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Sustainability: How Smart Innovation and Agile Companies will Help Protect our Future

Patrick Dixon, Johan Gorecki

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Patrick Dixon, Johan Gorecki : Sustainability: How Smart Innovation and Agile Companies will Help Protect our Future before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Sustainability: How Smart Innovation and Agile Companies will Help Protect our Future:

2 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Sustainability - A Very Green BookBy Gene MorphisSustainability is a book I bought on a Twitter recommendation.The tagline is "How Smart Innovation and Agile Companies Will

Help Protect Our Future" Authors are Patrick Dixon and Johan Gorecki. Maybe I should have perceived what it is really about - but I didn't. Rather than a business book (my supposition) it is a wide-ranging survey, analysis and set of proposals to reduce global warming. Let's set up my view of global warming, so that anyone who is interested in the review knows my biases. First, in my view the evidence that the earth is getting warmer is overwhelming. Basically, since the Little Ice Age (approx 1550-1850) the world has gradually, if irregularly, gotten warmer. Second, however, I haven't yet found the evidence that humans have anything to do with causing it very convincing. Much more difficult question. With bones of swamp-dwelling dinosaurs unearthed in Montana, where current winters are still brutal, it's clear that things have been warmer around here before. Third, is it a bad thing? Right now, I doubt it. Drop the temp a few degrees and a lot of land goes out of ag production, putting even more pressure on the currently stretched food supply. And fourth, I'm very much pro nuclear power. Now, the review. There is a fair amount of presentation of companies that are in the sustainability movement, or produce alternative energy, or equipment for alternative energy. I'll give the authors credit on several things. There is an astonishing amount of data covering an equally astonishing breadth of topics, such as the percentage of home heaters and boilers that will need to be replaced in the next 20 years, projected spending on green tech (\$500 billion per year short-term; far more longer term), power potential from ocean current, power production from a single windmill; at what passenger level trains spend less energy per person than is spent traveling in a car. Each chapter tackles a topic, generally energy use and how to reduce it for cities, ground transportation, future cities, nuclear power, solving the water crisis, etc. There are so many assertions that I can't imagine how the editor's fact checkers could have done their job: "...satellites show that clouds from a single jet can reduce sunshine over an area of 20,000 square miles at a time...". Examples of how the whole world could save 30-40% of its energy use at zero cost (well actually the paybacks stretch from 10-25 years. One recommendation was to replace current home heat with heat pumps. I had one; they may be efficient but they heat a house so slowly that I hated it. There were some assertions that I found incredulous, e.g. - "Governments have a habit of making agile decisions when it comes to regulations that are cost-neutral, easy to carry out and enforce..." I don't think there are many Americans who think their government at any level is agile...OK, all those objections aside, in many ways this is an interesting book. With the U.S. dependence on foreign oil, we should have an open mind to every energy alternative. And the authors were fairly even handed: they had a balanced approach to nuclear power, and they saved their harshest criticism for biofuels, especially ethanol. A subtext of the book is also feeding the planet and they see converting farmland from food use to fuel use as essentially immoral. Summary: if you are into the green movement - this book is for you. Looking for a business book - not so great.

Sustainability is about the ability to solve some of the world's most complex sustainability challenges with rapidly evolving business innovations, applications, methods, products and processes, adapted to changing situations. The book looks at how innovation and agility can save the world from the environmental disasters that face it. In addition, it sets forth positive ways in which businesses and individuals can deal with the issues and positively benefit from them. Sustainability includes text boxes containing shocking statistics about the destruction of our planet, short inspiring examples of how innovation has created new profitable business and helped the world, and personal messages from global leaders about sustainable innovation. Case studies of numerous well-known, high-profile companies are featured - demonstrating companies that have successfully used innovative and agile ideas and processes to improve their businesses and fight some of the greatest threats to the world's ecosystems. Subjects covered include: Power; future cities; transport; manufacturing; water and wood; health and food; venture capital; carbon offsetting and banks; business agility and open innovation; 10 steps to profitable sustainability.

About the Author Patrick Dixon is one of the world's leading authorities on future trends. Ranked as one of the 20 most influential business thinkers alive today (Thinkers 50, 2005), he is also Chairman of Global Change Ltd. and the author of 12 other books, including Futurewise and Building a Better Business. He speaks to thousands of business leaders every year about sustainability. His clients include Microsoft, Google, Hewlett Packard, Nokia, ATT, Siemens, Ford, Airbus, KLM/Air France, ExxonMobil, BP and Shell. Johan Gorecki is founder/owner and CEO of the Globe Forum, an internationally recognized marketplace for innovators and investors working for a more sustainable and profitable future. He is the founder of the Globe Award, the leading sustainability prize for innovations, corporate academia and cities. He is also an entrepreneur, and a part of the team that developed Skype.