

September 2019



The Salt Business Network provides a unique opportunity to learn about, support and engage in building sustainable solutions for the world's poorest communities.

Invest in What Rust and Moth Cannot Destroy

No matter how big or small, your business will present opportunities which affect how people live their day-to-day lives. Your staff and clients are beneficiaries of your decision making. The products you provide can change our society for the better or worse. Through this, there is incredible potential to release God's kingdom into the world. Whatever your business, you can set an example for others to follow. This is incredibly exciting, but also quite sobering.

Matthew 6:19 "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. 20 But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. 21 For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.

When we use business with a heart to do the will of the Father, using the gifts and skills he's given us, we store up our treasures in heaven. If we

make an idol of the earthly wealth or the reputation that comes with it, we miss the purpose and gain no reward. Only treasures that will fade away.

Where the economy needs to go next, why, and an example of how to get there

BY: John Beardmore & Iana Nesterova

Let's start by taking a 'big picture' view in terms of ecological footprint. Ecological footprint is an indicator that allows us to compare humankind's resource use to the resource the planet makes available. It is calculated in terms of the amount of area required to deliver the things we consume and dispose of (solids, liquids and gases), without the use of non-renewable resources. Because the area of available land and sea habitats are known, this indicator enables comparison between the footprint area required by activities, individuals or populations, and that available locally or globally. The area available globally is describes as the

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ABOUT: The Christian Aid Salt Business Network

Our vision is to create a movement of business leaders working together as agents of change, leading best practice within their own businesses and in the wider, global community.

Founded on strong theological principles, the Salt Business Network aims to inspire businesses and business leaders to be the 'salt of the earth and the light of the world' (Matthew 5:13-16) in advancing God's work here on earth.

It is also grounded in learning and action. Through our workshops, online community and at events, leaders have the opportunity to explore the impact businesses large and small have on our world and re-frame what it means to be in business.

To find out more about the network and how you can be involved contact: salt@christian-aid.org

'carrying capacity' of the planet.

Humanity has been exceeding the carrying capacity of the earth for over 40 years. We are currently exceeding the carrying capacity by about 60%, by for example harvesting more trees than are grown, overfishing, and emitting more climate changing gases than the planet can process. Carbon dioxide from burning fossil fuels has been the dominant component of humanity's Ecological Footprint for more than half a century, and its share continues to grow.

The manifestations of this "overshoot" include habitat and species loss, increasing green house gas concentrations in the air, and ocean acidification. This situation is not sustainable, and must be addressed soon to avoid catastrophe. The 2018 IPCC report suggests that we now have just eleven years left to limit the effects of climate change to 1.5 degrees, beyond which natural feedback mechanisms that we can't control, will make it very difficult to prevent very much more dangerous rises in temperature.

These issues may seem abstract and hard to relate to, but 'trade wars' and armed conflict over the last few years are perhaps consistent with the desire by governments to monopolise resources like fossil fuels, water, food and metals; and with an ever greater number of consumers competing over an ever smaller pool of available resources, with little notion of how to share what we need equitably, and only a limited desire to do so. On the face of it there may be no way forward. Neoclassical economics and 'game theory' seem to suggest that economic 'growth' will occur until it lacks the resources to continue.

Neoclassical economics ignores the embeddedness of economies within society and the biosphere, and humanity's dependency on the resources available, yet biology suggests that when populations run out of resources, their failures can be catastrophic. This may be all the more true in a species that lives as a socially and technologically complex network, of mutually dependent but competing societies. This is why business-as-usual cannot continue; a new economics is needed.

Iana- Where the economy needs to go next: The situation of severe unsustainability is a relatively recent phenomenon. For approximately 99% of human existence, people lived as

hunter-gathers and evolved to co-exist with nature successfully. With the development of agriculture, and subsequently industry, economies became orientated towards surplus production and growth. Eventually, and especially in the past 300 years, such fossil fuel powered expansion, led to severe ecological degradation. It becomes evident that to avoid collapse, the ends and means of our economies should be questioned.

For an ecologically sustainable and socially desirable economy to become possible, a radical shift in our societies, economies, values and worldviews must take place. This shift concerns systems such as markets, human-centric values, and of course agents such as businesses. It is essential to understand how businesses as agents, can facilitate a transition towards a degrowth economy, i.e. one operating sustainably within planetary limits (not exceeding the carrying capacity), while allowing non-human life to flourish, and at the same time increasing well-being. This is so because production by businesses is where the transformation of nature from high quality raw resources, to eventually, low quality wastes starts. Businesses, and individuals such as owner-managers, have the power to change our economies for the better, or to continue on the current path to severe ecological degradation and social injustice. A very topical theme in the fields of ecological economics and degrowth, a vision based on the science of ecological economics, is the organisation of production for a degrowth economy. This concerns businesses, what their operations should entail and why, how they should be organised, and what constraints they may face.

I suggest it is essential for a degrowth business to include three considerations into everything it does. These three considerations derive directly from our understanding of degrowth, and include the environment (particularly, matter and energy throughput reduction), wellbeing (of people, non-humans and nature), and a radical shift in values. It is essential to note that each of these considerations implies further requirements. For example, operating in a pro-environmental manner goes beyond seeking efficiency, but also requires understanding the concept of "enough". The concept of wellbeing goes beyond human wellbeing, which reminds us that our activities affect non-human life too. A shift in values is

■ THE CHRISTIAN AID BUSINESS NETWORK

2019 Conference

Friday 11 October 9am-4:30pm

Salt Conference 2019

Our Second Salt Conference is nearly upon us and as it arrives, together with all the organisational challenges of bringing together what we hope will be over 100 Christian business leaders, I'm filled with a strong sense of humility. Above anything else I feel privileged to be in the room on the 11th October, privileged to be part of every attendee's journey and part of the transformation I pray will follow. This year's conference will provide an opportunity to explore Stewardship in all its forms

Rick Warren, American evangelical Christian pastor and author said 'Leadership is neither showmanship nor dictatorship. Leadership is a stewardship and a partnership.'

Are we really stewarding all that is within our control? Does stewarding our planet involve some low-level recycling for employees or do we challenge ourselves to run environmentally restorative businesses?

To what extent are we good stewards of the wealth in our companies – does our stewardship extend to just wages for employees, paying just taxes, just prices for customers & suppliers and just returns for owners? These are challenging questions and ones we will spend the day exploring. Sharing the journeys that other business leaders have taken to live out their faith in business and in so doing transform our world.

Join with us as we work together to achieve this goal. Through your cooperation, we can unite as agents of change, modelling best practice and reflecting God's love within the global community.

Join us: Salt Conference 2019 – 11th October.

To book your tickets visit:
www.christianaid.org.uk/events/salt-conference-2019

required for environmental and wellbeing considerations to become deeply embedded, and sustained into the future.

Such a framework should be seen in a holistic way; all three considerations are necessary, though not easy to implement. This is because businesses operate within larger, powerful systems which impose constraints, and facilitate the common (yet misleading) belief, that businesses must exist to make a profit and grow, and that environmental and social considerations are subservient to the profit-maximisation imperative. However, it is not impossible to deviate from business-as-usual and become a degrowth business. Some businesses provide great examples of successfully incorporating all three considerations into their operations. In my view, this depends greatly on the worldviews of owner-managers, since when their worldviews allow them to see intrinsic value in nature and others (humans and non-humans), business operations are likely to develop accordingly. Of course, technical knowledge and a desire to learn are also essential. A degrowth economy also presupposes cooperation, and emphasises the value in businesses learning from each other and working together. One notable example of a business where all three considerations of degrowth come to prominence is T4 Sustainability. John Beardmore, a Founding Director of T4 Sustainability and Salt Network Member writes:

T4 Sustainability grew out of our work in the voluntary sector. Our voluntary work became so time consuming, that four of us considered starting a company so that we could do it full time. After some discussion, three of us incorporated the company in May 2002, and I made the transition from over paid software engineer to unpaid environmentalist.

Despite some very useful contacts from our voluntary work, uptake of our services was initially slow. One of us left in September 2002, and a second in September 2005, leaving just me. But I remained committed, we grew. By 2007 we were able to start paying ourselves a small monthly income, and by 2012 there were four of us working from a decent sized industrial unit, all well qualified academically, but just as importantly, very practical in our approach to engineering.

In parallel with our paid work, we support a lot of activity in the

community. One of us is involved with Plants For A Future, and chairs the Research Advisory Board of the Permaculture Association. Another supports numerous activist groups. I've been involved in opposing open cast coal and fracking; advising various community groups and churches on energy saving, renewable energy and sustainability; and advising the increasingly active Derby diocesan environmental group.

As time has gone by we have learned more and gained experience. Our formal work includes at one end of the spectrum, hands on installation of PV systems, solar thermal, heat pumps, biomass systems, and energy storage systems. We only install energy storage systems to support research projects though; we don't promote them to the public because from an end user point of view, they make neither financial nor environmental sense. At the other end of the spectrum we also do feasibility studies, Carbon Trust Standard assessments, ESOS lead assessor work, and support university research projects as partners, or bespoke equipment and service providers. We share what information we can with the wider community, and the software we produce is open source.

This work though, is not done for the fun of the engineering. We appreciate the social, and particularly the ecological context. Ultimately, all of the work we do is to support ecosystems, and the human and non human lives that depend on them. This isn't just about reducing CO2 emissions and plastics; these are part of it of course, but that the publicly discussed environmental agenda has been so narrow, says more about the 'bandwidth' of our media and political systems than the range of problems we all cause, and must now address. These have to include our behaviours, particularly around consumerism and consumption.

Beyond our formal work I have become increasingly interested in how other businesses see these issues, and how governments in their eternal quests for growth on a finite planet, continue to drive innovation in sectors such as aviation, which are surely more part of the problem than the solution. Our UK government has much to answer for at one level, but so do Local Enterprise Partnerships, who generally see growth in financial terms, with social benefits such as employment as a 'spin off'. The



Why not challenge yourself?

If we want a sustainable future economy where all people and the planet flourish then we, as Christian business leaders must start to lead the way in sustainable future fit practices. At Christian aid we say that 'Now is the Time' to act on climate change. So as part of Salt we are setting a challenge. What pledges are we willing to make, to stand together to deliver positive change? Here are a few simple ideas to get you started:

1.) Recycle, and use sustainable materials. It's one of the easiest and most effective day to day tasks we can do to save the environment.

Challenge:

Why not set aside bins for each recycling group and make it clear where they are in the office. Instead of using coffee cups and plastic cups, provide mugs and glasses. Have a think about how you can cultivate an environment where employees are conscious about their waste.

2.) Figure out your carbon footprint. Calculating your emissions rates and to determine your baseline CO2 emissions is a great start if you're aiming to go carbon neutral.

Challenge:

Hire a consultant or use formulas available on the internet to find out how much carbon your business is emitting. Here is one useful website: www.carbonfootprint.com

3.) Create a plan Whether it's meeting targets or rolling out a new product, you won't meet your desired goal unless you've set out a plan for how you're going to get there. Reducing your carbon footprint should be treated in the same way.

Challenge:

Why not create a five-year plan with the aim of reducing your carbon emissions to net zero?

environment is considered little if at all. We must work together to challenge these behaviours.

www.T4sLtd.co.uk

A legacy in twelve words

BY: Ollie Leggett, MD and Brand Consultant of IE Brand and IE Digital, and a founding member of SALT.

Everything has changed. Nothing has changed. Back in 2009, I can vividly remember repeating those six words in order to describe the business's position post recession. Everything had changed ... the economy had experienced an almighty shock, we'd lost a lot of money and had to let go of two of our talented team of 24. Our somewhat flabby but ultimately resilient business had received a sharp reminder of the importance of staying lean and focused.

Nothing had changed ... because in the midst of all the fallout, the multiple crises of confidence and the disruption, we rediscovered the fundamental fact that the clients we love to serve above all others are those who share our values. And as a direct result of reflection on recession we nailed our colours to the mast and began to talk about IE, for the very first time, as 'The Brand and Digital agency for Charity, Health and Education'.

A decade later I'm finding that the timeframes that occupy my mind and motivate my actions are becoming ever longer. Last year I turned 50. This year my business is celebrating its 25th anniversary. And by next year, after purchasing a 125 year lease on a new studio through my pension fund, I will become the owner of the building that the business calls home.

Over the years business anxieties have shifted from survival to succession. From viability to sustainability. From longevity to legacy. The clutter has cleared and my horizons have opened up – and the acquisition of a new building typifies this change of perspective. A 125 year lease has proved to be a transformative timeline. Building on a brownfield site, within the superstructure of an old 60s factory,

we have been given a chance to create a space that communicates our values as well as creating an efficient and productive working environment. We've embraced the opportunity to spend a little more for the sake of the team and for the sake of the planet. We've planned to park more bicycles than cars, to invest in an environmental air source heat recovery system, to explore polishing the existing concrete slab instead of covering it with carpet tiles, to fit motion sensors on all lights and even to consider twinning our toilets. The goal is to live by the six words that have summarised IE's mission and reason for being for the past decade: Make a difference. Enjoy the ride.

Make a difference is IE's 'why'. It's our motive and the way we choose to articulate our desire to invest our time and talent in 'what rust and moth cannot destroy'. Whilst we're not NGO workers, missionaries, health professionals or educators, we can and do make a measurable contribution to helping these societal change makers by putting our brand and digital expertise to work for the charity, health and education sectors.

Enjoy the ride is IE's 'how'. It describes our determination to put people first – because we are not just a business, we're a community – a motley band of pilgrims seeking to tread lightly together and to do right by one another. That's why on our annual camping trip we canoe together down the River Wye. It's why we breakfast together once a month to celebrate our best work. And it's why the new studio is being planned around people, by carefully curating spaces that are conducive to creativity, collaboration, hospitality and privacy.

As the founder of the business I want my legacy – first and foremost – to be to hardwire these values into the people and processes that I leave behind. Although rust, moth and entropy will ultimately destroy the fabric of new studio, in the meantime I hope it will provide a safe harbour for talent to flourish in community, and for future generations of the team to discover and embody IE's mission.

event



Upcoming Events

West Midlands Hub

Date: 10th September 2019

Location: TBC

East Midlands Hub

Date: 12th September 2019

Location: TBC

London Hub

Date: 17th September 2019

Location: TBC

Liverpool Hub

Date: 18th September 2019

Location: TBC

Edinburgh Hub

19 September 2019 – 5.00pm

Location: Dickson Minto, 16 Charlotte Square, Edinburgh, EH2 4DF, United Kingdom

Newcastle Hub- TBC

For all Salt hub event details visit the Salt Event pages of the website:

<https://www.christianaid.org.uk/business-network/salt-events>

Annual Conference:

**Restorative Stewardship:
Building a better world by
building better businesses**

Friday 11th October

09:00 – 16:30

<https://salt2019.eventbrite.co.uk>

Join us for a unique event, bringing together business leaders, entrepreneurs, aid workers and thought leaders from across the UK, unified around a single goal: to maximise the common good through developing successful and sustainable business enterprise.



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