

A sustainable future must go beyond the domain of purely environmental issues. Unless crucial social issues, such as overconsumption, inequality, poverty, access to education, and democratic participation are addressed, policy efforts for sustainability will fail to mitigate either the drivers or impacts of the environmental crisis. While the weak sustainability paradigm holds that developments on social, economic and environmental issues are interchangeable, strong sustainability demands their combined development. Academics and practitioners should be critical towards untenable trade-offs that originate from a weak sustainability paradigm, for example green growth and decoupling. Economic, social and environmental capital provide complementary services within society and it is not possible to substitute one for another. Strong sustainability is primarily a theoretical framework with few, often small-scale, real-world implementations. Many questions remain regarding its theory, implementation and assessment. It is in this context that the Jean Monnet Excellence Center on Sustainability (ERASME) organised a symposium in December 2019 to question and advance paradigms, models, scenarios and practices that embody strong sustainability. This book is a compilation of the symposium discussions. To initiate wide ranging discussions, the following questions were raised. How do the different sciences (e.g. humanities, engineering, earth sciences) approach the question of sustainability? Are there important differences between these approaches? What are the dimensions, topics, and themes that are part of or, on the contrary, escape the discourse on sustainability? Which are the paradigms embodying the idea of strong sustainability today? Which models, methods and scientific tools consider strong sustainability? Which future scenarios embody the idea of strong sustainability the most? How to finance strong sustainability? How to assess sustainability ?

Each contribution in this book builds on the foundations of strong sustainability to provide new theoretical insights or practical implementations of the concept. The contributions have been arranged in six sections: (1) Digressions on Strong Sustainability, (2) Paradigms for Strong Sustainability, (3) Transition to Strong Sustainability, (4) Education for Strong Sustainability, (5) Strong Sustainability in Developing Countries, and (6) Arts and Science Communication on Strong Sustainability. The contributions show that strong sustainability remains a stimulating paradigm to explore and many diverging efforts are needed towards its real-world implementation.



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