

Creating and testing visions of the future: the use of back-casting scenarios in promoting sustainable change in organizations



Data of Your Paper



Topic

- Resilience
- Lifestyle
- Building
- Resources
- Tourism
- Energy

Title of the Paper

Creating and testing visions of the future: the use of back-casting scenarios in promoting sustainable change in organizations

Form of Presentation

- Poster
- Presentation

Short Description (maximum 2500 characters)

In future and sustainability studies, back-casting scenarios are defined as a methodology that allows us to envision and analyze different types of sustainable futures and develop agendas, strategies and pathways to reach them (Vergragt & Quist, 2011). They constitute a useful qualitative tool in going toward alternative futures in issues of climate change (Giddens, 2009). In the LOCAW project, we are using back-casting scenarios as a tool for defining sustainable change in the complex environments of large-scale organizations, both public and private. Large scale organizations are responsible for a high percentage of carbon emissions across the European Union and implementing the adequate policies to reduce them requires changes in the production process and everyday practices in the workplace. These are sometimes difficult to bring about because such change involves coordinating multiple objectives, multi-causal organizational practices and relevant social actors.

LOCAW uses back-casting scenarios to define low-carbon future organizational goals and the pathways to reach them. The back-casting scenarios will then be used to construct agent-based models that will test the functioning of different scenarios in a simulated environment thus allowing us to formulate appropriate policies for European Union and national governments to facilitate transition to a low-carbon Europe.

The present paper will present the preliminary results obtained from applying the methodology of back-casting scenarios in both private and public organizations, with a special focus on universities. It will focus on the uses of this methodology in large-scale organizations. Results will then be discussed with a view to enhancing policy-making at all political levels.