

STEPS Centre Symposium 2009
September 24th G24/25 - The Freeman Centre, University of Sussex

Innovation, Sustainability, Development: Emerging themes, challenges and opportunities

We live in a time of transformations. The collapse of the Washington “consensus”, the financial crisis, the rise of China and other emerging economies and, of course, the threat of global climate change call for a rethinking of existing institutions, structures and paradigms. At the same time a renewed democratic spirit is mobilising sections of global civil society with hopes of radical reform. However, the agenda for the Copenhagen climate talks seems to fall short of this goal, and the G8 declaration from Abruzzo leaves many unanswered questions. Especially unclear is the precise role of science, technology and different forms of innovation in tackling the multitude of challenges, and the ways in which they can be co-ordinated to respond to urgent needs at different levels of society. In this time of change, the STEPS Centre is focussing its annual symposium on the emerging themes, challenges and opportunities that current reconfigurations present for innovation, sustainability and development. We hope to draw academics, policy-makers, civil society and private sector representatives together to discuss positive reforms at international, national and local levels that will link innovation to the goals of poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability. The symposium forms part of the STEPS Centre project “Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto” (www.anewmanifesto.org).

Goals of the Symposium

The STEPS Centre would like the day’s proceedings to:

- Identify, highlight and discuss new approaches to the governance of science, technology and innovation for poverty alleviation, social justice and environmental sustainability objectives.
- Gather feedback, both positive and negative, on the first draft of the STEPS Centre’s “new manifesto”, which will be tabled at the symposium or provided to participants in advance.
- Draw together and debate more detailed recommendations around broadening the scope of innovation policy, informing and democratising innovation.

Videos and summaries of the symposium discussions will be documented on the new manifesto website (www.anewmanifesto.org). The event will also act as the launch for a broader series of engagements with different partners at international roundtables to be held between October 2009 and March 2010. Together, these events will contribute to highlighting a diversity of viewpoints around innovation, sustainability and development in the run-up to the launch of the final “new manifesto” in Spring 2010.

Programme

Wednesday 23 September

- 6.45pm Shuttle bus from Jury's Inn Hotel to Carluccio's Restaurant
- 7.00pm Dinner at Carluccio's Restaurant, 1 Jubilee St, Brighton BN1 1GE

Thursday 24 September

- 8.30 Shuttle bus from Jury's Inn Hotel to the Freeman Centre, UoS
- 9.00-9.30 Registration
- 9.30-9.40 **Welcome and Introduction (Melissa Leach)**
- 9.40 -10.30 **Session 1: Themes, challenges and opportunities – international debates**
Chair: Melissa Leach
Provocation: Adrian Ely, STEPS Centre
Responses: Geoff Oldham, co-author of "The Sussex Manifesto" (1970)
Banji Oyelaran-Oyeyinka, UN Habitat and UNU-MERIT
Tony Marjoram, UNESCO

This first session will introduce and contextualise the new manifesto project, firstly by identifying opportunities and challenges for radical change, and putting forward provocative recommendations through which innovation might better serve sustainability and development objectives. Responses will provide a historical perspective to the manifesto and discuss how debates within academia and the international community (especially UN system) are evolving to address today's urgent challenges, in particular asking how can initiatives at various levels facilitate innovation in multiple desirable directions? How can the distribution of benefits, costs and risks from new innovations be made more equitable? How can emerging innovation systems be shaped so as to accommodate social, technological and ecological diversity?

- 10.30-11.00 Tea and coffee
- 11-12.30 **Session 2: Grassroots/bottom up innovation: How to facilitate emergence and flourishing**
Chair: Ian Scoones
Provocation: Anil Gupta, Founder Director, HoneyBee Network/ IIM-Ahmedabad
Responses: Monique Salomon, Prolinnova South Africa/PELUM South/University of Kwa-Zulu Natal
Hiroyuki Kubota, Executive Advisor to DG, Rural Development Department of the Japan International Cooperation Agency
Adrian Smith, STEPS Centre

Grassroots innovation can cater for needs that remain invisible to large private or public sector actors, and complement local practices and knowledge rather than displacing them. Bottom-up initiatives may drive innovation in directions that serve environmental goals within niches that may

eventually displace less sustainable socio-technical regimes. At the same time we need to find ways to identify and exploit complementarities between these models and more formal, capital-intensive approaches. This session will ask if, and how grassroots innovation and formal R&D-based initiatives can be arranged to work together? How can bottom-up initiatives be promoted without stifling innovativeness and creativity? Should bottom-up innovation be steered in certain (environmentally sustainable) directions, and if so, how?

12.30-1.30 Lunch

1.30 – 3.00 **Session 3: What opportunities are presented by the global redistribution of innovative activity?**

Chair: Martin Bell

Provocation: James Wilsdon, Director Science Policy Centre, Royal Society

Responses: Xiulan Zhang, Dean, School of Social Development and Public Policy, Beijing Normal University, China
Suman Sahai, Gene Campaign, India
Anabel Marin, SPRU – Science & Technology Policy Research

This session will discuss the opportunities and challenges resulting from the emergence of new centres of science and innovation. Drawing initially on the Demos “Atlas of Ideas” project, and the international activities of the Royal Society, the session will debate differing perspectives on the global “redistribution” of innovation. How has the increase in certain types of innovation in China, India and Latin America contributed to poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability at local, national and international levels? How can governments manage the changing dynamics of competition and collaboration, and work together to facilitate innovation that serves environmental, social and economic goals?

3.00-3.30 Tea and coffee

3.30-5.00 **Session 4: Internationalisation of science, technology and innovation policy: What room for “constitutional” reform?**

Chair: Adrian Ely

Provocation: Andy Stirling, STEPS Centre

Responses: Des Turner MP, Member of Parliament for Brighton Kemptown, Member: House of Commons Science and Technology/ Innovation Committee, Drafting Committee of the Climate Change Bill 2007
Richard Jolly, Research Associate, IDS and co-director, United Nations Intellectual History Project
Brian Wynne, Professor of Science Studies, Lancaster University

In response to a set of radical suggestions put forward in the New Manifesto, this session will discuss the potential for reform of institutions involved in setting STI policy (including governmental and non-governmental actors at national and international levels) in ways that might deliver increased democratic accountability to the stated beneficiaries of such policies. The session will ask what role do, and should, parliaments have in allocating resources, identifying priorities and influencing innovation pathways (e.g. for low carbon growth), both domestically and across countries? How can innovation policies be made more transparent, accountable and responsive to citizens' needs at national and international levels? What role do intergovernmental organisations such as the UN have to play in co-ordinating S&T efforts in order to respond to global challenges?

5-5.30 **Responses from the international community, government, media, civil society and the private sector**

Chair: Melissa Leach
Speakers: David Dickson, Editor, SciDev Net
David Grimshaw, Practical Action/DfID
Joachim Voss, Independent Consultant, previously CIAT
Christine Drury, Independent Consultant, previously Unilever
Individual(s) from UK government tbc

This last session will reflect on the day's discussions from the perspective of the media, NGO, government, the private sector and international organisations, linking some of the emerging themes to ongoing and planned activities in these various bodies.

5.30 Drinks reception

7.00 Shuttle bus to Brighton Station (and Jury's Inn Hotel)

Map 1: Brighton addresses



Jury's Inn Hotel, 101 Stroudley Road
Brighton BN1 4DJ
Tel. +44 (0) 1273 862 121

Carluccio's Restaurant, Jubilee Street, Brighton BN1 1GE
Tel. +44 (0) 1273 690 493

Map 2: The Freeman Centre, Sussex University



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Other contact details:

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