

# Conceptualizing good work for all. A social-ecological perspective.

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# Outline

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1. Two features of dominant concepts of work
2. (Re)productivity: creation processes
3. Human (re)productivities: from value-creation to needs-satisfaction
4. The role of society and nature
5. Conclusions

# Two features of dominant concepts of work

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**Work** often refers to **monetized value-creation process**

(e.g. neoclassical economics, public debates, national accounts, ...)

Limits work wrongly to

- monetized economic processes
- the creation of a singular value metric (utility / exchange value)

We suggest to conceptualize work as a

- **human (re)productive activity**
- to **satisfy needs**
- by mediating between **human, social and natural (re)productive processes.**

# (Re)productivity: creation processes

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- Value is the product “of processes of mediation between men/society (sic!) and nature”
- Interdependency of human and natural value-creation processes

## Human (re)productivity

- e.g. household work, care work, manufacturing, ...
- (independent of payment but related)

## Natural (re)productivity

- e.g. reproduction of fishes, growing of tree's

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## Work ...

- is a **human (re)productive process** that mediates **human, social and natural (re)productive processes**.

Generally, **work** refers to ~~monetized~~ value-creation processes

# Human (re)productivity: From value-creation to needs-satisfaction

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„satisfaction of needs“ as the goal of work

(Spencer 2014 and Blustein et al. 2016)

## Human Scale to Development Approach

- 9 human needs that are finite, classifiable and independent of the culture/time/space
- 4 existential characteristics (Being, Having, Doing, Interacting)
- 5 types of satisfiers (synergic, singular, destructive, inhibiting, pseudo)

(Max-Neef 1990; Cruz et al 2009)

# Work for needs-satisfaction

	Being (personal or collective attributes)	Having (Institutions, norms tools)	Doing (personal or collective actions)	Interacting (spaces or atmospheres)
Subsistence			Taking care (feed/care work), food production (farm work), resource extraction (mine work)	
Protection			industrial-work, ...	
Affection				
Understanding			Educate, write books, ...	
Participation			Facilitation, social events, family, ...	
Idleness				
Creation				
Identity				
Freedom				

(adapted from Cruz et al 2009)

# Human (re)productivity: From value-creation to needs-satisfaction

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## Work ...

- is a **human (re)productive activity** (doing)
- to **satisfy needs**
- by mediating **human, social and natural (re)productive processes**.

Generally, **work** refers to ~~monetized value-creation~~ processes

## Work ...

- is a ~~human (re)productive process~~ that mediates **human, social and natural (re)productive processes**.

# Sustainability of the three (re)productivities

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## Work ...

- is a **human (re)productive activity** to **satisfy needs** by mediating between **human, social and natural (re)productive processes**.

**Human (re)p.** – Human scale to development approach (based on Cruz et al 2009)

**Social (re)p.** – e.g. concept of contributive justice (based on Sayer 2009)

- **Quantitative**  
Everybody should contribute an equal amount according to his or her abilities to satisfy needs
- **Qualitative**  
Everybody should be able satisfy needs equally through ‘good’ and ‘interesting’ and ‘bad’ and less interesting contributions

**Natural (re)p.** – e.g. concept of planetary boundaries (based e.g. Röckström 2009)

Thank you!