

Publication

Sustainability's promise of salvation? A Kuhnian reconstruction of sustainability from resource management to contingency management

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Author(s) Christen, Marius; Seele, Peter; Zapf, Lucas

Author(s) at UniBasel [Christen, Marius](#) ;

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We analyse conceptions of sustainability from a Kuhnian perspective Assuming that the formation of sustainability can be seen as a conceptual paradigm shift we analyse conceptions of sustainability from a Kuhnian perspective. As Kuhn describes it, there are competing 'paradigm candidates' in the origin of paradigm formation. On this basis, we identify three 'candidates' of sustainability-world views that offer solutions to different problems: Resource crisis, environmental crisis , and system crisis . We then propose a fourth paradigm candidate responding to the more recent multi-crisis that also affects the sense-making of the individual. We call this new candidate contingency management referring to the 'salvation' associated to the concept of sustainability. Finally, we present sustainability in a process model and discuss theoretical and practical implications of the conceptualized sustainability paradigm candidates.

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