Editorial
Knowledge Sharing and Sustainable Development

Meir Russ [1,2]

1   Austin E. Cofrin School of Business, University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, Green Bay, WI 54311, USA; russm@uwgb.edu
2   Department of Information Science, Stellenbosch University, Stellenbosch 7602, South Africa

As the knowledge and data-intensive economy continues to evolve, in view of the continuously accelerating technological revolutions and pressures from ecological threats and the COVID-19 pandemic (e.g., [1–3]), knowledge and data management is being recognized as a key business asset and a crucial component of national, organizational, and individual strategies [4]. With growing pressure from customers and regulators toward environmental and social issues, companies are increasingly expected to shoulder greater responsibility for making sustainable development a swift reality (e.g., [3]). Moreover, sustainable economic development is facing a complex and paradoxical milieu [5], while it becomes obviously clear that economic growth alone is not an acceptable economic, social, and environmental solution at the present time (e.g., [6]). The need for a circular and agile economy at every scale (e.g., regional, national, and global) and for sustainable development has never been more acutely evident (e.g., [3]). This requires policymakers, planners, and management to balance economic, business, social, and environmental concerns, and outcomes. For this to happen, leaders need to quantify the relationships of all those aspects across different time horizons and link their organizational knowledge base to strategy and outcomes, so they can consider the tradeoffs of different alternatives (e.g., [7]).

Therefore, the ability to share knowledge is quickly becoming vital to secure and maintain organizational survival and success. Moreover, artificial intelligence, digitalization, platformization, and data management are changing the landscape of knowledge and social and human capital management, creating new strategic opportunities and threats while enabling new venues and ventures (e.g., [8,9]). To support sustainable development while also taking into consideration the continuous technological revolutions of AI/machine technologies within that changing landscape (at the meta-system level), an updated model of knowledge management (KM) was recently proposed by Russ [3]. The functioning of the new KM model is framed by the following key aspects of the new *Padkos* milieu [3]:

1. Continuous co-evolution and co-development of the adjoining spheres of society, economy, environment, and knowledge/science.
2. A few of those spheres are 'hitting' dangerous, acting on the edge constraints of their system.
3. Dynamic boundary management between and within the spheres is becoming increasingly complex.
4. Decision-making and learning processes of humans and machines are currently fundamentally intertwined.
5. The half-life of knowledge is continuously shrinking and in some areas is as short as 18–24 months.
6. Finally, the currently ongoing COVID-19 pandemic is only accelerating the trends listed above [10] and the need for a new model of sustainable development [11].

For this Special Issue, sustainable development was defined as economic and social development that meets the economic, social, and environmental needs of the present generation without conceding the ability of future generations to meet their own needs [12],

and also as "a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity" devised to "shift the world onto a sustainable and resilient path" [13] (p. 1). The agenda, consistent with earlier definitions of sustainability and the Triple Bottom Line [14,15] (as well as this model), has three segments: social, environmental, and economic, including seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Additionally, for this Special Issue, knowledge management was recognized as a socio-technical phenomenon in which the basic social constituents, such as person, team, and organization, require interaction with ICT applications to support strategy and add value to the organization, while improving the economic, social, and environmental sustainability of an ecosystem (e.g., [16]). In this context, knowledge sharing (KS) will be defined as an activity through which knowledge is exchanged among, within, or between agents [17].

To support such an agenda, this Special Issue called for papers that encourage an interdisciplinary fusion between diverse disciplines. Specifically, the call for papers solicited articles from a multidisciplinary array of scholars, including economic development, financial, systems–networks, IT/IS data/analytics, behavioral, social, environmental ecosystems, governance systems, and other related (e.g., NGOs) ecosystems. Multi-level and multi-discipline chapters that synthesize diverse bodies of knowledge were strongly encouraged. When appropriate, a plurality of empirical methods from diverse disciplines that could enhance the building of a holistic theory of knowledge sharing for sustainable development was also encouraged.

In this Special Issue on "Knowledge Sharing and Sustainable Development" *Sustainability 13*, five papers were recently published covering diverse subjects related to sustainable development and knowledge sharing. The papers included three theoretical, conceptual papers and two exploratory studies. Naturally, since the focus was on knowledge sharing, all papers emphasized distinctive processes and two of the five focused on capabilities. Moreover, four of the five papers discussed multi-level constructs.

In conclusion, the papers illustrate the complexity and diversity of the subjects that need to be included in the conversation of the application of knowledge sharing for sustainable development, and illuminate the barriers and the opportunities in the transition to a sustainable and agile economy and society.

Conflicts of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

References

1. Boyer, L. Are you Ready for the Fourth Industrial Revolution? Predict. Available online: https://medium.com/predict/are-youready-for-the-fourth-industrial-revolution-5ce767ebc16 (accessed on 10 April 2018).
2. Keidanren. Toward Realization of the New Economy and Society: Reform of the Economy and Society by the Deepening of "Society 5.0". Available online: http://www.keidanren.or.jp/en/policy/2016/029_outline.pdf (accessed on 19 April 2016).
3. Russ, M. The probable foundations of Sustainabilism: Information, energy and entropy based definition of capital, Homo Sustainabiliticus and the need for a "new gold". *Ecol. Econ.* **2016**, *130*, 328–338. [CrossRef]
4. Russ, M. Knowledge Management for Sustainable Development in the Era of Continuously Accelerating Technological Revolutions: A Framework and Models. *Sustainability* **2021**, *13*, 3353. [CrossRef]
5. Ahmed, A. Managing knowledge in the 21st century and the roadmap to sustainability. In *World Sustainable Development Outlook 2007*; Routledge: London, UK, 2017; pp. 16–30.
6. Kotler, P.; Kartajaya, H.; Setiawan, I. Marketing 3.0: From products to customers to the human spirit. In *Marketing Wisdom*; Springer: Singapore, 2019; pp. 139–156.
7. Russ, M. The individual and the organizational model of quantum decision-making and learning: An introduction and the application of the quadruple loop learning. *Merits* **2021**, *1*, 34–46. Available online: https://www.mdpi.com/2673-8104/1/1/5 (accessed on 1 February 2022). [CrossRef]
8. Agostini, L.; Nosella, A.; Filippini, R. Ambidextrous organisation and knowledge exploration and exploitation: The mediating role of internal networking. *Int. J. Bus. Innov. Res.* **2017**, *14*, 122–138. [CrossRef]
9. Johnsen, T.E. Supplier involvement in new product development and innovation: Taking stock and looking to the future. *J. Purch. Supply Manag.* **2009**, *15*, 187–197. [CrossRef]

10.　Bradley, C.; Hirt, M.; Hudson, S.; Northcote, N.; Smit, S. *The Great Acceleration*; McKinsey & Company: Brussels, Belgium, 2020. Available online: https://www.mckinsey.com/~{}\{\}/media/McKinsey/Business%20Functions/Strategy%20and%20 Corporate%20Finance/Our%20Insights/The%20great%20acceleration/The-great-acceleration.pdf (accessed on 12 July 2020).

11.　Leach, M.; MacGregor, H.; Scoones, I.; Wilkinson, A. Post-pandemic transformations: How and why COVID-19 requires us to rethink development. *World Dev.* **2020**, *138*, 105233. [CrossRef] [PubMed]

12.　Bruntland, G.H. *Report of the World Commission on Environment and Development: Our Common Future, Bruntland Report*; Oxford University Press: New York, NY, USA, 1987.

13.　General Assembly; United Nations. *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*; Division for Sustainable Development Goals: New York, NY, USA, 2015. Available online: https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld (accessed on 7 March 2021).

14.　Elkington, J. Enter the triple bottom line. In *The Triple Bottom Line, Does It All Add Up?* Henriques, A., Richardson, J., Eds.; Earthscan Publications: London, UK, 2004; pp. 1–16.

15.　Slaper, T.F.; Hall, T.J. The triple bottom line: What is it and how does it work. *Indiana Bus. Rev.* **2011**, *86*, 4–8.

16.　Russ, M. Introduction and a theoretical framework for Knowledge Management for Sustainable Water Systems. In *Handbook of Knowledge Management for Sustainable Water Systems*; Russ, M., Ed.; John Wiley & Sons, Inc.: Hoboken, NJ, USA, 2018; pp. 1–12. [CrossRef]

17.　Gurteen, D. Creating a knowledge sharing culture. *Knowl. Manag. Mag.* **1999**, *2*, 1–4.