

# 8 Communication for Sustainability

## Lesson 04: Cultures of Sustainability

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## Where are we?

Episode 8.1: Key concepts of communication

Episode 8.2: Framing

Episode 8.3: Narratives & Storytelling

**Episode 8.4: Cultures of Sustainability**



## Learning outcomes

### Learning outcome 1:

**Describe** the diverse nature of contemporary practices of sustainability communication on an individual, organizational and societal level, the relationship of strategic communication practices to other public communication practices, the role of stakeholders and publics and the communication practitioners in and outside of organizations (corporate, NGO, political and educational institutions etc.)

### Learning outcome 2:

**Develop** comprehensive and well-founded knowledge in sustainability communication as field of study, an understanding of how other disciplines relate to the field and an international perspective on the field.

### Learning outcome 3:

**Understand** the key elements of communication theories, strategies and tactics, and, thus, the character and operationalization of best practice sustainability communication planning frameworks.

### Learning outcome 4:

**Advance** your understanding of social and civic responsibility and develop an appreciation of the philosophical and social context of sustainability communication. Advance your knowledge and respect of ethics and ethical standards in relation to communication of, about and for sustainability.

### Learning outcome 5:

**Anticipate and Interpret** current issues and challenges of a world in transformation and social change. Develop a deep understanding of and skills to create change, develop advocacy, leadership and authorship in and for sustainability communication.



## Overview

- A. Sense- and meaningmaking – recap
- B. Culture – Definition
- C. “Cultivation of Sustainability”?
- D. Discursive construction of a “new norm”



## A. Sense- and meaningmaking - recap

### **Communication *for* sustainability**

- Culture oriented
- Quality of public discourses, social deliberation
- Meeting the uncertainty challenge by producing socially robust knowledge
- Meeting the ambivalence challenge by producing shared visions on sustainability
- Meeting the implementation challenge by producing better accepted decisions



## A. Sense- and meaningmaking - recap

### **Communication for sustainability = Sensemaking**

- sense making = “enactment of the social world, constituting it through text and verbal descriptions that are communicated to and negotiated with others” (Berger & Luckmann, 1966)
- Individual = man in action and practice; “a story-telling animal” (MacIntyre, 1981, p. 201)
- Conversation as “sensemaking in action” – sensemaking as “process of narrativization” (narrative-making)



## B. Culture - definitions

**Artistic definition** - refers to the artistic and intellectual creations of a society, especially those which are valued highly. (Kidd, 2002:100)

**Social definition** - refers to the 'way of life' of a social group, including their values, norms, behavioural patterns, customs and rituals and even material objects

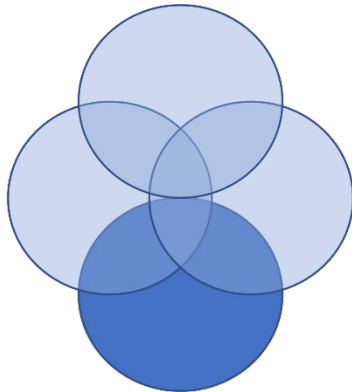
*The instinctive biological operations of our bodies are not assumed to be cultural (Hall, 1997),*

*-> but **all other activities requiring the transfer, understanding or construction of meaning and value are.***



## C. Cultivation of Sustainability?

Culture *in* sustainable  
development



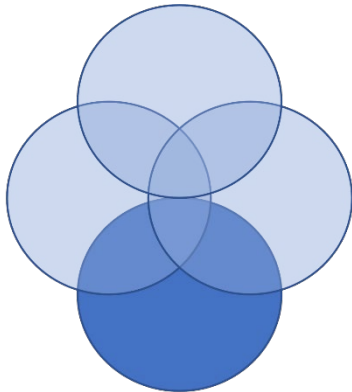
(Hammond, 2019; Soini & Dessein,  
2016; Soini et al., 2015; Godemann &  
Michelsen, 2011; 2013)





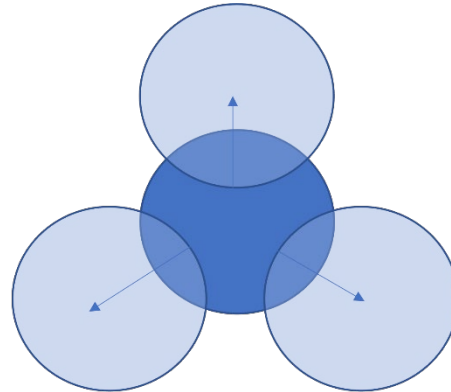
## C. Cultivation of Sustainability?

Culture *in* sustainable development



(Hammond, 2019; Soini & Dessen, 2016; Soini et al., 2015; Godemann & Michelsen, 2011; 2013)

Culture *for* sustainable development

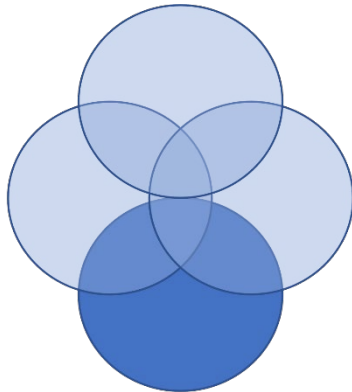


(Spinozzi & Mazzanti, 2019; Skitka et al., 2021; Weder, 2021; Weder et al., 2019)



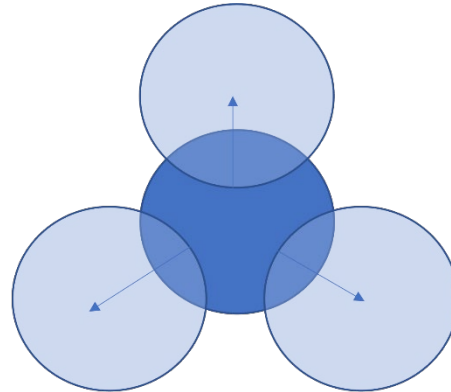
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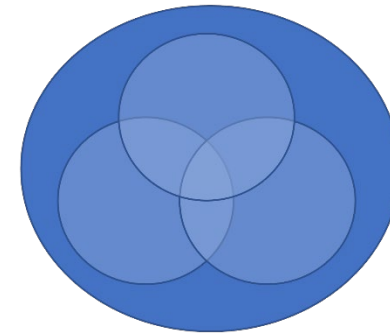
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Culture *for* sustainable development



(Spinozzi & Mazzanti, 2019; Skitka et al., 2021; Weder, 2021; Weder et al., 2019)

3<sup>rd</sup> way: Culture *of* sustainability



(Bourdieu, 1987; Giddens, 1984; Mouffe, 2013; Laclau & Mouffe, 2014; Weick, 1995; Batel, 2015; Castro, 2015; Moscovici, 1988)



## D. Discursive construction of a “new norm”

Communication *for* sustainability as ***all communicative activities requiring the transfer, understanding or construction of meaning and value.***



Photo by Juri Gianfrancesco on Unsplash

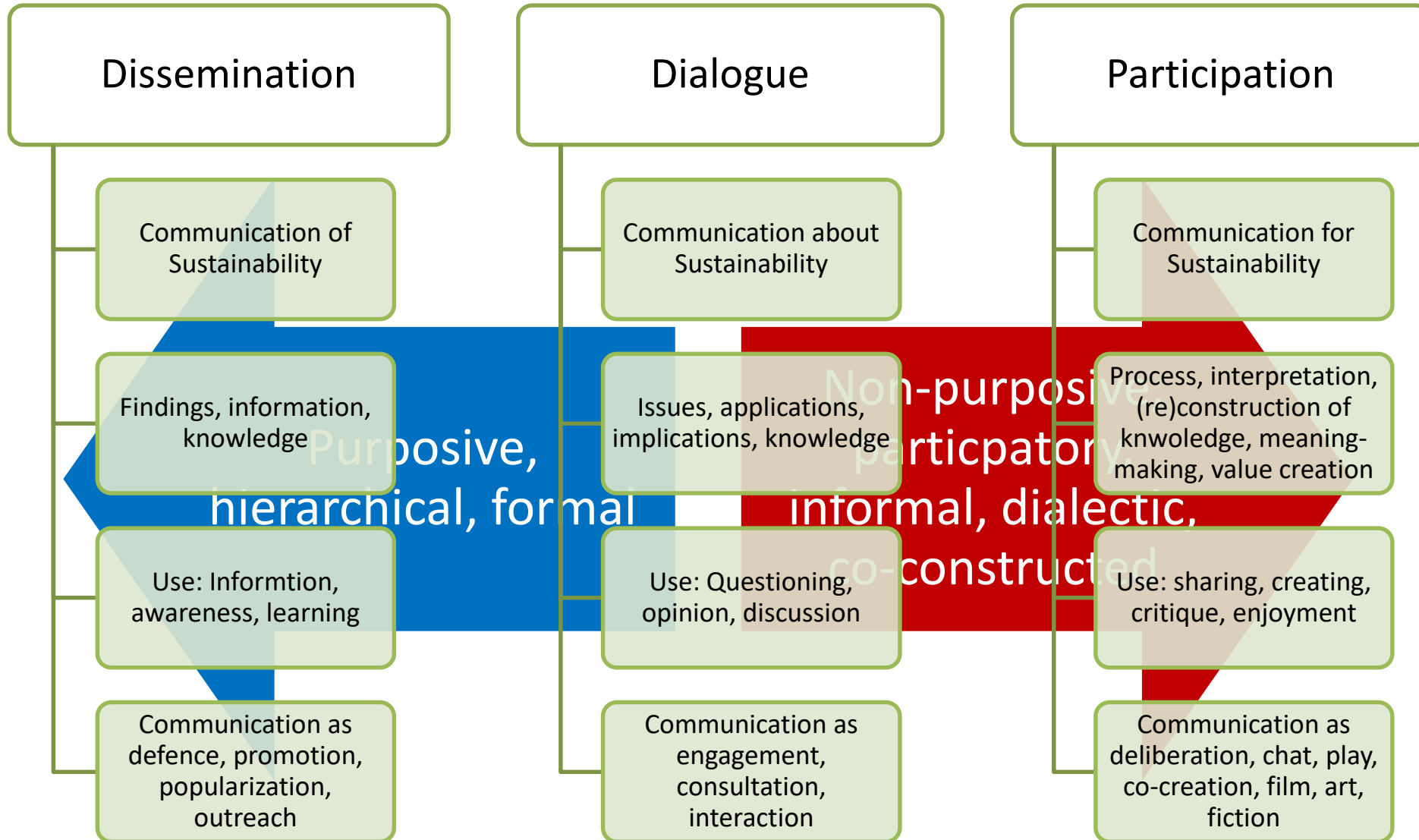


## D. Discursive construction of a “new norm”



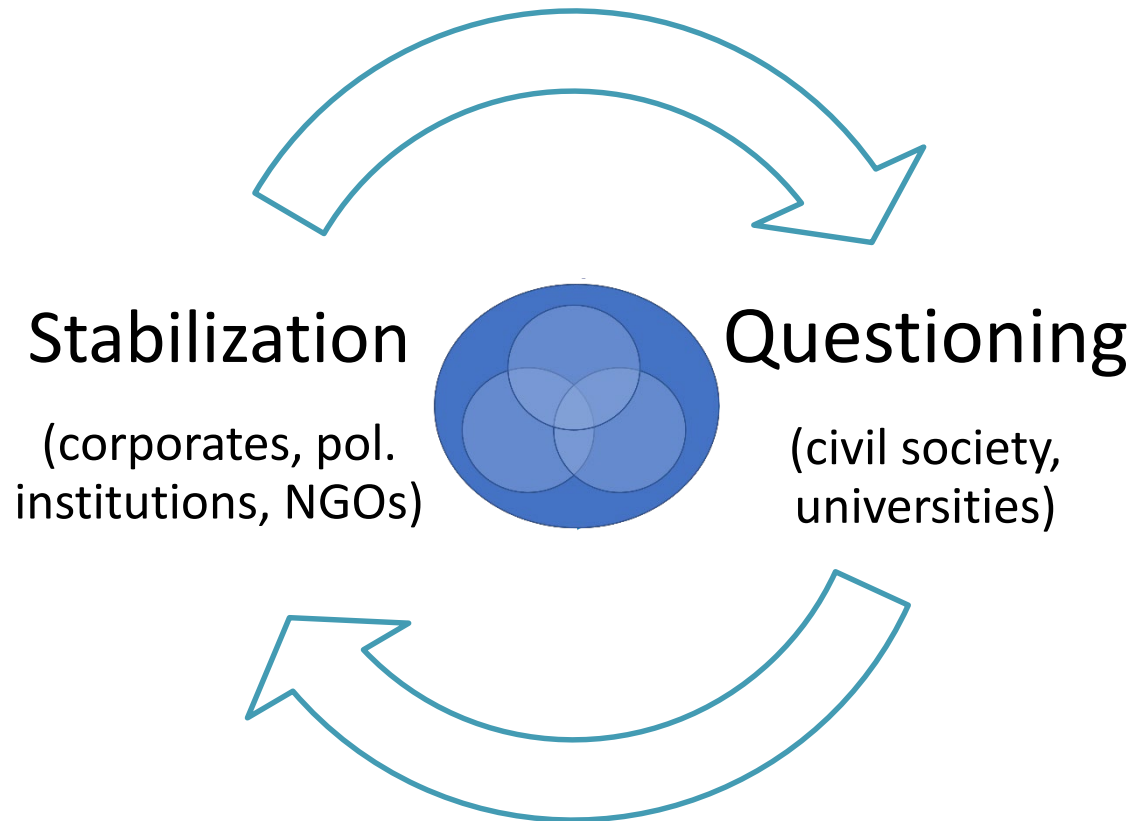


# D. Discursive construction of a "new norm"





## D. Discursive construction of a “new norm”



Sustainability, Wellbeing and organizational culture

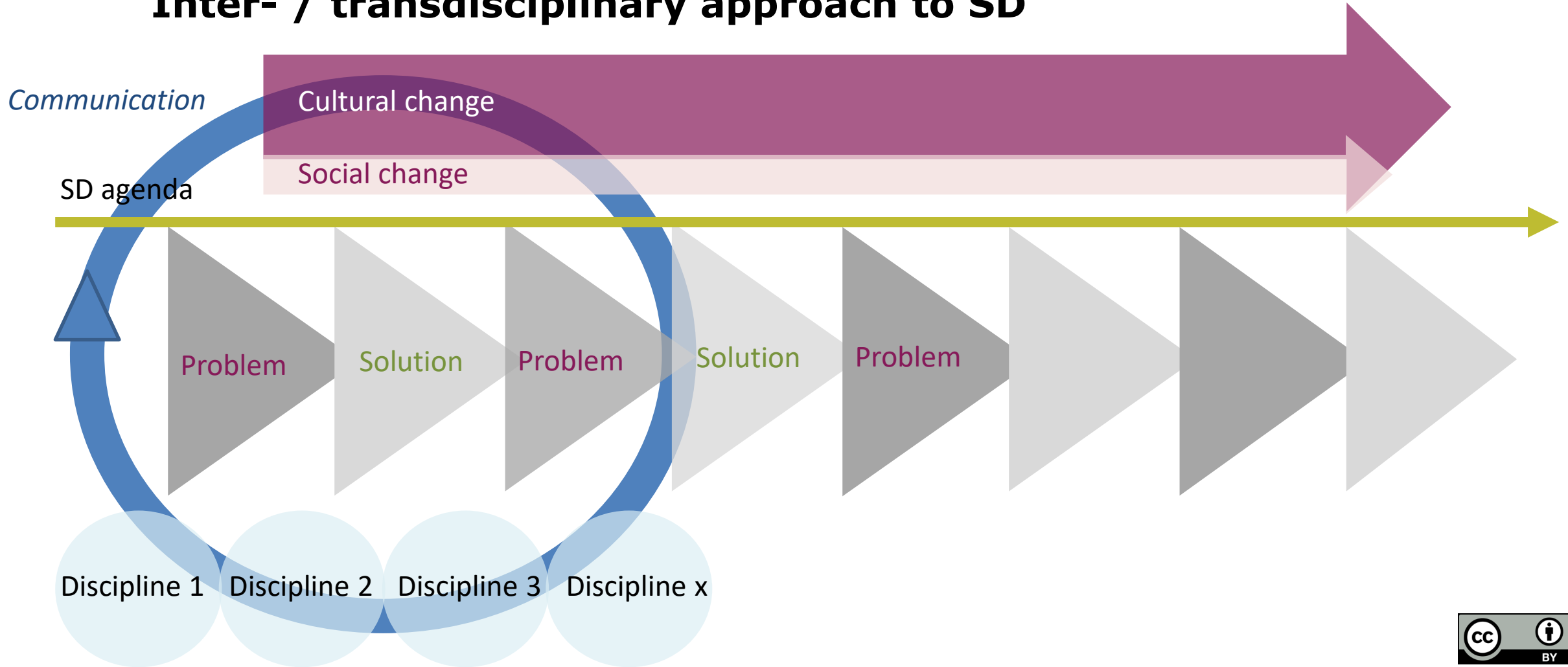
Narratives, framing & metaphors used in sustainability communication

Eco- and environmental art & science communication



## Links back to ...

### Inter- / transdisciplinary approach to SD





## Reflection

1. Try to describe Communication for Sustainability from a social constructivist, conversational perspective.
2. Why is it important, to include a cultural perspective in the discussion about sustainability communication?
  - What are different perspectives on culture & sustainability?
  - What role does communication play?
3. What are participatory communication modes, where can participatory, transformative communication take place?