



Conceptualizing SSE towards sustainable consumption and production:

Learning across contexts and cultures, from Geneva to Manila.

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Research Question & Approach



In what way can the SSE lead to more sustainable forms of consumption and production?

- Link two research domains: SSE and SCP
- Compare two contexts: the Philippines and Western Europe
- Discuss implications for transitions towards a more 'sustainable' society

Methodology



Methods:

- Exchanges between:
 - CD and MS
 - In-depth interviews conducted in Manila and Geneva (2012-2013)
- Literature review

Limits:

- Two very different contexts, in terms of cultural context and geographic scale
- Initial insights that merit further development

Conceptualizing the SSE



- Based on the engagement of voluntarily interdependent people (Servet 2006, 2007)
- Either complementary to or potentially transformative of the overall economy (Fraisse 2003; Kawano 2013)
- Promoting democratic processes...
- ...and potentially the democratization of the economy (Defourny and Develtere, 1999; Fraisse et al., 2007)

Conceptualizing SCP



- Reducing material and energy throughputs; reducing negative impacts: loss of biodiversity, global/local pollution, etc. (Georgescu-Roegen 1966; 1971; Daly 1996)
- Tendency to focus on individuals and technologies as central to change (Sahakian 2013)
- Focus on intergenerational responsibility (Brundtland 1987)
- Growth vs Green growth vs de-growth vs growth with prosperity (Jackson 2009)

SSE in the Philippines: how it's being conceptualized



- Strong civil society tradition; *Bayanihan*: working together towards a common goal
- First Asian Solidarity Economy Forum (ASEF): Manila 2007
- 5th RIPESS Global Forum of Social and Solidarity Economy: Manila 2013
- Triple bottom line + edifying values + good governance
- A supply chain approach aimed at transforming the overall economy
- Focus on under-privileged groups

SSE in the Philippines: how it's being practiced



- Active in rural areas, agriculture products/services
- Attempting to create value-chains: organic farmers, with organic pesticide producers, with fair trade markets, etc.
- Engaging secondary cooperatives and their financial services
- But tendency to focus on an elite that can afford such products

Examples of SSE activities in the Philippines



SSE in the Philippines: main conclusions



- New institutional platform (ASEC)
- So many entities in the Philippines could potentially be a part of the SSE
- Need to diversify the SSE offer towards a supply chain approach: solidarity transport, banking, insurance, etc.
- Need for additional internal coherence: to walk the talk within the organizations
- Very little recognition of the SSE beyond its own members;

SSE in W Switzerland: how it's being conceptualized

- A response to social and environmental issues, based on explicit guiding principles:
 1. Social wellbeing:
 2. Participative Citizenship and Democracy:
 3. Ecology:
 4. Autonomy:
 5. Solidarity:
 6. Diversity:
 7. Coherence:Applied to both production and consumption systems

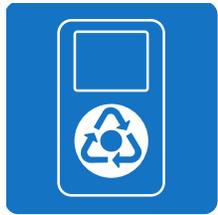


SSE in W Switzerland: how it's being practiced



- Limiting wage differences (between highest and lowest paid employee)
- Limited capital gains for enterprises
- Working towards favourable work conditions
- Participative governance and transparency
- A great diversity of products and services
- Limiting environmental impact within organizations is happening progressively (including procurement strategies)

Exemples of SSE activities in Geneva



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ALIMENTATION
DE PROXIMITÉ



SSE in the W Switzerland: main conclusions



- SSE Chambers rises in the region;
- Great diversity in the types of products and services,
- But limited in size
- But limited vision of how organizations transform the overall economy
- Need to be more coherent internally
- Growing recognition of the SSE as the 'sustainable development' economy

The SSE at a glance

	Philippines	W Switzerland
Institutional arrangement	Regional network established 2013 (few members to date)	City/region chambers since 2006 (several hundred members to date)
Value system	Five bottom lines + supply chain approach	Guiding principles for each enterprise
Offering	Mostly agriculture	Highly diverse products and services
Primary beneficiaries	Focus on underprivileged as producers (not consumers); rural context	Everyday people and ethical consumers
Visibility	Limited	Moderate to high (low in educational system)
Quantified impact on economy	None to date (that we are aware of)	Represents 10% of all jobs; but more research needed

General Conclusion



- The SSE is a **concrete area in practice**, and **conceptually ‘under development’**
- The SSE builds on a **long history**
- The **guiding principles /values** of SSE are more explicit than what is put forward in SCP

- The SSE is most **likely the economy of sustainability**
 - An economy with a market
 - Guided by social and ecological values
- But where **environmental values** can be further strengthened

Discussion Points and Future Directions

- What can we **learn from systems thinking** to strengthen environmental values in the SSE
- Working towards **greater coherence**,
- Recognizing the **importance of culture and context**
- Need for solidarity not only across supply chains, but also **between regions and between socio-economic groups** in a highly unequal world





Thank you for your attention.

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What can SSE bring towards greater sustainability?



- Explicit value system based on putting people and planet above profit
- Concrete examples of environmentally sound and socially fair production systems (Fair trade, local production, etc.)
- Enterprises based on participative governance, concerned for the well-being of workers, consumers and society
- Enterprises that believe in justice, equity and the participation of all stakeholders