

CAMBRIDGE INSIGHT

POLICY INFLUENCE, BUSINESS IMPACT

25 years of strategic leadership for sustainability



UNIVERSITY OF
CAMBRIDGE

25
YEARS

PROGRAMME FOR
SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP



.....
"What started out as an annual seminar at Madingley Hall has grown year by year to a point where the programme operates in six different countries with more than 5,000 alumni and a whole series of business groups..."
.....

As the Patron of CPSL, I want to send my heartfelt congratulations to everyone connected with the University of Cambridge's Programme for Sustainability Leadership on achieving such a notable milestone.

Even in this very special University, full of remarkable institutions and academic achievement, CPSL stands out as an unusual and very special centre of excellence recognised and admired around the world for its work to bring sustainability alive.

Having first visited Trumpington Street more than 20 years ago, I realise that I have been involved with CPSL almost throughout its life. What struck me in 1993 and still does today was the deep commitment to looking at sustainability in all its dimensions, rather than coming at it in a single dimension and regarding everything else as somehow peripheral. Of course we now realise that is the only way we are going to make sustainability a reality; but looking at things across all the disciplines hasn't always been a conventional or comfortable approach.

All the work that Polly Courtice and her dedicated team have done to draw in knowledge from such a large number of University departments has broken new ground. It was CPSL's inspiring ability to combine breadth and depth of understanding of sustainability issues in a way that makes the whole subject come alive to business leaders and policy makers that persuaded me to ask them to run my Business and Sustainability Programme.

I must say that I am very pleased that I did. What started out as an annual seminar at Madingley Hall has grown year by year to a point where the programme operates in six different countries with more than 5,000 alumni and a whole series of business groups tackling such profound challenges as climate change, banking, insurance and natural capital. It really is a force to be reckoned with.

Whatever the problem and they seem to multiply every year, I know I can absolutely rely on CPSL to harness both the learning and teaching ability of this most splendid University and the strength of the alumni network to get things done. It is a rare and powerful combination and one to which I am heavily indebted.

Charles



Cambridge insight, policy influence,

Polly Courtice, Director, CPSL



For a quarter of a century, the Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership has brought leaders together to acquire new knowledge and understanding, to gain fresh perspectives, and to share insights into tackling the complex and interconnected set of social and environmental challenges faced by society.

Along our 25 year journey, our learning programmes and leadership groups have combined five crucial ingredients to become effective catalysts of change.

We convene senior leaders, typically those who shape corporate strategy and government policy. We regard a leader as someone who can craft a vision and inspire people to act collectively to make it happen, responding to whatever changes and challenges arise along the way. However, having leaders in the room is not enough; it is vital to create a safe, neutral space for people to engage and explore ideas that may be difficult for an individual organisation or sector to tackle alone.

We take a collaborative approach to leadership and change. We have long taken the view that the complex problems societies face are impossible to solve by leaders or institutions working in isolation. Hence, bringing diverse groups together is vital – whether it be across sectors and industries, or up and down the value chain, or by breaking down functional silos within organisations, or crossing disciplinary boundaries among faculty. Creating solutions collectively is our primary means of action.

We focus on the world's most critical global challenges – the sustainability issues of our time, or what some call 'wicked problems'. By definition, this requires a deep appreciation for the interconnected nature of our social, environmental and economic systems. In order to embed this kind of systems thinking, the promotion and sharing of cross-disciplinary knowledge is imperative. This is reflected not only in the diverse array of our faculty, but also in the spectrum of functional and industry leaders that we bring together.

We advocate and support change, with an organisational purpose of helping to change institutions and cultures to create a better world. This means that our work is grounded in a values-based agenda. Despite this, it is essential that we, as learning providers and facilitators, do not have a campaigning or political or commercial axe to grind. It is also crucial that we understand how change happens in complex systems, which is something we continuously investigate, share and practice with the leaders in our programmes and groups.

We seek to create innovative solutions – to apply all the knowledge that resides in the University and among our extensive faculty and alumni network to solving real world problems. This requires that we understand and promote innovation, especially in business models and ways of collaboration, without neglecting the importance of scaling sustainable solutions. We know that incremental change is no longer enough. Hence, we are focused on transformational change, which breaks with the status quo.

The University of Cambridge has provided a unique environment for this work – a place in which intellectual endeavour is celebrated and encouraged, as well as a source of ideas to support the strategic direction of many companies. CPSL's engagement with business leaders and policy makers has also had a notable impact on the ideas and research of many in the Cambridge community; yet we are equally sure that this collaboration is in its infancy, with immense future potential for leadership companies and the University to co-create innovative solutions to society's most pressing challenges.

business impact

Looking ahead to the next 25 years and beyond,

the world faces a singular challenge – to provide for as many as nine billion people within a finite set of land, water and natural resources, whilst adapting to the destabilising effect of a warmer, less predictable climate. Business, of course, has a crucial role in responding to the challenge of our critical interdependencies, supporting economic activity that enhances rather than damages the environment and sustains rather than erodes livelihoods and well-being.

And CPSL, at the nexus of world-class academic research and cutting-edge corporate practice, has a unique contribution to make – helping leaders to make judgments on the basis of the best available scientific evidence and thought leadership; and working with business leaders to develop practical solutions that drive beneficial change in business and the wider system.

In the next five years, we will:

- Rapidly expand the range and depth of our engagement with Cambridge research – generating the conditions in which researchers will engage with companies in a living laboratory of innovation, with problems identified by the companies becoming research opportunities for academics.
- Focus our work with companies on identifying the sustainable business models of the future and, in tandem, exploring how they can be rewarded by the global finance system and policy and regulatory architectures in order to avoid placing economic prosperity at risk.

CPSL is of course immensely privileged to have HRH The Prince of Wales as its Patron. Since HRH's founding of the Business and Sustainability Programme in 1994, he has been an active and passionate convenor, champion and participant in so many of our initiatives. Without his personal leadership and commitment, CPSL would not have become the institution it is today, nor had the impact on so many that it has been able to achieve. This leadership remains central to us as we take the next steps in our journey.

CPSL: a brief history

1988

CPSL founded as the Cambridge Programme for Industry (CPI)

1992

Move into current premises at 1 Trumpington Street

1994

First Business & the Environment (BEP) seminar held in Cambridge, later the BSP

1998

Launch of the Sustainable Learning Network programme (SLN), later the Postgraduate Certificate in Sustainable Business (PCSB)

2002

CPSL South African office opened

2003

Launch of Chronos, a web-based educational programme

2005

Formation of UK Corporate Leaders Group (UK CLG)

2007

Formation of ClimateWise insurance group

Formation of EU Corporate Leaders Group (EU CLG)

2009

Copenhagen Communiqué receives 950 corporate signatures

CPSL EU office in Brussels opened

St James's Palace Nobel Laureate Symposium

2010

Launch of Master of Studies in Sustainable Leadership

Formation of Natural Capital Leaders Platform

Formation of Banking Environment Initiative (BEI)

2013

Launch of Investment Leaders Group

Inspiring learning, leadership and change

Since 1988 we have worked with over 2,000 companies and more than 5,000 senior leaders from business and government.

We have chosen seven initiatives to illustrate the range of ways we are building strategic leadership capacity to respond to the most significant challenges faced by society.

The Prince of Wales's Business and Sustainability Programme (BSP)



Launched in 1994, the Business and Sustainability Programme is the world's longest running senior executive programme on sustainability and one of CPSL's flagship programmes, bringing together senior leaders for an intense, immersive learning experience on leadership, business and sustainability.

According to BSP Director Aris Vrettos, "the programme remains unique in providing mainstream business executives with a quick but deep 360 degree exploration

of global trends and leading practice while creating real opportunities for innovation and collaboration". The programme has inspired many individuals, including current and future CEOs, to make changes within their organisation, but the impact has been even more profound for companies that have seen BSP as a long term learning partnership with CPSL.

For example, Nestlé sends a number of key executives from around the world on the programme each year. Suresh Narayanan, CEO Nestlé North East African Region, says, "The Cambridge (BSP) programme had some very valuable insights on the global perspective and challenges in sustainability that I was not aware of, the environment and participation was excellent and also there were a few ideas that reinforced my beliefs on what I could do in my Market to promote sustainability."

Beyond providing their senior leaders with insights into the latest trends and leadership expectations, it has also helped Nestlé get valuable feedback and learning on its strategy and practice from peers and experts. BSP has provided the company with a safe testing ground for strategic ideas.

The Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group (CLG)

The Prince of Wales's Corporate Leaders Group (CLG) was initiated in 2004, when UK Prime Minister, Tony Blair, challenged business leaders to work with government to deliver bold climate action. In response, a group of prominent UK CEOs were convened by the Prince of Wales and CPSL to create the political space for action. The CLG quickly became the progressive business voice in support of policy reforms such as the UK's Climate Change Act and the EU's 2020 climate and energy package.

The key to the CLG's impact has not only been its ability to convene business on this issue – with over a thousand international companies signing up to its ground breaking communiqués since 2007 – but also the consistency of its voice, even in the face of inadequate responses. “Making the case for climate action is a test of our resilience,” says EU CLG Director Sandrine Dixon-Declève. “We cannot let the pressure slip. Even though we may win small policy battles, we have yet to win the war on climate change.”



Part of this challenge is to convince more leaders of the benefits of a low carbon economy. Hence, the CLG has entered an exciting new phase, says Eliot Whittington, Director of the UK CLG. “We are preparing a new vision for economic opportunity in the face of climate constraints. With the right platform the CLG can become an unparalleled voice in support of ‘green growth’ in the EU and globally.”

Master's in Sustainability Leadership

The MSt in Sustainability Leadership, launched in 2010, owes much of its success to its interdisciplinary design – reflected both in the programme's content and the diverse backgrounds of the participants – and its focus on leadership responses to sustainability challenges. “This has proven to be well aligned with the growing desire amongst business leaders to engage with the complex ‘real world’ issues that they face and to shift from talk to action,” says Course Director, Theo Hacking.

The emphasis on change agency in the MSt has led many students to go on to make a real difference on sustainability challenges. For example, Sean Ansett, who had roles as Director of Corporate Responsibility at Burberry and Director of Global Partnerships at Gap Inc. before embarking on his Master's, has gone on to be Chief Sustainability Officer at Fairphone, a social enterprise that is disrupting the way smart phones are designed, produced and recycled, and Chairman of the Board of Liberty and Justice Clothing. He is also Interim Executive Director of the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh. The Accord – which is a mutually binding agreement between brands and labour unions created after the Rana Plaza factory building collapse on

April 24 2013 – is perhaps the most significant event in garment ethical trade initiatives in the past 15 years and now includes 112 brands, covering 1,600 factories that employ more than 2 million workers.

According to Ansett, “the MSt's focus on systems thinking allowed me to connect the dots and encouraged me to think differently and focus on distributive models that should lead to transformative change. The dissertation was also an important reflection point in my 15-year career and has refocused my knowledge and passion for the next 15!”



The Natural Capital Leaders Platform

The Natural Capital Leaders Platform, established in 2010, has provided global companies that have significant impacts and dependencies on nature's services – such as mining, food and retail businesses – with a safe space to collaborate around improvements to the way they measure, monitor and manage their environmental performance.

One of the outcomes of this work has been the development of a natural capital metrics selection tool, which goes beyond more simplistic approaches to reporting, like those of the Global Reporting Initiative, by comparing environmental impacts with relevant local natural capital constraints.

"The tool encourages the use of more informative, context based measures," says Martin Roberts, Director of the Platform. "For example, a metric which simply reports on a company's water use is of little value until it is clear whether these operations are taking place in a water scarce region or not." In fact, the development of the tool has highlighted the lack of information on critical

ecological thresholds, as well as the ongoing challenge of integrating natural capital considerations into day-to-day management. This imperative forms the basis of a major collaborative piece of work in 2014 around the theme of 'managing what matters' for individual companies.



Finance System

CPSL has long been engaged in building the strategic leadership capacity of the finance sector, for example through ClimateWise (working with the insurance industry since 2007), work with the pensions sector (the P8 initiative), the Banking Environment Initiative (since 2010) and the Investors Leaders Group (launched in 2013).



A key innovation that CPSL has identified and been well-placed to develop is the apparently simple recognition

that finance sector actors are service-providers to the real economy. This means their institutional talent and motivations are orientated towards their clients.

Andrew Voysey, Development Director leading CPSL's finance sector work, explains how this has changed CPSL's approach to making an impact with the sector. "Rather than working with financial institutions in isolation, we have driven the practice of convening 'critical mass' groups of leading corporates, together with their counterparts in banking or insurance, with the goal of identifying changes in finance sector practice or product innovation that could better support client leadership."

For example, the BEI has focused on how the banking industry can support consumer goods companies seeking to transform agricultural commodity supply chains to achieve zero deforestation and ClimateWise has seen the insurance industry work with energy companies to support the delivery of carbon capture and storage. "This approach has unlocked a new dimension of talent, incentives and commitment for change, but the challenge of designing and facilitating such partnerships shouldn't be underestimated," observes Voysey.

Anglo American Sustainable Mining Programme

Anglo American, in partnership with CPSL and the University of Queensland's Centre for Social Responsibility in Mining, has developed a unique programme specifically designed to build the social management capacities of senior managers across the Group.

Jon Samuel, Head of Social Performance at Anglo American says: "How we understand and respond to the expectations of host societies has become an ever-more critical competence for mining companies. The Advanced Social Management Programme has played an important role in helping our senior management to respond to this challenge through an innovative combination of theory, case studies, site visits and group working." A key insight from the programme has been the importance of stepping outside of the classroom to engage directly with on-the-ground projects which address some of the most pressing and profound social challenges.

Lindsay Hooper, Director of Executive Education at CPSL, says "it has been fascinating to work with nearly 200 senior managers from a major mining group, helping them to engage effectively with the complex challenges



that arise at the interface between, on the one side, their international mining operations and, on the other, surrounding communities, host governments and the natural environment. One of the most important aspects of the programme is its focus on strengthening the ability of participants to see these challenges through the eyes of their stakeholders and to explore what real leadership on social performance would look like within their own context."

Online Learning



Chronos, developed in conjunction with the World Business Council for Sustainable Development (WBCSD), was one of the world's first e-learning programmes on sustainability. Over the past 10 years, we granted more than 120,000 Chronos licenses, and many global corporates built the training into their staff induction programmes and other learning and development processes.

"Despite this success," says CPSL Senior Programme Manager James Beresford, "the way that busy professionals use online resources is rapidly changing and we want to respond to this. That is why the new Business and Sustainability Programme Online, to be launched early in 2014, is designed to be flexible, giving learners more freedom. It enables organisations to reach a global audience cost effectively, as well as being customisable." A key feature is that the relevance of sustainability is tackled at both a professional and personal level. Hence, participants are encouraged to reflect on how sustainability relates to their role in the organisation, as well as to their individual values.

At the heart of the learning approach is systems thinking – understanding the complexity of sustainability issues and key interconnections. Issues are brought alive by unpacking the value chains of everyday products, like tea, cars, mobile phones and cotton shirts, in addition to exploring the interconnections between biodiversity, food, health, water, climate and poverty in more detail. The challenges are also made more real by simulating business dilemmas that participants may face and placing them in the shoes of the person who has to recommend a course of action.

We have many people to thank for their contributions over 25 years.

Our Patron

HRH The Prince of Wales

Our Management Board

Professor Chris Gilligan (Chair)

Professor Bill Adams

Professor Howard Chase

Professor Sir Mike Gregory

Professor Ian Hodge

Professor Paul Linden

Dame Fiona Reynolds

Professor Koen Steemers

Professor Bill Sutherland

Professor Liba Taub

Professors Sir Malcolm Grant, Jeremy Sanders, Sir Richard Friend and Sir Robert Mair (former Chairs) and all former members of the CPSL Management Board

Our Advisory Board

Ian Cheshire, Kingfisher (Chair)

Steve Almond, Deloitte & Touche

Andrew Bester, Lloyds Banking Group

Robert Care, Arup

Andy Clarke, Asda Stores

Dame Amelia Fawcett DBE,
The Prince of Wales's Charitable Foundation

Philippe Joubert, Alstom

Lise Kingo, Novo Nordisk

José Lopez, Nestlé

Michael Naylor, Greentech Capital Advisors

Fred Phaswana, Standard Bank

Jonathon Porritt, Forum for the Future

Carlos Manuel Rodriguez, Conservation International

Mervyn Walker, Anglo American

James Smith (Former Chair) and all former members of the CPSL Advisory Board

Our Staff Team

Beverley Anderson

Alison Barrie

Nicolette Bartlett

Jane Batten

Paul Begley

Cécile Belivent

James Beresford

Lucy Bigam

Alexandra Brunner

Chris Burgin

Mara Caboara

Jemma Cobbold

Dr Leila Coupe

Polly Courtice LVO

Elaine Craig

Dr Gemma Cranston

Sandrine Dixon-Declève

Elsbeth Donovan

Dr Louise Drifill

Laura Fresch

Stacy Gilfillan

Melanie Griffiths

Dr Theo Hacking

Emma Harris

Sarah Hayward

Katie Hiscock

Lindsay Hooper

Han Hutton

Rosie Jennings

Ellis Karim

Fergus Kirkpatrick

Magda de Kok

Serena Liuni

Paul Mackie

Emma Mee

Andrew Montague-Fuller

Ellen Mumford

Louise de Muscote

Tomi Nummela

Dele Oke

Mike Peirce

John Pharoah

Francesca Raphaely

Dr Jake Reynolds

Fiona Riggall

James Rostampour

Martin Roberts

Pauline Sharp

Emma Sivyier

Helen Spence-Jackson

Katharine Thoday

Charmaine Thomas

Janna Tweed

Andrew Voysey

Aris Vrettos

Eliot Whittington

Peter Willis

Dr Christopher Padfield (Founder Director) and all former CPSL staff

CPSL Fellows

Dr Kern Alexander

Dr Nancy Bocken

Richard Burrett

Will Day

Dr Nicola Dee

Paul Gilding

Carlos Joly

Tony Juniper

Dr Jenny Pope

Dr Paul Pritchard

David Rice

James Stacey

Dr Farzad Saidi

Our Network

Our Network of Faculty, Tutors, contributors, as well as 5,000+ alumni and many more members of our Business Platforms and participants in our events.

CPSL Senior Associates

Dr Fiona Adshead	Oliver Dudok van Heel	Martin Porter
Terry A'Hearn	Dr Mark Esposito	Stefan Raubenheimer
Charles Ainger	Richard Fairburn	Kate Raworth
Sean Ansett	Tommy Garnett	Chris Rose
Ramon Arratia	Ruth Hillary	Dr Bob Scholes
Enos Ned Banda	Dr Andreas Hoepner	Dr Emily Shuckburgh
Mike Barry	Emma Howard Boyd	Hannah Skeates
Jeremy Baskin	Dr Alan Knight OBE	Professor Will Steffen
Craig Bennett	Professor Melissa Lane	Paul Turner
Jeb Brugmann	Ylva Lindberg	Dr Andrew Venter
Elizabeth Buchanan CVO	Gareth Llewellyn	Dr Wayne Visser
Tom Burke CBE	Professor Tim O'Riordan OBE, DL, FBA	Andy Wales
Professor Richard Calland	Gavin Neath	Penny Walker
Catherine Cameron	Jane Nelson	Mark Watts
Ken Caplan	Dr Stephen Peake	Steve Waygood
Anton Cartwright	Professor Edgar Pieterse	

CPSL works with a global network of 2,000+ organisations through our programmes and platforms. We are particularly grateful to our Strategic Partners, a small group of companies who support our mission.



For more information on how to support our ground-breaking work, please contact Polly Courtice, Director, CPSL: polly.courtice@cpsl.cam.ac.uk.

Cambridge insight, policy influence, business impact

For 25 years the University of Cambridge Programme for Sustainability Leadership (CPSL) has worked with leaders on the critical global challenges faced by business and society.

CPSL contributes to the University of Cambridge's mission and leadership position in the field of sustainability via a mix of executive programmes, business platforms and strategic engagement, informed by the University and other partners. CPSL is an institution within the University's School of Technology. HRH The Prince of Wales is the patron of CPSL and we are a member of The Prince's Charities, a group of not-for-profit organisations of which His Royal Highness is President.



Printed on Revive 100 uncoated paper, 100% recycled
and fully FSC Certified, using vegetable-based inks

In the UK

1 Trumpington Street
Cambridge CB2 1QA, UK
T: +44 (0) 1223 768850
F: +44 (0) 1223 768831
E: info@cpsl.cam.ac.uk

In Brussels

The Periclès Building
Rue de la Science 23
B-1040 Brussels, Belgium
T: +32 (0) 2 894 93 20
E: info.eu@cpsl.cam.ac.uk

In South Africa

PO Box 313
Cape Town 8000
South Africa
T: +27 (0) 21 469 4765
F: +27 (0) 86 545 5639
info.sa@cpsl.cam.ac.uk

www.cpsl.cam.ac.uk