Linking fields with GMA: Sustainability, companies, people and Operational Research

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This article is about making decisions concerning the management of sustainability, decisions that may influence the use or protection of natural resources or address difficult societal choices. Managers have more and more to tackle a diversity of problems in a rigorous and transparent way. One of the distinctive features of these decisions is that managers must give attention to both the values of people affected and factual information concerning the potential consequences of actions. This imposes the adoption of new methods for structuring spaces, strategy alternatives, and organizational planning. The support from operational research analysts becomes increasingly important, as we are dealing with people mostly without strong quantitative or model-building backgrounds. With the presence of different perspectives and mental models, behavior elements are at the core of the problem and unintentional biases in model use may occur. Our intention is to help promote the transference of knowledge to and within companies so that they may assure resilience. We found in general morphological analysis a great help for that. We want to make available a meta-model based on Operational Research for fields involving public resources and multiple interests to aid current and future managers of companies. We conclude the article with two case studies to illustrate our approach.

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