



Call for Papers

Sustainability Management Forum

Special Issue

Sustainability and Adaptation: Navigating COVID-19

Submission deadline: 31.12.2020

Background and Perspectives

Since its initial outbreak in late 2019, the impact of the novel coronavirus, or SARS-CoV-2, has been felt on a devastating global scale, with drastically growing numbers of infections and deaths reported, according to Johns Hopkins University & Medicine (2020). The pandemic has resulted in national governments taking unprecedented measures to contain the spread of the contagion and delay the peak of the infection. Approximately one third of the world's citizens have been instructed to self-isolate; businesses and schools have closed, and travel bans have been implemented.

These responses, while deemed necessary by WHO and other public health bodies, have undoubtedly affected businesses and economic structures around the world. According to the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD 2020), the global economy could grow at its slowest rate since 2009.

Energy sectors, stock-markets, and the tourism and automotive industries are suffering, with profits plummeting to their lowest point in a decade (Jones et al. 2020). There is a decrease in business travels, which account for 75% of airline profits (Stahl 2020). Many industries face critical interruptions in their supply chains as a result of the many areas around the world being under quarantine (Linton and Vakil 2020). It is clear that rather than relying on single sourcing, more resilient supply chains are needed. How will industries adapt?

But every crisis brings opportunities. There is already a significant boost for digitalisation, with virtual event companies seizing the opportunity to transfer physical events and meetings to an online capacity. It is very likely that once people are forced to use digital solutions to hold meetings and events, many might not want to return to on-site events (Bradshaw 2020). Businesses once considered 'digitally lazy' are being faced with the threat to operation continuity and must catch up with more digital-savvy companies. In March 2020, every third

employee in Germany was offered the option to work from home for the first time (Pauly and Holdampf-Wendel 2020). A study from Stanford University from 2013 (Bloom et al.) showed a 13% increase in productivity for the employees of a Chinese NASDAQ-listed travel agency when working from home. This could also pave the way for gender equality, as more flexible working arrangements can make it easier for families regarding the division of childcare.

What are the long-term scenarios for recovery after the crisis, and will there be any lasting structural change? To explore the responses and perspectives of the industries impacted by the global corona crisis, as well as shed light on the opportunities that these unparalleled times can bring to economies, Sustainability Management Forum plans to publish a Special Issue entitled "Sustainability and Adaptation: Navigating COVID-19".

Submission:

In the spirit of the Forum Romanum, which once functioned as the centre for public speeches and debates in Rome, this Special Issue strongly encourages discussion articles, case studies and comments related to the corona crisis. All disciplines are welcome.

Usual formats for articles in SMF include (but are not limited to):

- Original research
- Reviews
- Perspectives
- Correspondence
- Case Reports
- News and views
- Highlights
- Comments

Thank you for your interest in and support of this Special Issue. We look forward to receiving your submission. Submissions beyond the deadline will be considered for a regular issue.

References

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