New standpoints for new visions
-a call for a comprehensive anticipatory design science-

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Abstract:
Resilient and long term sustainable systems are typically characterized by
cooperation and diversity. However, for many centuries the western cultural sphere,
with its initial European epicenter, has worked in the complete opposite direction
(Hickel, 2018). The hallmarks of this direction have rather been expansion,
exploitation, competition and domination; today facilitated by the global
implementation of an economical monoculture with infinite exponential growth as its
primary and required strategy for survival. In the last few decades it has become
obvious that this 'road of development' has become increasingly 'bumpy' and
unpredictable. In fact, it even seems like we are now accelerating on this espoused
road towards an absolute, figuratively and literally, dead end (Bendell, 2018)

Increased uncertainties and a developmental acceleration of much – albeit not
everything - have called for a more structured way to be prepared. Consequently, big
multinational companies pioneered what we now know as Scenario Building and
Futures Studies. Their focus was on *probabilities* for different possible outcomes
along a 'road of development' that was never seriously questioned, per se. This
single lane, one way 'road of development' became a strong metaphor that
normalized concepts like developed vs. developing countries, and left the latter with
strategies like catching up and leapfrogging. By that it also normalized inherently
unsustainable mindsets and a role-model that has promoted a 'race to the bottom'
that in the not too long time-frame might jeopardize our very existence and presently
makes the divide between those who have and those who haven't larger each day
(Ibid.).

Design professions have in no way been an innocent player in this 'race' (Fry, 2009).
On the contrary, design has often been used as a hired 'driver', given the mission to
find new opportunities within the frames of an assumed infinite affluence. A situation
that for example called for creative ways to develop consumers wants—rather than
designing for their needs—and by that secure the kind of economic growth the
system rather than the consumer needs. However, inherent in design, there are also
some potentially more noble and still quite untapped characteristics. They primarily
include two things; firstly, *the ability to envision future alternatives to the seemingly
most likely outcomes* and secondly, *taking a more holistic approach by consciously
changing standpoints and exploring the issue at hand from many different
stakeholders' views*. Unfortunately, in mainstream design today, the 'future' typically
becomes the next product release and the most important stakeholders the present
local users and shareholders. Arguably a too narrow view if one wants to secure

livelihood in either future time or for spatially distant 'users'. Nevertheless, at the same time – and of profound significance when talking about anticipation – are design's cores of inherent mind- and toolsets. Or in other words, the training to creatively look for alternative approaches from new standpoints and finally being able to convey them in a palpable manner, seems today more required than ever (Gaziulusoy & Ryan, 2017).

When asked what his profession was Buckminster Fuller (1970) answered that he been engaged in what he called "comprehensive anticipatory design science". This paper argues that it's now long overdue for design disciplines to follow suit and to realize that design's core competences probably are much more urgently needed today than we, and others, so far have recognized. By describing experiences from a global collaboration between different design institutions in both Norway and the so called 'Global South", this paper explores how this can be best accomplished in practice. Questions asked and tentatively answered typically includes design disciplines paired with the challenge of climate change joined with topics like: How can the present defining standpoint be decolonized? How can radical and substantial change be implemented? (O'Brien, 2012). How can alternatives to the present regime be made think- and debate-able? How can design develop its present competences and tools to be more fit for the urgent and radical changes required?

Finally, as much as this also is an intra-disciplinary reflection it's still primarily a position statement that calls out for the kind of inter-disciplinary cooperation huge systemic challenges like climate change, global warming and possible social collapses seems to require.

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