

Sustainability Dialogue Series

Executive Action Breakfast

Tuesday June 27th 2023

Notes made by Wiro Kuipers

Kick off by Olga Karageorgiou and Petar Vuckovic of UIF, followed by a **presentation delivered by Chiara** on behalf of the organizing committee of the Dialogue series. Chiara Poli Reghenzi summarizes the 50+ pages of meeting minutes made of the previous six sessions (kick-off + five in-depth meetings). For each of the five topics covered we tried to summarize in two categories: small actions (one or only a few decisions needed, few actors involved, can be done fast), and big picture action strategies (asking for multiple decisions to be made, multiple actors involved, needs time).

The five topics are:

- Education for climate & sustainability
- Research, partnerships & divestment
- Societal impact & behavioral change
- The Campus metabolism
- UT System transformation

The overview Chiara presented is available, as well as the summary she used to base her presentation on. [This summary is to be found on the Sustainability Dialogue website.](#)

Chiara stresses it is difficult to do justice for all contributions made in the last months, and that the presentation does not show what has been decided, but what we heard participants bring to the table in the dialogues we hosted. She thanks all participants for their contributions and states the value of addressing this topic as the whole UT community.

Next Olga and Petar invite the **Executive Board to share their reflection** following this dialogue series. EB states they are really happy with all the content and ideas brought to the table, as diverse as the input is. There are a lot of things to follow up on, and EB would like to do that also building forth on the energy gathered in dialogues like these.

Machteld Roos covers a few topics:

- Visibility: how can we make sure more people can take notice of our sustainability efforts?
- Transparency: how to also formally show more of our efforts and impact, to stress the importance we give to it (e.g. in reports and monitoring).

Tom Veldkamp shares:

- Education & research: there is already a lot about this topic in programs, but we don't know and have no overview (yet). We find it important that all study programmes within the university integrate attention to climate change and its consequences into their curriculum in a way that is relevant to the study.
- In the end we want to achieve big system change, but we need to be realistic in what we can achieve as a 4th generation university. We want to be in the midst of society, and have our students work on real life challenges. We have to interact.
- With whom do we collaborate and under what conditions is something to consider. We have to open up for society, and keep our ears and eyes open.
- Activism welcome! We are the only university with a Student Union. In the end they (students) and staff make the difference, within the boundaries we set.

Vinod Subraminiam adds to that:

- We don't live on an island nor are we in an ivory tower. We want to be involved in and play a role in society.
- Breaking ties is not a good idea, as we would put ourselves out of the game. A moratorium might be a valuable way forward, but has not been discussed yet with the strategic board. Vinod asks Guus Dix (who brought it to the table) if there is already an other university doing this. The answer: not yet, so we could be the first.
- Important to stress: work from our own values and use those to set the boundaries for how we want to collaborate. So: in (re)considering partnerships, we need to do from our own framework. EB's intent is to get to such a framework together with the strategic board. Not limited to the fossil industry, but usable for the wider energy domain.

[The full and official reflection of EB on the Sustainability Dialogue is to be found on UT's website.](#)

After a short break(fast) the next question is how to make things actionable and bring those further? **To illustrate how DesignLab could contribute to that, Julieta Matos Castano takes the stage.** She shares how DesignLab's Responsible Futuring approach could be applied for societal challenges like the one we are addressing in this dialogue series. The intent with that: to co-shape the futures we want to live in together, building forth on different values and worldviews represented. Responsible Futuring could be an approach to apply to bring this dialogue further and broaden the scope of it, involving other stakeholders as well. Vinod adds that we want to get inspired by problems, insights and ideas that live in society – and stresses we should get out of the bubble we are in.

Olga opens the floor for the last part of the dialogue, focused on systemic cooperation. She asks people to group up to decide on three actions to undertake in the next few months.

A few of the actions that were shared following this exercise:

- Visibility of things that are happening already: who / what / when / where.
- Internally, as well as externally. Be an example. For Kennispark as an example.
- Involve others, long term, like the municipalities, companies, et cetera.
- By the end of the year: have visible what is already in education with regard to climate change / sustainability, and follow up.
- Reconsideration of what we (as activists) can do, we would like to see follow-up on this dialogue first (of which EB states that they will undertake action).
- Challenge students to showcase what they want to, as we say that we want to use Campus as a living lab.
- Get to a shared definition of 'sustainability', and a white paper to build upon together.

Machteld Roos wraps up this meeting, as well as the dialogue series thus far.

She stresses the value of making visible what's being done with this important topic, and invites each of us to keep contributing. Specifically she invites Green Hub to give timed information, and being proactive on this matter – to help us stay on track. Also she invites each participant to have their voices heard outside Campus, as we want to stick to our values of openness, inclusiveness and entrepreneurship.

The ideas brought to the table will be discussed in the Strategic Board and EB will get back to that. Machteld is looking forward to follow up on this series, so we can speed up this journey. She is thankful for the so many perspectives and each ones contributions, and specifically thanks University Innovation Fellows, Green Hub and DesignLab for organizing all this.

Petar Vuckovic the closes the meeting, stating this: *"Let's make change together!"*