

Abstract Template

Dr. Peter Tom Jones

Organisation : KULeuven/Plan C

Short description:

Plan C is a transition (management) arena in Flanders working towards sustainable materials management.

Presentation title: Impacts of consumer's choices on resource use and climate change: waste-products-resources chain and carbon footprint

Executive Summary of your Abstract:

The transition to sustainability faces a number of interlinked socio-cultural and structural barriers. Technological and behavioural changes need to occur synergistically. An effective change strategy will be a combination of Enabling, Encouraging, Exemplifying and Engaging instruments, which go far beyond individual change. The potential of this model is enormous, as long as governments are ready to show leadership.

Abstract:

Respecting the ecological limits of Ecosystem Earth is the non-negotiable basis for our social and economic development. The Rockström diagram illustrates that we have already breached the safe operating space for several (interlinked) global environmental issues. In order to reach/return to a situation of (strong) ecological sustainability, the use of natural resources by industrialised countries needs to be reduced by ~90% within the next decades. Incremental optimisation no longer suffices. A transition is required. This implies breakthrough system-level innovations; thus moving from eco-efficiency to eco-effectiveness. Factor 10 can be reached by combining three routes: (1) greening production and products, (2) shifting demand to low-impact consumption categories, and (3) lowering material demands. Technological and behavioural changes need to occur synergistically. The road to sustainability will be difficult, as many socio-cultural and structural barriers need to be overcome. Long-term planning and policy design together with steering mechanisms are required. The public sector can act as a driver for change, develop a vision and implement an appropriate mix of support mechanisms and incentives. An effective change strategy needs to take into consideration the different drivers for human behaviour. The British Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs developed the 4E-model: Enable, Encourage, Exemplify and Engage. Its potential is enormous, as long as governments are ready to show leadership.

Resumé: Dr. Ir. Peter Tom Jones currently works as a Research Manager in the area of 'Industrial Ecology' at the University of Leuven. He is also an engaged scientist, and author of several books and articles concerning ecology, ecological economics, climate change and transition management. His latest book is *Terra Reversa: de transitie naar rechtvaardige duurzaamheid* (2009)

Recommended reading:

Jones, P. T., De Meyere, V. (2009), *Terra Reversa, de transitie naar rechtvaardige duurzaamheid*. EPO/Jan van Arkel, Vlaanderen and Nederland.

Tukker, A. e.a. (2008), System Innovations for Sustainability 1: Perspectives on radical changes to sustainable consumption and production. Sheffield.