

From Politics to Implementation

Topic list for the media

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Topic + speaker/presenter	What is it all about?
<p>Organic farming, digitalisation, innovation Su Kahumbu Stephanou, Kenyan musician, pioneer of organic farming in Kenya</p> 	<p>Organic farming in Kenya: iCow creates more cash-cows It was a crisis moment that led Kenyan musician Su Kahumbu Stephanou into agriculture. One day, she accidentally poisoned her mother while applying pesticide to some tomatoes. Her mother inhaled the poisonous fumes and became seriously ill, but survived. After this, Stephanou began to experiment with organic farming. She has now truly established herself as a pioneer of organic farming in Kenya with her company Green Dreams Ltd. 2010 saw her develop the iCow app. Whether outlining the best milking methods or offering food plans for cows, this knowledge management system provides farmers with training, online videos and individual tips to increase their expertise in livestock breeding. The educational app, which can also be used in audio format on a simple mobile device, should help local farmers to significantly increase milk production, enabling them to feed their families in the long term and make a living from selling the milk. Farmers type in specific information about their own animals or provide the details in a voice-mail message on a mobile phone and then receive an individual analysis with tips for how to optimise processes. This analysis can be provided in written or spoken form as required. Stephanou continues to run her own company to this day, always looking for creative ways of making lasting improvements to the lives of smallholder farmers in Africa. For instance, through Green Dreams Ltd. she has made it possible for Kenyan farmers in Nairobi to sell baskets of their organic produce, similar to what German farmers do.</p> <p>http://www.greendreams.co.ke/</p>

Sustainability, green travel, communication

Ed Gillespie, Co-Founder of Futerra (a sustainability communications agency), travelled around the world without flying



PR consultant Ed Gillespie: 'We need to make sustainability sexy.'

What does it take to get someone to make lasting changes to their behaviour? It was with this question that it all began for Ed Gillespie. He travelled around the world without flying to show that a slow journey makes for a more exciting, intensive and sustainable experience. After his return, he developed LOCO2, a price-comparison portal for rail trips across Europe that helps users navigate the jungle of prices for the continent's train services. Gillespie is convinced that Brits and mainland Europeans will only switch from plane to train if it becomes easier to make bookings, find connections and compare prices. He is now highly adept at persuading people to choose sustainable alternatives. As Co-Founder of London-based communications agency Futerra, he raises awareness of socially responsible and environmentally friendly innovations, such as a hotel in the south of England that has been certified according to sustainability standards, and a new environmentally-friendly packaging material in the United States made from maize.

<https://loco2.com/>
<http://www.futerra.co.uk/>

Organic farming in the big city, innovation

Ed Gillespie, Co-Founder of Futerra (a sustainability communications agency), Non-Executive Director of Growing Underground



London: organic lettuce from an underground rail tunnel

The trend for organic produce has long since taken hold in major Western cities; demand for regional products in these municipalities even outstrips supply at times, as is the case in London. With arable land a rare commodity in the area between Big Ben, Piccadilly Circus and Tower Bridge, what can be done? Steven Dring and Richard Ballard came up with a brilliant idea. As the name of their company Growing Underground suggests, instead of putting their organic greenhouses *in* the city, they put them *under* it, 33 metres down in the abandoned air raid shelter of a London Underground tunnel to be precise. Offering constant temperatures all year round and an absence of pests, the tunnels provide an ideal environment for organic farming. Thanks to a special collection system, the subterranean agricultural enterprise uses 70% less water than it would with conventional methods. The lettuce, herbs, watercress and other vegetables grown there reach consumers within just a few hours due to short transportation distances. The project has the backing of Michelin-star chef Michel Roux.

<http://growing-underground.com/>
<http://www.zerocarbonfood.co.uk/about-us/>

Poverty reduction, education

Sanjit 'Bunker' Roy, Founder of Barefoot College



Education for poor Indians: school drop-out with plenty of life experience becomes teacher

Raised in an upper-class Indian family, from primary school to university he had the best education anyone in India could ask for and later became a squash champion. Sanjit 'Bunker' Roy lived a life of privilege. However, upon seeing the effects of a major famine in northern India in the 1960s, he decided to leave it all behind, moving to Bihar, India's poorest state, to carry out simple rural work. In an effort to alleviate the poverty, Roy set up Barefoot College. A school run by the poor for the poor, it does not look for teachers with qualifications, but rather for lateral entrants and school drop-outs. The idea is for it to be a school that values the life experience of locals more than dry textbook knowledge, and a place where the values of Mahatma Gandhi are upheld. Roy's non-governmental organisation of the same name helps poor people to take control of their own lives. For example, Barefoot College trains grandmothers from Afghanistan, Sierra Leone and several other African countries as solar technicians in India using sign language. These women then return to their own countries and pass on their knowledge to other women who are then able to develop solar-energy systems to power an increasing number of villages.

http://www.ted.com/talks/bunker_roy/transcript?language=de
<http://www.barefootcollege.org/>

Civic involvement, civil society, social business

Miguel Lago, Co-Founder of the Meu Rio network



A direct line to politicians: rethinking online activism

The residents of Rio de Janeiro can use the Meu Rio online platform to do far more than simply send off petitions. Miguel Lago and the platform's other founders have come up with new methods for gaining a hearing from local politicians. Whether it's the telephone service that automatically connects one Meu Rio member after another with the relevant politician as soon as he or she has a free line, or the webcam monitoring a school threatened with demolition, it's all about connecting people with a common cause in the same locality. This means that even a small number of voices can have a tremendous impact. The Nossas Cidades network is expanding the network of activists, having now begun operating in São Paulo as well.

<http://trendreport.betterplace-lab.org/insight/meu-rio>
<http://www.nossascidades.org/organizations/1/>

Organic farming, human rights

Vandana Shiva, nuclear physicist, environmental and human rights activist, winner of the 'Alternative Nobel Prize'



Saving the world with a vegetable patch – or: agriculture as a universal common good

Indian activist and winner of the 'Alternative Nobel Prize' Vandana Shiva thinks that the political world is too sluggish to change global production chains. Consequently, she wants to convince people of the merits of her idea of 'earth democracy', where there is equality for people, animals and plants, and agriculture becomes a universal common good. Shiva believes that providing more vegetable patches for everyone and making more space for gardening in towns and cities would make the topic of sustainable and diversified agriculture more real to people, potentially making the world a fairer place. But the environmental and human rights activist bemoans the fact that the agricultural industry internationally is not geared towards biodiversity, but rather towards maximising yields for global companies. Through the seed bank, research and educational institution called Navdanja, Shiva is developing democratic structures at grassroots level, with an extensive network now having developed in 17 Indian states. Navdanja has trained ten thousand Indian farmers in autonomous sowing practices and now has numerous supporters, such as Kusum Misra, an Indian woman running her own seed bank who also appears in the current German film '10 billion - what's on your plate?'

<http://www.navdanya.org/> <http://vandanashiva.com/>
<http://www.asianage.com/columnists/back-grassroots-882>
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GYH97Jfs_ng
<http://10milliarden-derfilm.de/>

Urban planning, mega-cities, population growth

Aromar Revi, Member of the Leadership Council of the UN's Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN), Co-Chair of the SDSN Thematic Group on Sustainable Cities, Director of the Indian Institute for Human Settlements (IIHS)

Sustainable cities: earthquake expert plans the megacities of the future

Aromar Revi is no stranger to natural disasters. The Indian expert has coordinated the rebuilding efforts following a number of earthquakes, storms and floods, not least after the Kobe earthquake that claimed 4,500 lives in 1995. These experiences have showed him that cities that are designed to be resilient, pursue environmentally-friendly economic practices and enable their residents to live together peacefully and securely will hold the key to our future.

More than 50% of the world's population now lives in cities, with this figure set to rise to 80% by 2050 according to experts. Fast-growing megacities such as Jakarta, São Paulo and Shanghai, often more thrown together than planned, are particularly susceptible to natural disasters. This is reason enough for Revi to place the issue of urban planning on the UN's new sustainability agenda.



The Director of the Indian Institute for Human Settlements has advised 30 Indian states, numerous international projects and three megacities. While rapid urban growth entails many risks, he sees it as a major opportunity. Two thirds of the cities of the future have not yet been built and that is where Revi intends to come in with his sustainable urban planning expertise.

<http://iihs.co.in/>

<http://urbansdg.org/>

<http://unsdsn.org/what-we-do/thematic-groups/sustainable-cities-inclusive-resilient-and-connected/>

<http://unsdsn.org/about-us/people/aromar-revi/>