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## Values in place; A value-oriented approach toward sustainable place-shaping

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Our starting point in this conceptual paper is the assumption that place-based approaches can contribute to the sustainable development of communities and regions. In order to enhance sustainable development, adaptations to vulnerabilities and unsustainability require a more place-based approach, using local resources, people's capacities and the distinctiveness of places for sustainable development. Our aim is to understand how processes of sustainable place-shaping are influenced by human values, rooted in culture. Culture is constructed and plays a mediating role between people and their environment, influencing people's intentions, way of life, sense of place, practices, norms and rules. In its variety, culture is one of the sources as well as an outcome of distinctiveness between places. Transformation to sustainability is not only driven by practices and political structures, but also by beliefs, values, worldviews and paradigms that influence attitudes and actions. The paper shows how values have been interpreted in different ways in various bodies of literature, as abstract principles and in an instrumental way. Values are not self-standing concepts but are intertwined, context-determined, culturally varied and connected to how we see our self and how we perceive our environment. It is argued that development and engagement of participants' values can build co-creative capacity in place-based development aimed at sustainability. A distinction is made between an economic, intentional and symbolic approach. A value-oriented approach can provide a more in-depth insight into what people appreciate, feel responsible for and are willing to commit to in the context of their place.

**Keywords:** values; place; culture; sustainability; sense of place; cultural mapping

### 1. Introduction

Our starting point in this paper is the assumption that place-based approaches can contribute to sustainable development of communities and regions. Our aim is to understand how processes of sustainable place-shaping are influenced by human values, rooted in culture. To arrive there, we will first make some introductory comments on how we understand place, sustainable development, and the role of culture therein.

The concept of sustainable development is born with the need to preserve the quality of the natural resources for the present and future generation, and has been embodied in international policy agendas starting from the 1972 Stockholm Conference (WCED, 1987). In the WCED (1987) definition of sustainability, Place, Persons and Permanence (time) have largely been neglected (Seghezzeo, 2009, p. 546).

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The three-pillar approach of sustainability, encompassing an ecological, social-cultural and economic pillar, was agreed upon during the Johannesburg Summit in 2002. Sustainable development has been considered as ‘a balancing act’ between these pillars. In practice, this balancing act is difficult to play, and the connections to notions of space and place are often implicit and underestimated.

Sustainability not only applies to pollution control, the availability of natural resources and the protection of species and their ecosystems, but also to wider notions of human and social development, including human rights, good governance and solidarity. The question regarding what the role of culture is in sustainability remains. Culture is a contested and open concept. It is a descriptive, empirical and analytical concept. Analytically, it is often used to differentiate between humans and groups of humans or to distinguish humans from nature (Birkeland, 2007). Recently, it has been argued that culture has a separate, distinct and integral role to play in sustainable development (Duxbury & Jeanotte, 2010; UN, 2014; UNESCO, 2014). Culture has also been introduced as a separate pillar of sustainable development (Duxbury & Gillette, 2007).

Culture has been captured in the notion of cultural sustainability, referring to a wide range of conceptualizations, from civilization and improvement of the human condition (including arts and the cultural sector) to conditions for action, meaning and communication, as well as to a way of life (Soini & Birkeland, 2014). The concept of cultural sustainability has been understood as a sustainable way of life, based on ethical choices in everyday activities – the consumption of products and services in relation to the environment and other people (Hajer, 1995). Furthermore, it has been viewed as a dimension of sense of place (Vileniske, 2008) and local or place-based self-sustainable development (Magnaghi, 2005).

Place-based approaches to sustainable development are increasingly favoured in science and policy (see, for example, Barca, 2009). The line of argument here is that in order to enhance sustainable development, adaptations to vulnerabilities and unsustainability require a more place-based approach, using local resources, capacities and distinctiveness of places for sustainable development (Roep, Wellbrock, & Horlings, *in press*). Such approaches assume that place specificities really matter in the form of social, cultural and institutional characteristics despite structuring global processes which have affected places. While the hegemony of the modernization and globalization perspective did result in the marginalization of place in social and human sciences, it is the territorial differentiation of globalization, creating ‘territories of difference’, that brings place once again to the fore (Escobar, 2001, 2008). Differentiation creates inequalities, exclusion and all sorts of dispersed and unevenly distributed unsustainabilities in the fields of food, energy and climate, poverty and migration. In order to benefit adaptations to vulnerabilities and unsustainability, a place-based approach would valorize the potential in places based on existing knowledge, needs, values and networks. Such an approach utilizes place assets and people’s capacities to realize optimal solutions for long-term development.

Place-based approaches have been debated in the context of regional development, where regions have been understood as geographically bounded or relational (Varró & Legendijk, 2013; Messely, 2014, p. 35). While some scholars focus on the importance of regions as administrative, organizational territories or governmental bounded areas, relational-oriented scholars have pointed to the importance of actors, relations and processes:

What gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized history but the fact that it is constructed out of a particular constellation of relations, articulated together at a particular locus. (Massey, 1993, p. 66)

Inspired by the rich literature on relational place and space (see, for example, Amin, 2004; Cresswell, 2004; Massey, 1991, 1993, 2004, 2005; Pierce, Martin, & Murphy, 2011; Woods, 2011; to mention just a few), regions have been conceptualized as processes that are performed, limited, symbolized and institutionalized through practices, discourses and power relations that are not inevitably bound to a specific scale, but may be networked in both time and space (Paasi, 2009a, 2009b).

We would argue here that it is productive to transcend the debate about territorial bounded versus relational places (see also Allen & Cochrane, 2007; Jessop, Brenner, & Jones, 2008). Although place can be conceptualized as a relational and networked space, we can also understand place from a spatial bounded approach in a concrete context, such as in debates on politics of place where power is exercised, or in discussions on the constructing of place identity. Evidence can be found for the significance of regions and their boundaries as catalysts for regionalist movements, ethno-territorial groups and planning strategies (Agnew, 2001).

This paper aims to elaborate on the crucial role of individual and collective cultural values in sustainable place-shaping processes. The key agency involved in places and regions is human intentionality in interaction with the environment (see also Paasi, 2010, p. 2297; Relph, 1976), which can lead to all sorts of unsustainabilities unfolding in places, but also to processes of sustainable place-shaping. Our argument is based on the following assumptions.

Culture plays a mediating role between people or society and the environment, influencing people's intentions, way of life, sense of place, practices, norms and rules (Dessein, Battaglini, & Horlings, *in press*; Horlings, *in press*). In its variety, culture – including tangible as well as intangible aspects – is one of the sources as well as an outcome of distinctiveness between places. A concrete example is the French notion of 'Terroir', which can be 'sensed' by the smell and taste of the wine, and includes immaterial aspects of people's agency, such as cultural traditions (e.g. varied ways of pruning the vines), craftsmanship, events, festivals and geographically varied styles of winemaking. Terroir also refers to physical characteristics such as the cultural landscape and differences in grape varieties. Terroir furthermore encompasses man-made artefacts such as the type of barrels, cork and labelling, expressing cultural creativity and traditions. So culture leads to geographically varied patterns of behaviour which impact on sustainability and are expressed in places. As Davies describes it nicely: 'Values are constructed through the interaction of individuals and structures in a socio-institutional context in places – they have a "geography"' (Davies, 2001, p. 82).

This is all the more relevant for sustainable development because sustainability and sustainable development have been considered as a quest or process of transformative change. Transformation to sustainability is not only driven by practices and political structures, but also by individual and shared beliefs, values, worldviews and paradigms that influence attitudes and actions (O'Brien, 2012, 2013). Insight in this last 'inner' dimension of sustainability, or 'change from the inside-out' (O'Brien & Sygna, 2013), helps us to understand the influence of ethical choices on daily activities and provides insight into why people would accommodate change.

Until now, there has been a lack of clarity in how values play a role in place-based approaches to sustainable development and which methods can be applied to analyse and map values. This paper argues for a value-oriented approach toward place-shaping. Such an approach would benefit place-based dialogues based on people's individual and collective values and beliefs, and provide a more in-depth insight into what people appreciate, feel responsible for and are willing to commit to in the context of their own place.

This conceptual paper is based on a literature review and has been informed by 'real-world' examples from various places. An earlier version of this paper was discussed during a conference on Cultural Mapping in Coimbra in 2013. Although sustainable development is often associated with the Global South, the examples here are mainly drawn from Europe, as this paper is inspired by debates in the period 2012–2014 between participants of the EU Cost Network 'Investigating Cultural Sustainability'. The Action has about 100 members representing 27 countries across Europe, and also collaborates with researchers from Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

We will first elaborate on the concept of value(s) which has been interpreted in different ways as abstract principles as well as in a more instrumental way. Our aim is to review the literature, drawing upon different bodies of literature from geography, behavioural psychology, anthropology and to some extent economics and decision-making. In the following sections, we analyse how values are expressed by people in places, distinguishing between an economic, intentional and symbolic dimension. These dimensions can provide more understanding into how values play a role in place-shaping processes. We will also describe some interesting methods for analysing and mapping values. The paper ends with some concluding comments.

## **2. What are values?**

The value concept is central in understanding human behaviour. A value is something that has to be recognized as valuable, so it has to become explicit, that is: consciously recognized as a value and termed as such. Values have been the subject of theoretical consideration in many disciplines and areas of study including 'education, political science, economics, anthropology, and theology, as well as psychology and sociology' (Kluckhohn, 1951; Rokeach, 1973). When we think of values, we think of what is important to us in our lives, e.g. security, freedom, wisdom, pleasure, independence.

Broadly speaking, the literature shows two different ways of conceptualizing values. On the one hand, values appear as abstract goals, beliefs or motivational constructs. Appleton describes 'values as concepts and objects for which individuals have a range of positive feelings' (Appleton, 2014, p. 23). On the other hand, values appear more in an instrumental sense, as criteria or standards for evaluation or as a system for ordering priorities, for example in notions such as economic value, environmental values and nutritional value (see also Kumar & Kumar, 2008; Schwartz, 2009).

Distinctions have also been made between universal and project-dependent values integrated in one's identity (Appiah, 2005), between held and assigned values (Brown, 1984) and between basic and given values (Fischhoff, 2000). Given values are acquired via experience: 'As one experiences diverse conditions and situations, one discovers or realizes one's values as they become known aspects of one unconscious and implicit reality' (Appleton, 2014, p. 23).

Values are a broader construct than attitudes. Attitudes can be considered to be emergent from values, and therefore an expression of values. The characteristics of our

attitudes are also shaped by the context, our behaviour, our beliefs, and our level of understanding, and as they change our attitudes can change, while our deeper values, some of which we are not even aware of, remain less malleable (Appleton, 2014).

Multiple methodological (qualitative, quantitative, mixed) and epistemological (e.g. social utility to social constructivist) approaches have been adopted to study values (Davies, 2001).

Environmental scholars (see Gilpin, 2000 for an overview) have referred to values in the context of environmental concern and people's motivation for action (Bannon, 2013; O'Neill, Holland, & Light, 2008). Bannon (2013) emphasizes the value of compassion with regard to the intrinsic value of nature, the establishment of an impetus to accept duties with respect to nature and to make sense of specific feelings of attachment and affection toward nature. What most of the various attempts to uncover intrinsic value in nature have in common is that they seek to use such ascription of value as a basis for a system of non-anthropocentric duties toward nature. Samuelsson puts the point nicely by saying that 'the point of establishing that nature has intrinsic value is that such values would lay claims on us – that they would supply us with reasons for action' (Samuelsson, 2010, p. 530).

We aim here to go beyond the environmental perspective and include the cultural dimension and values in sustainable development. Appleton (2014), for example, argues that values – and rather implicitly culture – are relevant in sustainable development in various ways, in the context of engagement, implementation and conflict, in relation to religious and ethnic aspects, in the context of educational strategies and development of sustainable competencies and in planning, with the challenges of implementing sustainable initiatives and aligning multiple stakeholders. The development and engagement of participant's values can build co-creative capacity in sustainable development projects. Appleton suggests to start each sustainable development project with a Participant's Values Analysis (Appleton, 2014, p. 18). The task and process of understanding values is 'an ongoing process of learning-by-doing and doing-by-learning in which all actors contribute to envisioning, agenda building, experimenting and evaluation' (Appleton, 2014, p. 5).

We would argue here that values are not self-standing concepts which can be mapped or analysed as atomized issues. They are intertwined, context-determined, culturally varied and connected to how we see our self and how we perceive our environment. Values such as freedom, solidarity and justice, for example, only gain meaning in actual people and practices and can be considered as dynamic in space, place and time. We consider especially the following notions in literature on value relevant for sustainable development.

### ***Economic value***

Economic value has been discussed in a theoretical sense, referring to *varied economic systems*. This paper does not offer the space to explore this here, but other scholars have discussed these issues in depth; for example, Marxist value theory (Fine, 2003; Fine & Saad-Filho, 2008; Roberts, 2011), capitalist value theory (Gidwani, 2013) or capitalistic market-oriented thinking. Shiva has, for example, criticized the dominance of an economic system which reduces the society to the economy and the economy to the market: 'Economic systems influence culture and social values. An economics of commodification creates a culture of commodification where everything has a price, and nothing has value' (Shiva, 2014, p. 8).

Economic value has also been discussed in *monetary terms*, to put a price on something. The dominant economic approaches assume that to make rational choices we must adopt some common measure of value, and that money provides that measure (O'Neill et al., 2008, p. 75). In fact, the price of something does not reflect its value or benefit but its scarcity; it is a reflection of the relationship between supply and demand under market conditions (Sagoff, 2008, p. 243). The concept of value encompasses far more than issues of use, benefit or utility. Money is the expression of value, but not all values; in fact, most values cannot be expressed in economic terms, even if they are expressed in monetary terms.

### ***Values as preferences, principles and motivational goals***

Values have also been conceptualized as people's *preferences, principles and motivational goals*. This includes motivations, passion, emotions and intentions, which express how precious something is for someone. Such values are inextricably tied to emotions, not objective cold ideas. Values are not just rational principles of the mind. Scharmer, for example, considers values as principles that drive people, and argues that change today not only requires a shift of the mind, it requires a shift of will and a shift of the heart (Scharmer, 2008). Several authors refer to the values people ascribe to resources in places or the environment (Battaglini & Babovic, *in press*; McIntyre, Moore, & Yuan, 2008; Yankelovich, 1991). Values as preferences are relevant because they influence people's perception of, their attachment to and appreciation of places as well as their motivations to contribute to sustainable place-shaping processes, as we explain in the next sections.

### ***Values as worldviews and way of life***

The notion of value is also used in a more ideological and abstract way, referring to worldviews, beliefs, levels of human consciousness and value systems on the level of human society, and which varies in different cultural contexts. There appears to be a growing recognition of the important role of worldviews in the transformation to sustainable societies (Hedlund-de Witt & Hedlund de Witt, 2013; O'Brien, 2009). Sustainability scientists plead for change 'from the inside-out', or the so-called 'inner' dimension of sustainability (Horlings & Padt, 2013; O'Brien, 2013). Hedlund-de Witt (2011) argues that a prime research focus for sustainability scientists should be the complex interaction between the objective, exterior and the subjective, interior dimensions of sustainable development, which includes world views and culture.

In the next sections we will elaborate on how different notions of values are relevant for sustainable place-shaping processes toward sustainability, distinguishing between an economic, intentional and symbolic approach. We acknowledge that different approaches are actually overlapping in practice. For example, intentional approaches can be underpinned by particular symbolic understandings of values and places.

## **3. The economic approach**

The economic evaluation of environmental interventions in places is becoming increasingly important and helps us to understand the impact of interventions as well as the value of environmental resources in places. Cost-benefit analysis (CBA) offers an instrumental method of economic evaluation that values all benefits against all costs.

The resulting cost–benefit ratio gives an indication of whether or not the benefits outweigh the costs of an intervention, and hence provides a decision-making tool with a broad societal perspective.

The method has been applied to evaluate the wider societal benefits of nature and landscape as well. CBA is based on rationality assumptions and utilitarian welfare economics. This has been subject to both methodological and more fundamental critique, especially in those cases where ‘priceless’ valuables such as nature and culture are at stake. Thus, broader approaches have been developed such as ecosystem services, based on the notion that ‘nature has value’, capturing economic as well as non-economic value. In an ecosystem services approach, values have been determined step by step by evaluating the attributes of the landscape, the ecological functions, how these functions provide services and the amount of benefit provided by the landscape (Halsey, 2014).

Other scholars have referred to economic value in processes of production and consumption. Thompson (1979), for example, describes how rubbish is consistently overlooked, bearing no, or in some cases negative, value. He argues that its visibility and presence also results from its ‘placing’. It has been suggested that value emerges through our ways of seeing and placing objects. A key critique of this theory, however, is its neglect of the practices of value creation (Parsons, 2007).

The notion of ‘shared value’ has been used by economic geographers and is relevant for the development of business sectors and cluster development in places. Porter and Kramer (2011) argue that shared value ‘holds the key to unlocking the next wave of business innovation and growth’ (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 17). In this sense, this approach could be seen as the next wave in capitalistic economic growth thinking, not paying sufficient attention to sustainability. However, the approach aims to integrate economic and social goals in capitalism in order to move beyond trade-offs between different dimensions of sustainability (Porter & Kramer, 2011). The notion of value refers here not to personal values, but is defined as ‘benefits relative to costs’. It is an economy term pointing to the aim ‘to enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in the communities in which it operates’ (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 7). The approach goes beyond a corporate social responsibility approach, by reconceiving products and markets, redefining productivity in the value chain, and building supportive industry clusters at the company’s locations. It acknowledges the profound effect that location can have on productivity and innovation within a competitive economic growth paradigm.

The notion ‘adding value to places’ has been used in the context of endogenous development of places and regions especially by rural sociologists (Oostindie, Broekhuizen, Brunori, & Ploeg, 2008; van der Ploeg et al., 2000). The emphasis in most approaches to endogenous development is in understanding the characteristics (natural, human and cultural) of a place that make it special and/or distinctive (different from other regions), and how these may become the focus of sustainable economic activity (Vanclay, 2011, p. 59). In general, endogenous development refers to the utilization and celebration of local and place-based dimensions of a region as the basis of its economic activity and livelihood. It aims to add value to products, practices and services based on local resources, capacities and the distinctiveness of places through actor-driven projects (Van der Ploeg & Marsden, 2008; Hurlings & Marsden, 2014). It is also considered as a new view on appropriate development, rural renewal and a multifunctional, post-productivist countryside (Slee, 1994; Marsden, 2003; OECD, 2006; Van Broekhuizen, Klep, Oostindie, & Van der Ploeg, 1997; van der Ploeg et al., 2000). Endogenous development can be considered as a bottom-up place-based strategy, as a reaction to

modernization, or as resistance to it (Bassand, Brugger, Bryden, Friedman, & Stuckey, 1986; cited by Vanclay, 2011). The assumption is that endogenous rural development can enhance the resilience of regions, as it points to the degree to which a rural economy is (Oostindie et al., 2008): (1) built on local resources, (2) a local model of resource management and governance, and (3) a local redistribution of economic gains, partly reinvested in development of local resources to further enhance quality of life.

This does not imply that external or global factors are not important influential factors; moreover, these external factors are transformed into a self-constructed model, creating autonomous capacity. Ray (2006) emphasizes the interplay between internal and external influences, rephrasing the concept as neo-endogenous development:

Neo-endogenous development retains a bottom-up core in that local territories and actors are understood as having the potential for (mediated) agency, yet understands that extralocal actors, inevitably and crucially impact on – and or exploitable by – the local level. (Ray, 2006, p. 278)

External influences are not merely adapted but transformed as ‘... these factors do not determine the “optimal solution” but can be read, translated and transformed in a way that strengthens locally specific development and local control’ (Oostindie et al., 2008, p. 55).

While for many regions an obvious choice is to compete with other regions for global, mobile capital and labour, as a counterforce to these global logics, place-based strategies are being developed which construct identities or images around new agricultural goods and services which add economic value. Such strategies can be considered as in line with the OECD’s ‘New Rural Paradigm’ for European rural regions (OECD, 2006). Attempts have been made to analyse or map such strategies as new sustainable pathways (Van der Ploeg & Marsden, 2008), making a distinction between niche innovation, the creation of new interfaces, and a re-orientation on territorial capital (Horlings & Marsden, 2014).

#### **4. The intentional approach**

This approach is based on the question of why people would accommodate change and participate in place-shaping processes. It refers to ‘the inner dimension’ of sustainability, and the motivations and intentions of people, reflecting on the conditions of their engagement in places. Long-term commitment towards sustainable development resides within people’s choices, grounded in people’s deepest motivations: human intentionality. Our reality is created by our beliefs. These beliefs, usually subconscious, are often the result of life-long programming and represent a powerful influence on human behaviour. Studies in neuroscience indicate that as much as 95% of our consciousness is actually subconscious. The subconscious mind is the store house for our attitudes, values and beliefs. It is from our beliefs that we form perceptions about the world and ourselves, and from these perceptions we develop behaviours (Lipton, 2005; Williams, 2007).

Values – and how we work with them – are a vital determinant for whether sustainable development remains a dream or solidifies into reality (Brown, 2005, p. 3). If we become more aware of our inner dimension, the source of passion, values, feelings and sense-making, this can enlarge our ‘cultural repertoire’. It can enhance agency, shape common ground for cooperation between actors with different interests, and commitment to take responsibility for a more inspired use of the environment. Here, values

appear as motivational or desirable, trans-situational goals varying in importance, serving as guiding principles in people's lives. Motivational values are requirements of the human condition. They can be directed towards conservation but also be open to change, contribute to self-enhancement and to self-transcendence. Schwartz describes 10 basic, motivationally distinct values (such as power, hedonism, conformity, self-direction, etc.), and argues that these are recognizable in varied cultures (Schwartz, 2009).

Motivational values are underestimated in research, which mostly deals with the 'outer' dimensions of people's actions, such as behaviour, systems and organizations. Seghezze (2009), for example, argues that in the often-used Brundlandt definition (WCED, 1987) of sustainability, personal aspects such as feelings and personal happiness are as good as forgotten. Bandura (2006) emphasized the psychological dimension of agency, describing motivations as one of the core properties of human agency. In a collective sense, he links this property to the plans and strategies of a group to make their shared intentions reality.

How can motivational values be analysed in the context of places? Wilber's (2000) four-quadrant model offers a good starting point, as he describes the psychological, cultural, behavioural and social aspects of human society, along two axes, an individual-collective axis and a subjective-objective axis. Or, as Brown described in other terms, these quadrants refer to four principal perspectives or domains or 'being-in-the world': 'What I experience?' (I), 'What we experience?' (WE), 'What I do' (IT) and 'What we do' (THEY) (Brown, 2005, p. 11). Ideally, sustainability agency in place-shaping processes connects all the four quadrants. Values point to the I quadrant – the individual, subjective, psychological dimension – and the WE quadrant – the collective, subjective dimension.

Insight into more broader and abstract worldviews is essential for approaches aiming to design and support (more) sustainable pathways and governance in places. Worldviews can be understood as inescapable, overarching systems of meaning and meaning-making that to a substantial extent inform how humans interpret, enact and co-create reality (Hedlund-De Witt, 2013). Distinctions have been made between egocentric, ethnocentric, sociocentric, world-centric and planet-centric worldviews (Riedy, 2013). A change of worldviews is considered necessary for sustainable development, as stated by Hay: 'Without attention to how we view ourselves and the world (philosophy), what forms of improvement appear to be most appropriate (development) and how to motivate and help direct us to get there (leadership) any program to address sustainability is only superficial' (Hay, 2010, p. 163).

Value-systems have been described and mapped on the societal level as well as in places, referring to different patterns of how individuals, communities and even countries respond to evolving life conditions and how this changes in time (Beck & Cowan, 1996). The 'Spiral Dynamics' framework, developed by Beck and Cowan (1996), aims to contribute to a way of framing and understanding of the forces of human interactions and behaviour. They use the term *vMEMES* to refer to the system of core values or collective intelligences that emerge at each level of human development. Meme stands for a unit of cultural information that changes and adapts over time as it is passed from one generation to the next (e.g. ideas, songs, theories, dances, habits, values, practices). The 'V' stands for values. Beck and Cowan posited that *vMEMES* comprise worldviews, belief structures, ways of thinking and modes of living – a cultural DNA map. Their assumption is that human systems develop in a development sequence; consciousness evolves in time. Eight memes (see Figure 1) are observed, divided in three tiers of human's consciousness. These memes are the product of 'Life Conditions' and can be

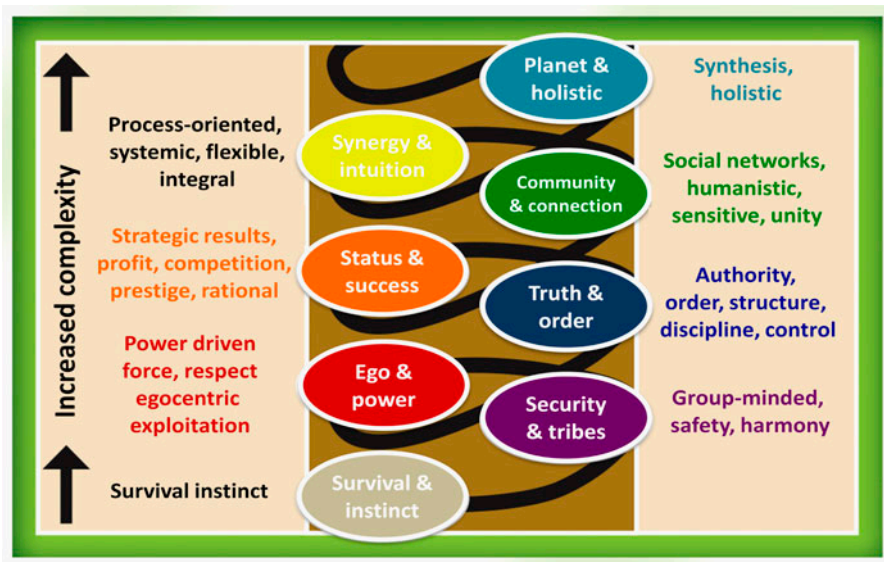


Figure 1. Value-systems (derived from Beck & Cowan, 1996; drawing copyright Auke van Nimwegen).

considered as value systems, visualized via different colours, that have an increasing of complexity level up the spiral from self-centric, sociocentric to world-centric.

These differences in value systems have consequences for governance and communication strategies toward sustainable places. 'Blue' values, for example, emphasize the role of authorities and rules, 'orange' values focus on the role of science and competitiveness and 'green' values point to a sense of community, networks and social cohesion. In terms of crisis, such as climate change, certain values (solidarity, aesthetics, humanity), may come under pressure, in favour of risk-avoiding or survival strategies ('beige' values).

The intentional dimension is also relevant as it is expressed in the moral convictions, passion and motivations which play a crucial role in place-based leadership (Horlings & Padt, 2013). Place-based leadership can enable regions to branch out onto a new path in order to create a more balanced and sustainable regional development. In these contexts, leadership is not a solo activity but is multi-agency and multi-level, present on different scales and shaped differently according to various institutional and cultural contexts (Davies, 2001; Roep et al., *in press*; Sotarauta, Horlings, & Liddle, 2012).

Until now there have not been many attempts to study value systems in places. An example is Hamilton's (2010) extensive empirical work in Abbotsford in Canada. She drafted a four-quadrant 'Flower Map' of the city, based on interviews with different types of respondents with varied cultural backgrounds, illustrating the internal quadrants of the people's psychology and culture, along with the external quadrants of behaviour and systems in the city.

## 5. The symbolic approach

People are involved in places via location, ecological participation, socio-territorial belonging and cultural conformity or commonality. Community attachment can lead to a

sense of affinity or we-feeling, via values such as loyalty and solidarity. The other way round is also true, we-feeling can lead to community attachment. As territories have become more complex, the territorial *Gemeinschaft* has fragmented and differentiated and ecological interdependence had decreased (Pollini, 2005).

This has, however, raised attention among sociologists in more subjective definitions of belonging and explorations of attachment to units of a particular size (home and neighborhood, local community, region, nation, continent, etc.) (Gubert, 2000). Such research shows that ‘the extension of increased frequency of relations across larger distances (continental and global) has not led to the superseding of local or at least non-cosmopolitan attachments. Attachment to local ambits still largely predominates’ (Gubert, 2000, p. 3134). People attach subjective cultural meanings to place, rooted in values. Such values are the result of people interpreting social phenomena through negotiation and communication and have a geographical dimension (Davies, 2001, p. 82). The values people assign to specific places are linked to the psychological dimensions that comprise sense of place, including place dependence (utilitarian values), place attachment and place identity (symbolic values) (Brown, 1984).

The subjective concept ‘sense of place’ is central in this approach, which is closely connected to community, personal memory and self and which includes different senses (Relph, 1976; Vanclay, 2008). Sense of place is a multi-theoretical, complex and contested concept (Convery, Corsane, & Davis, 2012, p. 6), which has been approached from a phenomenological and behavioural perspective. Location as such is not a sufficient condition to create a sense of place, attachment or a sense of belonging. There is a need for a long and deep experience of a place, and preferably involvement in the place (Shamai, 1991). Ritual, myths and symbols help in strengthening the attachment to place (Relph, 1976) and bind people to a place (Tuan, 1977). Carter, Dyer and Sharma (2007) argue that because meanings invoke personal emotions and are formed from diverse experiences and values, a sense of place may be both shared and contested at a single locality (Arefi, 1999), producing ‘territories of meaning’ (Relph, 2002).

Convery et al. (2012) describe two broad differences in the use of the term in the academic literature. In the first, sense of place, or *genius loci*, is used to explore a range of factors which together define the character or local distinctiveness of a specific place. In the second, the term has been used to emphasize the ways in which people experience, use and understand place (Convery et al., 2012, p. 2).

A wide range of components have been linked to sense of place in literature, such as place attachment, place identity, place commitment and dependency, place satisfaction, belongingness or rootedness or community connectedness and community cohesion (Jorgensen & Stedman, 2006; Soini, Hanne, & Poutaa, 2012; Vanclay, 2008, pp. 7–9). These components include material aspects, symbolic meanings and social relations. It is not possible to achieve a fixed or essentialized sense of place because ‘meanings’ are not static in time or space (Carter et al., 2007). As people are networked to places through social relations which stretch beyond geographical boundaries, they have a global sense of place and one that is locally specific (Massey, 1993).

People’s sense of place can be a valuable source of information as the knowledge of inhabitants about their place, their sense of belonging and the way they attach meaning to their place and construct identities can inform multi-stakeholder processes of place-shaping and interactive policy-making. Sense of place is also relevant in the context of cultural landscapes, which are specific to particular societal groups and are endowed with agency and personhood (Escobar, 2001). What cultural landscapes mean or how they are organized are part of complex processes through which individuals and groups

define themselves. Such notions are bound up in ‘people’s sources of meaning and experience (Castells, 1996, p. 6).

Sense of place has been linked to sustainability, suggesting that in order to create sustainable communities ‘... more people need to reconnect with a place that they call home, valuing the ancestral heritage that comes with development and maintaining a rooted sense of place’ (Hay, 1998). Sense of place can also inspire people to collective action as a response to unwanted spatial and sometimes unsustainable developments (Horlings & Hinszen, 2014). Such responses are often not badly informed, ignorant or selfish not-in-my-backyard responses, but should be reconceived as place-protective actions, founded upon processes of place attachment and place identity (Devine-Wright, 2009).

To summarize the above, sense of place refers to the symbolic meanings and values people ascribe to places. These values can be mapped and evaluated via various methods such as in-depth interviews, ethnographic observation, surveys, thematic apperceptive test evaluation, content analysis and associated literature, analysis of participant self-reporting and recording, psychometric testing, word association analysis, group participatory techniques, and so on (Appleton, 2014, p. 5). We would like to elaborate on some promising methods which aim to provide a deeper understanding sense of place, rooted in underlying values.

First, values have been spatially mapped. The growing emphasis on place-based value-centred meanings urges social scientists involved in natural resource management to think in spatial terms and facilitate the integration of personal place-based values data into resource-based decision models, as has been done in the context of forest management and planning (McIntyre et al., 2008).

Second, communities have been mapped (Gibson-Graham & Roelvink, 2009; Gibson-Graham et al., 2013) in the context of participative action-oriented community development. Assets are perceived as such by the residents and refer to what they value, perceive and experience as being qualities. Third, the mapping values has also been implemented in the context of the complex and contingent sphere of the multiple, co-existing space–time trajectories that make up landscape. Deep mapping as applied in the UK in Cornwall in place-based research refers to processes of engaging with and evoking place in temporal depth by bringing together a multiplicity of voices, information, impressions and perspectives in a multimedia representation of a particular environment. Bailey and Biggs (2012) included a wide set of participatory tools to retrieve data, building on conversational exchange, fieldwork, performative actions, sound and image work and a range of scholarly research methods and approaches. Fourth, values can be discovered based on the principles of appreciative inquiry (AI) and dialogue in the context of multi-stakeholder processes. AI is used for the development of potential of social systems, as a step to make an inventory of the values of participants, but also as a way to facilitate cooperation and joint learning. The approach is centred not around problems but around positive strengths and possibilities for change, and starts with discovering the very best in the shared experiences (Barrett, Fry, & Wittockx, 2010, p. 11). It is a generative approach; the future and the seed for change are encompassed in the conversations and stories approach (Cooperrider & Whitney, 1999).

Via a case study in an urban deprived neighbourhood in the Netherlands, some of the above methods have been applied. The findings indicated that the values of inhabitants influence their sense of place and their perceived qualities of that place (Horlings, *in press*). Values express what people appreciate about their place, they influence and prioritize actions and influence how people subscribe symbolic meanings to places. The characteristics of places afford the fulfilling of what people consider as

worthwhile – and this in turn influences people’s satisfaction with a certain place. However, more empirical research is necessary to underpin the assumed relation between values, qualities and sense of place.

## 6. Concluding remarks

The value dimensions as described in this article are expressed in people’s cultural practices. Place-based approaches to sustainable development deal with actors working in an arena with a variety of interests. The challenge of a value-oriented approach is to create a dialogue between actors, not based on personal interests, but on common agreed-upon motivational and symbolic values, directed to the common good. Such a dialogue should be ‘inclusive’ towards different dimensions of sustainability, paying attention to the long term, social, cultural and economic aspects and the consequences of actions in time and place, and encompass values such as survival, security, social inclusion, ethical issues, aesthetical aspects, solidarity, quality of life, etc.

We have described how values express people’s core principles and motivations rooted in broader cultural value systems and worldviews, how values influence people’s appreciation toward their place, and how they subscribe symbolic meanings to places. Values hinder or foster the fulfilling of what people consider as worthwhile, what they want to strive for and contribute to in the context of their own place. However, more research is needed to underpin the assumed relation between values, place characteristics and sense of place on different spatial scales.

In this paper we have explored different value-oriented approaches in the context of sustainable place-shaping, an economic, intentional and symbolic dimension. We have argued that values are not self-standing concepts which can be mapped or analysed as atomized issues, but they are intertwined, context-determined, culturally varied and connected to how we see our self and how we perceive our environment and place. Values such as freedom, solidarity and justice only gain meaning in actual people and practices and can be considered as dynamic in space, place and time. When testing, analysing or mapping values, especially in the context of the normative goal of sustainable development, one must consider espoused values and observed behaviour; the two are often not congruent (Schein, 2010, p. 25). People are not always aware of their values. Also, one does not always act in accordance to one’s own values or (sustainable) attitudes. Discourse analysis can be used to understand how people use language to accomplish social and emotional goals along with communicating ideas and how different ideas in turn reflect different worldviews and different priorities. The assumption here is that human language does not simply reflect the values and preferences of speakers, it also shapes them (Pattey, 2014).

We would argue that there is a need for more empirical ‘value-oriented’ research in the context of community and regional development, offering insight in people’s motivations and driving forces in place-shaping processes, and offering ‘valuable’ information for place-based governance strategies. Such a value-oriented perspective on place-shaping will probably gain more relevance, as we witness a trends towards self-organization, self-efficacy and the participative society, where people are expected to take (more) responsibility for their environment, individually and collectively. Notions of self-organization (Leeuwis & Aarts, 2011; Nicolis, 1989), the participative society and co-creation refer to vital citizenship, where people increasingly arrange things themselves and act as partners in policy. Examples are new self-organized cooperations in energy production, landscape associations, and place-based cooperation in health care,

which result in new networks in the globalizing society and hence new opportunities for sustainable innovation and ‘vital coalitions’ (Horlings, 2010). Such new coalitions and networks enhance place-shaping processes from below, in contrast to development from a top-down government perspective.

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