts, scientists and practitioners, it proposes that we need specific psychological qualities and competences such as integrity, critical thinking, connectedness or creativity, and thus inner change, to drive change in the external world. From the perspective of sociocultural psychology, individual experience and social relations are mutually constitutive. Social relations and structures are reproduced by individual actors carrying out normative social – including identity – practices. The current cultural logic, which also underpins dominant economic models, is characterised by values and ideals such as competitiveness, (time) efficiency, relentless productivity and busy-ness. Empirical research has demonstrated that it produces subjectivities which are centred on said ideals. Consequently, feeling, thinking and acting in an individualist, de-contextualised and often self-exploitative manner appear natural and normal to us.

Objectives/ Research question:

How can psychology contribute to the development of new, psychologically sustainable self-practices and, thus, societal transformation?

Method/ Approach:

In this paper, I draw on insights from the participatory action research project Turn The Tide, which I conducted in New Zealand and Switzerland 2020 – 2022, to develop a conceptual-practical approach to thinking together inner and outer change. The objective of Turn The Tide was to increase gender equality and work-related wellbeing in the participating organisations. An analysis of the intervention process provides the basis for the proposed approach.

**Results:**

Due to the affective investment in the current social order, its questioning can elicit feelings of anxiety, anger, and resistance, which need to be dealt with in a constructive manner to avoid backlash.

1. From a practice-theoretical perspective, our habitual ways of being, feeling, thinking, reacting etc. are self-practices and thus social and collective procedures. Changing them requires collective endeavours.
2. Collectively developing new self-practices necessitates a methodology that engages the whole, embodied person: their identities, self-narratives, values, and relationality.



Friday, 12.06., 10:30 – 12:30

Parallel workshop session

The “TAPAS Gallery” Project - Highlighting Future-Fit Economic Models

Facilitator: Christian Felber

Departing from a project started at the [World Ethic Forum 2024](#) in Pontresina, a collective of researchers, activists and artists tries to identify the most promising future-fit economic models that are discussed and practiced. The models we envision and want to make visible and embody social justice, solidarity, inclusion, democracy, and sustainability. We call the selection “The TAPAS Gallery” and our plan is to disseminate this gallery in an approachable and experiential way for broad audiences.

According to the slogan “TAPAS”: “There are plenty of alternatives!” we call the project “The TAPAS gallery”. The models will be selected according to criteria such as equitable, deeply sustainable/ regenerative, participatory/inclusive, and they need to have been proven in successful practices. We want to make them visible in a comparative overview according to categories that allow to describe, characterize and understand them easily and quickly. We took inspiration from a similar project: “Exploring Economics”. This “gallery” was created in the field of theoretical schools of economics (<https://www.exploring-economics.org/de/>). This matrix showcases relevant heterodox schools of thought in the field of economics next to the dominant mainstream school of neoclassical economics. We want to undertake the “next step” showcasing the most widely discussed, practical, and convincing future-fit economic models.

By highlighting these diverse approaches, we hope to inspire actionable change towards economies that truly serve the many, not the few. We want to share knowledge about these models and also try to facilitate conversations, collaboration, and convergence across different approaches. They can be used by teachers, policy makers and the media to rethink and relearn the economy. Together, these alternative frameworks offer a tapestry of solutions that meet the diverse needs of our global future. Together, they can become the economic foundation of tomorrow - one rooted in justice, equity, and sustainability for all.



Friday, 12.06., 10:30 – 12:30

Parallel workshop session

Systems Thinking: The Nature of Complexity and How to Solve Complex Problems (for the Common Good)

Facilitator: Oliver Huffman

How can we solve problems in an increasingly complex world? Knowing how to solve complex problems could mean the success or failure of your next big project. In this workshop, you will learn how complexity affects world economies, societies, the environment or organizations. Then, we will learn a method for mapping and solving problems in complex systems such as rural economies or multinational organizations. This workshop will be useful for business leaders, political leaders, social-entrepreneurs and researchers, who want to learn how to visualize the complexity of the world. This workshop will also be interesting to Master's students and PhD students looking for a new way of researching.



Friday, 12.06., 10:30 – 12:30

Parallel workshop session

Task Democracy Experiment

Facilitators: Peter Bootsma, Jacqueline Hofstede

As the polycrisis unfolds and mankind is failing to turn the tide, the sustainability movement knows very well it needs to step up its efforts. In our circles we see many gatherings where this awareness is central. Concepts for upscaling, however, often remain on the level of pilot projects and convening bottom-up actors in coalitions.

The drawback of this strategy is that it does not address what we see as a polycrisis root cause: the inability of political systems to organize sustainability transitions timely and effectively. In this workshop we research a different approach: convening the democratic top-level boards of networks and institutes from five mutually dependent transition task groups. Basically, this is designing a new political subsystem, which needs to be scalable, needs to be compatible with and acceptable for (liberal) democratic institutions and the sustainability movement and needs to be easy to proliferate.



Friday, 12.06., 10:30 – 12:30

Parallel workshop session

Building Transformation: From Conference Dialogue to Collaborative Action

Facilitators: Ruhul Amin Noel, Maria Pusoma, Gabriele M. Murry

A Sustainability conferences often generate valuable discussions, but translating dialogue into concrete collaboration and implementation remains a challenge. This interactive workshop creates a space where participants from academia and practice collaboratively explore transformation challenges, develop shared system perspectives, and turn conference insights into actionable next steps.

Using LEGO® SERIOUS PLAY® as a renowned collaborative method, participants make complex relationships and transformation dynamics visible through tangible models. Together, they identify interdependencies, tensions, and leverage points between science, practice, and society, while reflecting on how sustainable transformation can shift from isolated initiatives toward meaningful cooperation.

The workshop is designed as a focused collaboration format for a small group of participants from diverse sectors and disciplines. Beyond reflection and exchange, participants develop concrete short-term collaboration ideas and outline practical next steps for implementation over the next 12 months.

In addition to collaborative modeling and reflection, the workshop supports networking between science, practice, and transformation-oriented actors through facilitated exchange and networking materials. Workshop outcomes, visual documentation, and collaborative insights will contribute to a post-conference communication and exhibition format accompanying the ECGIC 2026 after movie and dissemination activities.

Outcome:

Shared transformation models, documented collaboration impulses, and concrete next steps for cooperation emerge from the conference dialogue.