

Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto

Roundtable Convenor's Pack

November 2009 version

Thank you for your interest in organising a Roundtable for the project *Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto*. Please find below a list of contents of the Roundtable Convenor's Pack – five sections aimed at helping you organise your event and share the outcomes.

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If you have any questions once you have read through the Roundtable Convenor's Pack, please do not hesitate to email info@anewmanifesto.org or get in touch with STEPS Centre co-ordinator Harriet Le Bris on +44 (0)1273 915671. This convenor's pack will be updated periodically, so please check the New Manifesto website (www.anewmanifesto.org) for the latest version.

Thirteen Manifesto background papers have been written by members of the STEPS Centre and are currently available online at: www.anewmanifesto.org/publications

Along with this roundtable pack, you received a draft copy of the New Manifesto document we are working on at the STEPS Centre. You may or may not choose to use this document in organising your roundtable. In either case, we very much encourage comments and critiques, specific and general. Please send these by email to: info@anewmanifesto.org

We are looking forward to being able to share the results of your roundtable discussions or your own 'Manifestos' with the wider world via our website, where these will be appropriately attributed to you and/or your organisation(s). To submit your roundtable report, please email info@anewmanifesto.org.

Thank you again for becoming involved in this project! We look forward to working together with you on new ways of linking science and innovation to development for a more sustainable, equitable and resilient future.

Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto

Roundtable Background Briefing



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What is the 'New Manifesto' Project?

[Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto](#) is a project of the [STEPS Centre](#), which aims to involve partners around the world in rethinking policies around science, technology and development, towards the development of cutting edge ideas and innovative policy recommendations. The Project will highlight diverse perspectives and stimulate debate via a series of international roundtables, held between May 2009 and March 2010, and using a virtual platform of a dedicated multimedia website and associated interactive web tools.

Regional roundtables are already planned in association with various STEPS Centre partner organisations. However anyone is invited to initiate a roundtable or submit comments, and may be guided by this Roundtable Convenor's Pack. All roundtable convenors are asked to submit a report or 'Manifesto' following from their event and any associated multimedia to be highlighted on the New Manifesto website. Thus the site will serve as an online forum for discussion where others can read, comment, share and exchange experiences using our integrated STEPS blog.

A team of researchers at the STEPS Centre will be drafting a 'New Manifesto' document which will draw inspiration from this international discussion, without attempting to incorporate all the diverse viewpoints. This New Manifesto, to be launched late in the first half of 2010, will seek to recommend new ways of linking science and innovation to development that address dynamic, uncertain global contexts and challenges of poverty reduction and social justice to create a new policy and funding agenda for a more sustainable, equitable and resilient future.

Background to the 'New Manifesto' Project

At the tail end of the 1960's the United Nations asked for recommendations on science and technology for development from 'The Sussex Group' - a team from the [Institute of Development Studies](#) (IDS) and [SPRU](#) (Science and Technology Policy Research), at the UK's University of Sussex. The report was intended as the introductory chapter to the UN World Plan of Action on Science and Technology for Development for the UN Second Development Decade, the 1970s. However, some proposals presented in the Sussex Group Report were considered too radical for the scientific establishment at the time. In addition to advocating challenging targets, the Sussex Group argued that an increase in the scale of S&T activity was inadequate on its own and required institutional rearrangements or risked being largely 'irrelevant' in developing country contexts. In particular, the Report showed a need to consider demand for science and technology 'services' as well as supply (e.g. of human resources and institutions).

Discussions within the UN earned the draft the title of "The Sussex Manifesto" [[download](#) the original document]. Negotiations resulted in the Report finally being included as an annex to a separate UN advisory group report instead. The Manifesto's publication in 1970 went on to raise awareness of science and technology in UN circles, influenced the design of development research institutions such as the Canadian International Development Research Centre ([IDRC](#)) and was used for teaching courses in both Northern and Southern universities.

Forty years on, the worlds of innovation and development have evolved beyond recognition. We live in a highly globalised, interconnected and yet privatised world. We have witnessed unprecedented advances in science and technology, the rise of Asia and ever-shifting patterns of inequality. Many of the old certainties of development and ‘modernisation’ no longer hold true. A fluctuating context of global political, financial, demographic, and environmental change require new ways of thinking and greater attention to sustainability, equity, resilience, the role of civil society, a systems focus on governance and human rights.

So what kind of Manifesto is needed for today’s world? The Sussex-based STEPS Centre and one of the authors of the original 1970 report, Professor Geoffrey Oldham, seek to bring cutting-edge ideas and some Southern perspectives to a New Manifesto relevant for today’s complex world. Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto aims to challenge the mainstream models of science and technology for development that have become integral to government and international agency policy. The Manifesto will build on the STEPS ‘Pathways’ approach to explore alternative ways of linking knowledge and innovation to development in ways that address and connect the “3Ds” - directionality, distribution and diversity - relevant across different sectoral and policy arenas.

- **Directionality** – of science, technology and society towards specific Sustainability objectives (rather than unspecified ‘progress’ which emphasises economic growth)
- **Distribution** – more equitable and legitimate distribution of costs, risks and benefits associated with different forms of innovation
- **Diversity** – allowing socio-technological systems to accommodate social, cultural and ecological differences

For more on these themes, please see <http://www.steps-centre.org/PDFs/3Ds%20in%20brief.pdf> .

The Role of the New Manifesto Roundtables

Since late 2008 the STEPS Centre has been hosting seminars and preparing background papers that may be drawn upon in the New Manifesto or in roundtable discussions.

In the second half of 2009, large and small roundtable events around the world will be held by STEPS partners, SPRU-IDS alumni networks, as well as other organisations and individuals with an interest in the New Manifesto and its agenda. The objective is to provide a forum for diverse and varied perspectives in local, regional or national contexts of innovation, sustainability and development, as a first step toward a deeper international engagement on these issues, rather than to force an international consensus. Roundtable convenors are asked to write a short report (c. 1,000 words – see “Roundtable Report Format” in this pack) which will be featured on the Manifesto website, as well as to submit alternative media (photos, video, audio, other creative contributions), if possible. The STEPS Centre will try to respond to each of the output reports before the final draft is published. The Manifesto website will thus serve as a central hub for debate and discussion, setting the stage for future collaboration in research and policy. The aim is to provide a space to see how ideas are developing across the world, and to enable roundtable participants and others to contribute and exchange feedback.

Your ideas and suggestions are welcome on carrying forward this collaboration.

Participate beyond the Roundtable

Please take a look at other roundtable reports, comment and respond on the Manifesto website and STEPS blog and sign up to the Manifesto RSS newsfeed and STEPS e-newsletter so that you are kept up-to-date with new material such as new seminar podcasts, video or roundtable reports. The aim is to stimulate international discussion and engagement with these ideas, to share experiences and set the stage for translating these ideas into policies and practice.

The Launch of the New Manifesto

We plan to launch the New Manifesto late in the first half of 2010 in a 2-3 day conference attended by STEPS Centre members, international partners, and other invited guests, including ministers and policy makers from national governments and IGOs, leading researchers and prominent civil society and private sector representatives active in the field of science and technology for development. The launch will provide the foundation for ongoing discussion, with hopes for further research and policy engagement, including refining and mainstreaming of the proposals put forward in the New Manifesto and roundtable reports.

More about the “3 Ds”

Directionality of Innovation: Established political and economic approaches to innovation and development emphasise the scale and pace of advances and how efficiently resources produce required outcomes. However knowledge, innovation and development also have ‘vector’ qualities that involve direction (as well as scale). Science, technology, research, policies, institutions and infrastructures can all develop along alternative path-dependent trajectories. Rather than restricting policy consideration to questions over the pace, efficiency and distributional consequences of going in any particular direction, focus is needed on the nature of the direction itself – and multiple alternatives.

Distribution of Consequences: It is well recognised that social distribution of economic resources, political power and cultural engagement are unjust in most countries. Yet, to the extent these are addressed in conventional innovation and development policies, this tends to assume that the direction of change is that favoured by powerful interests. Poverty reduction and well-being of marginal groups are thus reduced to a secondary, ‘tactical’ level. But distributional issues also present important criteria against which large-scale directions for change might be judged. Appraising alternative directions can enhance the scope for addressing crucial issues around the distribution of risks, burdens and benefits.

Diversity of Pathways: Established approaches to innovation and development tend to assume there exists some broadly most favourable configuration for technologies, practices or policies. Yet preoccupations with the ‘bottom line’ in business or ‘evidence-based decisions’ in policy making neglect the value and importance of diversity. This provides a crucial means to: preserve context-sensitivities in a world of globalisation, harmonisation and standardisation; ensure ‘not all eggs are in the same basket’ amidst uncertainties; foster more resilient and robust forms of innovation; enable accommodation of otherwise irreconcilable perspectives in plural societies; and counter and ameliorate concentration, momentum and lock-in in the dynamics of development and innovation. In a world of contending directions for innovation and development and a concern for the social distribution of their consequences, deliberate pursuit of a diversity of possible pathways has great potential.

Innovation, Sustainability, Development: A New Manifesto

Guidance for Roundtable Convenors



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Suggestions for Organising a Roundtable

Your roundtable can be small or large, a one-off event or attached to another related event, for example, as a break-out session or lunchtime discussion. Enclosed in this pack is a set of possible areas for discussion, meant to be flexible enough to encourage a broad range of perspectives, while providing a format that enables comparison with roundtable reports in other locations.

In other words, we want to help create and support an online forum for people in different parts of the world to see how others relate to the same set of issues, enabling a virtual space for deeper debate and discussion. We do not want to predetermine your responses or dictate how you go about answering the questions. You may prefer to reformulate or come up with other questions more relevant to your context. That said, we ask that at minimum you please submit a written report to be uploaded to the website for others to view, while we also encourage other artistic and creative forms of roundtable outputs.

Time: Ideally we suggest allocating at least 3 hours to the roundtable discussion. But the format is flexible enough to be shorter - perhaps used during a lunch meeting - or longer - extended to a half or whole day.

Participants: Anyone with some involvement or opinions on science, technology, innovation, sustainability or development: this may include representatives from civil society, academic or other researchers, government (local, regional, national) policymakers or policy advisors, private industry, technicians, scientists, development practitioners from non-governmental organisations, international aid agencies or community development initiatives, journalists etc, etc.) Gather a list of attendees and their organisations, and encourage participants to leave their contact details if they would like to participate in follow-up events.

Preparation: It is helpful to assign individuals to the roles of facilitator and rapporteur, or to rotate the role as the organiser or group prefers.

We recommend sending the background briefing, possible areas for discussion and timeline activity to participants in advance of the session so they might prepare their thoughts before the roundtable.

If you have a large group, you might consider dividing the group to address the same or different questions separately and then convene to share outcomes of the discussion in a plenary.

Recording or Documenting the Session: If equipment is available to photograph or record the sessions (video, audio or still) and participants have clearly indicated they are comfortable, we welcome any photos or recordings and will post at least a clip or possibly the entirety of these sessions on the Manifesto website. Guidance is available on this; please get in touch if you would like assistance or to discuss this further.

Please ask participants to indicate clearly whether they agree for their personal quotes or contributions to the roundtable reports (video, audio, or written) to be attributed by name, and if they are happy for this to be included on the website and other reports from the Manifesto process.

Clarify that the roundtable report will be published online, and that if participants do not want to be named, they can still speak anonymously if they choose. Similarly, comments from roundtables should be recorded to indicate where they reflect individuals' personal views, rather than formally representing their organisations.

Sending in your report and other material: Please submit your roundtable summary report by email (See 'Roundtable Report Form' in this pack) to info@anewmanifesto.org with details of the participants and any multimedia (photos, video, audio), as well as any constructive feedback on the roundtable process or content. The STEPS Centre will consider the outputs and aim to produce a response by the time the New Manifesto is finalised.

Note: There may be a limited amount of funds available to support roundtable events (local transport to venue, hire of recording equipment/materials, etc). Please email us at info@anewmanifesto.org for further information.

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Timeline Activity



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The online timeline aims to provide some historical context to current efforts toward effective policies that address science, technology, and innovation for sustainability and equitable development. Similar to the intention of the roundtables in calling attention to current realities, the New Manifesto Project timeline is aimed to elicit your ideas and participation in highlighting what has been historically significant in your region/nation/community, in other words what has happened IN and FROM countries in the South, not just related to efforts initiated by international or bilateral aid organisations. As you add events and documents to this timeline, this resource will be enriched and evolve into a unique 'open-source' research and learning tool.

As a short introductory activity, brainstorm key events or ideas in your area of focus, region, sector, or internationally, responding to the question:

What have been landmark events or publications over the last 50 years at the intersection of science & technology, innovation, sustainability and development?

Please submit this information for inclusion on the New Manifesto Wiki Timeline by providing the following information about each event by email to: info@anewmanifesto.org

Title

Date of event/publication (DD/MM/YYYY if known)

Summary Description (no more than 100 words)

Upload Link/Photo/File

Key importance/influence (no more than 400 words)

Source (give reference)

Type (event/publication)

Domain (if applicable)

- Water
- Agriculture
- Health
- Energy

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Possible Areas of Discussion



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Part 1 – Where do we want to go?

Here you might do a simplified ‘visioning exercise’, encouraging participants to visualise their ‘preferred future’. What are the most important characteristics of this imagined future, and how do these translate into ‘sustainability’ or ‘development’ objectives? How might achievement of these objectives be assessed or ‘measured’? If you think for the purpose of this exercise it is necessary to describe a working definition of any of these terms, please briefly document any discussion or outcome.

Drawing from your own experience, what are the most pressing sustainability and development objectives within your (global/national/local/sectoral) context?

Issues to think about:

Notions of ‘sustainability’ and ‘development’ differ between contexts – we encourage you to be explicit about the context you are addressing (global/national/local/sectoral) and your sustainability objectives. This does not need to be an exhaustive list; instead it may be helpful to focus on a set of objectives for the purposes of this discussion. If the group is unable to agree on a set of the most urgent objectives, please take note of the options discussed and record as much of the disagreements as possible.

In your opinion, are certain attributes/impacts of sustainability and development more crucial to address than others? How do you evaluate or measure these? (E.g. economic growth, absolute poverty indicators, distributional disparity, reduction of specific technological/non-technological risks, or changes/efficiency in resource use). What are other desirable characteristics that may be more difficult to measure?

Part II – How do we get there?

*Here you might like to break out into groups to focus on a particular sector or regional challenge, and consider how ‘innovation’ - again, following whatever form(s) or definition(s) you prefer - might more specifically help to achieve the future vision(s) described above. How did or might these innovations develop (i.e. under what conditions)? What makes these innovations unique in achieving the above visions? Are these already ‘mainstream’ or fringe/niche innovations? How might these innovations be better supported, sustained, and strengthened (policy, funding, etc - **please be as specific as you can**)? What are constraints and how might these be overcome (**again, please be specific and detail specific projects, policies, research, etc. where possible**)?*

Can you identify three kinds of innovations or initiatives that can help us to meet the above objectives?

Issues to think about:

'Innovation' can take many forms – whilst recognising its importance, we do not want to constrain you to (science-intensive) technologies, as many other forms of innovation can contribute to meeting sustainability objectives. Therefore, you might also consider social practices, informal innovations, or forms of indigenous knowledge as well as new technologies.

How did these innovations come about (private sector investment, bottom-up/informal innovation, public sector research, traditional knowledge, combinations, other)? Were they supported by government policy? What other factors facilitated their emergence?

Do you consider these kinds of innovation as 'mainstream'? Why or why not?

Issues to think about:

Do the forms of innovation just discussed differ from mainstream forms of innovation in terms of who benefits and who 'loses'? Do they display contrasting social, behavioural, cultural, economic, political, environmental or physical qualities? Are there differences in the ways they are regarded or spoken about? Are there different kinds of knowledge or experience involved?

Are these examples of innovations or initiatives (government or non-government) characterised by the 3D agenda (see the right-hand column of Figure 1 in the draft STEPS Manifesto document)? Why or why not?

Are there any constraints preventing these kinds of innovations from flourishing?

Issues to think about:

Are there dominant technologies, interests, infrastructures or policies that are constraining the ability of the innovations identified above from delivering equitably distributed benefits? You might consider what kinds of (social, political, etc) processes maintain the dominance of certain technologies/innovations, and how sustainable innovations identified above continue to survive despite the constraints placed on them.

Are there alternative policies or other changes that could help your preferred kinds of innovations to overcome the constraints identified and better serve development and sustainability objectives?

Issues to think about:

How can science, innovation and development *be linked* to build a more sustainable, equitable and resilient future for people in poverty – in policy and in practice?

Who should take the lead? What role is there (if any) for the private sector, public-private partnerships, government or philanthropically funded research, and how might existing approaches in these fields be improved?

How can policies, governance arrangements and incentive structures be better coordinated to promote innovation consistent with sustainability objectives? How can these policies enable flexibility and avoid dominant innovation directions becoming entrenched in a way that constrains emerging, more sustainable innovative opportunities)?

Is an absence of supporting evidence or are unanswered questions a factor that discourages leaders from accepting and enacting the proposed changes? Please suggest any (research) questions that you believe need to be addressed before policy-makers or others from acting on these proposals.

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Roundtable Report Format



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PLEASE SEND YOUR REPORT BY EMAIL TO: info@anewmanifesto.org

As a roundtable convenor you are asked to submit a short (suggested maximum 1,000 words) report detailing your event, though this may be supplemented by more creative outputs (video, audio, photo, etc). This is **your** Manifesto, if you like! However, to make this process as quick and easy for you as possible – and to enable comparisons across different roundtables - we suggest a simple format for the report as follows:

Roundtable Details

Convenor Name

Contact Email

Participants (name and any organisational affiliation)

Venue Name

Venue Address

Duration of meeting

What is the focus (e.g. sector/geographical area) of your discussion (if applicable)?

Sector

- Water
- Agriculture
- Health
- Energy

Region:

Country(s):

Follow-Up Events: The Launch of the New Manifesto late in the first half of 2010 will be followed by further international events that will build upon the momentum generated to translate the Manifesto's proposals into policies and programmes, and develop research or project proposals for policy change. Would you be interested to host a follow-up event in 2010? Please give details.

Report (Recommended maximum 1,000 words)

It would help us if you provide your report from the Roundtable process under the following general headings (responding to the questions detailed in the “Possible Areas for Discussion”):

1. Local and global sustainability and development objectives and associated favoured “directions” for innovation / development (Note: this does not need to be an exhaustive list, rather you might choose to focus on just a few)
2. Forms of innovation or initiatives that are relevant to meeting these particular sustainability objectives
3. How these do or do not reflect the emerging 3D agenda and other aspects of the New Manifesto draft
4. Principal constraints to these and/or related sustainable innovations
5. Alternative policies, institutions or governance arrangements that could promote innovation in more sustainable directions or better support existing practices/knowledge that help meet sustainability objectives
6. Evidence (if any) for the effectiveness of these alternatives and remaining research needs for better understanding their effectiveness

Feedback

Please share your feedback on the Roundtable process and content.