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#42 Business transition management: exploring a new role for business in sustainability transitions - Derk Loorbach, Katinka Wijsman

In our paper we seek to conceptually interpret business strategies related to sustainability from a transition perspective. We argue that there is an emergent trend of businesses and industries that move beyond optimizing the organization's individual performance, by mitigating negative environmental and social impacts, to fundamentally restructuring and rethinking existing businesses in light of broader societal changes. By means of the transition framework, we conceptualize the development of new sustainable business models as a new phase in corporate responsibility, in which societal sustainability challenges are translated into new socio-economic business models implying fundamental transitions within businesses. We then outline the basic contours of an approach that seeks to make business transitions to sustainable systems manageable in terms of influencing speed and direction of business transitions by adapting the transition management framework. We describe the framework of business transition management in a number of interlinked activities based on an experimental participatory case study of the transition in the Dutch roof sector.

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#85 Strategic Niche Management & Transition Experiments - Business Modeling and Changing the Socioeconomic Healthcare System - Hendrik Cramer, Geert Dewulf, Hans Voordijk

An aging population and increasing healthcare expenditures are pressuring today's healthcare system. Hence, transition experiments are needed in order to change the system. However, little is known on how to properly stabilize experiments to be able to actually change a system. Therefore, this study explores how local transition experiments change business models which in turn stabilize the experiments and hence advance the change of the socioeconomic healthcare system. It is demonstrated that transition experiments in community care, home care, and assisted living can change existing business models. Thereby, new business models emerge out of deepening, broadening and scaling up the transition experiments with the goal to continue the transition towards a more sustainable socioeconomic healthcare system. Strategic Niche Management is used as a theoretical background to study the
transition. Strategic niche management is an evolutionary theory in which the healthcare system can be viewed as a socioeconomic system which is pressured by an aging population while niches provide the space to experiment in order to deal with the pressure, trying to change the healthcare system accordingly. Nevertheless, new business models are not easily formed out of experiments. One of the difficulties is for instance the dynamics of networks or to reach consensus among the various stakeholders involved in the network. Consensus is needed to form a shared vision as well as a shared value proposition. Eventually, it can be argued that business modeling is a possible new approach to stabilize experiments and therefore advance the transition of socioeconomic systems.

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#201 Business Model-Resilience in the context of corporate sustainability transformation - Alexandra Palzkill

The transition to sustainability will not work without rebuilding the economy, i.e. changing its concrete production and consumption patterns. These changes are essentially triggered by corporate strategies [1, 2, 3]. Therefore, a great part of such a transition will be self-directed transformation processes within individual companies to reduce their environmental impact. Considering that such changes may be wide-ranging and substantial, the major challenge for companies is to identify “resilient” transformation strategies for their business models. In the socio-ecological research Resilience generally means the capacity of a system to adapt itself to processes of change and to shape these processes at the same time without compromising the structure and identity of the system itself [4, 5, 6]. For successful companies this conservation of their structure and especially their identity – as a brand – is particularly important to continue being successful. Therefore, Business Modell-Resilience can be understood as the ability of companies to adapt their business models in the face of external shocks or pressure, without losing their identity built by its core business model or its brand. A Resilience approach has not been applied with this perspective to the study of companies and their business models, yet. However, applying such an approach could be useful to better understand companies’ scope of action for self-directed transformation processes within established regimes and, more generally, it might provide new insights for strategic management research. The hypothesis of the paper is, that business models are in most cases more resilient than assumed but not indefinitely flexible. An empirical basis is needed, in order to classify different types of business model transformation and draw conclusions with regard to their Resilience. Exemplified by the fast food industry the paper will develop such an empirical framework.

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