

# Chapter 1

## Collective Green Creativity and Eco-Innovation as Key Drivers of Sustainable Business Solutions in Organizations

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### ABSTRACT

*The main objective of this chapter was to explore if collective green creativity and eco-innovation can create novel and sustainable business and management practices. A literature review approach was conducted on the link between collective creativity, innovation, and sustainable business practices. It was found that collective green creativity and eco-innovation can create sustainable business practices. The process starts with the creative individual which needs creative thinking skills, creative motivation, green mindfulness and green self-efficacy. A creative collective is then created using their creative intelligence and creative exchange to create a shared green vision. The creative collective requires green transformational leadership with access to green dynamic capabilities and resources to be effective in the business environment. This creative collective follows the six-step creative problem-solving process which enables the collective to create eco-innovation using an additional four steps. The end result is novel and sustainable business practices and solutions.*

### INTRODUCTION

King (2012) stated that the world has changed and that the planet is in crisis. Holthaus (2015, p.1) wrote that “we have reached the point of no return: climate change nightmares are already here”. The climate has visibly changed and more species are dying out at disastrous rates. Dell’Amore (2014) reports that mankind is busy causing the rapid loss of species estimated by experts to be between 1,000 and 10,000

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times higher than the natural extinction rate. For example, *because scientists do not know how many different species there are on the planet yet*, if there are around 2 million different species on the planet, then between 200 and 2,000 extinctions occur every year. If there are 100 million different species, then between 10,000 and 100,000 species are becoming extinct each year.

Mankind are faced with serious challenges due to human overexploitation of resources and unsustainable living. If this habit and mind-set are not changed very quickly by everyone on the planet, the unsustainable living and destruction of the incredible biodiversity on this planet, which is essential for mankind's survival, can lead to the so-called sixth extinction as identified by Kolberg (2014).

Traditional business and management practices have been blamed for the crises of the planet specifically. Issues like ecological overshoot, population growth, water and food shortages, financial crises, greed and corruption, as well as greater expectations of shareholders are however causing the rethink and transformation of business practices and other unsustainable human activity. An ever-increasing number of businesses are realizing that their long-term profitability is now dependent on social justice and protecting the environment (Global Sustainability Standards Board (GSSB), 2015). These expectations will intensify as businesses, financiers, customers and other stakeholders become more aware of the critical need for a sustainable economy (GSSB, 2015). This book and chapter, aims to play a role in creating more awareness to enable people and business to change and transform to protect the planet and life on it, because mankind have not been and still are not sustainable.

The main objective of this chapter was to explore whether collective creativity and eco-innovation in organizations can create novel and sustainable business and management practices. The secondary objectives were to

1. Explain the concept of collective creativity, green creativity and eco-innovation in business,
2. Identify the barriers to collaborative creativity and eco-innovation,
3. Discuss the determinants for successful organizational, collective creativity and eco-innovation with a view to enhance collaboration, and
4. Show how collaborative green creativity and eco-innovation can be used to solve 'wicked problems' and to create sustainable business practices.

The chapter starts off by providing the background to the chapter. This will be followed by a discussion on collaborative creativity and eco-innovation in organizations and how it can be used to create sustainable solutions, practices and strategies in an effort to minimize damage caused to the planet. Recommendations will also be made to enhance collaborative creativity and eco-innovation at organizational level in contemporary and future organizations.

## **BACKGROUND**

The planet experienced five extinction events. The next extinction, the Holocene extinction, also called the sixth extinction, started at the end of the last Ice Age. Vince (2012) predicts that in the next 300 years, a total of 75% mammal species will disappear due to a human-caused extinction. Mankind's attributes and intelligence are responsible for the biological success and advancement as a specie, however mankind's successes also altered the climate and reduced animal species. Kolbert (2014) chronicles

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