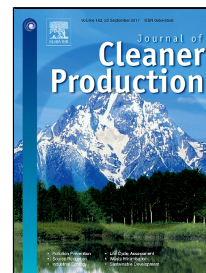


# Accepted Manuscript

Transforming sustainability challenges into competitive advantage: Multiple case studies kaleidoscope converging into sustainable business models

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PII: S0959-6526(17)31836-X  
DOI: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.08.118  
Reference: JCLP 10376  
To appear in: *Journal of Cleaner Production*  
Received Date: 30 September 2016  
Revised Date: 21 June 2017  
Accepted Date: 14 August 2017

Please cite this article as: Sandra Naomi Morioka, Ivan Bolis, Steve Evans, Marly M. Carvalho, Transforming sustainability challenges into competitive advantage: Multiple case studies kaleidoscope converging into sustainable business models, *Journal of Cleaner Production* (2017), doi: 10.1016/j.jclepro.2017.08.118

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***Transforming sustainability challenges into competitive advantage: Multiple case studies kaleidoscope converging into sustainable business models***

**Abstract**

Recent tendency has been pushing organizations to rethink their role in society and making organization reflect that profit may not be the only and foremost important business performance criteria. Thus recent literature has been exploring the sustainable business models (SBM's), as a way to insert sustainability goals into the core of business decisions. This research aims to advance in this body of knowledge and proposes a theory and practice-based framework to support organizations towards more SBM, making explicit main elements to align business to sustainability performance goals. To support the argument that there is no unique solution to design SBM, this research performs a multiple case studies in eleven organizations from diverse sectors, situated in Brazil and in the United Kingdom. Results show that SBM is not an attempt to deny business-as-usual perspective, but rather it seeks to complement this view, by adding a more axiological and systemic approach. In particular, three convergent aspects were identified in the case studies as relevant efforts support the integration of sustainability into SBM's value creation and delivery system: (1) the connection between business purpose and employees' values and believes; (2) the pro-active and clear engagement in solving sustainability problems; and (3) the need for system-level changes to enable successful SBM's. This systemic thinking is highlighted by the concept emerged from the research, the cascaded sustainable value captured, representing that, as SBM's are part of a value network, value delivered by the organizations is captured not only by stakeholders to which they have direct contact, but rather this is also deployed to stakeholders of focal company's stakeholders. This distinction is not always trivial for companies, so the proposed concept can support advances in SBM discussions. Further studies are called to the challenge of making explicit that SBM's are not only companies that directly addresses a specific social and/or environmental problem, but rather is an emerging paradigm on how to manage efficient businesses in any sector to add positive value to the globe.

**Keywords:** Sustainable business model; sustainable value; competitive advantage; sustainable development goals; corporate sustainability; value proposition.

**1 Introduction**

Recent tendency has been pushing organizations to rethink their role in society and making organization reflect that profit may not be the only and foremost important business performance criteria. It is reinforced by the fact that global sustainable development and future generations depends also on companies' current decisions and actions. Companies'

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