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How companies are facing grand challenges through real utopias and robust action?

International organizations have been alerting governments and civil society to the collapse of the Earth's ecosystems for several decades (Diaz et al. 2019). Facing such a situation, companies are also contributing to novel and unconventional solutions to societal grand challenges. Based on a long ethnographic study of Ulteria, a group of companies involved in the transformation of the food and non-food distribution sector, we used a comprehensive approach to show how a SME integrates major societal challenges into its strategy and organization. This work mobilizes recent literature on grand challenge management and specifically discusses the relevance of the robust action theoretical model for shaping strategies addressing societal challenges (Etzion et al., 2017; Ferraro et al., 2015). To complement this theoretical approach, we add to our thinking recent work on the role of the imaginary and real utopia in collective action (Wright et al., 2017; Gümüşay & Reinecke, 2021), arguing that these two components play a decisive role in managing societal problems. We, then, revisit the theoretical model of robust action to explain the strategic process aiming to contribute to societal challenges. We show that contributions to grand challenges go through a process of constitution of real organisational utopia. By doing so, the organization shows the rest of society how it provides answers to societal problems. In this process, the organization structures its contribution to grand challenges by linking four strategies: structural (construction of a referent organization), interpretative (active multivocality), practical (concrete and distributed experiments linked to societal issues) and imaginary-related (attraction of a set of alternative imaginaries).

➤ 12h30 — Salle 103 / Comodal

➤ Participer à la réunion Zoom

[https://zoom.us/j/95741920861?](https://zoom.us/j/95741920861?pwd=MIQreEO4STBPUIFELQVIVk55QIZyUT09)

[pwd=MIQreEO4STBPUIFELQVIVk55QIZyUT09](https://zoom.us/j/95741920861?pwd=MIQreEO4STBPUIFELQVIVk55QIZyUT09)

ID de réunion : 993 2844 4342

Code secret : 4RxD9R

➤ Calendrier des séminaires

<https://urlz.fr/jllR>

➤ Réunion IDO —14h à 16h— Salle 103 — Emilie RUIZ (USMB, IREGE)

Présentation d'un projet de recherche portant sur les communautés d'innovation (épistémiques et de pratique). Terrain : communauté Lego Serious Play (méthode de facilitation). Recueil de données en cours. Emilie sollicite les collègues sur la préparation du quantitatif et le questionnaire associé.

Participer à la réunion Zoom : <https://zoom.us/j/91009529612?pwd=YWZrYURmaGRObFc2S1J4bnlRc2VDdz09> ID de réunion : 910 0952 9612—Code secret : 4dDhKj

