



1. EXPLORING THE SYSTEM LEVEL

1.1 COLLABORATIVE BUSINESS MODELS FOR INCLUSIVE TRANSITION

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The sustainability transition requires the contribution of business organizations and their business models for transforming unsustainable development paths (Loorbach and Wijsman, 2013; Schaltegger et al., 2016; Baumgartner and Rauter, 2017; Bidmon and Knab, 2018, Aagaard et al., 2021). In addition, the transition calls for collaborative efforts of different societal actors and the alignment of different levels of change (Geels, 2002; Fuenfschilling and Tuffer, 2016).

For the sustainability transition, organization-centric business models of companies constitute a problem since they can rarely positively influence social or environmental sustainability (Jonker and Faber, 2019). Instead, sustainable business models with a broader systemic perspective and contribution to shared value creation can promote the sustainability transition (Bocken et al., 2014; Lüdeke-Freund et al. 2022). Various collaborative business models, which are closely linked to or also known as community, cross-ecosystem, and networked models, include the elements of inclusivity, shared

value creation and a multi-actor approach. Such models are seen as important approaches to tackling sustainability challenges (e.g. Jonker and Faber, 2019; Aagaard et al., 2021; Planko and Kramer, 2021; Pedersen et al. 2012; Rey-Garcia, 2021). Collaborative business models can produce various social and environmental benefits, along with economic value, by focusing on better-aligned collaborative and collective approaches, and the involvement of different societal actors, such as companies, citizens, NGOs and governments (Jonker et al., 2020; Planko and Kramer, 2021; Derks et al., 2022). For example, creating sustainable business models and a shared understanding were identified as the most distinct themes in enhancing the transition in the Finnish forest-based sector, which includes many controversial goals by different actors (Näyhä, 2019, 2020). Understanding and promoting collaboration and collaborative business models between companies and diverse actors, however, requires more knowledge of the involved actors and their relations concerning, for example, power (Fuenfschilling and Truffer, 2016; Avelino, 2021).

In addition, in-depth information on the impacts of collaborative business models on systemic level change is often lacking. Overall, better ways of analyzing shared value creation processes and their impact on the sustainability transition should be developed. Transition studies explore large-scale societal transformation towards sustainability (Markard et al., 2012), thus offering more systemic and interdisciplinary approaches to management and organizational studies. Management studies, in turn, when combined with transition research perspectives, can illuminate the role of actors and their agency in transition processes (Köhler et al., 2019). The goal of this session is, therefore, to introduce studies that bring together elements from both of these research traditions.

This session welcomes studies that combine research on business models and the sustainability transition, explore the role of business models in the inclusive sustainability transition and focus on various collaborative business models and their features and capacities. Bringing together these perspectives with various methodological and conceptual approaches is a necessity for studying, understanding and facilitating inclusive sustainability transitions in our society.

This session asks questions such as the following:

- What kinds of collaborative approaches and business models can improve the capacities of business organizations to promote the sustainability transition?
- What kinds of actors and relationships can or should be involved in the processes of shared value creation?
- How do the collaboration, dialogue and shared value creation of firms with their stakeholders facilitate the spread of new ideas through different levels of society?
- How does inter- and transdisciplinary research that combines business models and different perspectives on transitions generate novel insights into the sustainability transition?

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