A radicalisation of sustainability: the role of eco-feminist theorising

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Introduction

Sustainability – and its operational form sustainable development – is in turns a philosophy, an ethical perspective, a means to protect the planet, a form of corporate responsibility, an envisioning of a future and a means measure the gap between where we are and where we would like to be (Lélé, 1991, Argawal, 1992, Eckersley, 1992, Banerjee, 2002, Baker, 2006, Barter and Bebbington, 2009). As a concept, it has a literature stretching back 40 years (and in reality as a concept it has existed for centuries). However, we do not seem any closer to truly understanding the concept in or to enable its delivery. It is a concept that people agree is important (much like 'motherhood and apple pie') but cannot agree what it actually is or how it may be implemented to improve the Earth's survival chances. Sustainability is, difficult to characterise definitively (Pezzey, 1989, Toman, 1992) and in practice is difficult to operationalise in a unified way. Why is this?

As an interdisciplinary notion it derives its authority from a range of perspectives and thought, and this generates a confused (at best) notion of what a sustainable world would actually look like. Hence, it is contestable (Jacobs, 1991, Gladwin *et al*, 1995) and subjective (Blowfield, 2003) and therefore open to interpretation, abuse and misrepresentation. It is also subject to capture by those who would make it their own. Capture in this sense means that the concept is subsumed into a more generalised framework where the term may sound the same but where the meaning may be subtly changed so that it appears to follow a consensus but actually fulfils another agenda. It may even be unacknowledged that there is capture – businesses who, for instance, pursue a reporting regime which itself determines what is or is not

acceptable to report are capturing sustainability to legitimise their activities or to promote partial accountability.

Hence the confusion. What this paper attempts to do is suggest that a more radical theorising may reveal what sustainability is or isn't and how it may or may not be successful in guiding individuals, organisations, institutions and nations to form behaviours that lead to a better future. In terms of organisational and management studies the paper poses the question: how can we as management scholars transform our ways of thinking (and hence our actions) so that business may play a greater role in delivering sustainable development?

Defining sustainability as principle

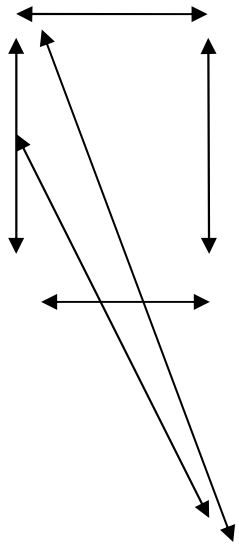
Haughton's (1999) five principles

Haughton classified sustainability according to equity principles to show the integration of human and environmental issues. The five principles are:

- Futurity – considering future generations (human **and** non-human may be included here)
- Social justice – intra-generational equity
- Transfrontier responsibility – geographical fairness, global equity
- Procedural equity – fair treatment of all people
- Interspecies equity – biodiversity considerations (Haughton, 1995).

These have social and environmental considerations contained therein. By interpreting Haughton's work these can be linked as shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Haughton's equity principles

ENVIRONMENTAL EQUITY	'OVERLAP'	SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC EQUITY
Transfrontier responsibility Interspecies equity		Social justice Procedural equity Futurity

This allows a consideration of the present/future aspects as well as the interrelationships between social and environmental factors. The diagram shows the interconnectedness more clearly and illustrates how the interplay of each factor creates the conditions for sustainability. This therefore becomes a graphical illustration of sustainability.

A brief history of sustainable development

Hopwood, Mellor and O'Brien (2005): 'mapping different approaches'

In their 2005 paper, Hopwood, Mellor and O'Brien outline the various definitions that they have studied and conclude that they lead to a confusion surrounding sustainability which is unhelpful to those wishing to develop policy or offer advice. Their aim is to emphasise 'sustainable livelihoods' and 'long term environmental sustainability' by mapping the trends and partnerships/movements that have emerged over the last 30 years. The methodology attempts to show these developments against two axes – reflecting socio-economic and environmental concerns. The map they create presents each development described by its contribution to the problems of well-being and equality (the social axis) and its approach to environmental concerns (from a basis of no concern through the categories used by O'Riordan (1989): techno- and ecoecentric). An elliptical area in the centre of this map represents those actions which can be described as sustainability – so, for instance this area contains Brundtland, WBCSD, Schumacher and social ecology. Outside of this area are approaches which are not sustainability – neo-liberal economics and deep ecology are two examples of this. Overlaid on this map are three regions – the status quo, reform and transformation. These represent views on the changes that are needed to achieve sustainability. The status quo is represented by the region of lowest concern – low social equality and an approach to environmental concerns from low concern to a technocentric one. A reformist position represents medium concerns, and a transformative position is where high concerns are demonstrated. Each of these regions contains developments which *are* or *are not* sustainability, so that the authors can determine whether a particular stance, movement or philosophy is describing sustainable development. This means that a clearer critique of a wide range of positions is given to reveal those developments which have been wrongly categorised as sustainable development –

those that may be described as radical as well as those considered more mainstream. Some examples are given in Table 2.

Table 2: Examples from Hopwood *et al*'s sustainability map

	Sustainable development	**Position within SD**	**Outside SD paradigm**	**Position if outside**
Transformative	Ecosocialist Ecofeminist	High env/social As above	Socialist cornucopia Deep ecology	High social/ low env High env/ low social
Reforming	Mainstream env groups Limits to growth (1992)	High env/med social Both med	Social reform Limits to growth (1972)	High social/med env High env/ low social
Maintaining status quo	EU Forum for the future WBCSD	Both low/med Med env/ low social Low social/ med-low env	Neo-liberalists	Both low

Reformist versus radical perspectives

Clement (2005) sees sustainability as having a compromised nature. The foregoing discussion has shown how complex the concept is and therefore it is no surprise that there has to be some compromise in order for people to engage with its ideas. This leads us to a position that many (Owen, 1993, Everett and Neu, 2000, Adams, 2001,

for example) have termed ‘mainstream’ or ‘reformist’. This is also called ‘technocentric’ (O’Riordan, 1981) because it uses practical steps involving measures such as regulation and planning, governance, internalising costs and modifying industry. The alternative is a ‘radical’ or ‘countercurrent’ approach (Adams, 2001) which is ecocentric and seeks deep change to political, social and economic structures. This tension is evident in much of the sustainability literature. Owen, writing in 1993, outlined the perspectives of the radical and the reformist, and argued that the pragmatic approach of the reformist was likely to deliver more tangible results in the move to a more sustainable world, especially in accounting for sustainability. However, this has been criticised: the paper by Everett and Neu (2000) can be used here to summarise the apparent dichotomy and to illustrate the tension. The authors argue that the work of the reformists have taken a value position that allows them to justify the reformist approach as the one which will achieve sustainability. They term this a ‘discourse of pragmatism’ (p15) with which proponents have been captured, and that there are unintended ideological consequences of such a position. In doing so, the position will prioritise nature over (certain) people and maintain the power inherent in First World systems. Hence, a more radical position is needed (Jallow, 2009).

Hopwood *et al*’s mapping allows us to consider what *transformations* may take place and how these may be underpinned by appropriate frameworks. It is clear that maintaining the current position on, say, climate change, will not lead to a more sustainable future; a reformist stance may only take us so far and may solve the immediate problems whilst creating longer term ones in their place. Hence, from this it seems apparent that a transformative thinking may be the most suitable way to move towards sustainable development and close the sustainability gap. The

dominant discourses in management theorising have always prioritised the status quo, and now we need not only to reveal this process of prioritisation but also to reveal how these oppress other discourses – this needs to be overcome to reveal other meanings, stories, and truths. This provides a place for ecofeminist thought.

A literature of ecofeminism

The methodological underpinning of the paper is situated in eco-feminism. Eco-feminism reveals the relationships between humans and nature and the accents and emphases that these relationships hold. It is premised on the understanding, firstly of the interaction between men and women and then on the lessons of those interactions between humans and nature. This, however, is a simplistic statement and needs to be examined further. Hence, there are viewpoints within eco-feminism that reveal these tensions which help us to understand how the framework could be useful. In order to understand the validity of this paper's contribution, further analysis of eco-feminist thinking is needed. Ecofeminism is not a single strand of thought and has developed much as the thought in feminism before it, in that it has a plurality of conceptions and arises not only from theorising but also from a political/activism axis which informs its development. In this way it takes its ideas, *inter alia,* from political ecology (Cockburn and Ridgeway, 1979), feminist environmentalism (Agarwal, 1992), feminist ecological economics (Mellor, 2006), and environmental ethics (Hayward, 1994).

Interestingly, but not coincidentally, the main developments in ecofeminism took place whilst the discussions on sustainability entered their 'environmental phase' – in the 1990s. Firstly the plight of women in patriarchal society was documented by Daly (Cuomo, 2002); this was taken up by Plumwood (1993) and Warren (1997) to extend to environmental activities. Most of the writing on ecofeminism takes place in the

1990s; a literature continues to this day allowing it to remain a powerful set of ideas from which we may borrow and learn. Lorentzen and Eaton (2002) identify the connections in ecofeminist thought:

- An empirical strand, in that there continues to be evidence of environmental destruction, which often disproportionally affects women;
- Cultural, conceptual and symbolic strands which are evidenced by the continued existence of hierarchical systems of dualism providing men with innate power over women;
- Epistemological privilege in that women are often argued to have more and better knowledge of natural systems.

However this last point has been criticised for its essentialism (for instance, see Leach, 2007) which renders all women to be identical in their understanding and connection with the natural world, and it was this criticism which saw some scholars to reject the ecofeminist project, and which caused a reduction of interest in its usefulness.

However, there are many positive messages in ecofeminism and it is my contention that these should be revisited. Firstly, a review of the differing strands of ecofeminist thought is presented to allow some context for the arguments presented later. This is briefly presented in Table 3, as a fuller discussion is outside the scope (and length requirements) of this paper.

Table 3: Ecofeminist strands

Strand	Features	Calls for...	Key writers
Liberal eco-feminism (reformist)	Environmental degradation caused by rapid development, causing resource depletion and pollution; Based on liberal political theory which supports individual self-interest and capitalism.	Improvement in women's opportunities (in employment and training) to engage at the same level as men; change to the status quo	Merchant, 1996
Cultural eco-feminism (reformist)	Joint subjugation of women and nature, due to women's closeness to it: biological root	Reassessment of traditional female roles such as childcare, to elevate roles to the status currently held by men's roles; female gender characteristics reasserted	Dobson, 1990, Plumwood, 1993 Haywood, 1994
Social eco-feminism (radical)	Roots in social ecology and in social constructs e.g. marriage; hierarchical challenges	Small-scale development; considering implications of human activity on the biosphere	Biehl, 1991 Merchant, 1996
Socialist eco-feminism (radical)	Reproduction as the central guiding principle; social action as a critique of capitalism	Consider the consequences of capitalist interventions for women and for nature; development of socialist society	Merchant, 1996

The foregoing has revealed some disagreement as to what the feminist project should be. Critics of the reformist eco-feminist positions would argue that the special relationship of women with the environment is tenuous, and denies the possibility

that men may have a role (and indeed want to play a role) in protecting the environment. Another criticism of cultural eco-feminism is that it treats all women as the same, and does not deal with other issues such as race or poverty, which nevertheless are felt by many women across the globe. This 'essentialist' view (Cuomo, 1998) makes 'female' characteristics fixed and separate from those associated with maleness. This contradicts much feminist thought, which often seeks to celebrate differences for their own sakes whether in woman or man. Further, the different experiences of women in the South and in the North mean that approaches to environmental management will be very different (Agarwal, 1992).

In terms of a 'human-centred' approach (Hayward, 1994) it appears that the framework of social eco-feminism, based as it is upon a rigorous approach previously adopted by Bookchin, would provide a coherent structure with which to examine sustainability. Sustainability requires us to integrate policy, to encourage participation by all people at all levels, and to begin a transformative process that will identify the mechanisms which will move us to a more sustainable world (Rocheleau *et al*, 1996). By making transparent those structures in our present society which prevent these transformations, we may begin to make the necessary changes. Academic research can contribute to the process by providing methodologies which are more revealing; which allow different ways of 'knowing, asking, interpreting, writing' (Madge *et al*, 1997). Eco-feminism, particularly social eco-feminism, may have an important part to play in this transformation.

<u>How could ecofeminism help to radicalise sustainability?</u>

Leach (2007) contends that 'ecofeminism is more strongly grounded in radical environmentalism than mainstream sustainable development theory' (p71). Hence, it has much to say about how we may transform our society into one which overturns

the accepted idea that men rule the public sphere and women the private one (Cuomo, 2002). It also reveals more strongly the connections between human society and nature and makes these mutual rather than oppressive and manipulative. As a theory, it has much to say about how human interactions take place, and as an epistemology, it can help us to understand our actions vis a vis the natural world. It is not an easy framework, though, and it will raise many objections, not least about its lack of uniformity, its basis in feminist thought, its borrowing from other disciplines, and its radicalism. It is also a framework that is influenced by activism. Cuomo (2002) stresses that ecofeminism is both a theoretical framework and an activist manifesto, and as such, this may make it an uncomfortable academic tool for explanatory purposes. Nevertheless, it has a firm place in transformation and this gives it an ideal position in the transformation of our society into a more sustainable one.

What would a transformed ecofeminist business look like?

The theme of the 2010 Academy of Management Meeting is ‘Dare to Care’. In 2009 it was ‘Green Management Matters’. Clearly, there is some willingness to embrace the concepts of sustainability but it is clear that the academy is struggling to find its way through the confusion surrounding sustainability as a concept. What I suggest here is that the tenets of ecofeminism can provide a transformative framework to allow us to develop management practices that are caring, inclusive and do not priories profit-making over people. This will need a commitment from senior management and an acceptance that the business as usual paradigm cannot deliver these things.

Many businesses are encouraging a corporate responsibility ‘ethos’ by developing corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes and reporting their progress in this

by producing regular CSR reports. Stakeholder engagement is so important, and therefore any successful implementation of sustainability must arise out of an engaged community of stakeholders. Selman (1996) uses the term 'eco-literate citizen' (p155) to describe the state of an educated or aware environmental citizen (that is, one actively involved in sustainability) and cites Brennan (1994) who states that such a citizen should 'have a blend of ecological sensitivity, moral maturity and *informed awareness* (my italics) of natural processes at either individual or corporate levels' (p155). Ball and Milne also use the term 'ecological literacy' (2005, p333) specifically related to the understanding of the ecological damage caused by business activity. Hence, this indicates a need, firstly for information flows to increase literacy – understanding, and secondly, for engagement of the citizen with the issues of sustainability before action can take place. However, as Selman (ibid) makes clear, education may happen on two levels – the practical (how to implement sustainability) and the philosophical (what sustainability may be). This is where ecofeminism may have an important role – it is an enabling philosophy which allows the debate between business and stakeholders to form a mutually beneficial CSR strategy; one which is not a servant to the main aim of financial return-making and shareholder wealth maximisation. Hence, whilst CSR can presently be regarded as a form of sustainability firmly in the reformist position, it has the potential to move to transform business organisations. This transformation to a framework which considers more widely the responsibilities of business impacts on the wider world will itself be an enabler of transformation.

A feminist framework recontextualised

In 1990, Martin proposed a framework for developing a feminist organisation. She proposed 10 dimensions which were necessary for an organisation to be considered

to be embracing feminist philosophy. If this framework is adapted to reflect eco-feminist principles, this may allow an imagining of an eco-feminist organisation. This is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Dimensions of an eco-feminist organisation

Dimension	Description
ECO-FEMINIST IDEOLOGY	Does the organization *officially* endorse beliefs associated with an eco-feminist perspective? If yes, is it liberal, radical, socialist, social, other? Does the organization *unofficially* endorse eco-feminist beliefs? Are ecological considerations part of the consciousnesses of the organisation? With which moral, ethical, personal, and political issues is the organization most concerned and how do these link to ecological concerns?
ECO-FEMINIST VALUES	Does the organization emphasize the importance of an ethics of caring for the environment, cooperation with others to encourage this ethic, interpersonal relationships, personal growth, development and social and environmental empowerment? Are internal democracy, fairness, and ecological literacy positively valued?
ECO-FEMINIST GOALS	Does the organization have an *internal* action agenda that helps organisational members see the environment as exploited and encourages those members to act politically and personally? Does the organization have an *external* action agenda aimed at reducing its ecological impacts and improving future performance? Does it take steps to pursue these goals? Is political (eco-feminist) analysis of environmental degradation part of the action agenda?
ECO-FEMINIST OUTCOMES	Are members *transformed* by participation in the organization? Does participation change them subjectively or materially (e.g. personal environmental behaviour changes, their conception of ecological degradation as a political issue requiring social change)? Is society *transformed* by organizational activities, to ecology's benefit?
FOUNDING CIRCUMSTANCES	What date was the organization founded? In association with what stage or aspect of the development of an ecological awareness (e.g. the acceptance of human-induced climate change)? Was founding associated with other social movements? If so, which?

STRUCTURE	What are the organization's normative internal arrangements? In what ways is the organization collectivist? And how are decisions made? How is nature represented in the organisational structure?
PRACTICES	What activities do members (or others) perform in pursuit of *internal* and *external* ecological goals? Are practices consistent with eco-feminist ideology, values, and normative structural arrangements?
. MEMBERS AND MEMBERSHIP	Are there requirements for organisational membership? How do members reflect the values of the organisation with regard to ecological concerns?
SCOPE AND SCALE	Is the organization local, national (or other) in scope? Is its orientation internal (toward encouraging ecological literacy in its members) or external (toward societal change and ecological protection)?
EXTERNAL RELATIONS	How does the organisation conceptualize its ecological image vis-a-vis its external audience? What is its legal-organisational status? How autonomous is it? To which external groups and organizations is it linked or partnered? How is the organization engaged with its social, cultural, political, and economic environments? What form do these engagements take and what issues are involved in these partnerships and engagements?

Adapted from Martin (1990)

This framework is useful in at least two ways: (i) it provides a reference point to assess the relevance of an eco-feminist perspective in a sustainability agenda, and (ii) it provides a mechanism to assess individual organisations in practice. For the first aspect, it encourages sustainability principles by emphasising the integration of ecological thinking and organisational design. It allows the organisation to be explicit about the principles which govern it and it encourages positive action towards a sustainability agenda. For the second aspect, it may provide a means to explore empirically organisations that either claim to be green or who are set up to be eco-friendly. In either case, I suggest that the proposed framework is a useful tool in examining transformation. It could help to move the research agenda forward.

Social enterprise – the way forward?

Eco-feminism has its roots in eco-radicalism (Drysek, 1997). This often situates itself in the opposition of large scale, market-driven commercial organisations which are implicated not only in the exploitation of the environment but are an assault on freedom (Pratt, 2000). The answer would appear to be in the development of small scale (or human scale) structures which allow individual and collective freedom and the protection of ecology - a social ecology, as proposed by Bookchin (in Palmer (ed) 2001).

These principles seem to be exhibited in the social entrepreneurship movement, where individuals whose values encompass the ecological and the social, create structures for organisational activity which incorporates economic, social and environmental benefits. In the UK, these are often termed social enterprises, and are becoming so widespread that they have their own organisational voice – the Social Enterprise Coalition (see www.socialenterprise.org). Some, since 2004, may be registered as Community Interest Companies (see (http://www.cicregulator.gov.uk/aboutUs.shtml) which provides regulatory support as long as certain conditions are met. The vast majority of social enterprises are classed as small (an average turnover of £2.1m, according to the Social Enterprise Coalition 2010 annual report (SEC, 2010). These are locally based with a range of missions and a variety of outcomes. They are often started by an individual or group with a particular objective, which may be social or environmental in orientation, or a combination of these (Jallow, 2010). Hence, they demonstrate social ecology in action.

Interestingly, though, some can be very large with turnover exceeding £100 million. For UK readers, some well-known large social enterprises include

- The Eden Project (an environmental educational project and 'global garden' (www.edenproject.com) which is situated in disused clay mines in the southwest of England;
- Fifteen, which is a chain of restaurants set up by chef Jamie Oliver as a training project for unemployed youngsters (www.jamieoliver.com/fifteen);
- The Big Issue (www.bigissue.com) which prints a weekly magazine which is then sold by homeless people to provide a legitimate income;
- Divine Chocolate Company which produces chocolate sourced from Ghana underpinned by fair trade principles (www.divinechocolate.com).

Other, less well-known examples, taken from the SEC 2010 annual Report, are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Two examples of UK social enterprises

Ashton – motivated by community	**Investing in people**
Since 1985, the Ashton Community Trust has played a key role in the development of one of the most deprived areas of Northern Ireland. The Trust is based in North Belfast and was founded in 1992 in order to spur social and economic regeneration of the local area. The Trust now owns a range of community buildings that host incubation space for small businesses, including a grocery store, a GP surgery, a childcare centre and a hairdressers, all of which aim to address poverty in the community. It now has an income of over £3 million per annum and employs over 100 people, creating a circle of economic activity.	Since 1983, the Wise Group has helped over 25,000 people from across Scotland and the North East of England move into employment through support, training and work experience programmes. It started in 1983 as Heatwise, a small project aiming to combat fuel poverty amongst Glasgow's poorer households and provide training to unemployed Glaswegians. Heatwise became the Wise Group in 1987, experienced steady growth and diversified its activities towards long-term unemployed people in Scotland, then spread to the North East of England. The Wise Group's turnover, at £21 million in 2007, has grown by more than seven times since 1986.

Source: Social Enterprise Coalition 2010 Annual Report

One of the criticisms of the social enterprise movement was that it was too small-scale to make a difference to our unsustainable trajectory (Jallow, 2010). However,

the development of the sector has delivered enterprise on a scale that echoes the more traditional economic model of a business organisation, at least in terms of scale. What this demonstrates is that alternative socio-economic models are not only possible, but they are viable, growing businesses with strong ethical underpinnings and that demonstrate sustainability in action. The next step is to evaluate this movement of 'new' organisations against the eco-feminist project to see where the lessons are and how the model can encourage our transformation to a more sustainable society. Hence, I am proposing that an evaluation of social enterprises against the adapted Martin model above may reveal the transformations that have already taken lace, as well as the transformative actions that are still required to deliver sustainability and close the sustainability gap.

What next? Conclusions and recommendations

Adams (2001) argues that sustainability needs to be 'claimed' (p370) if we are to move to a more radical position, and he describes three responses that can be taken to make the claim. These are:

- Adaptation is a response – that which is taken to livelihood changes.
- Resistance against 'capture' by the ruling systems is a further response.
- Protest is a further response. This is perhaps the most radical response and requires more direct action and demands change.

Hence, this reveals a sustainability which we can engage with, and that moves the world along the sustainability continuum; many believe that sustainability may be best achieved at the reformist level: as stakeholders understand the principles so they engage in activity to implement them. This is an incremental approach which allows the sustainability gap to be narrowed slowly. It has raised the question: can we ever have a radical practice of sustainability? And if not, is there a place for

academic research which takes a radical position? I believe there is, because it challenges the status quo in a way which pushes the reformists further along the continuum. However, this kind of research should never forget what is happening in practice; those who have had the good fortune to devote time to studying sustainability should recognise their privileged position in understanding the complexities of it. It is our role to persuade others of the importance of sustainability – stakeholders will only engage if they are convinced by our arguments.

It is clear that we are not living in a sustainable world – the evidence of climate changing effects is all around us. How do we close the sustainability gap? I contend that we are unlikely to find consensus to define what the concept is so another approach is needed. Looking at the concept from a transformative perspective may lead to this alternative approach. Transformation occurs when we review what we know and how we know it. Eco-feminism helps us to understand how our relations with each other and with nature may be repressive and destructive. By unpicking these relationships and revealing why they happen in the way that they do, we can begin to understand how we transform our thinking and our actions – to transform our practices.

Transformation means that women and men have equal roles in both the public and private spheres, that we uncover our connections with the natural world, and that we address the sustainability gap not by incrementalism, but by rethinking our relationship with each other and the natural world: harmony.

There may be no agreement about the courses of action that we need to take – governments cannot agree on treaties, businesses and civil society clash about responsibilities – but it is becoming clearer that some action is needed. If we could agree that transformation is not only possible but desirable then we could look to

what underlies the transformative process. This needs a new thinking and this paper suggests that the principles of a social ecofeminism will provide this. Let us look at a transformative process of rethinking our relationship with each other and the natural world, so that we may reverse the hegemony which allows us to exploit without consequence. If we can consider what it is to exist in harmony then we can envisage ways of being which achieve this. This may be a radical transformation and require a deep change to our ways of being but it may be the only way we have left.

My suggestion is therefore this: let us develop a research agenda which attempts to establish what it means to use eco-feminism as an underlying philosophy and how this reveals the sustainability gap. This may be by taking the Martin framework, as adapted in this paper, and evaluating how this explains what happens in our social enterprise sector. This would allow us to explore how transformative this sector was, and what contribution it made to closing the sustainability gap.

A final plea: often ecofeminism is regarded as a depressing response to domination and oppression and therefore it becomes conflictual and opposing in its own right. These are necessary characteristics of the framework, but many ecofeminists also argue that their starting point is compassion and caring and that this underpins their motivation to provide a framework for a better world (Cuomo, 2002). This aspect is important if we are to show ecofeminism in a positive and constructive framework. We care about sustainability and the future of the planet – let us use a framework that allows us to express this!

Sustainability ‘is the beginning of a process, not the end. It is a statement of intent, not a route-map’ (Adams, 2001, p383). I offer these ideas as an enabling beginning: using ecofeminism, we can begin to move to a more sustainable way of life – one

where environmental and social equity ensure that nature and humans all share Earth's bounty.

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