

A Complexity Approach To Sustainability

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The sustainability of a human society is not just about its relationship with the environment: it 's a problem concerning the nature of the society and the way it is organised. This is the important message of a book by Angela Espinosa and Jon Walker: A Complexity Approach to Sustainability – Theory and Practice. Both authors were pupils and colleagues of the late Stafford Beer who saw that hierarchical forms of government were incapable of dealing with the complexity of the problems ...

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~~Spiral: A complexity and networks approach to sustainability~~

KISS, an acronym for keep it simple, stupid, is a design principle noted by the U.S. Navy in 1960. The KISS principle states that most systems work best if they are kept simple rather than made complicated; therefore, simplicity should be a key goal in design, and unnecessary complexity should be avoided. The phrase has been associated with aircraft engineer Kelly Johnson.

Business sustainability and sustainable development are of great importance in modern-day socio-economic study. Despite this, the impact of recent contributions from systems and complexity sciences in addressing these issues has not yet filtered down into effective practice. This book argues that there is a need for urgency in the application of analytical tools which embody the principles of complexity management in sustainability research, in particular in the context of the global climate change. The approach presented is based on the concept of clusters of whole systems coming together through collaboration, in order to create larger wholes capable of dealing with the issues facing our socio-economic environmental systems. In this updated second edition, the authors further clarify the viability and sustainability (V&S) approach, and the criteria and framework needed for sustainable governance. It includes a more detailed perspective on the implications of the V&S approach to businesses and networks towards changes in structure, strategy and processes, inspired by specific case studies. Key additions include a criteria for designing more viable and sustainable self-governed organizations, the methodologies and tools to design and implement self-transformations towards sustainability, and how these tools support sustainability management individually and globally, for businesses and society.

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Complexity theory illuminates the many interactions between natural and social systems, providing a better understanding of the general principles that can help solve some of today's most pressing environmental issues. Complexity theory was developed from key ideas in economics, physics, biology, and the social sciences and contributes to important new concepts for approaching issues of environmental sustainability such as resilience, scaling, and networks. Complexity Theory for a Sustainable Future is a hands-on treatment of this exciting new body of work and its applications, bridging the gap between theoretical and applied perspectives in the management of complex adaptive systems. Focusing primarily on natural resource management and community-based conservation, the book features contributions by leading scholars in the field, many of whom are among the leaders of the Resilience Alliance. Theoreticians will find a valuable synthesis of new ideas on resilience, sustainability, asymmetries, information processing, scaling, and networks. Managers and policymakers will benefit from the application of these ideas to practical approaches and empirical studies linked to social-ecological systems. Chapters present new twists on such existing approaches as scenario planning, scaling analyses, and adaptive management, and the book concludes with recommendations on how to manage natural resources, how to involve stakeholders in the dynamics of a system, and how to explain the difficult topic of scale. A vital reference for an emerging discipline, this volume provides a clearer understanding of the conditions required for systems self-organization, since the capacity of any system to self-organize is crucial for its sustainability over time.

This book aims to contribute to the overall, integrated understanding of the processes of language contact and their evolution, be they the result of political or economic (dis)integrations or migrations or for technological reasons. Via an interdisciplinary, holistic approach, it also aims to support the theoretical grounding of a unified, common sociolinguistic paradigm, based on an ecological and complexity perspective. This approach built on the fact that linguistic structures do not live in isolation from their social functions and must be situated in relation to the sub-and supra-systems that determine their existence if we are to understand their fortunes. It is a useful contribution to understanding and promoting the processes of linguistic revitalization in the world, combining at the same time the maintenance and development of diversity while ensuring the intercommunication of human species.

Is sustainable development a workable solution for today's environmental problems? Is it scientifically defensible? Best known for applying ecological theory to the engineering problems of everyday life, the late scholar James J. Kay was a leader in the study of social and ecological complexity and the thermodynamics of ecosystems. Drawing from his immensely important work, as well as the research of his students and colleagues, *The Ecosystem Approach* is a guide to the aspects of complex systems theories relevant to social-ecological management. Advancing a methodology that is rooted in good theory and practice, this book features case studies conducted in the Arctic and Africa, in Canada and Kathmandu, and in the Peruvian Amazon, Chesapeake Bay, and Chennai, India. Applying a systems approach to concrete environmental issues, this volume is geared toward scientists, engineers, and sustainable development scholars and practitioners who are attuned to the ideas of the Resilience Alliance—an international group of scientists who take a more holistic view of ecology and environmental problem-solving. Chapters cover the origins and rebirth of the ecosystem approach in ecology; the bridging of science and values; the challenge of governance in complex systems; systemic and participatory approaches to management; and the place for cultural diversity in the quest for global sustainability.

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Focusing on the essential uncertainty of participating in evolving events as they happen, this book considers the creative possibilities of such participation from a complexity perspective.

Managing Complexity: Earth Systems and Strategies for the Future introduces and explores systems and complexity in relation to near-synchronous world and environmental problems. These relate to but are not limited to water, biological diversity, worldwide climate change, trade and conflict, global migration and the quest for sustainable development. Complemented by discussion of the new era of the Anthropocene, its many manifestations, and Earth system properties such as planetary boundaries and tipping points this book offers practical suggestions for how a sustainable future for humanity can be realised. Specifically discussed in *Managing Complexity: Earth Systems and Strategies for the Future* are innovation, education and capacity building, application of the natural and social sciences and new paths towards sustainability based on industrial development and engineering, as well as in diplomacy and foreign aid. The book's conclusions discuss the ambitious yet vital reforms the authors propose as routes to a sustainable existence. This book will be of great interest to students and scholars of sustainability, sustainable development and complexity theory.

Complexity theories gained prominence in the 1990s with a focus on self-organising and complex adaptive systems. Since then, complexity theory has become one of the fastest growing topics in both the natural and social sciences, and touted as a revolutionary way of understanding the behaviour of complex systems. This book uses complexity theory to surface and challenge the deeply held cultural assumptions that shape how we think about reality and knowledge. In doing so it shows how our traditional approaches to generating and applying knowledge may be paradoxically exacerbating some of the 'wicked' environmental problems we are currently facing. The author proposes an innovative and compelling argument for rejecting old constructs of knowledge transfer, adaptive management and adaptive capacity. The book also presents a distinctively coherent and comprehensive synthesis of cognition, learning, knowledge and organizing from a complexity perspective. It concludes with a reconceptualization of the problem of knowledge transfer from a complexity perspective, proposing the concept of creative capacity as an alternative to adaptive capacity as a measure of resilience in socio-ecological systems. Although written from an environmental management perspective, it is relevant to the broader natural sciences and to a range of other disciplines, including knowledge management, organizational learning, organizational management, and the philosophy of science.

A collection of scholarly essays, *Complexity Theory and the Philosophy of Education* provides an accessible theoretical introduction to the topic of complexity theory while considering its broader implications for educational change. Explains the contributions of complexity theory to philosophy of education, curriculum, and educational research Brings together new research by an international team of contributors Debates issues ranging from the culture of curriculum, to the implications of work of key philosophers such as Foucault and John Dewey for educational change Demonstrates how social scientists and social and education policy makers are drawing on complexity theory to answer questions such as: why is it that education decision-makers are so resistant to change; how does change in education happen; and what does it take to make these changes sustainable? Considers changes in use of complexity theory; developed principally in the fields of physics, biology, chemistry, and economics, and now being applied more broadly to the social sciences and to the study of education

This book, from noted materials selection authority Mike Ashby, provides a structure and

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framework for analyzing sustainable development and the role of materials in it. The aim is to introduce ways of exploring sustainable development to readers in a way that avoids simplistic interpretations and approaches complexity in a systematic way. There is no completely "right" answer to questions of sustainable development – instead, there is a thoughtful, well-researched response that recognizes concerns of stakeholders, the conflicting priorities and the economic, legal and social aspects of a technology as well as its environmental legacy. The intent is not to offer solutions to sustainability challenges but rather to improve the quality of discussion and enable informed, balanced debate. Winner of a 2016 Most Promising New Textbook Award from the Textbook and Academic Authors Association Describes sustainable development in increasingly detailed progression, from a broad overview to specific tools and methods Six chapter length case studies on such topics as biopolymers, electric cars, bamboo, and lighting vividly illustrate the sustainable development process from a materials perspective Business and economic aspects are covered in chapters on corporate sustainability and the "circular materials economy" Support for course use includes online solutions manual and image bank

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