

Business, Ethics, and the environment

Imagining a sustainable future

dr. Tine Compernelle

Who am I?

Tine Compernelle

Master (2008) and PhD (2012) in Applied Economics (UH)

Assistant Professor Environmental Economics at Uantwerp (50%)

Senior researcher at Geological Survey of Belgium (Royal Belgian Institute of Natural Sciences)

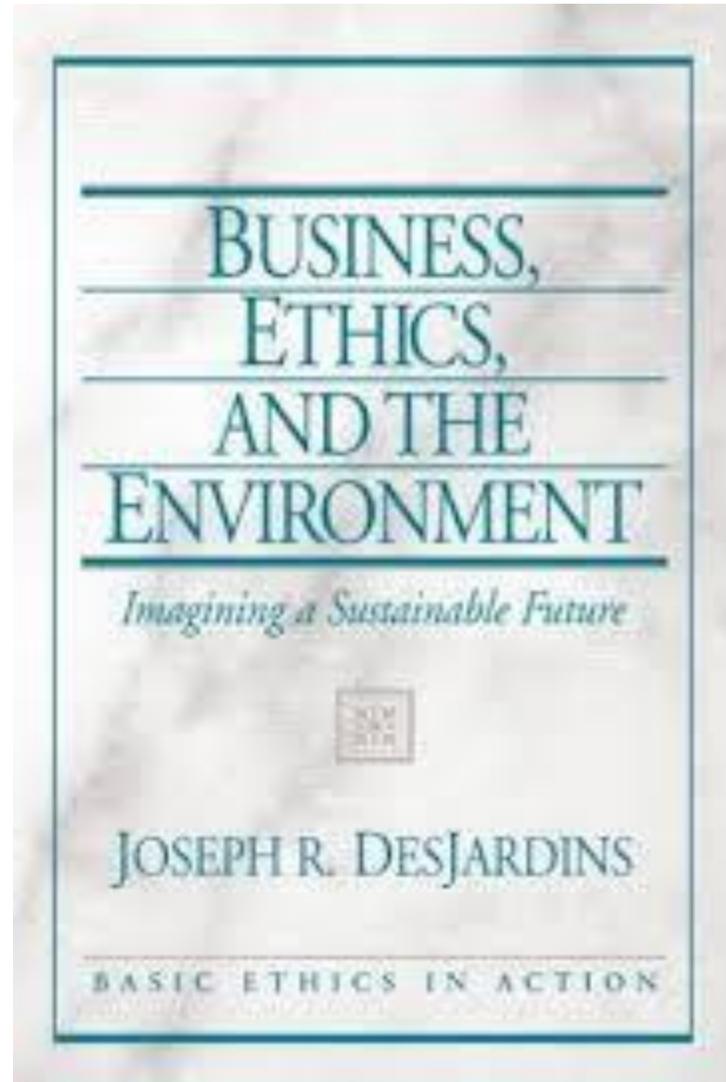
Main interests:

- Decision making under uncertainty
- Within an environmental economic context

Main collaboration:

- Tilburg University / University of York /
- Geological Survey of Belgium
- TU Delft

Sustainability management



Date	Topic	Location	Recording available
17/02 08:30-10:30	Course introduction Chapter 1	M004	Yes
24/02 08:30-10:30	State of the biosphere Chapter 2	M004	Yes
03/03 08:30-10:30	Economic Growth + market failure Chapter 3+4	M004	Yes
10/03 08:30-10:30	Ecological Economics Chapter 5	M004	Yes
17/03 08:30-10:30	Ecological Economics (continued) + The business case for sustainability Chapter 6	M004	Yes
24/03 08:30-10:30	Techno-economic Assessment + ROA	M004	Yes
21/04 08:30-10:30	Intermediate feedback of the assignment	Online	Yes
28/04 08:30-10:30	Sustainable production + LCA Chapter 7	M004	Yes
05/05 08:30-10:30	Guest lecture ASML Marijn Vervoorn	M004	Yes
12/05 08:30-10:30	Guest lecture Kriket Michiel Van Meerven	M004	Yes
19/05 08:30-10:30	Video Presentations	Online	Yes

Evaluation

Evaluation

The Assignment (50% - 1.5 ECTS)

- Paper (30% - 0.9 ECTS)

Understanding the subject (24%): students are assessed on how well they formulate their assessment using the scientific literature and interview results, the validity of their arguments, and the relevance and robustness of their recommendations; 15% on the assessment of the company (1/ and 2/); 3% on recommendations; 3% on the comparison with more global/more local companies and 3% on comparison with other regions.

Quality of the paper (6%): the extent to which the paper is appropriately structured, absence of typos and grammar mistakes, consistent and appropriate use of font, punctuation, page numbers, etc.

- Evaluation of the video by jury members + Tine Compernelle (15% - 0.45 ECTS)
- Peer review report, written for the paper of another group (5% - 0.15 ECTS)

Written exam (50% - 1.5 ECTS)

Re-exam:

The points of the part for which one has passed will be retained. Only re-exam of the part for which one has not passed. If you did not pass the assignment then one gets an individual task. The student must contact Tine Compernelle for the instruction of that task **before the end of the first week of July**.

The assignment

Timing

17 Feb 2022: explanation assignment

24 Feb 2022: groups are formed and firm is selected. E-mail to T. Compernelle by 24 Feb the latest, indicating group members and firm selected, and language (English or Dutch). **Also indicate whether you as a group are available the whole day on 19th May for the video presentation.** You will receive a reply for confirmation. **A firm cannot be selected twice**

21 April 2022: intermediate feedback assignment. On 19 April the latest, send an e-mail to T. Compernelle to ask for a 15 minute appointment on 21 April, if needed. Make sure that you can ask specific questions. It will not be possible to give feedback to all groups within the time-schedule of the course. The agenda of the lecturer is blocked for the full day to give this feedback.

21 April 2022: send your paper for peer-review by e-mail to tine.compernelle@uantwerpen.be . Each group will receive an e-mail with a paper attached for which you as a group have to write a review report of 1 page. (see instructions below)

28 April 2022: submit peer review report **to the group for whom you did the peer review (not to T. Compernelle)**. Use the review report that you receive to improve your own paper. For the paper: write a 0.5 page to indicate whether or not you took the comments into account and why (not). See instructions below.

5 May 2022: You will be informed about the time at which you have to present your video presentation

17 May 2022: Submission of full (including the 10 items listed above), final assignment + video by e-mail (tine.compernelle@uantwerpen.be) at 23:59 the latest. **Late submissions will not be accepted.**

19 May 2022: presentations by video and question round by external jury members.

The assignment

Goal

In **groups of 4 persons**, students read the paper by Khmara and Kronenberg (2018) to get an understanding about degrowth. Then, the students look for a company to analyze to what extent this company and its sector follows this degrowth paradigm. To make this assessment, the students will use the criteria listed in Tables 1 and 2 of this paper, analyze company documents, newspaper articles and have at least one interview with a person from this company. By contacting the company, students are expected to ask detailed questions to know more specifically (i) whether the company measures its environmental impact, (ii) which actions a company undertakes to become sustainable and (iii) how that impacts the organization and operation of the company.

The assignment

Content of the paper (10 components)

Paper can be written in English or Dutch.

1/ Introduction to degrowth. To be based on the paper by Khmara and Kronenberg (2018), the book/PDF by Desjardins (2007) on which this course is based + additional scientific literature on degrowth in a business environment to be searched for by the students. **(2 pages)**

2/ search for an organization or company which is operative on an international scale. **Firms that were selected last years, cannot be selected again** (see overview table on blackboard). Indicate whether this company is a frontrunner or follower with respect to the adoption of degrowth principles, relative to the industry it is operating in. This section should contain the following items **(5 pages)**:

- Give an overview of the environmental and social impacts of the company and the sector as a whole to the extent that this data is made publicly available. Indicate how detailed the data is provided by the company and how these impacts are monitored by the company. If this data would not be available or insufficiently detailed, please state so in your paper.
- Indicate where **the industry/sector as a whole** is with respect to the adoption of degrowth principles. Use the literature consulted in 1/ to base your argumentation on.
- **For the selected company**, indicate whether this company is a frontrunner, follower, or green washer in the industry in terms of adopting degrowth principles. Use the literature consulted in 1/ to base your argumentation on. **Be critical.**
 - o Provide sufficient argumentation that support your choice. You can discuss the primary functions of the firm as well as supporting processes, company stakeholders, etc.
 - o Provide detailed and company specific examples that support your choice: what actions did the company (not) take in the past to improve its environmental and social impact, what challenges does the company face in reaching its sustainability targets?
 - o Provide examples from competitors in the industry that justify your opinion on the companies' position as a frontrunner or follower

3/ Formulate recommendations for the company. Given the above assessment of the company, what are the top 3 programs and/or initiatives the company should undertake to 'catch up/remain on par/remain or become a frontrunner' in the next 3 years? **(1 page)**

The assignment

Content of the paper (10 components)

4/ Reflect on scale. What would be different for companies in that industry that are much bigger and/or much smaller? Give 2 to 3 examples; provide relevant arguments, and specific examples. **(1 page)**

5/ Reflect on geography. What would be different for companies in that industry in another geographical area? Give 2 to 3 examples; provide relevant arguments, and specific examples. **(1 page)**

6/ Response to the peer review **(0.5 page)**

7/ List of references

Annex

8/ Review report you received from another group **(1 page)**

9/ Review report that you made for another group **(1 page)**

10/ Transcript of interview(s)

The assignment

Video

Each group prepares a video which summarizes the results **of the first 5 components of the assignment**. Many firms have videos on their website (corporate videos), to promote and market their product or service, reaching out to their audience, improving engagement, educating customers, recruiting new employees. To create this video, you should imagine that you are working at the company that you selected and that you are asked to put a video online, being truthful and critical about the economic, social, and environmental impact of the firm (relative to the sector), the actions that the firm is taking to become more sustainable, and what should be done in the future.

This task aims to stimulate your creativity and to help you explore new ways of communication (where there is no direct interaction with the audience), compared to a 'traditional' presentation

Duration of the video: 6 minutes max. you can use a background voice but please avoid background music. Each group shows the video during an online session to which external jury members are invited. After the video, the jury members will ask questions to the students.

Evaluation criteria of the video:

Are different components of the assignment clearly and precisely presented?

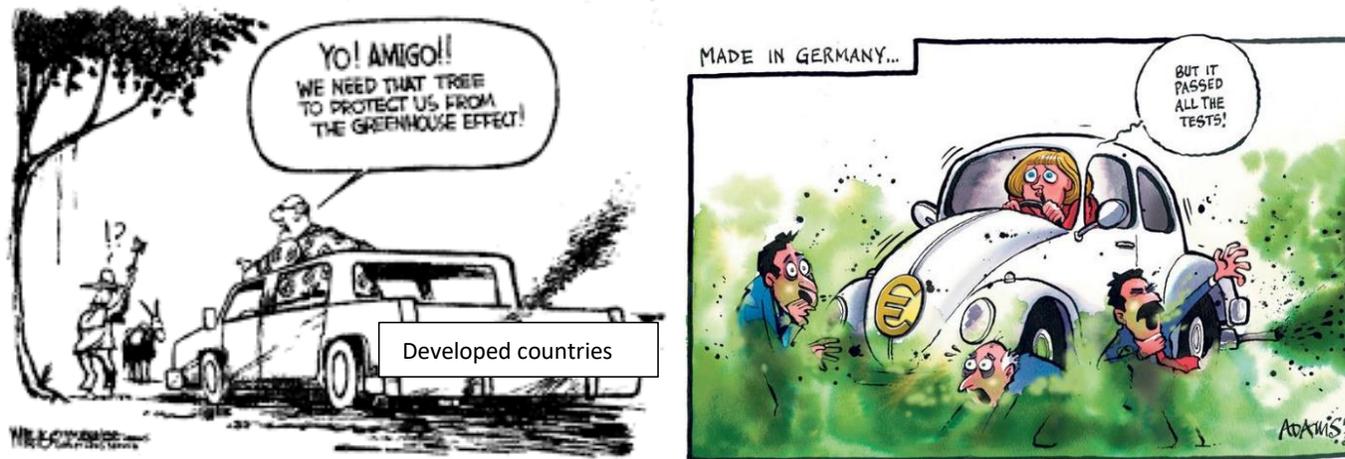
Are argumentations/perspectives evidence-based? When the group presents their point-of-view, what evidence do they provide in support of their point-of-view?

Is the information provided in a logical way?

Level of grammar/vocabulary used

The exam

1. **(4pts)** Study the cartoon below and answer the following questions:
 - a. Explain how the classical, market-based model approaches environmental problems like climate change and how that translates into a business environment
 - b. How does this classical, market-based model fail to protect the environment?



1. **(3pts)** Explain what life cycle management involves and how it is/could be applied at the company that you studied in your group paper.

The exam

1. Zara SA is a Spanish apparel (in Dutch: kleding) retailer based in Arteixo (A Coruña) in Galicia, Spain. The company specializes in fast fashion, and products include clothing, accessories, shoes, swimwear, beauty, and perfumes. It is the largest company in the Inditex group, the world's largest apparel retailer. Zara as of 2017 manages up to 20 clothing collections a year. Imagine that you are the sustainability manager at Zara and that you want to understand the environmental impacts of the company and their causes.
 - a. **(2pts)**At the end of this exam, you can find some examples of the garment supply chain and some general information about seven major environmental impacts of the fashion industry. Based on this information, draft a flow diagram connecting different economic system components to ecological system components that would help you as a sustainability manager to better understand the causes of these environmental impacts. You can create a new flow diagram or write directly on page 9 of this exam.
 - b. **(3pts)**Imagine that there is a new CEO at Zara who wants to transform Zara into a slow and more sustainable fashion brand. Identify in your flow chart three relationships that need to be transformed or adapted to make this change happen. Explain what these adaptations involve.