

PRME Webinar on Climate Change and Business School Curricula in the Era of Sustainable Leadership, 26 May 2009

Hosted by the Copenhagen Business School, Denmark

Introduction

In the context of the World Business Summit on Climate Change (24-26 May), the Copenhagen Business School hosted a virtual meeting (webinar) with PRME interested signatories and World Business Summit participants in order to exchange views about the state-of-the-art in the introduction of climate change concerns in the curricula of business schools in the era of sustainable leadership. Furthermore, the event was a first step towards discussing the agenda, nature and expected outcomes of the PRME/CBS International Conference on Sustainable leadership in an Era of Climate Change (23-24 November 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark).

Manuel Escudero, Head of the PRME Secretariat, started the webinar by outlining the agenda and the secretariat's great interest in the topic underlining the importance of a curriculum change to also accommodate climate change. Furthermore, he introduced the hosts, Professor Mette Morsing (webinar chair), Director CBS Center for Corporate Social Responsibility (cbsCSR) and Research Director Jonas Eder-Hansen, cbsCSR and presenter, Professor Peter Mollgaard, Director of Climate Strategies for Business at CBS (CBS-CSB) and Head of Department of Economics, Copenhagen Business School.

Peter Mollgaard gave a presentation on "Proactive climate strategies and responsible management education" focusing on climate strategies and emerging proactive strategies for an increasing number of business leaders and how this feeds into management education including lessons learned from setting up the CBS Climate Strategies for Business initiative (CBS-CSB).

Marc Lemenestrel, University Pompeu Fabra in Barcelona, mentioned how they have set up a one week MBA course on sustainability issues and asked how business schools can help each other in setting up new courses.

Mollgaard proposed to start with curricula and faculty exchange and also mentioned the current ideas at CBS to set up a Wiki system for faculty, companies and students which might be possible to extend to the wider PRME network.

Daniela Beck, University of St. Gallen, asked if an adaptation to climate change in business school curricula could draw on change management literature in order for researchers to achieve a meta understanding on how to teach about uncertainty in general. This goes for innovation, design, etc.

Andreas Rasche, Warwick Business School, further raised the question of how CBS plans to integrate engineering and the more natural science aspects of climate change into the curricula.

Mollgaard responded that business schools in general need to increase its focus on integrating the more technical sides of climate change into business thinking and noted the cultural tension between the disciplines sustained by the fact that they often do not speak the same language. As Mollgaard noted this can be compensated for by inviting guest speakers from different environments and engaging in cross-disciplinary partnerships and research projects such as the collaboration between CBS and the Technical University of Denmark.

Eder-Hansen added that the PRME network could be an obvious starting point for encouraging cross-disciplinary partnerships and the PRME Secretariat might be interested in focusing on the further attraction of technical universities into PRME.

Tony Buono, Bentley College, shared the experiences from Bentley of how students enrolled in the Liberal Studies Major can select from a vast range of courses that also includes courses from the natural science faculty.

James Almeida, Silberman College of Business, mentioned how the mindset within business schools needs to be changed to make the established disciplines more open towards sustainability issues and called for a new model for business education that takes this more into consideration.

Donald Schepers, Baruch College, noted that the challenges of integrating climate change issues into business school core curriculum called for specific focus on undergraduate and graduate level.

Morsing responded that this challenge is further complicated by the fact that the programme structure differs a lot across continents (with a special regard to the US-Europe differences).

Buono said that Bentley has introduced a business ethics workshop which deals with the incorporation of business ethics and related issues into the various courses in the classroom. Part of the purpose of the workshop is to bring together faculty from different disciplines to work together to solve issues around business ethics and they have started to integrate also issues of sustainability.

Escudero rounded off the discussion by inviting all participants to join the preparatory working group that will work on formulating the 23-24 Nov conference programme. Furthermore, it was decided to arrange another webinar once the conference programme draft has been finalized to get final input from the network.



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***Proactive climate strategies and
responsible management education
Prof. Peter Møllgaard, CBS-CSB
CSB: Climate Strategies for Business***





Climate strategies

1. Reactive

- Reluctant
- Based on competitiveness "angst"

2. Responsible

- Acceptance
- Compliance

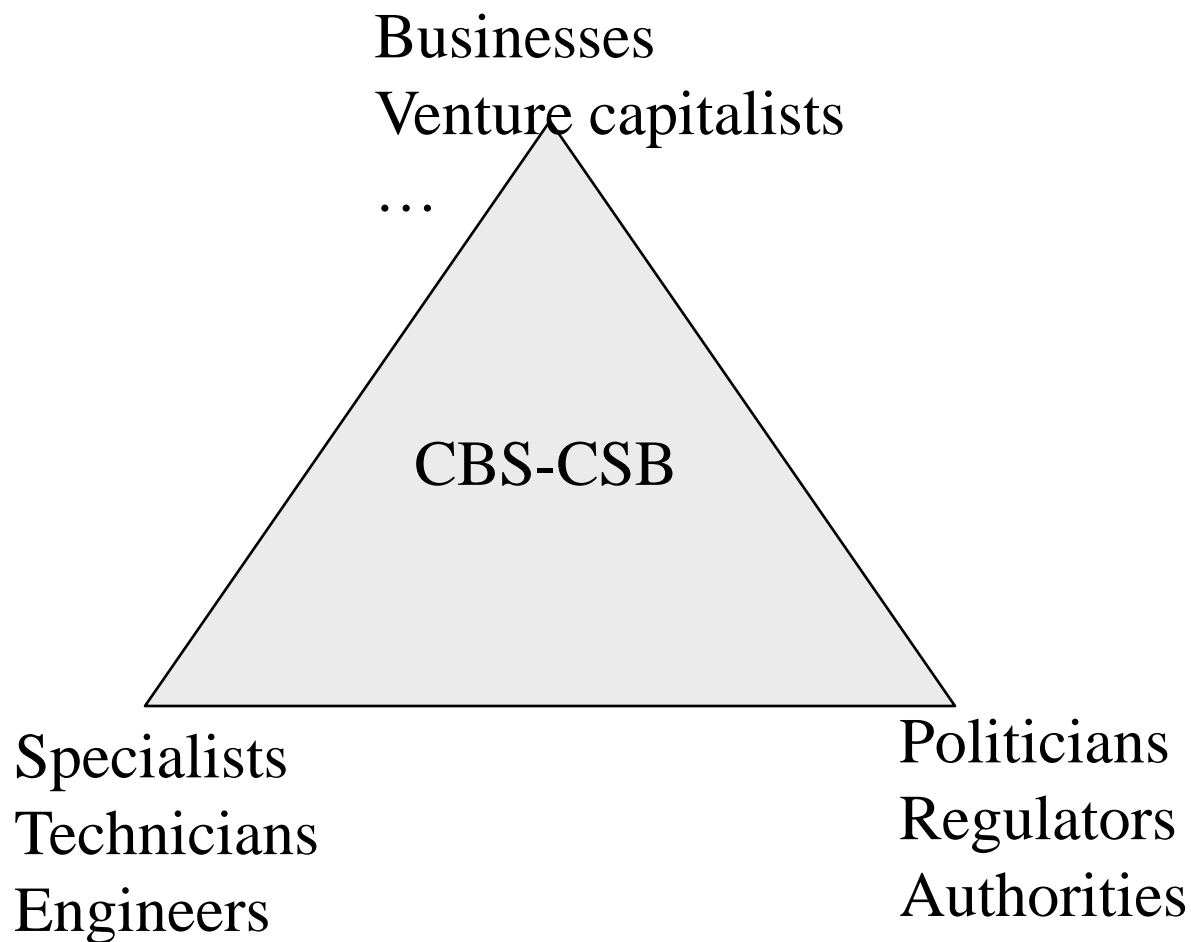
3. Pro-active

- Embracing
- Business opportunities

CBS – CSB

- A cross disciplinary initiative spanning:
 - Efforts to optimize carbon efficiency using existing technologies
 - New low-carbon solutions (innovation)
 - Public policy and regulation
 - Leadership in partnership (filling the void between scientists/engineers, business people and politicians)

Filling the void



Climate Strategies for Business

- CBS-CSB Mission
 - a platform for research and teaching on climate, energy and environment
 - in partnership with the business community
 - implementation of the climate part (sustainability) of the Principles for Responsible Management Education (UN PRME) through adaptation of curricula, research, teaching methods...

Climate Strategies for Business

- CBS-CSB Vision
 - Help developing climate strategies for business
 - Thus contributing to solving climate challenges
 - Adapted to the various circumstances of companies
 - Educate business leaders and managers to handle climate challenges

Across disciplines

- Finance
- Accounting
- Operations
- Marketing and strategy
- Organizational behavior
- Economics

Teaching initiatives

- CSR courses
- Minor in sustainable business
 - At least three out of six courses related to sustainability



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CBS Minor in sustainable business: 3/6 courses:

- **Corporate social responsibility in global supply chains**
- **Social entrepreneurship: creating social change using the power of entrepreneurship**
- **Corporate social responsibility – ethical, political and strategic perspectives**
- **Globalization, business and politics - regimes of sustainability governance**
- **Organizing markets for business development and innovation**
- **Business strategies for sustainable innovation**



Questions

- Do you have other examples of climate-related courses?
- Can we - and should we - integrate climate change into existing non-sustainability courses?
 - If so, how?
- CSR and climate strategies: should they be disjoined or united?
- How to ensure enriching cross-disciplinarity?