

The Trunk & Branches



Strategic Leadership towards Sustainability

International Master's Programme
at the Blekinge Institute of Technology (BTH),
Karlskrona, Sweden

Winter 2009

News for the StratLeade Network

Newsletter 7

Hållbarhet2009 Learning Journey—Our First Alumni Reunion

Hållbarhet2009 was the inaugural alumni gathering of MSLS graduates of the first four years of the programme. The host location was Australia, with 5 other cities—London, Boston, Vancouver/Whistler, Ottawa, and Karlskrona—celebrating alongside and connecting in via video-conferencing.

The Australia event was one that I think many of us participants are still digesting. We experienced an incredible amount of hospitality as we toured the land, starting in Sydney and finishing in Melbourne. We shared our time with some inspiring and accomplished individuals, organizations, and networks.

We were there during a very intense time—flooding in the north (Queensland area), continued drought in vast regions of the interior, and devastating forest fires in the south—at times only miles away from us. Much of this event is already documented on the Hallbarhet.org website, so a summary here is mostly

superfluous. We invite you to check out the website and comment on the posting as you'd like. We'd love to hear your thoughts.

Coverage of this event has also been generously welcomed and facilitated by our friends at WorldChanging.com, the pre-eminent source of information and thought on ground breaking sustainability action. The summary posted from those of us in Australia can be found on WorldChanging under the title: "Community as Technology", posted March 4th, 2009. It is a fantastic read and a very thorough summary of what we were up to there.

Here are photos of the Australia participants, in year-by-year representation: (all others were with us in spirit!)



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MSLS Alumni Toolbox—A Call for Collaboration

By Sara Blenkhorn

Back in Sept of 2008, a group of eager MSLSers sat together in the learning lab dreaming about the ideal sustainability MSLS specific toolbox. Like many MSLS classes before, we talked about how it would be perfect if there was one (yes, just one) place where all alumni could go and get information. We could feed to each others blogs, see what's happening in and around the MSLS community, upload interesting documents, meet

people from previous years, discuss, share and get rejuvenated when we felt out of touch. The only difference between this year and many past is that we have Khuloud in our class. Khuloud is an IT guru with a get-er-done attitude. Back in October she pulled together some contacts in Washington, DC and managed to deliver us a Drupal operated interface equipped with Drupal genius VJ Rao, from Xykon Consulting

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Message from the Programme Team

Putting together the Trunk & Branches is a time-consuming yet interesting task. I enjoy it incredibly because it facilitates my own reflection on what we have collectively accomplished in the previous months. This edition, while far behind my own self-imposed deadline, is once again encouraging and motivating. I hope you feel the same, as we share some of our sustainability-related experiences and thoughts.

Period 2 flew by as usual this year. All three classes seem to have really found their 'groove' – both students and staff seemed happy with their outcomes. In this edition of the Trunk & Branches, you'll read about one of the more successful Strategic Management (STM) projects, which was carried out in Dublin with some fantastic results. This year, the students in STM really took the opportunity to a whole new height – many groups facilitated visioning and/or entire ABCD workshops with their partner organizations. The organizations that they connected with were utterly astonishing, and we are very pleased with the work they did.

The thesis projects are now well underway, with the first set of peer review presentations completed last week. The next official update comes late April, with final presentations scheduled for May 25-29. Please feel free to join us if you are in the area!

The last few months seems to represent a period of 'Firsts'. In the last edition of the T&B, we reported on the first marriage of two MSLSers, Georges and Michelle Dyer. Since then, we had our first baby born to a made-in-MSLS couple, Kate Maddigan and Chris Walker, and our first baby born in-programme to two MSLS students (counting the dates, I suspect they were celebrating their acceptance letters from BTH). The first MSLS Alumni Reunion successfully took place in Australia with simultaneous events running in an additional 5 locations around the world. And while we speak of growing our family, we also now see the first spawn of the MSLS programme, the new Master in Sustainable Product Service-System Innovation (MSPI) ready to welcome the first batch of students this coming fall. For more details on all of these 'Firsts', please take a read through the following pages.

My trip to Australia for Hållbarhet2009 was great. A huge thanks goes out to all that participated in making it happen. It was not only incredibly fun and 'learningful', but also so nice to see Göran (programme co-founder) have some time to relax and breathe in the results of his many

long years of hard labor. For me personally, the trip re-ignited a fire under my @ss, and reconfirmed that I do really have the best job on the planet.

This spring we have some exciting plans for some of our staff. Later in March, Merlina will head to Bonn, Germany for the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development, where she will present what the MSLS programme has been doing over the past 5 years. Simultaneously, I will be travelling to Marseille, France to teach a one-week international seminar on Strategic Sustainable Development. As the programme's reputation grows, we are finding more and more interest in our programme and collaboration in various forms. Our challenge remains to find the financial capacity to respond to many of these requests, and I am hopeful that we'll find a way to make it happen. [Fundraising ideas, anyone?]

In terms of staffing, Sophie will move from Director of MSLS to Director of MSPI, and it seems likely (subject to job competitions) that I will transition into Director/Coordinator role for MSLS. Applications for MSLS Programme / Distance Learning Assistants should be posted within the month. We're also hoping to get creative with some internship opportunities, and other paid contracts over the coming summer and beyond.

The first box of MSLS student applications arrived last week to our office. To date, we've received over 700 online applications from all corners of the world – the diversity is awesome! Thanks to all of you for spreading the word and helping to bring in such talented people. In addition to these international applications, we're hoping for a big increase in Swedish applicants this year, after some concentrated marketing to the Swedish population. We look forward to reading all of these applications and inviting the newest recruits to this little fun we call MSLS.

And on a final note, I saw - with my own eyes - buds on the trees here, which can only mean that spring (and sunshine) are just around the corner.

Well, hope you enjoy this (lengthy) edition of the Trunk & Branches. Feel free to contact me with any questions, comments, or suggested stories – tamara.connell (at) bth.se

Kind regards,

Tamara Connell, on behalf of the MSLS 2008/2009 Programme Team.



This is utterly random, but isn't it the coolest bike repair area ever? It's at CERES in Melbourne, Australia.

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(www.xykonconsulting.com). Xykon is a passionate all woman-owned consulting group of top IT professionals. VJ has been monumental to getting this site up and going. He has invested several hours of his time including weekends assisting us in the Drupal learning curve and helping us build the site with initial content and style. Thanks VJ!

Now the toolbox is ready for the next stage. On behalf of the toolbox committee we would like to do a call out for all techie and non-techie alumni interested in helping us in the preliminary stages of building and launching the site. We would like to invite two or three people from each year to help us capture the ideas and work done in each respective year. If this is you, please send an e-mail to tiffany(dot)finley(at)gmail(dot)com. The testing phase is already underway so if you are interested, don't wait too long.

We all know the importance of inviting people to participate in something meaningful and we see this as an opportunity to do exactly that. Calling all MSLS alumni, please watch for a survey link to be posted on the MSLS alumni Yahoo group. We would like you to tell us what you think about the existing Yahoo alumni network, what aspects you enjoy and what you would add/change if you could. As for MSLS supporters and non-alumni, note that with this initiative, we as MSLS students and alumni, are working to better organize ourselves and become stronger, and more connected as a whole.

Sincerely, The toolbox committee of 2009 (Sara Blenkhorn, Tiffany Finley, Khuloud Odeh, Rebecca Petzel, Melina Planchenault)

Living Up Our Long Dark Winter

By Sue McCormack

You know, when people describe the winter season in Karlskrona and claim that it is long and dreary, cold and rainy, damp and foggy, dark and miserable... they're not lying. In fact, they're not even kidding. Through the early winter months, life is bearable because there is the holiday season to look forward to. Post holidays, each dark winter day becomes a little more painful, UNLESS.... you have an outlandish SEX AND THE CITY PARTY to keep you motivated – which is exactly what we had!

The party was used as an excuse to dress up a little fancier than usual, drink cosmopolitans that are too pricey to order in an establishment, and bring some excitement to a regular Friday night in Trossö. More importantly, it was the commemorative celebration of a dual birthday in the MSLS class: Jayne Bryant, who turned 35, and I, Sue McCormack, who turned 30. We could not think of a better theme for our joint party – not because we're whimsical, ideally employed, materialistic women, but because during the dark and dreary evenings in Karlskrona, we search for bosom buddies and long to laugh like Ya-Ya's, which inevitably leads us to enjoy episodes of Carrie, Miranda, Samantha and Charlotte.

So, with a robust party plan and a strategic approach, plus the outstanding hosts at Hotel Siesta, our evening included delicious cocktails, a tasty dinner, a movie screening, much camaraderie amongst our colleagues in attendance, and of course, a visit to the local dance floor.

While I can't comment as to whether or not the affair fell into compliance with all four of the SP's, I can tell you that it definitely put our cornerstone birthday on the map and, without a doubt, fulfilled our need to have fun.

Overall, it was a smashing success!



**Jayne and Sue would like to extend their deepest thanks and appreciation to the gracious team of people at Hotel Siesta on Trossö. You made our evening possible!*

Alumni Spotlight



Michelle and Georges Dyer '06

Michelle and Georges Dyer, both members of the class of '06, met in the common room their first day at BTH, and found they were living in the same section of the Minerva apartments. From there, they became friends, thesis partners, a couple, business partners, home owners, dog owners, and finally husband and wife – in that order. They were married in September with a great showing of MSLS friends on hand. They are living in Gloucester, MA, USA, and are enjoying greening up their new house – the latest step was adding some extra insulation, next step is even more insulation - they've needed it this through this particularly cold and snowy winter.

Michelle remains busy in her (relatively) new role as Vice President of Second Nature, a non-profit in Boston focused on education for sustainability at the college and university level. She has had great success at managing the rapid growth of this small, but effective organization. The Presidents' Climate Commitment remains central to her work, with 616 colleges and universities now committed to incorporating climate and sustainability issues into the educational experience of all students, and backcasting from climate neutrality in their campus operations – over 400 have



Kristoffer Lundholm '05

I feel inspired when I see all the great work that is happening on the sustainability front. But let's face it; the walls of the funnel are closing in. If there is a time to 'up the game', it is now. Real change is needed and it is up to us all to ask

ourselves if we are in the right place to facilitate this change [Thanks Renaud '05 for reminding me]. These thoughts are fairly central in my mind at the moment as I am at a point where I can choose how to position myself.

After leaving Karlskrona in 2005 I went back to Gothenburg to finish a Master's degree in design. During that time I also started arranging speaker sessions, workshops and courses in D-schools around in Sweden. I left when offered a position on the innovation team at Forum for the Future in the UK. There I have been fortunate enough to take part in some great and inspiring projects aimed at developing more sustainable products and services in partnership with business. Just to share a few key learning points I'll say this: (1) It takes a lot of time to learn how to develop sustainable products and services and because of this it is crucial to build long term relationships and partnerships built on trust, openness and critical friendship. Having enough time is important as it may take

measured and reported their carbon footprints so far, and full climate action plans are due for the original signatories in September – all reports are available at <http://acupcc.aashe.org>. She's also established a partnership with a major foundation to include green building principles as part of their construction grants and create a program to ensure that under resourced and minority-serving institutions are able to reap the benefits of building green.

Georges continues to work a lot with Second Nature as well, but has been shifting his focus more to his work with Archie Kasnet ('05) at Aedi Group - a holding company with a portfolio of sustainability-oriented business, and an affiliated non-profit, Village Corps. The five Aedi businesses are in the real estate and technology sectors, and Village Corps will focus on poverty alleviation work around the world, with the first partner village in South Africa. All of the work is explicitly organized around the framework for SSD, and they're feeling hopeful, that despite (or because of) the economic crisis, investors and customers will see the value in this approach.

The Dyers continue to volunteer their time to keep Stratleade up and running as a fundraising vehicle for the MSLS program, and are excited to see this network grow with new alumni, resources, collaboration tools, and events. Their dog, Kol (Swedish for 'carbon'), is getting big and enjoys chasing tennis balls endlessly on the beaches of Gloucester.

time for organisations to mature or evolve their thinking. Ideas and concepts rejected at one point can re-emerge later if there is enough time. (2) A lot of organisations have little knowledge and no structured methods for how to gain insights in to the full lifecycle of their products and services. This limits creative thinking and strategic planning. While tools for 'measuring' impacts may seem attractive it is my experience that simple mapping exercises and dialogue with stakeholders across the value chain can't be substituted by numbers.

Ironically enough I am heading back towards the MSLS beacon in Karlskrona. I am once again relocating and can decide where to go and what to do. I am considering joining the research team at BTH to do a PhD in sustainable product-service system innovation. My greatest concern at the moment is that the delay between theoretical research findings and actual change in the real world is too long. The words of Göran Carstedt, when describing one of his leadership principles at IKEA North America, echo in my mind; "What doesn't show in store, hasn't happened at all." I want my work to 'show in store'. I'm therefore hoping to help start a programme of applied and design-led research within the scope of the *Real Change* programme's credo – *Research from words to action*.

I hope to be able to catch up with you in a year or so to report on my progress. Until then, best of luck to all.

Alumni Spotlight ...continued



Sophie Dunkerley '08

Back in 2007, I took a leap of faith and left my job working as a public affairs consultant in Brussels, hoping that I would be offered a place on the MSLS course. I was interested in learning about sustainability and was looking to give a new direction to my professional activities.

Little did I know that the MSLS experience would be so transformational, influencing at a very personal level thoughts on how to lead my life and on what to do to usefully contribute.

After graduating from BTH in June 2008, I moved to Paris to join my boyfriend and started to work as a consultant at the United Nations Environment Programme, in the branch dealing with Sustainable Consumption and Production. Within that branch, many initiatives are ongoing related to familiar topics such as sustainable design, cleaner production, resource efficiency, life cycle assessment etc.

When positioned from the point of view of a global institution working on so many issues, the value of The Natural Step framework, in providing a common understanding and strategic direction – the trunk- is all too apparent. I feel privileged to

have been trained in a whole-systems perspective with a clear scientific definition of sustainability. The result is a sense of empowerment, linked to the ability to see the “big picture” and to relate any specific issue to what really matters when it comes to sustainability, without getting lost in the leaves.

I am also very grateful to have been able to practise communication skills to talk about sustainability in a way that is effective. I have found that patience, “meeting people where they were at” and the “yes...and” technique used profusely really do make a difference. Thanks Kalle for hammering that in!

The biggest challenge for me after leaving Karlskrona was to find myself in an environment in which people do not share the same interest or understanding of sustainability and to be reminded everyday, by looking around, of how much still needs to be done to achieve a sustainable society. When a sense of deep insecurity over our collective capacity to make the necessary changes creeps in, I feel energised and inspired from knowing that I am connected to an amazing group of people doing the most amazing things around the world, thanks to the MSLS network. I feel incredibly privileged to the part of that network and know that all together, having changed ourselves, we can (oh Yes We Can!) positively change the world...



Fiona Wright '07

Since graduating the MSLS programme, I have had the privilege to work with the MSLS programme team at BTH for the last year and half – supporting the delivery of the programme with the classes of 2008 and 2009, each member of which I am very

happy to now as a friend and sustainability colleague.

From that work I took on a role with the expansion of BTH's sustainability distance learning offerings. I am currently working part time for BTH as the Course Coordinator for BTH's new distance learning course Introduction to Strategic Sustainable Development. We had an extremely successful first iteration of the course last fall, and this spring we have 65 participants, mostly mid-career professionals, from 18 countries. This course is an exciting route for the expansion of our network of people working in sustainability with a common language.

I just moved back to my hometown of Ottawa, Canada – thus really living the new possibilities of distance learning and working! I am also working with a few MSLS thesis groups on some very exciting projects with green ICT and urban planning

processes. It's great to reconnect with old friends and family and to explore all the sustainability work that's happening in Canada.

Since graduating, I have a new favourite motto: “there are things for you to learn and there are things for you to teach.” This really supports my confidence in sharing the expertise in framing strategic work in sustainability that I gained during my MSLS experience as well as from my science training and previous work with education and conversation efforts internationally, while always being on the watch for what I can learn from every situation. It's easy at moments to feel like one knows nothing about anything in the face of such overwhelming challenges and all the great work that is in progress, and other moments to think one knows a lot when in fact one really doesn't have a grasp of the whole picture. The dance is about finding those moments when you have a key contribution to make, and the moments when you are learning from others. Both are important.

Recent highlights include the manifestation of the first MSLS Alumni gathering: Hållbarhet 2009 in Australia, and in particular an aboriginal ceremony we were invited to take part in at the Tent Embassy in Canberra where I really felt that we all have a role and a place and we all need each other.

STM Group Goes to Ireland to work with Dublin City Council's Social Housing Department

By Zaida Barcena, Kate McKeown, Caroline Nolan, Mary Ostafi, Melina Planchenault

It is classic rags-to-riches – as well as a story of boom and bust.

In the space of a decade, Ireland went from being described as the “Poorest of the Rich” on a January 1988 cover of *The Economist* to being celebrated on another cover in the same magazine as “The Celtic Tiger: Europe’s Shining Light” for its high-performing economy in January 2004. Four and half years later, Ireland officially entered a recession – the first in Europe. “Ireland, as a country, now has the “R” [recession] word attached to it,” declared a member of the opposition of the September 2008 news before blaming the current government for leading them there.

Despite the recession, Dublin City Council (DCC), Ireland’s largest employer, is getting focused on sustainability with the help of RealEyes, an Irish-based sustainability consulting firm run by Michael Donnelly and John Harrington. Last November, RealEyes hosted a kick-off event with the Dublin City Council to launch an internal concept branded as “Sustainable Dublin – A smart, competitive, visionary city” with an opening speech by Karl-Henrik Robert. Around the same time, BTH’s Tamara Connell held her own kick-off event for the MSLS 2009 Strategic

Management (STM) course – and mentioned a connection with a student from the previous year’s class, Dermot Hikisch, saying that there may be an opportunity to work on a project with DCC. Several students were interested and they were eventually put in touch with RealEyes’ consultant Michael Donnelly, who scoped out the project to work with the city’s Housing & Residential Services’ department (also referred to as “social housing”) – specifically, the DCC’s Housing Maintenance (HM) section.

No small operation, the HM section maintains responsibility for the repair and upkeep of 27,000 Council-owned dwellings through eight depots in Dublin City. In 2007, 500 area-depot staff (including tradesman such as glazers, plumbers, painters and carpenters) responded to nearly 60,000 requests for repair and services for everything from helping tenants who have forgotten their keys get into their flats to more structural issues such as leaky roofs. They have their own joinery (carpentry) workshop, along with a large painting squad, so as you can imagine, HM uses a lot of materials and is responsible for the management of a tremendous amount of waste, much of it from the refurbishment of council flats to bring them up to code following vacancy by a tenant.

After initial contact with Vincent Healy, Senior Executive Officer, Housing Maintenance, we worked with Michael Donnelly of RealEyes to make it possible



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for our team of five to travel to Dublin to research our project on the ground and conduct a half-day workshop with approximately eight representatives from the social housing and housing maintenance departments. The trip, which we funded ourselves, was a four-day whirlwind that included the half-day workshop as well as indepth tours of a typical Housing Maintenance Depot (Coleraine Depot), a tour of social housing units in various states of readiness to be rented, and extensive interviews with maintenance depot staff as well as external stakeholders including representatives from several tenant groups. Joining us were Christy Burke, DCC's longest-standing Councillor and Pat Gates, Community Regeneration Officer for the nonprofit Dublin Inner City Partnership.

In order to create our Action Plan for a sustainable HM, we needed to better understand the department's core ideology. Despite an extensive search, it became rapidly apparent that such a distinct core ideology did not yet exist. Interviews with both our primary contacts confirmed our findings. As such, we included this in our half-day workshop on Dec. 5th at, to help HM staff identify and co-create their core ideology and vision which can be summarized as: "To make our tenants' quality of life better through excellent services." We were pleased to see the emergence of strong core values – quality, service and efficiency.

During our workshop, we also introduced the concept of BHAGs (Big Hairy Audacious Goals). We invited the group to co-create a BHAG for HM keeping in mind their core values and purpose. As a result, the following BHAG was created with a suggested timeline of 2025, which will produce the desired creative tension: "Selling their maintenance services to private homeowners or other cities in partnership with the best sustainable industries of DCC."

The workshop also included our facilitation of the ABCD process – which resulted in a list of compelling measures. Unfortunately, we ran out of time to complete the D step of prioritization. Nonetheless, we were able to work on prioritization upon our return. Our final report, which included an Action Plan for Housing Maintenance was presented to the department, along with a presentation via Skype in early January 2009.

We have since learned from RealEyes' Michael

Donnelly, who continues to work closely with the department, that several of our recommendations in the Action Plan have been adopted by the HM department, specifically, the immediate phase-out of the use of PVC (they are used extensively in windows) to be replaced by a renewable resource – wood – for the time being. Also, the HM department has made a commitment to purchase only FSC-certified wood from well-managed forests. With 60,000 repair requests at council flats all over the city, they are also beginning to look at how to increase transportation efficiency by both strategically grouping trips to certain buildings and areas. They are also undertaking an analysis to determine what percentage of their calls are emergencies so as to better understand how they can better group trips around areas instead of by when the repair request is made.

Three of us (Melina Planchenault, Caroline Nolan and Mary Ostafic) have since returned to Dublin in February to again work with the Dublin City Council Planning Department, this time working closely with John Harrington of RealEyes, on our thesis project which is about leveraging the city development plan to move a cities toward sustainability.

All in all, it was an amazing opportunity to have a real-life experience and well worth the investment we each made to fund the four-day trip.



New research project at BTH - Labelling and Procurement Support for Sustainable Product Innovation

The Research-team at BTH was recently granted 2,958,000 SEK from the Swedish Knowledge Foundation for a three year project called “Labelling and Procurement Support for Sustainable Product Innovation”.

The project aims to investigate how the framework for strategic sustainable development (FSSD) could aid the criteria development process for product labelling and procurement schemes. Labelling and procurement schemes are important instruments for communication of demands and qualities, which affect both consumers and product developers. To utilize their full potential we believe that these instruments should be further developed to include a full socio-ecological perspective as well as the strategic dimension (development over time).

Some expected results:

- Development of improved development processes for product labelling and procurement criteria that reflect both sustainability requirements and

the needs and reality of industry.

- Clarification of how to use sustainability criteria in procurement specifications.
- More comprehensive definition, assessment and understanding of ‘sustainable products’ as a lever for change within organisations and the business community.
- The creation of innovative sustainable products.
- Development and analysis of front-edge methods and tools for sustainable product development.

Dr. Sophie Hallstedt, who is the project manager, aims to find interesting projects for the MSLS students from this research work. Cecilia Bratt is one of the PhD students working in the project and Prof. Karl-Henrik Robèrt and Prof. Göran Broman are also researchers involved from BTH. For more information look at the home page: <http://www.bth.se/tek/productevaluation>

New MSPI Two-Year Master’s Programme to Welcome First Class

By Sophie Hallstedt

BTH is offering a new unique Master’s Programme in Sustainable Product-Service System Innovation this fall to prepare people to be sustainable product innovators. A product’s socio-ecological impacts are largely determined by decisions made during the early phases of the innovation process. These decisions can have positive and negative effects on society through the product’s life cycle. Companies will gain competitive advantages in the evolving sustainability-driven market by building competence in innovation for sustainability. However, there is currently a shortage of sustainable product innovators and this programme is intended to fill that gap.

Despite the short marketing period the interest of the Programme is better than expected and we will now start to evaluate the 170 international applications and offer a start to

30 students this fall 2009. Dr. Sophie Hallstedt, Prof. Tobias Larsson, Prof. Göran Broman, Henrik Ny and Anthony Thompson have all been involved in the development of this programme. Sophie has been the project manager during the year and she will be the new programme director. If you want further information contact her directly: sophie.hallstedt@bth.se, or see the information on the home page: <http://www.bth.se/mspi>



The upcoming MSLS 09 baby

In preview for T&B, an exclusive interview from the youngest participant to the MSLS 09 programme, a secret student nobody has seen or met with so far! She has been observing and listening since the beginning of the year. Today, this baby reveals her impressions.

R: Good morning dear Baby. How did you come to attend the programme?

B: *I think I was at the right place at the right moment... Well, to tell you the truth, my parents brought me here with them.*

R: Oh, I'm sorry about that. So, what definition of sustainability do you have?

B: *I guess it is a scientific principles-based definition?*

R: Can you describe to us the life in Karlskrona?

B: *Since I am here, it has been quite dark. I haven't seen the light so far. Nevertheless, the winter time is definitely warmer than I expected.*

R: What did you learn from the classes, at BTH?

B: *I know how to count to 5 with the 5 level framework and I know the ABCDs of the alphabet. This is a lot for a newborn you know!*

R: How were the classes for you?

B: *It was quite good. I got a private VIP armchair for exams and have been on a comfy couch during all my thesis meetings.*

R: What are your dreams?

B: *I have a strange recurrent dream about a funnel and cubes with SP1, SP2, SP3 and SP4.*

R: What are your projects?

B: *I actually have an action plan. My short term action is to be born around the 7th of March. My mid-term action is to travel and observe the "MSLSers" applying the FSSD worldwide. My long term action is to come back to Karlskrona to attend the MSLS 2034 programme.*

R: What will be your first word?

B: *I was considering dad or mum but I prefer 'sust-ain-aaa-bil-ity'. I hope my parents won't mind.*

R: Would you recommend this programme to another baby?

B: *The hardest part was for me was being unable to read the slideshows. The nice one was my baby-shower. The best part will be to meet with all my potential babysitters and colleagues of this year and also the staff members of the programme.*

R: Well. Thank you very much for sharing your thoughts with us.

Babies, babies, everywhere!

Editor's note:

Since first soliciting stories for the Trunk & Branches, we have now successfully welcomed the illustrious baby of the previous story into the welcoming arms of her parents, Cécile and Olivier Herve-Bazin, both students in this year's MSLS programme.

Here are some thoughts from the parents:

Clara was born the 26th of February 2009 at 4.35 PM! She weighed 2,5kg and measured 49cm. She is baby number 222 of this year in Karlskrona. [Wow!]



The delivery went as naturally as possible: acupuncture, showers and warm bath, (also osteopathy and homeopathy of course). The midwives have been very gentle and have always spoken to us in english. They have also listened to us well and brought support. We have strongly experienced this unique and wonderful moments. To celebrate the birth, we have received fika: colourful sandwiches and swedish flag on a beautiful silver plate.

Our gift is the very first picture of thr three of us, taken by the midwife, a few minutes after the birth.

-Cécile and Olivier Herve-Bazin, the happy new parents.

And on a very similar note, one of our made-in-MSLS couples of 2005/2006, Chris Walker and Kate Maddigan welcomed their new addition, Mr. Fergus Kalle Walker on Dec. 30th. Congratulations to both of you! Karl-Henrik should be very proud, and we are all happy to have a sustain-a-baby in the family.



MSLS Alumnus Obtains New Job as Environmental Coordinator at BTH

We are excited to announce that one of our alumni will take on an even larger role in implementing sustainability initiatives at BTH. From March 1st Heleen Podsedkowska will start to work as the Environmental Coordinator at BTH. To start with it is a part-time position (50%). Heleen's major task will be to develop, implement and monitor an environmental management system (EMS) at BTH. Another task will be to adapt all of BTH to the recently announced climate neutral profile. These are exciting and challenging tasks because Heleen will start to work with one tool (EMS) for achieving sustainability. She aims to spread the word about the FSSD and after that to start applying the FSSD in her work to move BTH towards sustainability. *Congratulations, Heleen!*



Changing the Speed of Change

By Tony Thompson

After a research meeting last week where we were discussing systematic methods for product innovation, I picked up a new book called "Mavericks at Work". The introduction (which is all that I've read so far, so I cannot give it a rating just yet) focuses on the rapid rate at which businesses are changing. Since it is written by the editors of a magazine called *Fast Company*, that is hardly a surprise!

I often wonder if people that were practicing business a century ago also felt that things were changing very rapidly: automobiles were changing the speed and flexibility of transportation, the assembly line was beginning to allow for mass production, and so on. When people today talk about that pace at which business is changing, I only laugh. Yes, of course things are changing and changing fast. But things have been changing "fast" for a long time! Perhaps it's true that the pace of change is increasing. Or perhaps it is only that we feel things are changing so fast because we tend to take a very short perspective on what it means to change. Probably it is some of both.

On another topic, one of the projects I have been spending a lot of time with lately relates to modeling the sustainability consequences of products along their life cycle. One "trap" that a system dynamics modeler must be wary of is a "positivist trap" that goes like this: if only we could model in enough detail, we could predict the behavior of systems. Of course, modeling to such a level of detail is not possible, so we use models to help us explore what might happen, based upon the assumptions and simplifications that our models make. If, for example, we are modeling fire in a forest, we would say that some part of the forest is always on fire and there is a causal relationship between the amount of forest on fire and the amount of forest recently burned. As the size of the fire grows, more of the forest is burned. The more of the forest that is burned, the less the fire can grow.

There is another approach to modeling known as agent-based modeling. Here, systems are modeled from the perspective of individual actors within the system. With the forest example, the agent-based approach models the behavior of the forest by representing each tree in the model. Each tree "decides" to burn or not based upon a few simple rules, e.g. if the tree next to me is burning, after five minutes I will start burning also. By aggregating the behavior (burning or not burning) of all the trees in our forest, the behavior of fire in the forest emerges. Thus the system's behavior (forest fire) is "constructed" by observing what happens to individual actors (trees)... this, then, is a constructivist approach which says we do not know what the future from the system's perspective, but we can construct it as we go.

We would expect that these two different models (if built using real-world data) would produce similar results with the forest fire example. Thinking about positivism and constructivism, however, has been an interesting thought exercise for me. As one who enjoys backcasting from sustainability principles and co-creating within constraints, the constructivist side tends to be more appealing. But my fascination with the short-sightedness (regarding both future and history) of those with a mindset similar to that in "Mavericks at Work" remind me that those of us who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat it. Of course it is possible that knowing about the past only makes us aware when it repeats, rather than allowing us to escape the repetition.

Either way, let us be humble in our novelty as we venture forth to co-create desirable futures within sustainability constraints... and consider that perhaps the only constant is not change, but rather the increasing pace at which change occurs.

Who do you think you are? Why identity matters for sustainability.

By Andrew Outhwaite

Beyond being one of the Max-Neef's Needs I think our 'identity' is actually central to effectively working towards sustainability. Questions of identity have come up repeatedly during my personal journey since graduation, whilst traveling overland back to Australia, and most recently during Hallbarhet2009.

Completing the MSLS program and having a shared sense of identity with 200 others has been really important for my work. The shared terminology, concepts, values and worldviews create a sense of community, enable idea sharing and have given me extra confidence in challenging situations and new roles. Because I benefit from our community, I also contribute to the it's development financially, and by supporting others through mentoring and advice.

So far, that all sounds like a win-win-win for me, the community and society right? Yes, and it's not all positive. If I am too attached to being a MSLSer and our established way of doing things, it can mean I stop thinking and questioning. The same attachment can also create barriers to engaging with individuals or networks through using exclusive language or not empathising with their perspective (e.g. *'My definition of sustainability is better than yours'*).



In another way, I can also be excessively attached to a 'small', independent and limited sense of identity. This can mean I am plagued by fear and self-doubt in the face of the enormous challenges we face. These feelings can mean I seek to protect myself rather than open up to collaborating or leading. Recognising that vulnerability, I have found

inspiration to get beyond my 'small' sense of identity in at least two ways. One is through personal practices (meditation, contemplation, and deep dialogue) where a common experience is that all of what and who I am is much more than what 'I' alone simply think, feel and can see. The resulting expanded sense of self creates the mental space for me to face, respond to or ignore my fears and insecurities e.g. *'I am not just my emotions and thoughts, so*



the prospect of being embarrassed is less scary'.

A second inspiration has been learning more about the lives of those who I admire. This may be Buddha or Gandhi, Vandana Shiva or Karl-Henrik Robert, or even close peers. They are all human. Really. Made of flesh and bone, and prone to forgetting names or suffering from food poisoning just as much as you or I. To me that suggests there is every opportunity for me to make the same sort of commitments and efforts they did, and perhaps a similar positive contribution. That realisation really threatens the 'small' self's fondness for hiding and making excuses. For me, that realisation leads to a more liberating and energised engagement with life and sustainability challenges.

Another significant component of my identity is my nationality. Since leaving Australia in 2005, I've worked and met with people from diverse cultures and landscapes. Increasing my ability to empathise with different perspectives is an incredibly important area of learning for me. I believe I am now much more aware of different ways of building trust and community, new appropriate technologies for growing, making, organising and transporting, and new ways of perceiving situations that lead to more creative solutions. I don't have to permanently let go of my Australian-ness to continue to learn more, but I must at least temporarily let go of excessive identification with my habitual ways of seeing, doing and being.

Through this selection of examples, I tried to articulate why asking 'Who am I' is relevant to sustainability. Being flexible in your identity, and questioning the value or overly identifying with one sense of self is, afterall, something we are also asking of those that we engage with in our work e.g. *Citizen or consumer? CEO or grandfather? Activist or the CEO's neighbour? Farmer or steward of the land?*

So, it can't hurt to lead by example, can it?



MSLS Alumni's Submission to Design Competition gets Recognition

By Jennifer Nichols: In November 2008, UNESCO and its partner Felissimo Group (Japan) launched the 'Languages Matter!' competition for the creation of the 2009 UNESCO official poster of International Mother Language Day (21 February). This initiative was part of the DESIGN 21: Social Design Network programme.

Liane Fredericks, Tim Nichols and my poster was selected along with ten other for honourable mention out of 1133 entries from 85 different countries. You can see our entry here: <http://www.design21sdn.com/competitions/17> under the "winners" category!

The three of us worked together long-distance between Canada, the United States and the United Kingdom. Together we created the image of a tree with roots made up of various translations for "Language Matters" with the top of the tree growing into the continents of the world. A few Latin and ancient Tagalog characters fall from the branches to acknowledge disappearing languages.

The project was also a collaboration between

friends from five continents who offered translations. We received phrases in Arabic, Swedish, Yoruba, Persian, Cantonese, Icelandic, Hebrew, Mohawk, Russian, Dholuo, Igala, Spanish, Portuguese, Urdu, American Sign Language and several more. All the translations can be seen on my blog: <http://jenstory.ca/>

We continue to collect translations. It is exciting to see how many languages we can represent from the 6000-7000 in Earth's rich ethnosphere. We think offering this translation challenge to the Mother Language Day audience through the Design21 website would be a meaningful extension of the poster project.

This design became a way of uniting us. By sharing ideas across cultures we have created a symbol of unity with a spirit of diversity within peaceful coexistence.

I am captivated by many of the entries and feel honoured that our group effort is part of the exhibition. Thank you to UNESCO and Design21 for the fun opportunity to show off our passion for conserving human culture and the ethnosphere.

