

Table feedback on initial perceptions of degrowth

- Punctuated equilibrium - anthropomorphism of natural phenomena eg. Volcanoes, earthquakes (the relationship of more natural disasters to human causes)
- Consumption vs advocating sustainable degrowth - cutting back equally doesn't make sense therefore how to advocate this (related to differences in developed and developing countries and also that we cant treat all processes and products equally or linearly)
- Growth vs development ie qualitative differences here eg. Innovation as opposed to numbers
- Crisis as a western/industrialised model - but need to allow global south to grow therefore what is the sustainable country? Eg Western countries work more on a knowledge economy (service)
- Domsday catastrophe will happen but it is challenging us to rethink redesign - related to population eg social issue
- GDP is abstract therefore who is our audience in degrowth debate? - GDP is political
- Conventional rationality - unconventional = don't buy!! Issues of lifestyle - examples in SME and micro business of changes to work approach and practices on profit sharing with wider community and other business values
- Always look at problems in aggregation but don't disaggregate eg. Deconstructing GDP
- Moderation in everything - tapping into traditional knowledge in aphorisms
- Explored the existentialism in growth and fear of changing this - explored examples of companies eg Patagonia
- What does prosper mean?
- What is sufficiency? What does this mean at a corporate level?
- Qualitative vs quantitative growth? Good and bad growth??
- Millennium development goals have growth embedded in it. I.e. institutional constraints.

Main themes;

- Relation to discourse of sustainable development. i.e. North vs south
- Semantic distinctions of growth vs development - latter related to innovation
- Reprivileging aphorisms of social and environmental justice in our cultures eg moderation is everything
- Questioning values systems? Eg what does prosper/sufficiency mean?

Further notes on degrowth

Following are some ideas that emerged from my pre-reading of some papers on degrowth. These ideas were part of my summing up and were framed as questions and curiosities for people if they wished to consider them further.

“Growth”:

What if we understand growth as a state of perpetual perturbation. What does this mean for economic systems that are based on assumptions of self regulating market forces that have mechanisms to deal with stochastic and deterministic disruptions based on closed systems thinking?

“Degrowth”:

reframes many of the ideas that have come from radical green discourses, e.g. bartering, intentional communities, reduced wages and working time, etc.

What are the radical ideas that researchers should be picking up now?

Are organisation/management studies too conservative a group to voluntarily take on degrowth?

“Metabolism”:

looking at organisational processes as metabolic has the potential to reframe approaches to resource consumption and waste production - see M. Kowalski-Fischer ‘Social Metabolism’ (Vienna).

Has the potential to provide measures and counters the criticisms of Degrowth that it doesn’t provide a framework for quantification and that this is a weakness in the theory and movement of degrowth (See van der Bergh and Kallis).

We don’t need to measure everything with quantitative precision but only ‘food’ both real and metaphorical (eg waste = food the ecological maxim).

“Alternate Discourses and Philosophical Frames”:

these would fit Latouche’s ‘decolonisation of the imaginary’ - indigenous or other logic models (not appropriation but renarrating their constructs into a new organising narrative) - see chapters by Brearley et al ‘Indigenous Perspectives and Finlay ‘Indigenous Organising’ in Hansen and Barry 2008 Sage Handbook on new Approaches of organisation and management studies that explore Australian Aboriginal, Maori and North American Indian philosophies.

“Systems Thinking”:

have we really explored what a steady state system means ecologically? E.g. all ecological systems are dynamic and self regulating - when a perturbation occurs change happens.