

System Change, not Climate Change: Towards a progressive climate change research agenda in organization and management studies

An online workshop, to take place 9-15 December 2022, organized and moderated by:

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Organization and management scholars have found it difficult to orient their research towards the growing climate crisis. As recent as 2022, Nyberg and Wright pointed out that just 0.2% of research articles published in leading management journals between 2007 and 2018 directly addressed climate change. This is now rapidly changing. Finally, an increasing number of articles and books are now appearing in mainstream organization and management studies (OMS) publishing outlets.

Much of this research naturally focuses on changes in firm-level and individual-level behaviour. Climate change, however, cannot plausibly be overcome by the action of individual organizations and individual actors alone. These threats require action by governments and supra-national inter-government agencies, as well as other collective actors such as social movements. Our scholarship on organizations and the natural environment should address the challenges and opportunities at that system level too.

To advance this system-level research agenda, a Standing Working Group on 'System Change, not Climate Change' was established at the European Group of Organization Studies (EGOS) and has conducted Subthemes and PDWs in 2021 and 2022 and will be organizing them again in 2023.

In order to provide more impetus to this effort, and to stimulate submissions to the 2023 and 2024 programs, we are now organizing a mid-year online workshop that will take place between 9 and 15 December 2022. Our hope is that this will stimulate more interest in the upcoming 2023 EGOS program.

Prospective participants are asked to submit an extended **abstract of between 1000 and 3000 words** to the workshop organizers by **15 November 2022**. Papers / presentations can be critical reviews, conceptual in nature or empirically grounded. Participants will be informed about the acceptance of their submissions by 22 November 2022.

The online workshop, which will be dialogic and developmental in nature, will kick off with a keynote address by a leading climate researcher on 9 December. Participants will then be allocated to groups of 3-4 scholars, and each group will have an experienced climate change scholar as mentor. Scholars will discuss each other's research within the mentoring groups for about 5-6 days of online interactions. The workshop will close on 15 December 2022 when groups will be sharing their main learning points, leading to an outline of a progressive, future-facing agenda of the system-level issues in OMS climate change research.

We particularly invite contributions that respond to the following challenges in system-level climate change (SLCC) research:

- What system-level assumptions are being made in the existing climate change literature in OMS?
- What has OMS SLCC scholarship to offer to other social and natural scientists working on system-level issues in climate change? What issues are unique to OMS that other disciplines struggle to address?
- What theories can be mobilized in our SLCC scholarship?
- How can marginalized and dissenting voices be heard in our SLCC scholarship, and how can other ontologies be seen and recognized?

- Can climate change be addressed within the politico-economic and cultural frameworks of growth-based capitalism, or do we need to pivot to degrowth, post-growth or other politico-economic paths?
- What is the role of state and governmental institutions in addressing climate change?
- What is the role of civil society, including NGOs, community groups and social movements driving system-level change?
- What are the roles of firms, managers, workers in driving and restraining system-level change?
- How can we critically evaluate contemporary corporate and market-based mechanisms to addressing climate change?
- How do we understand the differences and interdependencies between Global North and Global South climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts?
- How does a progressive, future-proof SLCC research agenda look like in OMS?

Steffen Böhm is Professor in Organisation & Sustainability at University of Exeter Business School, United Kingdom. He was previously Professor in Management and Sustainability at the University of Essex. He's also held visiting positions at Uppsala University, Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, Uppsala, Sweden, as well as at the Federal University of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, and St Andrews University, Scotland. His research focuses on the political economy & ecology of the sustainability transition. He has published six books: *Repositioning Organization Theory* (Palgrave), *Against Automobility* (Wiley-Blackwell), *Upsetting the Offset: The Political Economy of Carbon Markets* (Mayfly), *The Atmosphere Business* (Mayfly), *Ecocultures: Blueprints for Sustainable Communities* (Routledge), and *Negotiating Climate Change in Crisis* (Open Book Publishers). The book *Climate Activism* (Cambridge) is forthcoming in October 2022. More details at steffenboehm.net

Zlatko Bodrožić is an Associate Professor in Technology, Organization and Sustainability, and co-leader of the LESS research group on system-level sustainability at the University of Leeds. He is interested in the evolution of technologies, management models, organizational paradigms and the political-economic system (see for example *Administrative Science Quarterly*, March 2018; *Organization Science*, 2022). His current research focuses on the evolution of these spheres in the era of digital transformation and climate change. He has successfully convened several EGOS conference sub-themes on "Activity Theory and Organizations" (with Yrjö Engeström and Anu Kajamaa) and "Historical-Evolutionary Organization Studies: Understanding the Past to Shape the Future" (with Paul Adler and Thomas G Cummings).

Daniel Nyberg is a Professor of Management at Newcastle University, Australia, an Honorary Professor at the University of Sydney, and a visiting Professor at Copenhagen Business School. His research explores responses to climate change in projects investigating the transition to a low carbon economy, the politics of adaptation, and how corporate political activities influence public policy. His research appears in journals, such as, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Management Studies* and *Organization Studies*. He recently published the book 'Organising Responses to Climate Change: The Politics of Mitigation, Adaptation and Suffering' together with Chris Wright and Vanessa Bowden.

Paul Adler is currently Harold Quinton Chair of Business Policy, and Professor of Management and Organization at the University of Southern California. He has published widely in academic journals, edited several books, and most recently published *The 99 Percent Economy: How Democratic Socialism can overcome the Crises of Capitalism* (2019). He is former President of the Academy of Management and has had a long involvement as sub-plenary and sub-theme coordinator at EGOS.