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Building an Ecodesign Transition Framework toward Sustainable Product Innovation

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Abstract

In order to effectively integrate environmental aspects into product development processes, companies have to significantly change some of the practices and habits of all involved stakeholders and organisation. To complement earlier research and the (technical) “hard side of ecodesign”, this article explores the promising “soft side” that considers company culture and human factors, through a multiple steps literature review. Whereas a consistent prescriptive change model is still lacking in ecodesign literature, a strong convergence and synergy is shown with the emerging Transition Management approach designed for sustainability issues facing organisations. The principles of an “ecodesign transition framework” are proposed, combining a three-level systemic approach, complementary top-down planning and bottom-up innovation, through new types of interaction and cycles of action and learning, with a deeper stakeholder management. This new combination could be capable to address change management issues and help companies evolve toward a more effective sustainable product innovation process, in the context of evolving business management practices.

Keywords: *ecodesign, integration, change management, transition, sustainability*
