

Draft

TippingPoint Brussels 2010
EESC, January 25 & 26
Notes on Open Space Sessions

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Day 2

A high visibility art project' newsworthy, prepared, strategic follow-up; debates, lectures, etc.

Borders and Climate (national, individual, how to overcome, develop cooperation)

Alternative Energy , Arts and Science Collaboration

If the European Commission could only fund one action, what should it be?

The Thor Heyerdahl Globe, Norway. Visualising global data on a 3 meter diameter floating sphere

A new/different approach to **nature** on a global level; different artistic strategies

The power of symbiosis as a practice and a metaphor

Degree's Warming – change is inevitable (expressing climate scenarios)

Concrete projects and concrete change of minds

A performance right here, today

Climate care world summit and/or joy and peaceful festival of creativity for climate care

School: here's all the potential for transformation

Individualism was a mistake

Reinvent revolution, a la Woodstock How to make a struggle against climate change fashionable, attractive for masses

Framework Programme 7 – for community based expression

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Energy as currency

Sport & climate change

Catastrophism: Art, science and politics: whose register, what impacts?

Leader: Nicole Dewandre Note taker: Maria Joao Cruz

Catastrophism, despair, drama are part of society. It has always been part of the arts' register. Apocalypse is at the core of artistic inspiration. It's a visual spectacle, it has strong impacts, it provides a fantasy. People are attracted by death and drama. So, one can say it is legitimate to use catastrophism in arts.

However in the politics' register, there are two risks linked to the use of catastrophism: 1. credibility of public action and 2. totalitarianism. Regarding the latter (totalitarianism), catastrophism aims to mobilise around fear. This creates the perfect conditions for dictatorship. Regarding the former (credibility), the abuse of the argument ("last chance", "now or never", etc,) leads the situation where institutions have to face the day after. .. and keep working on the same goal! Or is it really true that we'd better turn around and forget about climate change because it's too late anyway? This indifference is also a potential consequence of the (ab)use of catastrophism.

But what about the use of catastrophism by scientists? There, the attitude is very diverse. Most scientists avoid using this register. However, there are pressures for communicating about scientific results and the pressure of media to make cover stories with simple and clear messages clashes with the complex nature of scientific truth. The policy request to disseminate results may also converge with the desire of some scientists to catch attention and engage into catastrophism as a communication strategy or dance with an underlying phantasm of omnipotence ... but the scientists present in the discussion group didn't feel this happens often. They believe that usually the journalists just look for the most pessimistic stories and that they misinterpret what scientists say.

Preaching to the Converted

1. Next TippingPoint event to be at McDonald's (or other highly visible public space)
2. Learn from successful behavior changing campaigns (such as drink and drive)
3. Promote large artistic interventions connected with a strategic communication plan
4. Create a public check-list of practical things to do to promote change in our individual lives
5. Positive passion attitude to make change
6. Eco-membership club. your ecological deeds give you access to an exclusive club (events, restaurants, bars). make ecological attitudes fashionable
7. Bring scientists to inspire artists to inspire the people to vote for the government to make policy to MAKE CHANGE

Inspirational Stories

- Montreal protocol on CFC emissions, for ozone layer
- Transition Towns, e.g. Kinsale IE, Totnes, UK – has own local currency – Totnes Pound, creating community, buying local, personal commitment.
- Interface (flooring company)
- Cradle to Cradle
- Bring back the butterflies, bees and lady birds
- Woolworths (SA's M&S) - large SA retailer, all produce transitioning to organic SA's environmental minister's ban of water
- Recycling tin in SA
- In South Africa TV has an electricity meter that shows national usage
- Last minute market - a website selling out dated food
- Sustainable-everyday.net has examples of things that are working
- Collective kitchen, several small apartments using a communal kitchen
- Sustainable stories that are good so often are predicated on a return to community, e.g the Laundromat next to the playground
- The Youth are engaged: research from British Council, shows youth want change 10/10 site check it out 10 ways to it now, reduce by 10% reduction by 2010, ten things you can do in 10 weeks
- Public private partnerships on energy/resource management: www.oekoprofit.at <<http://www.oekoprofit.at>> , www.enviro-pro.eu <<http://www.enviro-pro.eu>> - gives ways for companies to improve staff wellness and ecological footprint
- Technical solutions

Anthropogenic climate change was first signaled in 1896. Why did it take until Al Gore has successfully spread awareness?

Science has lost the original function of "episteme" theoretical contemplation. Still now that is maybe why it took so long for independent researchers speak out. Also scientists are bad at conveying simple messages, and in working together over the boundaries of different scientific branches.

A possible solution

Software of science should be autonomous. But setting THE agenda of science should be manipulated by democratic control. Hence more public funding for scientific climate change oriented research. Both theoretical as practical.

Modern science sees itself as positive instrument for progress. Task oriented Techno science. Often funded by the corporate world We have forgotten THE alarm function of science. And should reinstall this important function. Funding for Nuclear Research still 30 times more than renewable energy. We are not even mentioning research into new weapons We can turn this around if we want.

Engaging young people with on the issues of climate change and the arts

As this discussion group was to focus on practical options rather than theoretical debate there were three participants including the convener.

We were in agreement, through experience, that young people will respond to creative activities or triggers to motivate new thinking and discussion on complex issues. The issues of climate change can be presented through all artforms, with artists trained in social engagement to share information, translate misunderstandings, motivate responsibility and the benefits of interdependence.

Interaction is hope.

SHAME

Participants: Mons Lagerlof, Bob Hull, Helen Evans, Johanna Storm, Angela McSherry, Birgit de Boissezon, Kathi Vogt, Rachel Feuchtwang, Massimo Todini

We were the Shame group and we felt we needed to stand up and be counted. Our name is Shame and we are addicted to Oil.

We talked about owning up to guilt; that the resistance to owning up is fear and this is not creative. So we run away instead.

We talked about communicating hope; it sounds good but we don't always feel it.

Our emotional response is shame.

Can we mobilise this emotion? If we change our lives this can provoke shame in others.

Our moral compass tells us to do the right thing but we are doing the wrong thing.

Meanwhile consumerism is telling us not to be ashamed "because you're worth it".

And the only difference between human beings and animals is the capacity to feel shame. Which is the fundamental basis of our society.

We talked about how can we use this feeling to make something creative, to make a causal link between taking action and a tangible result.

We got sidetracked into thinking about solutions and came up with ideas for guerrilla negative advertising campaigns based on shame and selling fewer resources and lower consumption. Or cities where advertising is banned.

But we also got waylaid by pondering who is the arbiter of shame? Who are the authorities to trust? The systemic failure of governance and authority – who do we listen to? We run about in the glare of information and disinformation and end up doing nothing = apathy.

So we talked some more about Giving Things Up, how things aren't just taken away but can be given away. About retreating into a more personal examination of values and qualities and analysing what we really want – starting with home and looking at local resilience, pacing ourselves.

We questioned if climate protection and environmental change needs its own civic moments of truth and reconciliation. A collective public admission of shame.

That change can only begin to happen following recognition of the cause.

Are artists the ones to take on the moral responsibility or are they showing society an ethical mirror reflection? Art is about questioning not about telling what to do?

We talked about needing artists to help imagine the future, but that it's not just the art or artists, but a human issue between people.

Urban farming and walking Annemie Maes and Maarten Roels

Points of interest:

- (Artist) community based / community development
- Biodiversity
- Sustainability
- Living quality
- Food as a primary access point for behaviour change

Obstacles to greening urban space

- scepticism
- conservative housing industry
- a strong vision on urban development by policy makers is absent
- time (is also money)
- means to train competence among people
- fear of new things
- no out of the box thinking causes people to persevere common practices
- feeling of insecurity
- fear causes suspicion because we don't know the urban environment and that in turn is caused by our mobility behaviour: we are not really connected / present in the urban environment but just moving from a to b
- we are unskilled in living with nature (in the city)

Food as a basis

- linking economic and artistic in the frame of urban environment

Walking in the City

- is about
 - mobility
 - perception of the environment
- see smell and cross the borders of the senses
- experience the feedback of our behaviour of the environment

Solutions

- Transitional spaces in oxford colleges: from individual through semi-public to public space
- Collective gardens in Brussels (using unwritten contracts in the transition from guiding to autonomy)
- Top down and bottom up need to meet:
 - Flemish legislation: obligation 2% investment of public money in housing projects
- long term contracts between productive side and consumer side can produce

- new, sustainable economies
 - is about short circuits economy and could be transposed from agriculture to other economic sectors
- issue of scale
 - e.g. waste disposal needs to be organised on a larger scale with awareness on a scale
- more balance between green, recreational areas and agriculture + savage spaces

What will you do to tackle our ecological crisis?

- Repopulate your green space with veggies
- Give your garden space to community who takes care of it
- Bee-keeping in cities
- Guerrilla gardening and seed bombing
- Set **up** community seed bank to exchange bio seeds
- Keep and adopt (eco)chickens to control slugs for instance
- Get involved in transition towns

Climate change and mental health

How to cope with losing everything

How to cope with change

Migration, and the consequences of migration

Preparation for disaster? Is it possible?

Being a resilient, active agent (not waiting around....)

Alienation

A public health issue, therefore interventions are possible – arts, education, community action, etc.

IMPLODING THE CITY: Concepts and ideas for sustainable cities

If cities are mapped according to their resource consumption and waste production, they have enormous footprints that extend far beyond the borders of their "city limits".

Imploding cities means bringing modes of production inside the city limits:

- Energy production
 - Bio energy that utilizes city bio waste and sewage, producing energy and bio char that is used for agricultural fertilizer and carbon capture
 - Integrated solar pv, wind, geothermal and in-stream hydro
- Urban agriculture
 - Distributed farming: utilizing incidental public space
 - Vertical farming
 - Floating greenhouses
 - Rooftop farms
- Greenspace: horizontal, vertical, layered
- Nature: wild spaces integrated into the urban space
- Enterprises: private and public investment

Another idea brought up:

A global committment should be made to Haiti to:

- Rebuild Port-au-Prince into a truly world-class sustainable city utilizing good design, low-tech and appropriate tech solutions, and sensible urban planning
- Build bio energy stations as discussed above, using the bio char bi-product to replenish Haiti's depleted topsoil
- Reforest Haiti to rebuild it's biosphere
- Implement sustainable farming practices
- Forgive all of Haiti's debt
- Set aside 60% of land as national parks
- Working with and empowering Hatians, make Haiti a global model for sustainability

EU Research, Communication, Networking and Eco-innovation.

Moderator: Brigitte de Doissezon. Participants: Marie Lillies, David Viner, Zuzana Bouklalova, Andreas Löschel, Adele Wiman, Alok B Nandi, Annemarie Maes
Rapporteur: J. David Tàbara

In principle there is a lot of potential for collaboration between scientists and artists to develop common creative communities and in particular in EU research.

However there is also a problem of how the research processes are carried out. One of the main caveats or difficulties for such collaboration relates to how the reviewing process of research proposals are carried out. On the one hand, in a research project, very rarely it is asked that such collaboration exist. On the other, some scientists who may be inclined to use artists in the research strategies, not only in the communication of final results but also in collecting data (e.g. traditional or local knowledge and perspectives) may not do so for fear of having their proposals turn down –on the grounds of lack of disciplinary or scientific rigour.

So one idea which emerged from this group is that the reviewing processes in particular fields of the eu funding mechanisms should be adjusted, regarding the composition of evaluators, to include artists. This should also be accompanied with changes in ‘what is asked for to attract the right people’. This demand for collaboration should be very spell out very clearly in the requirements for the research projects.

Another idea that came up in our group was the need to create a network or a platform (a Coordination Action?) to build on the insights and contacts created in this Tipping Point meeting.

Regarding communication strategies we need also to consider whether to expand the range of means and techniques to convey a message or to go deeper in one single means...

We have some examples from collaboration of artists and scientists in the translation of scientific knowledge and of local knowledge into actiond -e.g. in Africa /India, etc- this more than just communication. All these bottom-up initiatives are very important but for the type of challenges we face now –on climate change, etc- they also need to be complemented and accompanied with some top-down strategies.

Finally, to address the issue of cultural approach to science is crucial. For instance, the lack of an agreement in some key political negotiatoins is may be due to the lack of a common cultural ground from which to share a trustful dialogue. Artists may help to build these cultural bridges –e.g. through music or any other artistic expression.

FP7 Civil society science partnerships

The European Commission is launching a new program called 'partnerships civil society / scientists for sustainable development'. The program aims at making scientists and civil society groups interact to activate learning processes in initiatives aimed at solving concrete problems related to sustainability, and to stimulate _ reflection on science methods and theories.

The concept of science / civil society partnership has been discussed with regard to two themes:

1. how to recover wasted resources through collective action? How to raise consumers' awareness of the energy intensity of their consumption? Examples such as unused peak energy, 'transition towns', Indian restaurants' used oils, local currencies, initiatives to avoid plastic bottles have been made.

2. How to mobilize sport into community action? Sport can foster community development and have a mass audience. It has been observed that sport is not politically and gender neutral. Examples of initiatives involving sport have been made such as community festivals, community biking, sports in the streets - that may motivate population to defend free from cars open spaces in the city.