

Project Group (Number and Name): 46 – “The role of sustainable entrepreneurs in societal u-turns for sustainable development”

Comment

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The role of Sustainable Entrepreneurs in social U-turns and sustainable development:

Challenges based on the Multi-Level Perspective

The impacts of global warming of 1,5 °C or higher will have devastating impacts on various ecosystems that guarantee the existence of approximately 8.7 million organisms on our planet. Despite the pandemic and political issues around the world, humanity must prioritize the reaching of a turning point in the climate crisis. To pursue this goal “[...] not only incremental changes are required, but entire socio-technological transitions [...]”. Those “[...] non-linear changes [...] arise from the coevolution between economy, society and ecology.” Those three sectors contribute to sustainability transitions to different degrees due to different trading- and actions structures within each sector. The aspect of coevolution between the sectors though, is neglected. We elaborated the challenges of Micro-, Meso-, and Macro-Level regarding the MLP Theory. Niche actors or entrants pursue the goal of a sustainable development, which can be described as follows. “A development which meets the needs of current generations, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. The challenge arising is combining high sustainable orientation while reaching the market impact needed to contribute to sustainability transitions. Incumbents and

other regime actors are restricted by “dominant structure, culture and practices”, that rely on unsustainable economical methods and limit the actors in their sustainable behavior. On a Macro-level, the consumers don't take enough responsibility in sustainable transitions and lack awareness to consume more sustainably. Furthermore, the government isn't compensating this lack of awareness by creating a sustainable framework, which supports behavioral change in society.

These challenges are elaborated by asking two key questions.

1. Which problems and challenges are most relevant to the individual?

Many Consumers have a lack of knowledge and therefore struggle to make sustainable decisions e.g., Greenwashing trap, sustainable alternatives. Rising inflation and socio-political crises also create a financial challenge for consumers to make sustainable investments.

Niche Actors struggle with reaching high market value through sales due to the challenges occurring from the consumers.

Regime actors avoid a decreasing of their market value and wealth and therefore don't make radical sustainable changes but rather sales focused sustainability campaigns which aren't efficient.

A coevolution between consumers and niche actors could result in Maintenance of Sustainability which would put pressure on regime actors.

2. What differs between the individual level and the “beyond me” – perspective?

The major difference is how largely the decisions made have an impact on sustainability transformations, which also influences the degree of responsibility.

In this context egoistic actions of individuals and regime actors were discussed. Consuming to secure livelihood compared to an epicurean's lifestyle isn't egoistic. We decided that a balanced lifestyle defined by conscious and mainly sustainable decisions as realistic and a good way of living.

A counter argument could be that the dominant structures in each of the earlier mentioned sectors impede coevolution or even make it impossible. Nonetheless, a higher degree of interaction and cooperation is the key frame to achieve sustainability transformations.

As concluding thesis, the challenges of each sector won't be overcome, if they act separately instead of cross-sectoral.

Works Cited:

Hörisch, Jacob (2015): The Role of Sustainable Entrepreneurship in Sustainability

Transitions: A Conceptual Synthesis against the Background of the Multi-Level Perspective

(Pages 287 – 297)