

Sustainable Innovation 2013

10 Key Lessons

Collaboration, Co-creation & New Business Models

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A scenic view of a snow-capped mountain range, likely the Himalayas, with a glacier in the foreground. The mountains are partially covered in snow and partially shrouded in mist. The foreground shows a dark, rocky slope on the left and a glacier with blue-tinged ice on the right.

1. Foresight

Adaption to climate change, circular economy & eco-innovation are now being hardwired into future European industrial policy scenarios; with thinking on eco-innovation now breaking away from the traditional definition of eco-industries based on 'end of pipe' environmental technologies towards a more horizontal view based on a pervasive 'greening of industry' & the development of a diverse array of eco-innovative products, services & technologies



2. Circular Economy

Leading companies are implementing 'design for disassembly' & 'design for up-cycling' in product design & development e.g. Kyocera (printer cartridges) & Globe Hope (clothing) but are finding a lack of infrastructure, knowledge, networks, skills, etc to support these initiatives; where is the 'smart (closed loop) grid' discussion to enable the Circular Economy? & how should it be developed.

A photograph of a waterfall cascading down a mossy rock face in a forest. The water is white and frothy as it falls, surrounded by green foliage and trees. The scene is captured from a low angle, looking up at the waterfall.

3. Disruption:

New players entering existing markets with disruptive eco-innovative technologies can experience a very bloody fight with aggressive responses from incumbents;

Nest highlighted the need for significant financial resources to fight legal battles, the importance of design, monitoring & quickly responding to customer feedback & creating a 'can do' mind set;

Globe Hope & ZedFactory highlighted the need to stick to core values, the importance of personal resilience, having a solutions oriented mind set (to problems) & a lack of public policy support for sustainable & eco-innovators.



4. Business Models

An emerging question is, do green business models actually exist? & perhaps that the question needs to be re-framed; growing energy, material & water challenges are leading a number of companies to adapt their business models; many eco-innovative SMEs have a product/technology push mind set & lack sound business models, so there is a need for widespread dissemination of business model thinking amongst sustainable & eco-innovators; more strategically, 'green ventures' units are emerging within a number of leading companies e.g. Patagonia & Nike stimulating & financially pump-priming new & potentially disruptive sustainable & eco-innovative start up businesses

5. Democratisation

Stronger 'grassroots innovation' is emerging through 'people power' facilitated by social networks, & information & communication technology (ICT) which is characterised by growing trends in the use of 'open innovation' including crowd sourcing ideas & funding, & the rise of makers & fixers.





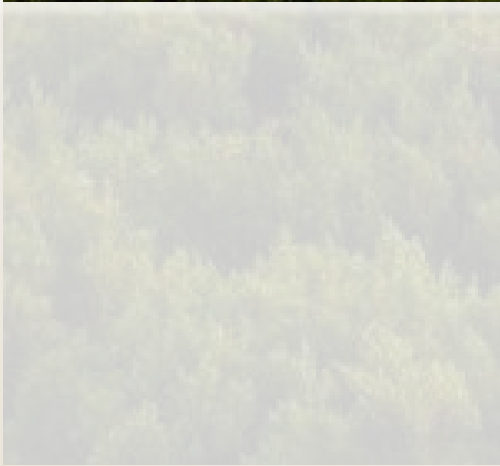
6. Collaboration

Open innovation & crowdsourcing approaches are being used to co-create new businesses with collaboration & partnership being essential; developing & building relationships & trust will be viewed as as central principles to the co-creation of businesses.

7. Freedom

Breaking away from conventional thinking patterns & practice needs organisations, groups & individuals that can operate outside 'the system'; an ability to experiment & 'break the rules' will be increasingly important; however, 'breakaway organisations' e.g. Envia from the

Netherlands that operate more openly, un-conventionally & un-reasonably will still need to have well organised structures & systems especially related to funding & project delivery.





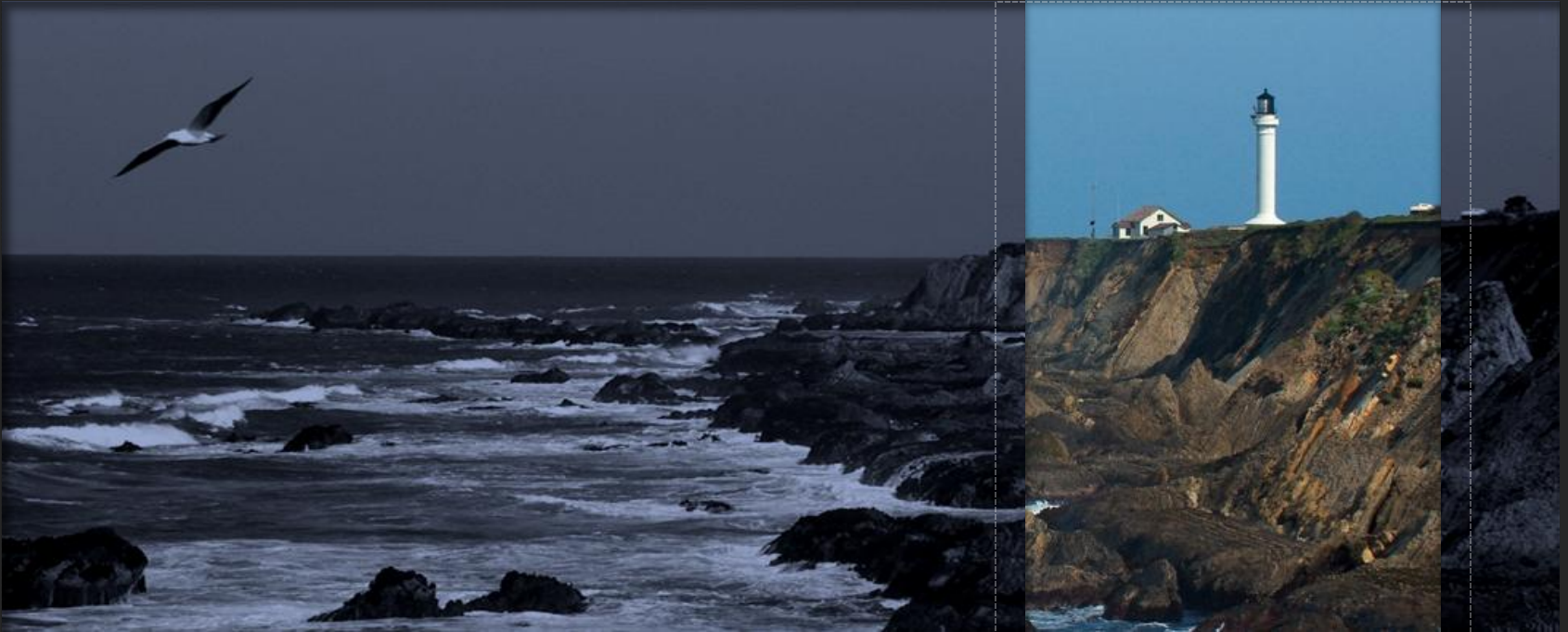
8. Demonstration

It was highlighted that people need access to real, physical demonstrations of more sustainable futures to enable them to 'see' a way forward, this was well illustrated by Bright Green Island (a 'living laboratory' for sustainable solutions in Denmark), Pines Calyx ('cradle to cradle' conference centre in UK) & Village Impact (socially designed and innovated kitchens in Malawi).



9. Systems

To drive sustainable & eco-innovation there is a need to operate in parallel at grassroots & system levels, & this requires business, civil society & government to develop better ways of working together – however, presently sustainable or eco-innovation seems to be emerging from civil society & business, with government's role being seen as increasingly unclear.



10. Capitalism 2.0

Green growth & green economy is permeating global policy thinking however 'grassroots innovation' is emerging from civil society & entrepreneurs rather than big business or NGOs; alongside this, new business models are emerging where business success & performance are not just being judged by financial success but also by positive environmental & social impact.



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SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION 2014

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