

Letter from the Editors

Doughnuts not only for eating

In the last issues, many articles revolved around the topic of sustainability. In this issue, in fact, all articles touch the topic of sustainability. The sheer abundance of aspects to consider and their interconnections make the topic of sustainability exciting but also challenging not to mention the urgent need for radical changes. What models exist to give us some orientation? There is the widely known three pillars model but there exist also newer models like the doughnut economics (Raworth, 2017). It describes a safe and just operating space for humanity located between social boundaries as the foundation and planetary boundaries as the ceiling – thus visualizing a doughnut. The idea is to address social shortfalls while preventing overconsumption of resources and too much pollution. The ecological aspects namely, climate change, ocean acidification, chemical pollution, nitrogen and phosphorus loading, freshwater withdrawals, land conversion, biodiversity loss, air pollution, and ozone layer depletion are adopted from Johan Rockström. The considered social aspects are food security, health, education, income and work, peace and justice, political voice, social equity, gender equality, housing, networks, energy, and water.

The research paper “Carbon Capture and Utilization – A new building block for Circular Economy?” by Florian Frieden first introduces some CCU processes before exploring the hurdles and potentials of CCU based on expert interviews. The article thus sheds light on a technology that is still in its infancy but could make important contributions to climate protection as well as circular economy. The recognition of CCU in the EU ETS, costs, entrepreneurial risk, the efficiency of CCU processes, and the high energy demand are identified as main hurdles. On the contrary, the large field of application, rising CO₂ prices and higher margins through sustainably labeled products present the potentials of CCU.

The first contribution to our commentary section comes from Jutta Paulus. Her article “Is the EU Green Deal channeling a transition towards a sustainable chemical industry?” picks up a ten-point action plan for the green transition of the chemical industry that she developed together with her colleague Sven Giegold. In the following, she explains each of these points in more detail, highlights progress and, above all, points out what still needs to be done.

Nabila Rabanizada’s and Monica Harting Pfeifer’s article “Disruption of the role model closed loop mechanical recycling of PET” deals with a challenge in the recycling of PET bottles used for e.g. juice: The coating inside the bottle. They raise awareness of this topic and call for exchange of knowledge and cooperation in the supply-chain to achieve true circularity.

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Raworth, K. (2017): *Doughnut Economics: Seven Ways to Think Like a 21st-Century Economist*, Random House.