

# INTRODUCTION TO THE FRAMEWORK OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE CAREER GUIDANCE

BIRMINGHAM, NICEC WORKSHOP 3/7-2024



## WHO ARE WE?

- Miriam Dimsits, Associate professor, VIA University College, School of Continuing Education, Aarhus, Denmark
- Tristram Hooley, Professor of Career Education, Inland Norway University



## Agenda:

- ❖ Defining terms
- ❖ Our methodology
- ❖ The five dimensions of environmentally sustainable career guidance
- ❖ A framework for theory and practice of environmentally sustainable career guidance
- ❖ World café group discussion on the five dimensions
- ❖ Wrapping it up!

# THE STARTING POINT OF OUR WORK



Common participation in  
Erasmus + project



Exploring Green Guidance  
aiming at.....



Our first meeting in Prague  
we began discussing  
definitions and practice  
frameworks



Our collaboration  
snowballed into what we  
will be presenting today

# Exploring green guidance



HOME

MENU ▾



Green guidance

**Career support  
for sustainable  
life choices**

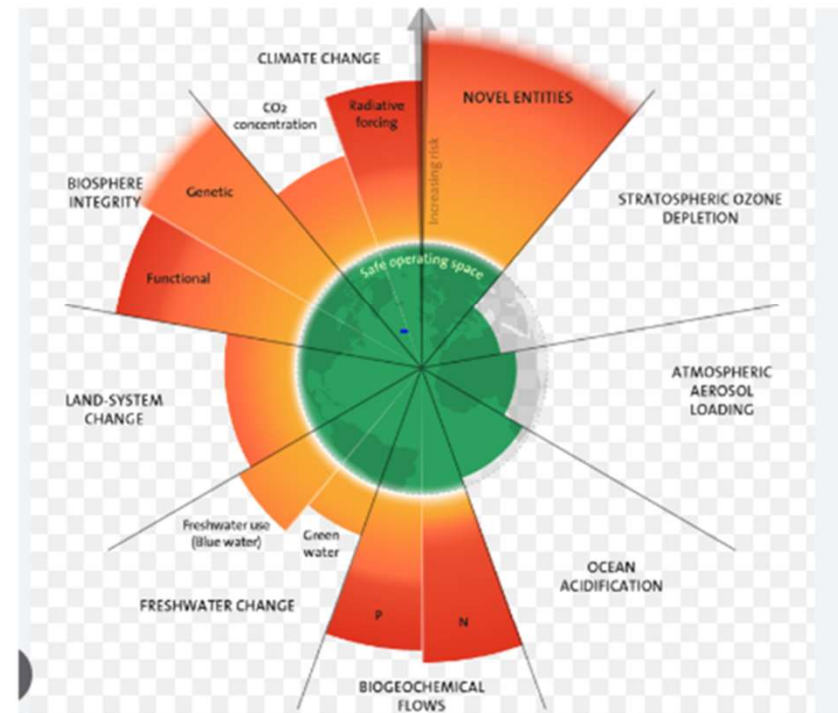
<https://www.green-guidance.eu/>

## DEFINING TERMS

- Green vs. sustainable - built-in vaguenesses/obscurities/ambiguities
- What does “green” guidance mean? Something with nature...but not the systemic dimension of interrelations, impacts, reciprocity of education, labour market, production, consumption
- Does “sustainable” perhaps encompass a little too much of what we want to achieve?
- “the empty signifier is a site of struggle onto which different parties seek to place meaning” (Laclau, 1996/2007)
- We want to bring (the power of) informed and research based clarity and precision into the field
- Naming a career guidance practice, that addresses the crisis of climate, biodiversity and environment - as areas connected to our lifestyles, work, production, consumption, living conditions locally/globally



# 6 OUT OF 9 PLANETARY BOUNDARIES HAVE BEEN EXCEEDED ...



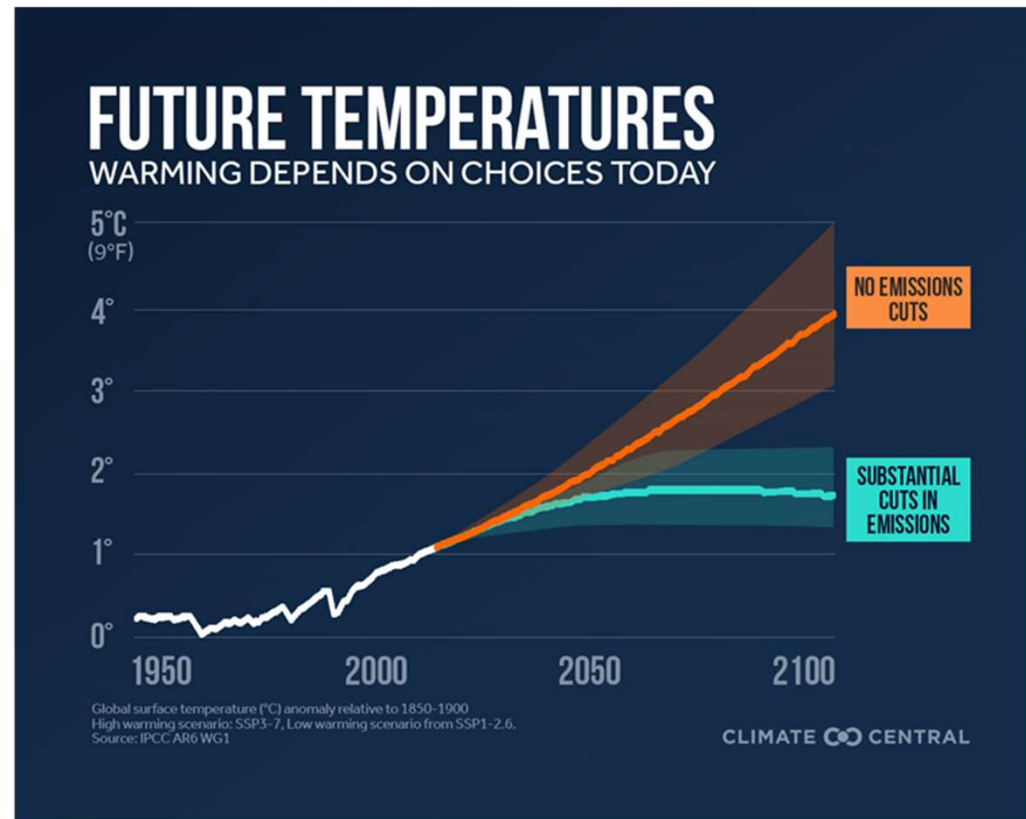
We are not doing enough to address this?

But the solution is not a mystery.

We know what to do and how to do it.

Climate change can be stopped.

But it requires action.



The labour market is an important arena for challenging climate change





# This creates an important role for career guidance



- We can help people to think and act in a green way.
- People have been talking about green guidance for years.
- But, what is it?
- How can it be done?

## ***Environmentally sustainable career guidance...***

"empowers individuals, groups and collectives to develop their lives and careers in ways that do not compromise the ability of other people nor future generations to meet their needs. It recognises that human beings are a part of nature which is valuable in its own right, and that all life, particularly the life of the most vulnerable, is threatened by a growing climate crisis, the depletion of biodiversity and other environmental damage caused by human action.

Environmentally sustainable career guidance is a pedagogic intervention which builds individual and community capacity to analyse, respond to, and address social, environmental and career problems whilst supporting people to build a good life for themselves and others. Fundamentally it aims to stimulate people's imagination and empower them to find their way to a better life and a sustainable world" (Dimsits & Hooley, 2024)

# What do we already know from the literature?



Narrative literature review



Snowball method



Danish anthology – looking into references of references of references



Literature search on combinations of sustainability or green and career or career guidance or career learning or career education



Leaving out the vast ESD-area not touching upon career, career guidance, career choice, career learning, career education

## THE FIVE DIMENSIONS OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SUSTAINABLE CAREER GUIDANCE

The affective dimension

The social- ecological dimension

The learning dimension

The transformational dimension

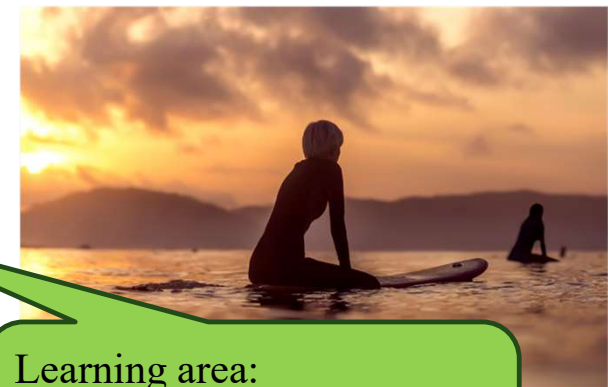
The political – ideological dimension

## THE AFFECTIVE DIMENSION

- Feelings as empathy with others/nature, stress or burn-out, connectedness to nature, feelings of alienation and detachment from nature and environment (Guichard & Di Fabio, 2015; Di Fabio & Bucci, 2016; De Vos et al, 2020)
- Feelings of powerlessness and loss of hope, both in relation to the future and the possibility of developing a career (Dimsits, 2022; Buhl, 2022)
- Loss of resonance/establishing resonance - *af-fection* and *e-motion* (Rosa, 2021)

### What could career guidance practice look like

- ❖ Using nature as a career guidance setting
- ❖ Working with existential or/and grounding- inspired approaches
- ❖ People's attitudes and emotions in relation to nature and the environment
- ❖ Working with craft approaches
- ❖ Collective and group based settings evoking universality and hope



Learning area:

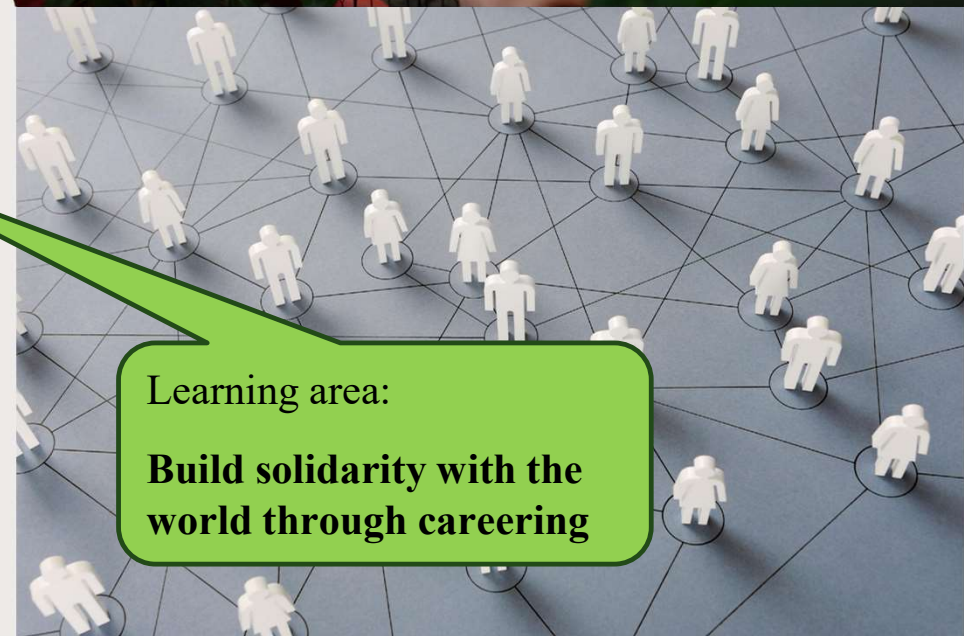
**Connect career with the world**

# THE SOCIAL – ECOLOGICAL DIMENSION

- The importance of collective learning and action with those around you (Buhl, 2022)
- Building social-ecological solidarity with the marginalised and threatened lifeforms in the world: people/groups/nature/species/habitats (Thomsen et al., 2022)
- Connect people to others and to the natural world

## What could career guidance practice look like

- ❖ Collective, group oriented or community based
- ❖ Focus on how we can live together
- ❖ Build solidaristic communities of mutual aid with both those who are like us and those who are different
- ❖ Work together to understand which actions are needed to contribute to a socially and environmentally sustainable community for human beings and all things living.



Learning area:


**Build solidarity with the world through careering**

## THE EDUCATIONAL DIMENSION

- How the world of work impacts the environment
- Which careers contribute positively to the green transition of the economy (Plant 1996, 2014, 2020)
- The careers practitioner cannot provide simple answers to the problems of environmental sustainability
- Be transparent and reflexive in discussions with clients about the uncertainties in working with and even comprehending sustainability
- Encourage the client to explore and consider different possibilities (Hooley, 2023) and find her own answers (Poulsen & Skovhus, 2022)

### What could career guidance practice look like

- ❖ Career guidance activities about the connection between the climate- and environmental crisis, the production systems and the world of work.
- ❖ Exploration of the environmental impacts of different career paths, occupations, and sectors
- ❖ Providing quality labour market information that addresses environmental sustainability - information on needed skills both technical and transversal for the green transition.



Learning area:

**Learn about careers in a sustainable world**

## THE TRANSFORMATIONAL DIMENSION

- Stimulate the 'sociological imagination' (Mills, 1959/2000), supplemented with the 'ecological imagination' (Norgaard, 2018)
- Help clients to connect their everyday experiences, troubles and hopes to the big social and environmental issues that they face,
- Help clients see possibilities and a way beyond the current situation
- Using imagination, entrepreneurial, transformational didactics
- Encourage people to consider and create alternative forms of work, production,

### What could career guidance practice look like

- ❖ Career guidance activities that focus on imagining and inventing a vocational future worth hoping for
- ❖ Working and collaborating in creative ways to make change happen in your life, community, and world.
- ❖ Making inventions for the future
- ❖ Scenario building, preferable futures



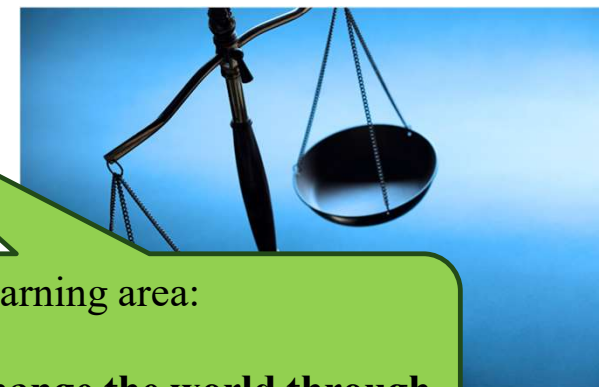


## THE POLITICAL – IDEOLOGICAL DIMENSION

- Developing clients' understanding of the nature of the problem, how we live in the world and think about changing it (Hooley 2015, Irving & Malik-Liévano, 2019; Thomsen et al, 2022a)
- Supporting people making career choices that support both personal well being/sustainable living AND local/global sustainability (Frigerio & Dimsits, 2023)
- The need to refrain from directive or dogmatic practices, enabling development of clients' stances on sustainability and careers (Poulsen & Skovhus, 2022)

### What could career guidance practice look like

- ❖ "From laying brick to building a cathedral" – systemic practice as means of comprehending work/nature reciprocity, enabling development of career values and meaningful career goals
- ❖ Critical interrogation of dominant and emergent political and societal ideologies
- ❖ Demasking content, power structures and actor interests
- ❖ Develop sensitive approaches to transparency and partiality
- ❖ Engage dialectically with students and clients without imposing own values and positions on them



Learning area:

**Change the world through career**

You have to prepare as a CGP

**Preconditions:** Careers practitioners have capacity to:

Understand and communicate environmental issues *and* Be reflexive about ethics, norms and ideology

We have turned the dimensions into learning areas

**Aims**

Career practitioners support people to:

Connect career with the world (affective)

Build solidarity with the world through careering (social-ecological)

Learn about careers in a sustainable world (educational)

Imagine and invent the world as you career (transformational)

Change the world through career (political-ideological)

– CGPs can aim for these areas in their design of activities, content and form



**Pedagogies**

Drawing on:

A wide range of

pedagogic and

counselling approaches

with particular reference

to those informed by

critical theory



**Approaches**

Working with people in:

Collectives

Communities

Groups

Individual sessions

(Dimsits & Hooley, 2008)

## DISCUSSION IN GROUPS

AT EACH TABLE YOU HAVE A COPY OF 1 OF THE DIMENSIONS (AFTER 10 MINUTES, WE CIRCLE THE DIMENSIONS – WE DO THIS THREE TIMES)

- What do careers professionals need to know and be able to do in order to support people with the dimension?
- What would it look like if a student or a client engaged deeply with this dimension?
- What theories and pedagogies might underpin work in this area?
- What practical approaches might be useful in relation to this dimension?



# SUMMARY OF THE DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

- What have been main points in your group discussion?
- What inspired you – and what are critical points?
- What can be implemented in practice right away?

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### **Pedagogies**

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with particular reference  
to those informed by  
critical theory

### **Approaches**

**Working with people in:**

Collectives  
Communities  
Groups  
Individual sessions

(Dimsits & Hooley, 2024)

THANK YOU FOR  
JOINING US TODAY!

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