

GordonMiller

Communicator: Writer Blogger Journalist Curator

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Having our cake & eating it

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How do we feel about a headline ‘Big Food Acquires Green Companies To Boost Sustainability’? Are we right to care not only about the end result – food produced sustainably – but also about the businesses behind its production?

Most consumers would say yes but indisputably we have a challenge to achieve organic, fair trade and sustainable produce at scale for the current 7 billion of us (set to rise to 9 billion by 2050). Can we have our cake and eat it?

First off, I’m not anti-big business; I’m a pragmatic idealist – they ain’t going away and if we harness them to do good things and make the right stuff they can accelerate the switch to a low carbon economy.

The things is we have to be vigilant, call them to account – social media is an incredibly effective way to do this (corporations are terrified of the speed viral campaigns proliferate) – and ultimately reward those who produce the right stuff and provide their services in the right way by buying from them.

Nothing but nothing accelerates change and innovation in corporations as the prospect of losing sales and market share to the competition.

And consumer demand is now more powerful than ever before. A recent study of 2,500 interviews with global businesses across 34 economies cited customer/client demand (64 per cent) as second only to cost management for why they are engaging with sustainability. #Whatisyourreason

So surely that's it, isn't it? We can have more & better by buying the same amount or even more products & services – which keeps our economies growing and our standard of living high – as long as it's the right stuff that will not deplete the planet's finite natural resources or release the GHGs that are killing us.

Are there enough of the right stuff products – from renewable & sustainable sources & from recycled & upcycled sources – out there? Here's a few:

- Electric cars (Tesla) that don't pollute
- New modular carpet (Interface) from recycled old carpets
- Toilet rolls that don't have a cardboard inner tube (Scott Naturals)
- Water in pouches (Ohoo) so we don't need plastic bottles
- Pencils (sprout) that becomes plants

Let me know yours. I want to see the virtuous circle – the more right stuff and services we buy the more of it manufacturers will produce to replace non-sustainable products – kicking on at a scale to make a difference.

And let's do it now because it's become [critical](#).

To mix a metaphor it's in all our hands to vote with our feet and buy with our heads screwed on the right way.

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This [article](#) inspired this blog

Thx to @elainecohen for the tweet that put me on to the article. @PeggyatKC for the UN report prompt.

The product in the photo is Ohoo.