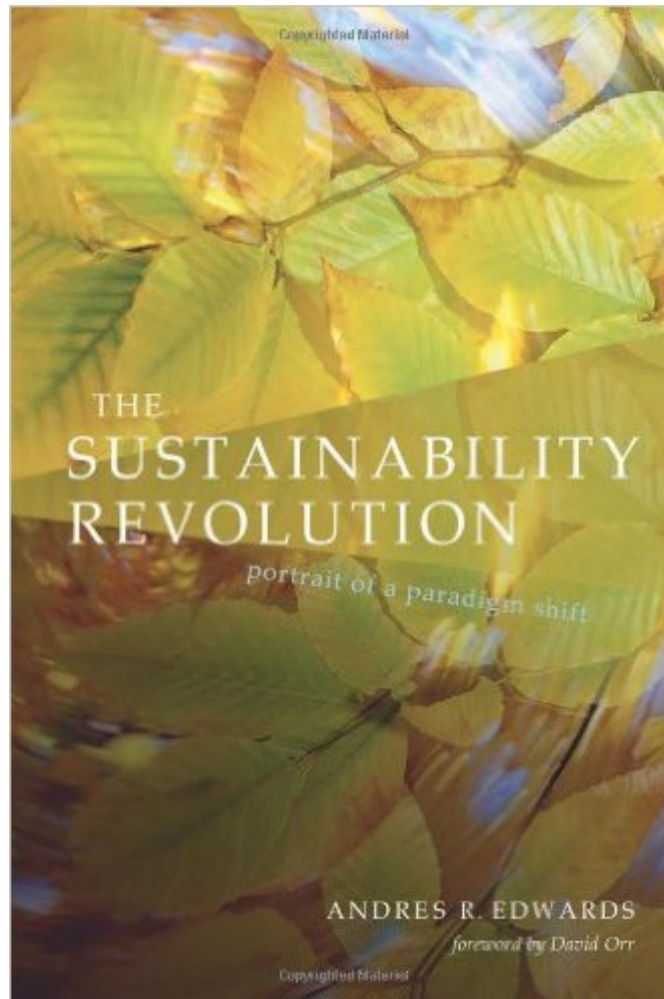


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The Sustainability Revolution: Portrait Of A Paradigm Shift



Synopsis

Sustainability has become a buzzword in the last decade, but its full meaning is complex, emerging from a range of different sectors. In practice, it has become the springboard for millions of individuals throughout the world who are forging the fastest and most profound social transformation of our time—the sustainability revolution. The Sustainability Revolution paints a picture of this largely unrecognized phenomenon from the point of view of five major sectors of society: Community (government and international institutions) Commerce (business) Resource extraction (forestry, farming, fisheries etc.) Ecological design (architecture, technology) Biosphere (conservation, biodiversity etc.) The book analyzes sustainability as defined by each of these sectors in terms of the principles, declarations and intentions that have emerged from conferences and publications, and which serve as guidelines for policy decisions and future activities. Common themes are then explored, including: An emphasis on stewardship The need for economic restructuring promoting no waste and equitable distribution An understanding and respect for the principles of nature The restoration of life forms An intergenerational perspective on solutions Concluding that these themes in turn represent a new set of values that define this paradigm shift, The Sustainability Revolution describes innovative sustainable projects and policies in Colombia, Brazil, India and the Netherlands and examines future trends. Complete with a useful resources list, this is the first book of its kind and will appeal to business and government policymakers, academics and all interested in sustainability. André's R. Edwards is an educator, author, media designer and environmental systems consultant who has specialized in sustainability topics for the past 15 years. The founder and president of EduTracks, an exhibit design and fabrication firm specializing in green building and sustainable education programs for parks, towns and companies, he lives in northern California.

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Customer Reviews

The Sustainability Revolution provides a broad portrait of a paradigm shift, as the sub title claims. Although I checked this out of the library, this is a book to own and refer to especially if you are interested in furthering sustainable best practices or even wondering what they are. Sustainability can be a challenge to get understanding and organized around and this book neatly categorizes it in 7 chapters and concludes with a substantial resource section; it is well referenced throughout for additional follow-up. First we read about how sustainability's environmental roots were expanded to include consideration of the 3 E's, ecology, economy and equity; sustainability therefore looks at the interdependencies of the 3E's and engages a diversity of stakeholders when we broaden the undeniable scope of impact. Ecology is the environmental consideration in which we shift to a long term perspective, acknowledge and respond in turn to our dependence on our life support systems. Looking at economy we see a healthy environment and a healthy economy coexisting, not the opposition of these as is often still purported. The human well being requirement of the sustainability triangle is referred to herein as equity or equality as it acknowledges that the well being of the individual is dependant on the well being of the community and calls us toward a spirit of cooperation and ethics within the distribution of basic resources such as food, shelter and water and a greater emphasis on the value of education. The author then proceeds to describe sustainability principles in 5 basic categories, Community, Commerce, Natural Resources, Ecological Design, and the Biosphere with education as a key component of each as we weave our way into the sustainable path.

TSR comes from discussions of sustainability concepts during seminars at New College of California (xi). Basically, Edwards begins by discussing an overview of the SR and its implications. He writes that sustainability "represents an alternative that supports economic viability and healthy ecosystems by modifying consumption patterns and implementing a more equitable social framework" (3). It encompasses such movements as anti-globalization, organic foods, green building, renewable energy and other "green" movements, climate change movements, population growth, labor rights, environmental justice, etc. The beginning of the SR began in 1972 at the UN conference in Stockholm and the Brundtland report, Our Common Future. While the

movement itself hasn't fully materialized, Edwards believes that it's on its way. What has emerged has emerged mostly in the US and the European Union. Edwards labels five goals of the SR: Remarkable similarities among sustainability groups in overall intentions, large and diverse number of groups, wide range of issues, decentralized leadership, and varying methods of action. There are three criteria of the SR. First is ecology/environment, economy/employment, equity/equality. The movement itself is holistic. It encompasses all of life (as I will argue more later) and seeks to provide a new type of economy, one based on sustainability issues and not necessarily one on profit margin. It recognizes the need for employment, often partnering with labor unions and other practices. The rest of the book looks at different pieces of sustainability ideas, coming from a myriad of places, which I will give a piecemeal account of in my critique. There are many worthwhile things to note about the TSR.

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