

## *Editorial*

by *Antonio Garofalo*

Sustainable Development is a process that is based on ethics, economic efficiency and fair governance of the three fundamental functions of the economic system: allocation, accumulation and distribution. In a Sustainable model, these three functions are capable of generating individual and communal levels of Well-being, of maintaining a balance between material living conditions and quality of life, of countering inequalities and supporting the replicability of the four capital stocks (human capital, social capital, economic capital, natural capital).

In 2011, the OECD produced a report titled «How's Life?» which first advanced the idea that the components of Well-being are both material (GDP per capita is an indicator) as well as qualitative (physical and mental health, human relations, etc.). The document also evidenced that in order to maintain stability and create the conditions for the production of satisfactory levels of Well-being, it is essential to take into consideration the issue of the preservation of the aforementioned four capital stocks. The work of the OECD is a fundamental step in considering the issue of Sustainability as multi-layered and multi-dimensional, instead of reducing it to its environmental aspects.

Such view has notoriously been supported by the United Nations and the Global Agenda for Sustainable Development, or 2030 Agenda, conceived in September 2015 and undersigned by 193.

The relevance of paying attention to all four stocks of capital is also visible in an updated reading of the Circular Economic Model, first theorized by Pearce and Turner in 1989. The model, originally, was introduced by the two American economists in order to tackle the problem of scarcity of natural resources on Earth. However, if we read it taking into consideration the definition of Sustainability from which we have departed, we can observe that the Circular Economic Model ultimately can be adapted to an analysis of the role of all four stocks of capital. In all these instances, furthermore, the model of Circular Economy highlights one fundamental issue: the necessity of introducing new decisional models that do not damage in any capacity the

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preservation of the capital stocks. Further, in addition to preservation, the four stocks of capital must be protected in their fundamental characteristics as well, meaning: quality, proximity and peculiarity.

Ultimately, if an essential passage of moving towards Sustainable Development is to ensure the replicability of the four capital stocks, endowed with their specific traits, it is implicit that a better governance of such resources is at the heart of the question of Sustainability. The present issue of *Rivista di Studi sulla Sostenibilità* wishes to offer a duplicitous focus on two of the discussed capital stocks – human capital and natural capital –, in order to analyze how these are currently governed and what are the possibilities for improvement in the future as well as the challenges to overcome. In particular, the first four articles will deal with human capital, while the following three will deal with natural capital, giving an overview that spans across different dimensions of Sustainability and bringing up important questions for further research.

In «Analysis of the Religious Situation in Kazakhstan and its Influence on Sustainability during the Pandemic», the authors bring up important aspects relating to institutional Sustainability. Religion, as a matter of fact, is a powerful tool for increasing participation of citizenship in the social life of a given community. Such participation is coded around the moral compass offered by faith which aims to orient worshippers in their quest to search for Well-being. Institutional Sustainability revolves around, precisely, stability, democracy and the engagement of citizenship. Therefore, it appears evident that religion can have a great impact on it. In this analysis, the authors look into how the advent of the Covid-19 pandemic affected the twofold capacity of religion, possibly damaging an important driver towards Sustainable Development.

The following paper, «Socio-psychological factors influencing satisfaction, loyalty and employee involvement in the production process» develops a theoretical model of levels of satisfaction, loyalty and involvement of employees. Given that Sustainable Development, as previously defined, is a process based, among other components, on economic efficiency, a firm or company that aims at economic growth must take into account the level of productivity ensured by its employees. The information gathered in the paper is fundamental for managers and executives and can conduce them to manage their workforce in a more efficient manner. The level of satisfaction of employees as well as their loyalty to the workplace is a key factor in guaranteeing a stable and growing level of productivity. The article evidences thus how the correct management of human capital can conduce toward Sustainability.

The 27 countries of the European Union have adhered to the principles and goals of the 2030 Agenda and enshrined it in their action plans to reach

Sustainable Development. In a phase in which Ukraine is involved in negotiations to enter the EU, it is thus imperative that its legislation is harmonized with that of other EU countries – including on matters of Sustainable Development. The article «The current state of tort law in Ukraine and its development in the context of European integration» brings up this topic precisely by focusing on the case of tort law in the event of rights violations in civil transactions. This law ensures the protections of rights of citizens and effectively safeguards human capital. The paper, combining general theory and unique scientific methods analyzes the current state of tort law and its prospects for improvement within the context of European integration.

The following article «Analysis of the State and Legal Policy of the Republic of Kazakhstan and Interaction with the Diaspora in the Context of Sustainable Development» tackles the issue of diasporas and its impact on local economies. The analysis provided in the paper highlights the fact that, currently, the potential of diasporas is ultimately underutilized. There is, thus, a concrete effort to be made to improve the contribution of diasporas to socio-economic development. Authors suggest that one instance of this is the integration of gender equality dimensions into these interactions.

In «Unveiling the Wholesomeness of Whole Foods: A Comprehensive Analysis», the authors focus on the recent growth of organic farming. Departing from a case study, they investigate the advantages as well as the shortcomings of the current organic model. Whole Foods Market provides valuable insights into the areas where improvement is necessary. Mainly, organic farming seems to need more automation which, according to the authors, could minimize errors, increase efficiency, productivity, as well as overall operational effectiveness. These innovations can have a profound impact on the industry and conduce to better management of the natural capital on which it relies.

«Promising Directions of Increasing Energy Efficiency and Development of Green Energy in the Household Sector of Ukraine» looks at data between 2014 and 2022 to establish the benefits of the employment of green energy, particularly in terms of its efficiency in minimizing costs and providing satisfactory levels of energy to households in Ukraine. The paper principally looks into solar power as its low costs and easy installation procedures have made it a favorite among families who wish to rely on renewable energy. The findings open a window into the study of the results obtained with eco-sustainable technologies in the field of energy.

The last paper, «Modern Political Processes and Mechanisms to Ensure Geocological Safety and Sustainability of the Northern Caspian Region (by the example of the Republic of Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation)»

examines certain geoecological issues within the context of the Northern Caspian Sea. The expansion economic activities in the region has been accompanied by violations of its ecological balance. The research presented advances approaches to ensure the geoecological safety of the region by means of the introduction of a single economic space.

I would like to thank all the authors who have offered their valuable contribution.