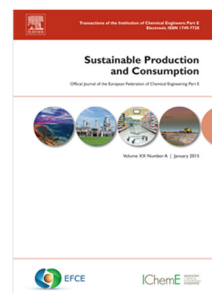


Accepted Manuscript

The sustainable business model pattern taxonomy – 45 patterns to support sustainability-oriented business model innovation

Florian Lüdeke-Freund, Sarah Carroux, Alexandre Joyce, Lorenzo Massa, Henning Breuer



PII: S2352-5509(18)30078-2
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2018.06.004>
Reference: SPC 147

To appear in: *Sustainable Production and Consumption*

Received date: 5 March 2018
Revised date: 21 June 2018
Accepted date: 22 June 2018

Please cite this article as: Lüdeke-Freund F., Carroux S., Joyce A., Massa L., Breuer H., The sustainable business model pattern taxonomy – 45 patterns to support sustainability-oriented business model innovation. *Sustainable Production and Consumption* (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.spc.2018.06.004>

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The Sustainable Business Model Pattern Taxonomy –
45 Patterns to Support Sustainability-Oriented Business Model Innovation

Revision 1, 21 June 2018

ABSTRACT

The literature on sustainable business models (SBMs) offers different classifications of the available kinds of SBM. Our careful reading of this literature reveals that the received classifications have emerged along different trajectories. As a consequence, the proposed classifications are only partly overlapping and difficult to reconcile, thus hampering cumulative progress. Building on this premise, we offer a synthesis and consolidation of the available knowledge about SBMs. Following the notion of patterns as problem-solution combinations, we developed, tested, and applied a new multi-method and multi-step approach centred on an expert review process that combines literature review, Delphi survey, and physical card sorting to identify and validate the currently existing SBM patterns. Ten international experts participated in this process. They classified 45 SBM patterns, assigned these patterns to 11 groups along ecological, social, and economic dimensions of sustainability and evaluated their potential to contribute to value creation. The resulting taxonomy can serve as a basis for more unified studies of SBMs and for new business model tools that can be used in various disciplines and industries to analyse and develop sustainability-oriented business models.

Keywords

sustainable business model; sustainable value creation; corporate sustainability; business model pattern; review; Delphi survey; taxonomy

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