

Analysing corporate sustainability at utility companies: a case study from Slovenia

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Title of the Paper

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Presentation

Short Description (maximum 2500 characters)

Corporations and their leaders across the world are increasingly accepting their role in making societies more sustainable. This has fostered the development of voluntary tools and initiatives (mainly based on 'hard' techno-centric solutions) to help them address sustainability. However, discussions on 'soft' issues, have been limited. This paper focuses on Corporate Sustainability (CS), where drivers can catalyse change from the unsustainable status quo (SQ) towards producing more sustainable products and services. Identifying barriers to change can help to apply appropriate strategies to overcome them, thus helping to better incorporate and institutionalise CS. This would bring the system to a More Sustainability Oriented State (MSOS). In time the MSOS becomes the status quo novo (SQN), and the process starts again. Better-planned internal organisational change, where the entire organisational structure is addressed, can help the company transition from the unsustainable status quo towards a MSOS.

The paper analyses the case of Nigrad (a Slovenian utility company). Fifteen employees from different levels were interviewed. It was detected that most of the drivers were external (such as regulation and legislation) and some internal (such as leadership). The analysis also showed that there is a mismatch between the barriers to change recognised and the strategies applied to overcome them. To better embed sustainability into Nigrad the appropriate strategies need to be applied. Additionally, the company needs to engage with the tools and techniques for CS that would better address its core competencies (such as cleaner production and life cycle assessment).