How Do You Transform A Sector? First, Change the World—Step by Step

Kai Chan
Professor, CHANS Lab (Connecting Human & Natural Systems)
Institute for Resources, Environment and Sustainability
2018.11.14       © Kai Chan       @KaiChanUBC
Outline

- Payments for Ecosystem Services → RES
- Certification (+ Consumers)
- Jurisdictional Approaches
- CoSphere/Earth+
- First RSPO, then the world ... Or vice versa?
1. New Externalities

A cure for every ill, an ill for every cure

2. Misplaced Rights & Responsibilities

Polluter is paid

Chan, Anderson, Chapman, Jespersen, Olmsted 2017 Ecol. Econ.
4. Efficiency & Equity

What about me?

Icons by Freepik from www.flaticon.com

5. Burden of Monitoring

Cheating pays, so pay for policing

Chan, Anderson, Chapman, Jespersen, Olmsted 2017 Ecol. Econ.
7. Top-down prescription

What’s Not to Love?

1. A cure for every ill, an ill for every cure
2. Polluter is paid
3. Money breeds mercenaries
4. What about me?
5. Cheating pays, so pay for policing
6. A solution … seeking applications
7. State knows best

Chan, Anderson, Chapman, Jespersen, Olmsted 2017 Ecol. Econ.
A Brilliant Accident

BushTender, a reverse auction
- Efficiency through competition?
- Collusion?
- Underbidding?
- Cognitive dissonance

Let’s not forget values

We won’t achieve sustainability unless we foster ecologically sensitive behaviours, norms & identities
PES → Auctions → Awards

“Land steward: How can we help you do more?”
1. Reward stewardship, not an output
2. Steward is paid
3. Co-pay complements intrinsic motivations
4. Forget ss-additionality: focus on value change
5. Honour code & peer monitoring?
6. Impact offsets / User fees for nature
7. Inspîre agency

Old PES

RES (Rewards for ES)
But let’s not forget small-holders

“Without dignity (of legality), we are paralyzed.”

Certification

Producers

Processors

Distributors

Retailers

Consumers

Marketers

Org

Org

Org

Org

Org Marketers
Certification is cool, but …

Common Challenges

1. Costly
2. Residual impacts
3. Other problems (e.g., labour)
Cacophony of Concerns

• Too many issues
• Too much complexity
• Too much contention

Common Challenges

1. Costly
2. Residual impacts
3. Other problems (e.g., labour)
4. Cacophony
5. Relies on a ‘less-bad’ logic
6. Relies on a ‘green’ identity, deepens divides
Digressions

1. Consumers are crucial
2. Consumers care ... and can be moved
“Other”: Humans have a responsibility to account for our own impacts to the environment because they can harm other people

**Offshore Wind**

Would many pay more?

**Values:**
- Majority is already onside
- Other: Humans have a responsibility to account for our own impacts to the environment because they can harm other people

**Klain, Olmsted et al., 2017 PLOS ONE**
Relevance for Palm Oil

1. It’s lore that consumers won’t pay more
2. That’s only true in one context
3. What matters more is whether they will:
   a. Pay more when it’s built-in
   b. Reward brands who do good
Jurisdictional Approach

1. Sounded too good to be true
2. Sabah + Forever Sabah schooled me
3. Transformative potential
4. Together with RSPO’s P&Cs evolution ...

Overcoming Challenges

1. Costly
2. Residual impacts
3. Other problems (e.g., labour)
4. Cacophony
5. Relies on a ‘less-bad’ logic
6. Relies on a ‘green’ identity, deepens divides

+ Paves the way for RES
Digressions

1. Concerned consumers do buy palm oil
2. More than enough to leverage change
Maybe people won’t identify as concerned until they can take action

E.g., Ocean-Positive (O+)

Connect consumer/retailer concern to actions that do good, linked to but de-coupled from the product
E.g., Project Beef

Co-pay for:
1. Transition to CSPO
2. Going beyond P&Cs
3. Wildlife corridors
4. Forest restoration
5. Enhance habitat
   → Earth+
A Supply Chain for Virtue

Producers

Processors

Distributors

Retailers

Consumers

Stewards

CoSphere

Org

Org

Org

Org
CoSphere

A Community of Small-Planet Heroes (ecologically regenerating economies)
CoSphere: Key Features

- Reaches beyond conscientious consumers to include all
- Leverages existing widely held values of responsibility
- ... By making it easy, enjoyable, and inexpensive to mitigate environmental impacts
- Employs one label, so promotes normalization
- Mitigates impacts efficiently, lessening the divide

Overcoming Challenges

1. Costly ✔
2. Residual impacts ☑
3. Other problems (e.g., labour) ☑
4. Cacophony ☑
5. Relies on a ‘less-bad’ logic ☑
6. Relies on a ‘green’ identity, deepens divides ☑

With RES and CoSphere/Earth+
Summary

• RSPO is onto something powerful, poised to transform
• Concerned consumers are being left out, let’s give them an easy, positive way to express their concerns
• Enlist everyday heroes by enabling actions—inclusively
• CoSphere isn’t a new solution, but an integration
• Join us—in any capacity (Community.Sphere@gmail.com)

https://support.ubc.ca/projects/cosphere-development-fund/

You Can Help RSPO …

• **All**: Vote ‘Yes’ to the P&Cs
• **Brands**: Commit to 100% CSPO, to buying Jurisdictional Approach (JA), pressure retailers, mobilize consumers
• **Governments**: Initiate JA; force transparency
• **NGOs**: Mobilize consumers for net-positive action, pressure all, organize stakeholders for JA
• **Financial Institutions**: Require transparency, pressure
• **Foundations**: Fund JA, net-positive approaches
• **Collaborate** to bring sustainability from niche to normal


A new broad-scope open access journal publishing work from across research areas exploring relationships between humans and nature.

For more information contact Managing Editor Emilie Aimé
emilie@britishecologicalsociety.org

people-and-nature.org