

Call for Papers: Moving the Logic of Sustainability Towards Flourishing for All

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Introduction

Climate scientists continue their alerts concerning the consequential effects of global warming, from receding shores (e.g., Norton, 2022) to droughts (e.g., Hermans & McLeman, 2021), from the mass movements of population (e.g., Grecequet et al., 2017) to famine (e.g., Thompson et al., 2010), to global species extinction (e.g., Diaz, 2019) and war (e.g., Dupont, 2008). Since the early 2000s there has been an open discussion about the consequences of breaking some (at this writing five of nine) planetary natural boundaries (Rockström et al., 2009; Steffen et al., 2015; Guimaraes-Costa et al., 2021). If there is certainty about those that are already broken, the cross-effects of destabilizing a system in which balance has permitted the emergence of life as we know it on Earth are still widely unknown. Meanwhile, growing disparities in wealth, both between nations and between individuals, add to a sense of injustice and grief (Heyward, 2014) that has been greatly exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic. While two or three individuals invest billions of dollars in a seemingly senseless space race (Fernholz, 2018), billions of people live in poverty, touched by famine, war, and a lack of any hope in the future. In the background, companies that have become bigger and more powerful than many governments continue to benefit from under-regulation (Ozili, 2020) and loose international supervision to gain ever more dominant market positions and increase shareholders' gains at the expense of equity, the natural environment, and other-than-human species.

The current situation is justified by a dominant logic that posits individuals as maximisers of utility, companies as amoral entities whose objective is to maximize profits, and social and environmental negative impacts of corporate action as externalities (Waddock, 2016; 2020). Within the institutional order of capitalism, greed and a short-term perspective are but normal attitudes of self-interested agents (Crouch et al., 2016). Competition and zero-sum games often define the norms followed by the different industries. And (few) laws and (fewer) regulations are defined by national governments and international bodies to support this frantic activity. This logic of capitalism has been adopted not only by Europe and Northern America, but also in more-or-less explicit shapes and forms by new economic powerhouses such as China (Lin, 2011) and India (D'Costa, 2005), without forgetting other emerging economies in Africa (Klareen, 2021), South America (Adelman, 2003), the Middle East (Meyer, 2013), and South-East Asia (Yeung, 2004).

Persisting in this logic only seems to aggravate the crises we noted above. A holistic logic moving from the current economic order through sustainability to flourishing of all life seems to be necessary to avert the already observed consequences on both natural and social systems.

Aim and scope of the special issue

With this special issue, we intend to promote and further the discussion about an enhanced and more comprehensive logic of moving from merely environmental and economic sustainability to what we call “flourishing for all” as a holistic approach which targets the increase of life conditions and earth protection around the globe. This logic would imply that individuals and organizations, at each period-in-time, are aware of the inter-generational compromise imposing ways of obtaining material subsistence and are capable of organizing time and space that preserve the Earth system (Kump et al., 2004) and continuously assures the balance of the flows between the natural and the economic systems. In this revised sustainability logic, actors perceive and understand their specific social reality as situated in a particular space, place, and time—entwined with nature and its resources. In such a holistic sustainable reality, actors learn and know how their practices and the assumptions shaping their actions are intertwined with those of other social spaces and beings. Finally, a high awareness of sustainability-related issues is embedded in the prevailing cognitive systems, values, and beliefs (Thornton & Ocasio, 1999) of this logic, as well as in many Indigenous value systems. This emerging awareness is necessary to assure social processes, rules and conventions shaping decision-making and problem-solving do not compromise the capacity of future generations to meet their needs while the current one fulfills theirs (Brundtland, 1987).

The comprehensive sustainability logic we intend to explore in this Special Issue is set to respond to overwhelming “wicked problems” (Lönngren & Van Poeck, 2021), which justifies our encouragement for submissions involving inter- or transdisciplinary research perspectives, but also disciplinary contributions that go beyond their traditional sights. We welcome papers adopting innovative perspectives, combining different disciplines, methods, and techniques, or integrating different forms of knowledge to advance current discussions or raise totally new questions that both tackle the grand challenges currently facing the world in terms of holistic sustainable development—and develop new ideas, insights, and perspectives that can enhance the potential for flourishing for all. Given the demand of a holistic and global view on sustainability we leave the field of contribution open which means business and society perspectives as well as environmental or humanistic ones are welcome. We are especially looking for contributions identifying and exploring the complex interdependency between the variables that can contribute to the creation, development, and perennity of a new institutional logic of sustainability.

This Special Issue was inspired by the discussions held during the [4th edition of the ARTEM Organizational Creativity and Sustainability International Conference](#) in Nancy, France. As such, in addition to entirely new submissions, we also invite for review and potential publication substantially extended versions of the papers presented there which are within the scope of this Special Issue.

Potential Themes

From a methodological point, theoretical considerations as well as empirical studies (i.e., case based, primary, or secondary research, meta-analysis, etc.) are welcome. Contributions may address a large range of themes, including (but not exclusively):

- Reflection on new epistemological, ontological, and methodological approaches to sustainability science and flourishing for all, including the potential of inter- and transdisciplinary approaches;
- The basic elements of an ecologically and socially sustainable society: actors, structures, processes, systems, its dynamics and interdependencies;
- The dynamics between natural, social, and economic systems: paradoxes, multi-layered complexity, balances, trade-offs, compromises, and red lines;
- The opportunities to be seized if (societal, organizational, individual) change towards sustainability is to prevail, the corresponding outcomes, and how to address them;
- The institutional (micro-)processes associated with the emergence of a logic of sustainability, including barriers, change, legitimacy, and entrepreneurship;
- The issues arising from the inter-generational compromise in furthering a logic of sustainability: time, space, and limited natural resources;
- The issues arising from the inter-social-space compromise in furthering a logic of sustainability towards flourishing: tensions between social and cultural specificity and inter-connectedness;
- The individual, organizational, and systemic perspectives of change towards a logic of sustainability: questions of identity, agency, power, interdependency, and complexity.

Instructions for submissions

Submissions are welcome from a variety of theoretical, methodological, and disciplinary perspectives, as long as they are closely in line with the topic of the Special Issue. Authors are strongly encouraged to refer to the BASR's submission guidelines for detailed instructions on submitting a paper to this Special Issue. Papers must be original and unpublished. They can have up to 10,000 words and must follow the editorial style of *Business and Society Review* which are found at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/page/journal/14678594/homepage/forauthors.html>.

All submissions must be made via BASR's online submission platform <https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/basr> by January 25, 2023. Please be sure to indicate that the paper is for this Special Issue during the submission process.

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