

2. Instructions for use

This guide comprises *two main parts*: firstly, definitions and background knowledge on sustainability, tensions and dilemmas, and secondly, general and specific metacriteria of sustainability with guiding questions for reflection that can be applied to concrete sustainability (research) projects.

In the third chapter, the *analytical understanding of sustainability* used here is explicated. Then, the concept of the practical *dilemma* with its two components of norms and conditions of action is summarised and related to sustainability: for the *early recognition* of areas of tension with potentials for dilemmas, for the *clarification* of strategic assertion and denial of dilemmas, and for the *processing* of practical dilemmas that nevertheless exist, especially in research. This serves as background information “from theory for practice”.

The subsequent fourth chapter contains *meta-criteria* for reflecting on areas of tension and possible, associated dilemmas of sustainability. They are divided into eight metacriteria which operationalise questions guiding reflection that are categorised into three systematic blocks:

Block A: Metacriteria 1 and 8 aim at reflecting on dilemmas of sustainability and the *initial and final reflection* on one's own understanding of sustainability.

Block B: Metacriteria 2, 3 and 4 aim at reflecting on project planning. The focus here is on the *subjective component of the norms of action* of dilemmas of sustainability.

Block C: Metacriteria 5, 6 and 7 aim at reflecting on the implementation of the project. The focus here is on the *component of the conditions for action* of dilemmas of sustainability.

In addition, special meta-criteria are formulated for funding bodies.

