

Blueprint for European Sustainable Consumption and Production: Finding the path of transition to a sustainable society

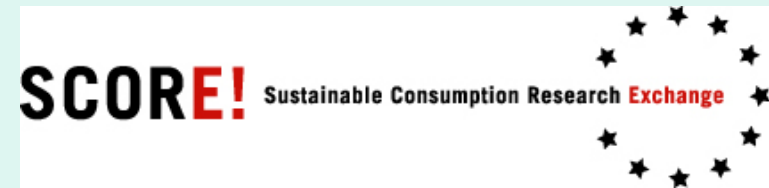
Workshop during JAoCC, 8-10 June 2009, Copenhagen

Arnold Tukker, TNO/SCORE! Network
Doreen Fedrigo, EEB

(part presented earlier during the Blueprint Launch, 26 May
2009, Brussels)



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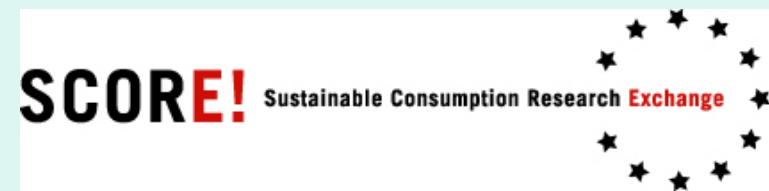


Workshop program

- Presentation of the Blueprint on SCP, dr. Arnold Tukker, TNO (20 minutes)
- Reaction of a panel on the 3 key questions (15 minutes)
 - Dr. Theo de Bruijn, TU Twente/co-ordinator GIN network, Netherlands
 - Philip Vergragt, initiator SCP America network, US (invited)
 - Eivind Sto, SIFO, Norway (SCORE co-ordination team member)
 - Irmgard Schultz, ISOE, Germany (reviewer, Blueprint)
- Discussion with the audience. Note: in case of a high number of attendees discussion will be held in break-out groups with plenary feedback (50 minutes).



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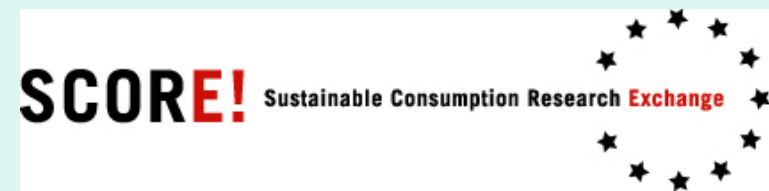


Outline

- Why the Blueprint?
- Goals of change
- A vision on change
- Types of change
- Actions by level of change



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Why the Blueprint?

- SCP mentioned in the political agenda since Rio (1992) and Johannesburg (2002) summits, but with little political attention
- The formal SCP agendas developed in EU countries so far often suggest “convenient truths”
- Focus on marginal changes and/or technical progress



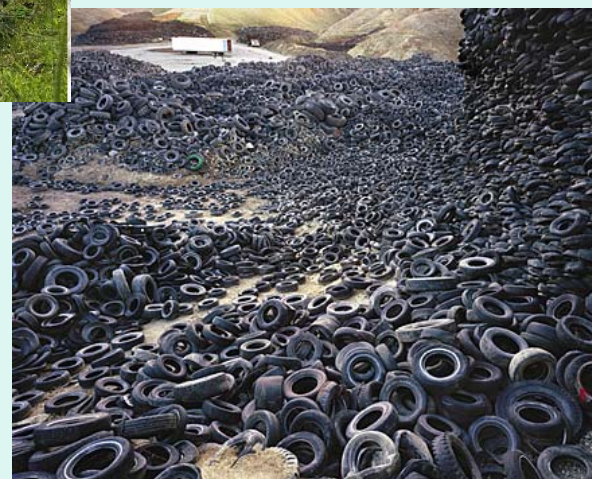
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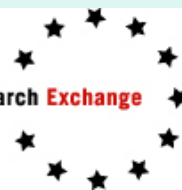
Goals for change – something is going wrong

- The starting point: the sense that something is going wrong
- Since Industrial Revolution, economic growth unprecedented in human history
- Growth made possible by technical progress, rise in the use of finite, non-renewable resources, transformation of ecosystems into cultivated land, the use of nature as a sink for residuals of production and consumption



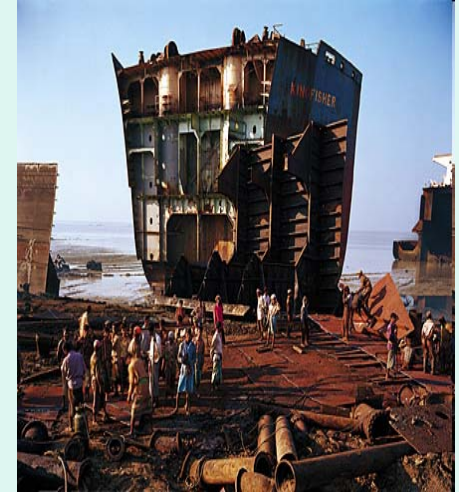
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Goals for change – no more room for expansion

- Despite talking about sustainable development since 1987, the indicators show overall we're heading in the wrong direction
- Social, environmental and economic crises illustrate problems of the concept of limitless growth on a finite planet
- 20th century “expansion” approach is no longer acceptable or possible
- SCP policies have not yet addressed this reality



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Goals for change – the simple maths

- The simple maths: Western lifestyles are negotiable, and need questioning
 - 6,7bn people on the planet, 1bn wealthy, 1-2bn in fast developing economies, 3-4bn living in poverty
 - We are already “colliding” with Earth
 - Wealth does not equal well-being: a sense of place in the society you help to construct, control over life, sense of belonging, absence of fear
 - Reaching limits – to finite resources or planet’s ability to absorb emissions
- “Bridge at the End of the World” :
- *Half the world’s tropical and temperate forests are gone...*
 - *About half the wetlands and a third of the mangroves are gone...*
 - *90% of the larger predator fish are gone, and 75% of marine fisheries are now overfished or fished to capacity...*
 - *Species are disappearing at rates about a thousand times faster than normal...*
 - *Over half the agricultural land in drier regions suffers from deterioration and desertification...*
 - *Persistent toxic chemicals can be found by the dozens in each and every one of us...*



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Goals for change –

transition to living better, equally, within limits

- From “expansion” to “contraction and simplification”
- Peak Oil, climate change, finite resources ... “Peak Everything”
- Will societies contract and simplify intelligently or in an uncontrolled, chaotic fashion ?
- Planned, intelligent change requires a sustainability transition approach



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A vision on change – Type of change

- Living within limits
 - Food & drink/agriculture
 - Transportation and tourism
 - Housing (including energy-using products)
- Shaping a sustainable society, not a sustainable consumer
- Addressing the public as citizens in society, not simply as consumers
- Addressing production *and* consumption
- Creating the systems that lead to sustainable behaviour



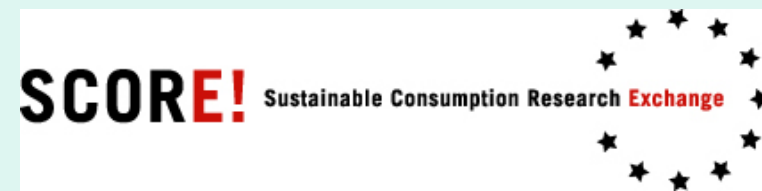
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A vision on change – Finding the path forward

- Characteristics of change to SCP
 - Beyond marginal adaptations and technical fixes
 - In part fundamental adaptation of structures and paradigms....
 - ... and high complexity and uncertainty due to long time frames
- Hence a program of 3 blocks:
 - A. Establish a basic institutional framework
 - B. Lead change that can be realised within existing structures
 - C. Develop inspiring approaches towards change still resisted now

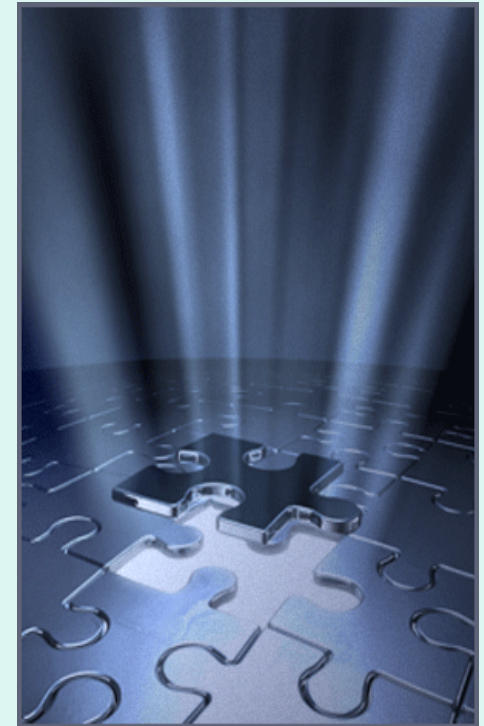


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Block A: Establish a basic institutional framework

Develop policy frameworks covering all the below	EU, Member states
Handle SCP at strategic levels in government	EU, Member states
Develop monitoring systems for SCP	EEA, Eurostat
Transform UN Resource Panel into an 'IPPC for SCP'	EU, UN
Facilitate networking and access to resources and knowledge	EU, Member states



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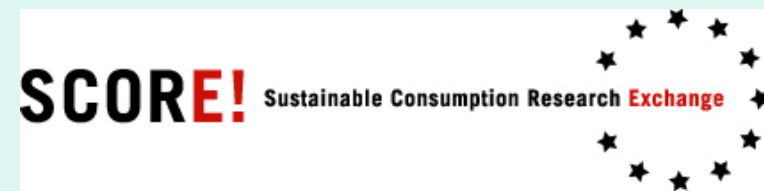


Block B: Lead change that can be realised now

- Characteristics
 - (Political/scientific) consensus on problems and solutions
 - Measures legitimised by prevailing paradigms, public expectations, or (multiple) crises
 - Examples include goals reflected by the UN Global Compact and Millennium Development Goals
- Courageous, inspiring political and business leadership still required
 - Always some resistance
 - Usually due to affected interests
- Subdivided into
 - 'Driver' oriented
 - Policy
 - Business
 - Consumers
 - Society in general
 - Consumption area oriented



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Block B: Lead change that can be realised now – driver oriented (1)

- Policy-driven: maximise use of instruments along the production-consumption chain
 - Setting emission and resource use caps, standards and charges, energy performance targets
 - Shifting taxes from labour to resources
 - Limiting advertising
 - Scaling up sustainable procurement
 - Abolishing perverse subsidies and fair taxation
 - Enforcement of UN agreements on Human Rights and ILO standards
 - Articulating “sustainable industrial policy”
 - Articulating “sustainable innovation” beyond “lower environmental impact”



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Block B: Lead change that can be realised now – driver oriented (2)

- Business-driven: maximise implementation of voluntary initiatives
 - upstream – CSR, sustainable private procurement
 - Company level – integration of sustainability (social too) into decision-making, ecodesign and innovation, investing in more radical sustainable innovation, information provision on products/services' impacts
 - Downstream – information provision, choice editing, coherence between product performance and marketing/comms, business models
- Consumer-oriented: maximise (opportunities for) sustainable consumption
 - “political consumerism” – pressure on companies and governments
 - Awareness-raising campaigns for consumer-citizens
 - Educational programmes for consumer-citizens
 - Infrastructure supportive to sustainable consumption
- Society-oriented:
 - Develop more equal societies – (re)distribution systems, structures for societal engagement, ensuring basic needs can be met while respecting diversity
 - Economic *recovery* or *stimulus* packages to become economic *transition* packages



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Block B: Lead change that can be realised now – consumption area oriented

- Built environment and housing:
 - performance standards,
 - retrofitting for sustainability,
 - zero-energy housing, resource use implications via sustainable land-use / planning, sustainable building objectives
- Electronic products –
 - progressive energy performance targets and benchmarks
- Mobility / tourism –
 - emissions and energy performance targets,
 - fuel taxes,
 - road pricing,
 - Etc.
- Food & drink/agriculture:
 - sustainable farming with organic as starting point,
 - low environmental impact diets



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Block C: Develop inspiring approaches towards change still resisted now (1)

- What is the problem?
 - Fundamental, paradigmatic controversies about the way forward
 - Lack of knowledge about the way forward
 - We need hence process-oriented approaches enhancing legitimacy and reducing uncertainty on long-term change
- What strategies can be effective?
 1. Provide inspiring, practical examples of radical change
 2. Provide convincing evidence where change is most needed, and how it can be organised
 3. Organise a process of deliberation, learning and analysis on 'pieces de resistance'



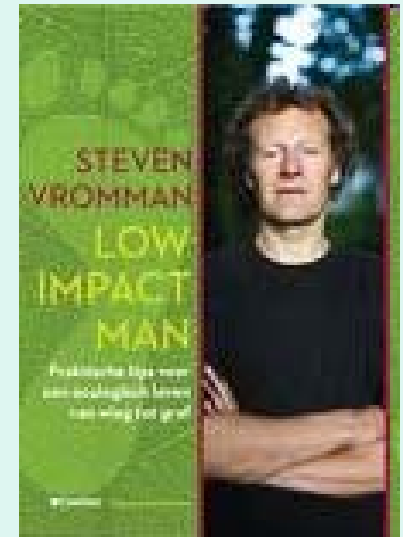
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Block C: Develop inspiring approaches towards change still resisted now (2)

- Provide practical, inspiring examples
 - Powerful way to break deadlocks due to opposing views and uncertainty about how to realise change
 - Show what is possible, create legitimacy for institutionalisation of measures that mainstream
 - Usually bottom-up
- Lead role for CSOs, front runner businesses, and government
 - WWF's "One Planet Futures" programme
 - Movements such as Transition Towns, Slow (Food, Cities, etc)
 - Covenant of Mayors
 - Individuals "walking the talk", e.g. the 'low impact man'



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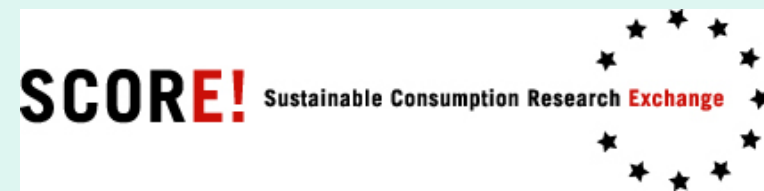


Block C: Develop inspiring approaches towards change still resisted now (2)

- Provide convincing evidence
 - Reduces uncertainty
 - Provides legitimization
- Lead role for EU/UN, CSOs and think tanks
 - Assessing environmental and resource limits ('IPCC for SCP')
 - Develop indicative roadmaps on change in key consumption domains
 - Perform 'paradigm challenging research'
 - new economic foundation's Happy Planet Index,
 - National Accounts of Well-being;
 - UK SDC's Prosperity Without Growth, Redefining Prosperity



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Block C: Develop inspiring approaches towards change still resisted now (3)

- Informed deliberation on 'pieces de resistance'
 - Complement of former point
 - Creates a joint 'search process' reducing uncertainty and creating legitimacy for change
 - Bring insight into how change can be organised in a credible way
 - Thinking "outside the box"
- Lead role for CSOs, EU, Member states and front runner businesses
 - EU "Beyond GDP" conference
 - Science/CSO lead "Degrowth" conference
 - Sarkozy's "Stiglitz Commission" on new metrics for prosperity



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Conclusions

- SCP is about changing the economic system
- Most SCP action plans
 - focus on actions in existing structures
 - have limited focus on institutional embedment
- The Blueprint provides
 - A clear framework for action and roles per actor
 - Focusing on
 - Institutional framework
 - Leadership and action for change possible now
 - Strategies to deal with the more difficult issues
 - Based on proved approaches
 - ...all on 1 page!



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A: Establish a basic institutional framework

Actions	Expected leadership	Examples of tests for change
Turn the UNEP Resource Panel into an IPCC equivalent on resource use and consumption	UN, EU	EU and UN Sustainable Development Strategies
Develop policy frameworks and plans covering all the below at EU and Member State levels	EU and Member States	* Environmental Action Programme; UN and EU Sustainable Development Strategies
Place SCP policy units at a strategic level in governments	EU and Member States	A European Commissioner level Sustainable Development Committee
Develop monitoring systems for SCP	EEA, EUROSTAT and national counterparts	
Where relevant, facilitate networking and access to knowledge and finances for the activities below	EU, Member States: Finances All: networking	Specific CSO projects in FP7; national government funding for CSOs; Global Environment Fund
Develop social policy and structures to create more equal societies, allowing active engagement	EU and Member States	

B: Lead change that can be realised within existing structures and mindsets

General actions	Expected leadership	Examples
Maximise use of policy instruments along the production-consumption lifecycle	EU and Member States	Articulated sustainable industrial policy development; enforcing ILO standards; green/sustainable public procurement; coherence between sustainability objectives and fiscal mechanisms (taxes, subsidies, emission trading, etc)
Maximise implementation of business instruments	Business and business organisations like WBCSD	Corporate Social Responsibility, choice editing, supply chain management, new business models
Maximise opportunities for sustainable consumption and practices/lifestyles	CSOs and Individuals EU and Member States	Political consumerism, education, responsible advertising
Focus financial support like innovation and recovery packages on fundamental change	EU and Member States	Abolishing perverse subsidies, internalising external costs, investment in sustainable infrastructure
Consumption-area specific actions		
Built environment and housing		Maximise use of domain-specific instruments limiting emissions and resource use:
Energy using products	EU, Member States, local governments and businesses	• Sustainability standards / minimum requirements for houses, cars, electronics, agriculture
Food and drink/agriculture		• Fiscal mechanisms (e.g. aviation fuel tax, emissions trading, subsidies, etc)
Mobility (including for Tourism)		

C: Develop inspiring approaches towards change that is still resisted now

Activity	Expected leadership	Examples
Provide practical, inspiring examples showing fundamental change can work	CSOs Front runner businesses, EU, Member States, local government	WWF's One Planet Future programme, Transition Towns, Slow movement, eco-cities, individuals "walking the talk"
Provide convincing evidence of how change can work and where it is most needed, e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • assessing environmental and resource limits • providing indicative roadmaps for change in key consumption domains • performing 'paradigm challenging' research 	EU/UN: establish an Intergovernmental Panel on Resource Consumption; CSOs/Independent think tanks	IPCC for climate change; new economic foundation; and UK Sustainable Development Commission
Organise a process of deliberation, learning and analysis on 'places of resistance'	CSOs Front runner businesses EU, Member States	"Beyond GDP" conference; "Stiglitz Commission"

Questions during this workshop

1. What are the problems of current SCP policy settings?
 - ⇒ Many NGOs and sustainability scientists find progress in the SCP dossier slow. Yet, simple calls for stronger measures by NGOs and scientists have little value since too often policy entrepreneurs seeking the implementation of effective measure face fundamental problems such as a lack of support, legitimacy etc. What are such key blocking factors for progress?
2. What strategies need to be in place for realizing successful SCP policy settings?
 - ⇒ The Blueprint suggests some strategies of fostering momentum and legitimacy for more far-reaching change, such as niche experiments, enlarging the evidence base for change, and deliberative activities. Are these the right ones? Can these be effective? What other strategies can be thought of ?
3. How can the scientific community best help in this and how should it be organized for this?



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