

Focus on Water

Featured Case Writers and Cases:

- Michael Gordon (University of Michigan, USA) - *So You Want to Be a Social Entrepreneur: Starting Out, Scaling Up and Staying Committed*
- Debapratim Purkayastha (IBS Hyderabad) - *Trevor Field and The PlayPumps of Africa and WaterHealth International: Providing Safe Drinking Water to the Bottom of the Pyramid Consumers*
- Kevin McKague (Schulich School of Business, Canada) - *City Water Tanzania*
- Andy Hoffman (University of Michigan, USA) - *Coke in the Cross Hairs: Water, India, and the University of Michigan*
- Steve Bowden, Eva Collins (Waikato University, New Zealand), Kate Kearins and Helen Tregigda (Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand)- *Good Water: Standing on Holy Ground*

Dear reader,

Access to safe drinking water is critical to well-being and human development. Still, an estimated 3 billion people lack access to clean water. Bottled water, although a convenience, creates issues on its own - large amounts of plastic waste. This issue of oikos Case Quarterly is focused on the topic of water and we are showcasing six teaching cases from the oikos online case collection.

The first featured case on the social enterprise “Wello” (www.wellowater.org) is presented by Michael Gordon (University of Michigan, USA) who uses [this case](#) to teach about the nature of a social entrepreneur. It tells a story of an MBA student Cynthia Koenig who started Wello to deliver clean water to a billion of people in India and other developing countries. The second story features “PlayPumps International” (www.waterforpeople.org) and “WaterHealth International” (www.waterhealth.com) - another example of social enterprises that aim to secure access to safe drinking water in developing countries. [Both cases](#) are written by Debapratim Purkayastha from IBS Hyderabad (India). [The City Water Tanzania](#) case by Kevin McKague (Schulich School of Business, Canada) addresses a slightly different problem - the choice between public and private water utility management.

The other two cases in this issue - [Coke in the Cross Hairs: Water, India, and the University of Michigan](#) by Andy Hoffman (University of Michigan, USA) and [Good Water: Standing on Holy Ground](#) by Steve Bowden, Eva Collins, Kate Kearins and Helen Tregigda (Waikato University and Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand) - focus on water-related issues in developed countries. The Coke case outlines events in 2005-2006 when the University of Michigan decided to cut its contract with Coca-Cola because of the allegations of the company’s misuse of water resources in India. The Good Water case raises the issue of the ethics of bottled water and presents a story of a New Zealand-based ecopreneur.

Other interesting cases focused on water from the oikos online case collection and its partners’ collections are: [Procter and Gamble’s PuR Water Purifier](#) by Lisa Jones Christensen and Jessica Thomas (Kenan Flagler Business School, USA); [Coca-Cola’s Water Sustainability Initiatives](#) by Debapratim Purkayastha and Hadiya Faheem (IBS Hyderabad); [Elephant Pumps: Pumps Aid’s Business Solution To a Social Problem](#), also by Debapratim Purkayastha and his colleague Maseeha Syeda Qumer. Also of interest may be two Richard Ivey School of Business cases: Eureka Forbes Ltd: [Growing The Water Purifier Business](#) by Srinivas Sridharan, S.K. “Bal” Palekar and Ramasastry Chandrasekhar and

[Fiji Water and Corporate Social Responsibility - Green Makeover or ‘Greenwashing’?](#) by James McMaster and Jan Nowak.

At the end of this issue you can read about [a wonderful case collection](#) on water resources put together by [CasePlace.org](#); [a new case teaching book](#) by Debapratim Purkayastha “Case-Based Learning: A Student’s Handbook”; and a call for contributions for the Teaching Case Development Laboratory at [GRONEN](#) conference in June 2012.

Liudmila Nazarkina
oikos Case Quarterly Editor

Next issue of oikos Case Quarterly (Winter 2012) will be focused on the topic of Sustainable Lifestyles. We will feature cases on sustainable food and clothing:

- Burgerville: Sustainability and Sourcing in a QSR Supply Chain (by Darrell Brown, Phil Berko, Patrick Dedrick, Brie Hilliard, Joshua Pfleeger)
- Portland Roasting Company (by Madeleine Pullman, Greg Stokes, Price Gregory, Mark Langston, Brandon Arends)
- Lululemon’s commitment to the environment (by Andrea Erin Bass)
- Noir/Illuminati II (by Benoît Leleux, Barbara Scheel Agersnap)

So You Want to Be a Social Entrepreneurs: Starting Out, Scaling Up and Staying Committed

by Michael Gordon, University of Michigan, USA

The Case Story

Cynthia Koenig holds a full-time job, is immersed in school while working on her MBA, and is trying to start a social enterprise, [Wello](#), to deliver clean water to a billion people who lack ready access. Can one person do so much at once and succeed?

A Wello WaterWheel is an innovative water transportation tool that carries water inside its “wheel”, transforming 175 pounds of water to an effective weight of less than 20 pounds. The WaterWheel makes it possible to collect 20 gallons (75 liters) of water - four times the amount possible using traditional methods - in less time and much more easily.

On a long transatlantic flight, Cynthia recounts Wello’s origins, struggles, and hoped-for future with a passenger seated next to her. We learn about both the severe health and economic consequences of not having clean water readily available and the struggles Cynthia faces in her nonprofit organization.

As her seatmate questions her, Cynthia reveals how she happened upon working on the issue of water transport, how she tries to make use of and manage volunteers, her continual efforts to raise funds

for her 501(c)3 organization, her thoughts about how to develop a market for WaterWheels so that Wello is sustainable, and other issues that many early-stage social entrepreneurs face.

This case is less a who-dunnit demanding a clever “solution” than it is a portrayal of what goes into starting a social enterprise and what personal qualities it takes to persevere and succeed.

Teaching the Case

This case is designed to be taught to an MBA (or BBA) class on social enterprise, social entrepreneurship, base of the pyramid business, or something with a similar spirit. Ideally, this case comes towards the end of a semester during which students have learned about many organizations that are engaged in social enterprise and the individuals who have launched them. At that point, some students are wondering if becoming a social entrepreneur is right for them. This case can help students with questions such as:

- What kind of background is necessary to work as a social entrepreneur?
- Where does one get the necessary skills and background?

- What are the personal struggles and sacrifices of going this route, and what are the rewards?

I have only taught this case for one year (to two different groups of students). It’s been easy to capture students’ attention when Cynthia actually rolls a WaterWheel into the classroom and passes around a water vessel that girls use to carry water on their heads. (Naturally, everyone in the class “tries it on,” learning that it’s heavy even when unfilled.)

“It’s been easy to capture students’ attention when Cynthia actually rolls a WaterWheel into the classroom and passes around a water vessel that girls use to carry water on their heads.”

The upcoming year, Cynthia will be in India or other parts of the world far from where I teach. Since the excitement and true learning from the case come from students being able to question a “real” early-stage social entrepreneurs, I’m entertaining the idea of bringing in to my classes one or more other social entrepreneurs, or using Skype if necessary, to allow the kind of interaction my students have had with Cynthia.



Michael Gordon

Michael Gordon is the Arthur F. Thurnau Professor of Business Information Technology at the Ross School of Business, University of Michigan, where he teaches students how to change the world. (At least, he tries.) He has received the university’s highest teaching honor and has been hailed by the Smithsonian Institute - three times - as a Hero of the information age for his innovative teaching and ideas.

He has had broad experience helping organizations around the world use their talents to address societal

problems and benefit themselves at the same time. He has also helped students and others become social entrepreneurs, and he wants to help many more change the world, too.

He is author of the book [Design Your Life, Change the World: Your Path as a Social Entrepreneur](#) ([worldchangingbook.com](#)) and is working on a new book, *What I Wish I Knew Then: Becoming a Social Entrepreneur*. He blogs at [profmichaelgordon.com](#).

Since I have spoken to social entrepreneurs from around the world as research for my book-in-progress, *What I Wish I Knew Then: Becoming a Social Entrepreneur*, I can add a complementary perspective (and, if need be, conduct the class without the benefit of a real, live social entrepreneur). But the Q&A among students and someone changing the world right now is what makes this case so exciting to teach.

The only preparation required for students is to read the case ahead of time, look at the wellowater.org website, and come with a willingness to learn and ask questions.

Favorite Cases

Not to toot my own horn, but... I have an extended, online multimedia case on developing

sustainable for- or nonprofit businesses to confront malaria in Tanzania. The case stems from my work with Acumen Fund and students as they grappled with this very issue. The rich data (including videos) about Africa, malaria, business conditions, etc. allow detailed investigations of sustainable base of the pyramid: product development, distribution strategies, (social) marketing, financing, and more.

I'm happy to make this case available to others to teach with.

New Case Development

An organization I'm interested in is [samasource](http://samasource.com). They cater to high volume customers desiring services such as transcription. They provide the service by employing those living on a dollar (or so) a day.

Case Purchase Information

Inspection copy of the case "So You Want to Be a Social Entrepreneur" is available from the online [oikos Case Collection](http://oikos.org/case-collection). Please contact [Michael Gordon](mailto:michael.gordon@oikos.org) to obtain licensed copies of this case. This case is also part of the new oikos [Case Collection book \(Volume 2\): Case Studies in Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainability](http://oikos.org/case-collection-book) published by Greenleaf.



Collecting water on Funzi Island, Kenya 2011: Contributed by Tim Lehmann, oikos PhD Fellow

‘Trevor Field and the PlayPumps of Africa’ and ‘WaterHealth International: Providing Safe Drinking Water to the Bottom of the Pyramid Consumers’

by Debapratim Purkayastha, IBS Hyderabad, India

The Case Story

The case [Trevor Fields and the PlayPumps of Africa](#) is about social entrepreneur Trevor Field who co-founded Roundabout Outdoor to install and maintain [PlayPump Water System](#) in various parts of Southern Africa in order to address the problem of water scarcity. Playpumps were a child’s roundabout fitted with a pump that could pump water as



Debapratim Purkayastha

Debapratim Purkayastha is an Assistant Professor at IBS Hyderabad, a leading Indian B-School that offers a 100% case-based MBA program. He teaches Strategy and is also actively involved in case research, primarily writing under the IBS Center for Management Research (ICMR) brand. He has more than 11 years experience in teaching and in the industry. He has written more than 20 case studies focusing on corporate sustainability and social entrepreneurship. He has won awards and recognition in most of the leading international case writing competitions and many of his cases are published in global editions of textbooks in management. He also conducts training and Faculty Development Programs on case writing and case-based learning.

it turned; the four surfaces of the storage tank were used as billboards for commercial and public education/social messages. The funds for installing the PlayPumps were arranged by PlayPumps International, a non-profit organization also co-founded by Field. Revenue earned from the advertising helped maintain the water systems for up to a decade. By the end of 2007, more than 1,000 PlayPumps had been installed in four countries in Southern Africa. Field was keen to grow the business throughout Africa but he faced a number of challenges in scaling up further.

“WaterHealth’s aim was to cater to needy communities throughout the world but it faced a number of challenges in growing further. One of them being, the target segment’s reluctance to pay for water as they felt that it should be provided free of charge.”

[The WaterHealth International](#) case is about the social purpose for-profit venture in the safe water sector that is focused on serving the traditionally underserved ‘Bottom of the Pyramid’ (BoP) segment in countries including India, the Philippines, and Ghana. Its water system was based on UV Waterworks (UVW) technology that disinfected water from harmful pathogens and microbes. [WaterHealth](#) helped arrange loans for communities to finance the installations of its water systems and the beneficiaries had to pay a nominal user fee to avail of the service. The company also offered a franchise model to entrepreneurs where they received a return on investment within 12 to 18 months. WaterHealth’s aim was to cater to needy communities

throughout the world but it faced a number of challenges in growing further. One of them being, the target segment’s reluctance to pay for water as they felt that it should be provided free of charge.

Teaching the Case

The main idea behind developing the [PlayPumps](#) case was to expose MBA students to the world of social entrepreneurship and enable them to draw inspiration from social entrepreneurs such as Trevor Field. The case can be employed in a specialized elective on social entrepreneurship. The case objectives are primarily four-fold: a) To understand the issues and challenges in starting a social enterprise and managing growth and maturity; b) To understand and explore ways in which a social entrepreneur can build a sustainable business in developing and emerging markets - especially with respect to serving the BoP population - while addressing some of the most pressing issues confronting the global community; c) To understand the issues and challenges faced by social entrepreneurs in sustaining innovation and also in sustaining the enterprise financially; and d) To study the reasons for the success of the Roundabout Outdoor (RO) till the end of 2007, and explore ways in which the venture can be scaled up further in Africa and beyond.

I usually use this case in a core strategy course. I find it useful to drive the concepts of CSR as strategy for developing and emerging markets, and how serving traditionally unserved/underserved markets could lead to business model innovation. In a 75 minute session, I usually start the discussion by asking the students to analyze the business model adopted by

Field. This is followed by a quick debate in the class on whether the PlayPumps and its business model are innovative. The students are then challenged to come out with their recommendations and action plan on what should be done to scale up the venture further. I have observed that students tend to participate very enthusiastically whenever this case is discussed in the class. Most of them can't seem to believe their ears when, towards the end of the session, I tell them that the venture had run into some problems since the time the case was written. This also provides an opportunity to drive the message that the line between success and failure can be very thin.

Research Associate Hadiya Faheem and I wrote the [WaterHealth International](#) case for a specialized elective on social entrepreneurship to be taught at the post-graduate level. The case objectives are similar to the PlayPumps case in that both deal with the issue of managing growth and scaling up, both are set in emerging markets, and both served the BoP segment. Additionally, this case enables the students to compare WaterHealth's business model with other existing models being employed in the safe water sector, and explore ways in which it can be made more effective and sustainable.

In a strategy course, I use this case to drive the concepts of BoP, strategies that can be adopted to serve the BoP segment, and how this can lead to business model innovation. In a 75 minute session, I usually start the discussion by asking the students to analyze WaterHealth's business model and compare and contrast it with the other existing models being employed in the safe water sector. The students are asked to identify the critical success factors and also the challenges that the venture needed to overcome in order to achieve its objective. Finally, the students are asked to present their recommendations and action plan on what WaterHealth should do to overcome the challenges. Since my institute offers a 100% case-based MBA program there is enough scope to include cases of companies

operating in different sectors while teaching particular concepts. I usually include a generous share of cases on social ventures and those with issues related to corporate sustainability. This gives students a better understanding of the concepts, how they can be applied to the business context, and also helps them integrate sustainability into their thinking process.

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Favorite Cases

One of my favorite cases is [Procter and Gamble's PuR Water Purifier: The Hunt for a Sustainable Business Model](#) by Lisa Jones Christensen and Jessica Thomas, which enables students to understand the issues and constraints in serving the BoP segment. I also liked the [HBS case Hindustan Unilever's 'Pureit' Water Purifier](#) by V. Kasturi Rangan and Mona Singh. For driving concepts on CSR as strategy, I find the [ICMR case 'Ecomagination' at Work: GE's Sustainability Initiative](#), by SS George and S Govind, very useful.

New Case Development

Most sustainability cases available today are pitched for or used in dedicated CSR or sustainability MBA programs, or in one course dedicated to this topic in an MBA program. I would like to see more 'mainstream' cases (meant for Strategy, Marketing, Operations, etc.) with the social and environmental dimensions woven into them. Otherwise, there can be a disconnect between what students learn on sustainability and the skills that businesses expect from them. I would also like to see some cases on companies that have championed sustainability but had to face various challenges once recession set in, including some shareholders questioning the companies' investments in sustainability initiatives during these tougher times.

Case Purchase Information

Inspection copies of the case [Trevor Field and the PlayPumps of Africa](#) and [WaterHealth International: Providing Safe Drinking Water to the Bottom of the Pyramid Consumers](#) are available from the online oikos case collection. Both cases can also be purchased from ecch - [PlayPumps](#) and [WaterHealth](#). Both of these cases are also part of the new oikos [Case Collection book \(Volume 2\): Case Studies in Social Entrepreneurship and Sustainability](#) published by Greenleaf.

City Water Tanzania

by Kevin McKague, Schulich School of Business, Canada

The Case Story

The [City Water Tanzania](#) case is about the management of water utilities in urban centres in the developing world. The question of the pros and cons of private water utility management is central to the case and the main focus of Part A. Like many cities in Africa, Dar es Salaam had an aging and leaky system that wasn't able to serve its rapidly growing population, especially those in lower-income areas. Presented with the facts, students are asked to argue for



Kevin McKague

Kevin has developed 8 teaching cases focused on sustainability and social entrepreneurship issues, a number of which have won awards, including an award in the 2007 oikos case competition and in the 2010 Next Billion case competition. From 2006 to 2009 Kevin worked as a case study coordinator for the UNDP's Growing Inclusive Markets Initiative, mentoring 10 developing country case writers to create 30 cases of business contribution to the millennium development goals for the project. Kevin has also worked for the International Finance Corporation to develop 25 cases of IFC client companies for internal executive education training in sustainable business practices. Kevin is a former Research Fellow at the Aspen Institute, former associate director of the Sustainable Enterprise Academy and is currently a PhD candidate at the Schulich School of Business in Toronto.

whether they think the utility might be better managed by a private company. In part B of the case we learn that following the advice of the World Bank and the common wisdom of the day, the Tanzanian government did indeed decide to address the problems by contracting a UK private water utility management company. We also learn of the huge challenges faced by the management company and the political pressures on the government in opposition to private water utility management. Tensions mount in the short term although real improvements to water service would take many years. Students role play the two main protagonists - the Minister of Water for the Tanzanian government and the CEO of the water utility management firm - at a meeting to decide whether the contract should be continued or whether the government will pull the plug on the experiment. In the end, it is revealed that the contract is terminated. Too many forces conspired against success as things fell apart.

“Students role play the two main protagonists – the Minister of Water for the Tanzanian government and the CEO of the water utility management firm – at a meeting to decide whether the contract should be continued or whether the government will pull the plug on the experiment.”

Teaching the Case

There are a few nice things I like about this case. First, the idea that there are no right or wrong answers to the question of private or public management. The challenges to water utility management are enormous with crumbling infrastructure and management in cities like Dar es Salaam. Various organizations - government, NGOs, multilateral donors, the private sector - are all interested in contributing to improving the

system. The debate about the pros and cons of private sector management in Part A is a nice start to flesh out the various issues and get a sense of the real challenges. Students may get an idea that it was worthwhile trying something new as the status quo was certainly not working, especially for the poor.

Second, the case is nicely set up for role plays and debates. In the later part of the case, student teams role play either the Minister of Water or the CEO of the private water management company. Students can get a sense of the different kinds of pressures that each major character is under (political and economic). Although students try to make a deal work for the benefit of all, usually it becomes obvious that the centre cannot hold and the experiment collapses. This is indeed what happened. So on the face of it, this is also a ‘failure case’ as the CEO and expatriate senior managers of the private company were unceremoniously kicked out of the country.

“There are a few nice things I like about this case. First, the idea that there are no right or wrong answers to the question of private or public management.”

This is a case for MBA classes that touch on sustainability issues, water issues, international development or utility management issues. The leaning outcomes include:

- Understanding the pros and cons and challenges of private sector participation in water utility management in a developing country context
- Understanding the goals and challenges of public-private partnerships in providing clean water and sanitation in developing countries
- Exploring the question of who should pay for access to clean water - customers, governments, or private investors
- To provide an example of failure

- and the dynamics that cause an important partnership to break down

There are some good complementary teaching materials available, including documentary films on a very similar story that played out a few years previously in [Cochabamba](#), Bolivia, where there was a major political movement against contracts with private companies to manage water utilities. Also check the videos from the [2006 UNDP Human Development Report](#) focusing on water. The situation in Kibera and Nairobi is very similar to that in Dar es Salaam. Finally, you can watch the full 20 minute [documentary](#) with New Yorker writer William Finnegan. Again, strikingly similar issues emerged in Tanzania.

Favorite Cases

One of my favourite cases on corporate sustainability and social entrepreneurship is: [So you want to be a social entrepreneur?](#) by Michael Gordon at the University of Michigan. This case won first place in the Social Entrepreneurship category of the 2010 oikos case competition and is an excellent case for students who may be considering launching their own social enterprise ventures. The case gives an unvarnished look at the challenges, the work, the setbacks and the sacrifices that can be involved in being a social entrepreneur but also a sense of the rewards from following a passion to make the world a better place.

Case Purchase Information

The “City Water Tanzania” case is available for purchase as a case series from ecch: [Part A](#), [Part B](#), [Part C \(Striking a Deal\)](#) and [The Private Sector Experiment](#), and [Part D](#). It is also part of the [oikos Case Collection book \(Volume 1\): Case Studies in Sustainability Management and Strategy](#) published by Greenleaf.



Youth in the Kibera slum, Nairobi, Kenya 2011: Contributed by Tim Lehmann, oikos PhD Fellow

Coke in the Cross Hairs: Water, India, and the University of Michigan

by Andrew Hoffman, University of Michigan, USA

I wrote the Coke case, with two students, as a form of catharsis from a very unpleasant experience I had with the Dispute Review Board at the University of Michigan. Though I am not explicitly in the case study, it very much conveys a story that I lived for more than a year. In that year, I dealt with strident and disrespectful activist students, hesitant administrators and corporate executives in avoidance mode. However, in the end, I believe a good result emerged, and more importantly, a good learning tool for students interested in sustainability.



Andrew Hoffman

Andrew (Andy) Hoffman is the Holcim (US) Professor of Sustainable Enterprise at the University of Michigan, a position that holds joint appointments at the Stephen M. Ross School of Business and the School of Natural Resources & Environment. Within this role, Andy also serves as Director of the Frederick A. and Barbara M. Erb Institute for Global Sustainable Enterprise. Andy is a leader in using organizational, network and strategic analyses to assess the implications of environmental issues for business, and has published nine books and over ninety articles and book chapters on the topic. Prior to academics, Andy worked for the US Environmental Protection Agency (Region 1), Metcalf & Eddy Environmental Consultants, T&T Construction & Design, and the Amoco Corporation.

This case can be used in a BBA or MBA course dealing with corporate strategy and sustainability or globalization issues. In short, the case drives a discussion around events in 2005-2006 when the University of Michigan decided to cut its contract with Coca-Cola because of the company's environmental issues in India and labor issues in Colombia. There are a variety of themes that resonate through the case including, but not limited to: (1) globalization, information technology, and the sustainability agenda; (2) brandjacking, activism, and the decision to engage; (3) social change agents and the dark green/bright green divide; and (4) the university as global citizen.

"I wrote the Coke case, with two students, as a form of catharsis from a very unpleasant experience I had with the Dispute Review Board at the University of Michigan."

Components 1 and 2 are very helpful for driving some key learnings on sustainability. But I find that my students most strongly resonate with item number 3 as they can see themselves personally in that issue. I challenge them to see themselves in one of the four roles at the beginning of the case as a way to provoke them into thinking more about their own identity as a change agent. There are many roles in the change process, some within activist groups on the outside, some within executive roles on the inside. They all have a place and students need to learn where they best fit (i.e. are they dark green or bright green).

The discussions are often spirited and, though guided by me with a pedagogical structure, evoke some very healthy personal reflections within the class. I thoroughly enjoy teaching it.

The last component (#4) also drives

some very interesting conversation, but I don't always have time. It offers an opportunity to really consider their values in the face of some real pragmatic concerns that they can understand. So, for example, many students react very positively to the idea of a University playing the role of social change agent and forcing change upon the vendors with which they have contractual relationships. But what if that forced change raises their costs for tuition, logo paraphernalia or sports ticket prices? This is where the rubber seems to hit the road, and provokes them into thinking about their values and the tensions they may create for other aspects of their lives, particularly financial. Overall, the case is a ball to teach.

To help students prepare, I include several readings. The idea of "tempered radical" is a great tool for teaching the challenges of wanting to be a business person while also holding true to environmental values that may be at variance with that goal - Meyerson, D., and M. Scully. 1995. "Tempered radicalism and the politics of ambivalence and change." *Organization Science*, 6(5): 585-601. The question of whether companies face the tension of values versus profits is played out nicely in two articles, one that says that companies are being destroyed by sustainability - Murray, A. "Will 'Social Responsibility' Harm Business?" *The Wall Street Journal*. 18 May 2005: A2 - and another that says it is a false dichotomy - Davis, I. "The biggest contract." *The Economist*. 26 May 2005, 69-71. Obviously I use the first as a foil to set up the second, with which I agree. One last paper introduces the idea of "bright greens" and "dark greens" and shows how there is a healthy synergy between the two ends of the spectrum - Hoffman, A. 2009. "Shades of green." *Stanford Social Innovation Review*, Spring, 40-49.

“There are many roles in the change process, some within activist groups on the outside, some within executive roles on the inside. They all have a place and students need to learn where they best fit (i.e. are they dark green or bright green).”

The case questions I assign them to prepare cover the gamut of the issues I bring out in the class discussion: 1. At the end of the case, Amy Landau is wondering if her efforts will have failed if Coke remains on campus. Is that a fair metric for judging SOLE’s (Students Organizing for Labor and Economic Equality) efforts at success? 2. Why is Coke being singled out for attention by

activists? Is this a fair criticism? Does it matter? Should Coke take the challenge seriously? Should Coke deal with Amit Shrivastava from [India Resource Center](#) directly? On what grounds? Is it in Coke’s interests to engage this debate? How do you decide? 3. Who are the change agents in this case? What are their respective roles and sources of power? Which role do you most resonate with? 4. Is the University of Michigan using its resources and power appropriately by taking action against Coke? What if this was your university? Would you be happy if this meant that costs to the university went up? 5. What does this case tell us about the evolving definition of sustainability as a business concern?

Other cases that I use include: [Seventh Generation: Balancing Customer Expectations with Supply Chain Realities](#), 2006, U. of Oregon Case (D. Goldstein and M. Russo); [The Clorox Company Goes Green](#), 2010, Erb Institute Case 1-428-989; [Wal-Mart’s Sustainability Strategy](#), 2007, Stanford Case: OIT-71; [FedEx and Environmental Defense: Building a Hybrid Delivery Fleet](#), 2004, Stanford Case: SI-82; [Molten Metal Technology \(A\)](#), 2010, Erb Institute Case 1-429-049; [Honest Tea: Sell Up or Sell Out](#), 2010, Erb Institute Case 1-428-947; [Living Homes](#), 2008, Erb Institute Case 1-428-714.

Case Purchase Information

An abridged version of the inspection copy of the case “Coke in the Cross Hairs: Water, India, and the University of Michigan” is available from the online [oikos Case Collection](#). This case can also be purchased from the [GlobaLens website](#).



Mangrove forest, Funzi Island, Kenya 2011: Contributed by Tim Lehmann, oikos PhD Fellow

Good Water: Standing on Holy Ground

by Steve Bowden, Eva Collins, Kate Kearins and Helen Tregidga, Waikato University and Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand



Eva, Kate, Helen & Steve

The case was written by Steve Bowden, Senior Lecturer in Strategy at Waikato University, Professor Kate Kearins, Associate Dean for Research in the Faculty of Business and Law at Auckland University of Technology, Associate Professor Eva Collins who works with Steve in the Strategy Department at Waikato and Helen Tregidga, Senior Lecturer in Accounting and a colleague of

Kate's at Auckland University of Technology. We came together as a team to write cases because we were dissatisfied with the cases that were available at the time to meet our classroom purposes and context. Most cases were on big corporates based in North America or Europe. We were interested in the experiences of small businesses that were founded to make a positive social and or environmental impact. Small businesses are an important force for change in our own, and

in many other countries. Our collaboration started in 2005 with the [Phoenix Organic case](#), continued with our 2008 case, [State of Grace 2009](#), [Kapai New Zealand](#) and in 2010, the [Good Water case](#). We have been fortunate to have been a finalist in the oikos case writing competition with each of these cases and we have been grateful for the international exposure being a finalist has given our cases.

The Case Story

The case tells the story of [Good Water](#) CEO, Grant Hall and his desire to realise a closed loop system, which he calls his Nirvana dream. Grant wanted to sell water in bottles made from local biomass, with the used bottle waste separated, recycled into plant bottles, allowed to biodegrade to support new plant-life and sources of biomass for further production of water bottles. The case explores issues with scale, the desirability of and the need for bottled water, and the resultant creation of a huge amount of plastic waste. The case uses a layered approach with six pages of text and optional hyperlinks to websites, news articles and video clips for maximum teaching and learning flexibility.

Teaching the Case

The case was originally developed to use in a core strategy course for a case competition, where teams

of four or five students conducted an internal and external analysis and recommended a strategy for the future. The case has also been used with graduate, undergraduate and MBA classes on strategy courses, sustainability-focussed courses as well as entrepreneurship courses.

Although bottled water consumption in New Zealand is much, much lower than in many European countries and the US, bottled water outsells any other beverage sold on the Waikato University campus. It is such a popular beverage that most of our students have not even thought about why they pay for something (clean water) that is available freely from taps. The ethics of bottled water has always led to lively classroom discussions. We tend not to assign any of the optional links as mandatory, but encourage students to explore them. We find that students start to engage, and in many instances,

explore online beyond the recommended links.

“The ethics of bottled water has always led to lively classroom discussions.”

Some of us use the case to explore the concept of ecopreneurs - entrepreneurs who start a business to have a positive social and or environmental impact. Grant Hall wanted to not just succeed financially, he wanted to transform the whole post-consumer waste to landfill system, by separating out the good waste and upcycling. Financially, the company was not doing well. In addition, to try to get the scale needed to get waste separation happening, Grant controversially shared his intellectual property with his competitors.

The case is also a good example of a practical application of the concept

of life-cycle assessment. We ask students to compare the life-cycle of a Good Water bottle compared to the traditional plastic, or PET bottle. Aligned with life-cycle assessment, the case gives students a chance to explore the cradle-to-cradle concept and analyse how challenging it can be to close the loop.

After we wrote the case, Grant Hall exited the bottled water industry and morphed his company into “Good Packaging” where he could work with his former competitors and at the same time explore new applications, beyond bottled water, for plant-based packaging. This seems a more feasible way of moving toward system transformation - and it is a solution that smart students usually come up with.

“After we wrote the case, Grant Hall exited the bottled water industry and morphed his company into

“Good Packaging” where he could work with his former competitors and at the same time explore new applications, beyond bottled water, for plant-based packaging.”

Favorite Cases

In the last couple of years, the impact of the recession on sustainability and business has been the topic of class discussion. The case, [“Marks & Spencer - The Business Case for Plan A.”](#) by Heiko Spitzbeck, is a great case to use to examine business strategy in an economically constrained environment. Another favourite case is by David Foot, [“Easter Island: A case study in non-sustainability.”](#) The case works well in introductory sustainability classes to illustrate the interconnectivity of nature. It explores the question of whether humans will use up every last resource within an ecosystem. More modern examples, such as the Atlantic Cod, can be used in class

discussion, or alternatively, the students can be asked to share their own examples.

New Case Development

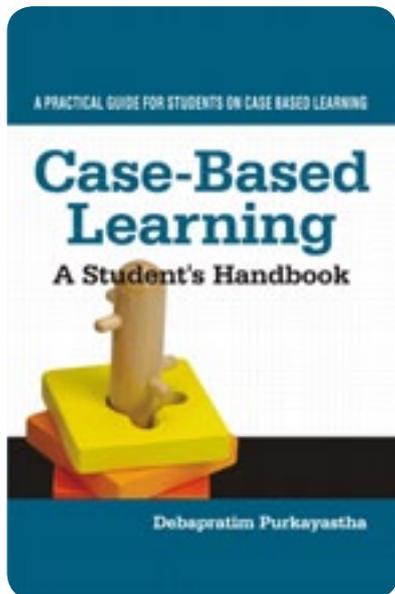
We have been drawn to write cases about ecopreneurs, and look for more of these types of cases, because we believe sustainability will not be achieved by incremental strategies adopted at the edge, but of wholly new ways of doing business. We want to inspire our students to move beyond what Paul Hawken called the “make, take, waste” linear model and imagine new business models. We like to use cases that highlight the power of commerce to socially and environmentally transform society.

Case Purchase Information

This case is available from the Case Research Journal: Bowden, S., Kearins, K., Collins, E., Tregidga, H. (2010). Good water and good plastic? Case Research Journal, 30(4): 85-95.



Case-Based Learning: A Student's Handbook



IBS Hyderabad is launching a new [book](#) “Case-Based Learning: A Student’s Handbook” (by Debapratim Purkayastha, ISBN: 978-81-314-2831-3) that is written to help the students get a thorough understanding of what to expect from the case method, what is expected of them, the demands this method puts on them, and how they can get the best out of Case-based Learning.

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Price: India: Rs. 249 (+ Postage as applicable). Outside India: \$10 (+ Postage as applicable). e-book is available at \$10.

Water Resources Reading Collection @CasePlace.org

CasePlace.org have put together a new [Reading Collection](#) on Water Resources. This collection includes material on water resources, business reaction to water-related challenges, the impact of innovation on efforts to alleviate pressure of water supplies, access to water in emerging economies, managing water risk as well as related environmental impacts, and more. The collection includes case studies, syllabi, articles, and reports and provides a broad selection for teaching and learning about this issue.

ecch: Advanced Case Method Workshop

26-27 March 2012
Venue: IMD Switzerland

Led by award-winning case author and teacher Kamran Kashani, this workshop for experienced case users will be a case study on case teaching and writing. The fundamental principles of effective discussion leadership will be explored and different approaches will be assessed. The workshop will discuss the case development process and how to design an effective case based course.

The workshop will be of benefit to a wide audience, including: (1) case teachers and writers keen to improve their performance and refresh their skills; (2) faculty and trainers who have taught with or written cases but never received any formal training; (3) those from any sector or discipline.

Fees: £495/€645 non-residential. Fees include course materials and lunch. ecch member organisations receive 10% discount. More information on the [ecch website](#).

Teaching Case Development Laboratory @GRONEN Conference

26-29 June 2012
Venue: Couvent Royal, Saint Maximin la Sainte Baume (near Marseille), France

Training opportunities on case writing and teaching in the field of corporate sustainability and social entrepreneurship are still rare. Moreover, often even the most interesting cases have a weak teaching note which leads to limited learning benefits for students.

This [workshop](#) aims at exchanging experiences in using teaching cases in sustainability-related courses, as well as mainstream disciplines such as corporate strategy, marketing, entrepreneurship and finance. The workshop intends to gather scholars within the GRONEN network who are teaching cases or/and are involved in case writing. By including experienced case writers and instructors we will explore principles, methodologies and tools for efficient case teaching and discuss what an “ideal” teaching note should include. We encourage participants to submit short exposés on using teaching cases in the classroom or teaching notes (finished or in progress) of their own cases. Both types of submissions (exposé or teaching note) should not exceed 10 pages.

Deadline for submissions: 15 February 2012

Contact

We would like to hear your experiences of teaching innovative corporate sustainability and social entrepreneurship cases! If you have any suggestions for improving this periodical, or information you may want to share with the community of case writers and instructors, we would appreciate your feedback. Please send us an email at case@oikosinternational.org or give us a call at +41 71 224 2698.

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Partners:



Water containers, Kidimu Village, Kenya 2011: Contributed by Tim Lehmann, oikos PhD Fellow

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