V: How would you briefly define circular economy and sustainable consumption in one sentence each?

C: Circular economy is an economic system in which materials and products circulate, or at least they loop with the intention to both keep products in the system for longer and to maintain material integrity for as long as possible and to keep materials in the loop as long as possible as well. The way I define it is from a resource perspective. Sustainable consumption is an approach towards consumer behaviour that tries to find ways through research and practice to stimulate consumers to behave more sustainable, to behave in ways that are less impactful. And there are many ways they can do this, but that is the overall goal of sustainable consumption.

V: How would you explain the key characteristics of the future circular economy to to people who don’t know about circular economy, so to friends or relatives?

C: I would very simply say it is about closing loops. Keeping products for longer and recycling materials.

V: Imagine a truly circular economy. How would consumption change?

C: We would use our products for longer, clearly. We would probably shift to owning less and having more access to products. We would probably have a vibrant culture of repair, refurbishment and remanufacturing. We would have to innovate recycling, and I think a truly circular economy would also be based on the use of renewable energy and energy sources otherwise the material loops and closing the material loops will simply be too impactful. I think it would also require that we really reconsider our whole approach towards waste.

V: Then we come to the second part. This is about the sustainable business model. There are three bigger parts to it: at first the value proposition, the value creation and delivery, and then value capture. Each of these have sub-elements. My first question is How should companies shape their value proposition when implementing circularity and sustainable consumption? That is: value proposition is the value the firm offers to a specific target customer segment. It’s about the product or service, about the customer service and relationships, and about the value proposition not only for the customers but also for society and environment.

C: It completely depends on the kind of company and the kind of product. So it’s difficult to answer in general terms, but you have already given me the answer in general terms because it needs to be a value proposition that is enticing and that will let people engage with a product or give that offer at least, be it a product or service or combination.

V: You can also make it more specific if you want to give specific examples.

C: Well a company can go multiple ways in its value proposition. In the value proposition that a company puts forward, there should always be a story about not just what the product can bring you when you use it but it should also have a story about what happens after first use. I think the essence of a good circular economy value proposition is transparency. There is an element of transparency in terms of what will happen next, and this could mean that you are required to deliver the product back to the company through the contract or subscription model that you have. That you at least are getting engaged in order to contribute to the circular economy by voluntarily giving back the product or keeping it longer. That is one element. The second element is that a good circular economy value proposition would also entice people to take better care of their products. So in order to keep them longer. And the third part would be for products of consumption, the transparency about end of life would be really important because then you have to talk about biodegrading or recycling whereas if you look at products that can last longer, the element of care is going to be much more important from a consumer perspective. There’s still two ways, even within that, so there could be an approach from a company to really start engaging consumers in the whole story of circular economy like: together we can shape this, but it also requires you to do something as well as we will do something. That’s one approach, and another would be for a company to say: you consumers just sit back and relax, we will create an amazing experience for you but we will keep control, so we will take care of all these issues in terms of EoL and refurbishment and re-mend, and you just have the most wonderful customer experience and we will take care of it. The third way would be that the company puts everything on the consumer. That would mean that society should figure out how circular economy should work but I can’t see that work. I can see it work if company’s keep control over their resources, and I can see it work in a dialogue/co-collaboration together with consumers.

V: How do you think the companies could and should change their product and service offerings. They have to maybe engage the consumers more, but what do you think?

C: From a very technical perspective, depending on the product. From the consumer role it should be just extremely easy to recycle, or biodegrade, and we should make clear choices about those. Many developments are just going in the wrong direction. We used to have soup in cans, and these are extremely easy to recycle. Now we are moving from steel cans to bags that are made of laminated foils with plastic and aluminium combined in order to create the same properties as a steel can has, but this is completely non-recyclable. This is a problem. For convenience sake the consumers love the bags because they are not heavy and easy for storing etcetera but from an environmental perspective it is a very bad development, so there you get the trade-offs. And you will get many of those. The essence is to create a bag that is recyclable if you really want to get rid of the cans, and that is still a step that needs to be taken. Or just take the step back to the cans, but that is a step people will now no longer accept. This is because we have taken a step to the bags, and if you go back to the cans they will say ‘hey what happened to the bag, we don’t want these cans’. For the durable products, again you can take two approaches: either you can argue that a company retains IPE and develops relatively closed products and controls so that is the perspective where the costumer is not really engaged a lot in the whole thing except that at some point the product will need to come back. Whereas the manufacturer will retain IPE and will make sure the product is refurbished and resold or something. And the other one where you start more engaging you will need a more open product architecture, and you would engage customers in repair and maintenance. Develop a repair facility and really try to do it in a networked collaborative way to make this product last longer. Those would be the two approaches for the durables.

V: And how do you think companies should in the transition to the circular economy think about providing value to the society and to the environment? So not just to consumers.

C: Through relentless innovation. It is a very generic answer. We don’t know yet how closing material loops will really be embedded from an environmental perspective. There will be so many negative side effects that we hardly can predict. Last week I was in a meeting where a company was presenting its vision towards 100% closed loop recycling and there was a question asked: if you do in a completely close your material loop you will no longer mine stuff. The mines that are currently used will no longer be needed. So what are you going to do with the people that depend on these mines in Africa, south America. If you force them to close these mines if you are going to recycle of that. And the company said: We thought of that! The company was already talking to stakeholders in Africa about setting up programmes to set up new life opportunities, education for people who may no longer be working in these minds in the future. Which I thought was an amazing long term vision, but it was one of those side-effects that I had never even considered. And probably as you start in the closing loops more and more, and you can see this happen, there will be so many questions and effects that you cannot even foresee and we need to innovate the recycling process desperately because it is about 100 years old and over the last 50 year the process hasn’t improved much. If you go to a recycle plat and look at how basic it all is, just hammers and sieves and some magnets and some water baths here and there, it’s not high-tech and there is much to be done there. Also in terms of product design we have forgotten how to design for disassembly, how to design for repair. How to understand reparability is not ‘how do I design for reparability’ but understanding what are the most fragile parts and to what level we want people to have access. So in short: relentless innovation and continuously monitoring all kinds of side-effects and dealing with the trade-offs that will occur. Very fascinating.

V: I’m curious how it will turn out and what is going to happen. We are coming to the second part now, and I think we could start from technology and product features because you already started talking a little bit about that. We talked about product features like more easy to disassemble and so on, but what do you think could be the role of technology in the transition. How should companies use technology to facilitate the transition to a circular economy?

C: I think I answered it. I gave an example of social problems that may arise. If you understand recycling technology at the moment as it is, it is extremely difficult to recycle something 100%. The whole process of how we recycle, how we sort stuff and how we shred it and then try to figure out what is what, it just needs to change and that requires technological innovations but we may also need innovations in terms of materials. We are so used as designers to just pick something. ‘We need a material with these kind of properties, with this kind of shine, this colour and this coating’ and it can all be done. There is never a question about whether you realised that if you use this specific material than these are the potential implications, this is thought of hardly ever or at least way too little. So there is a lot of work to be done, also from our side as educators. So making designers much more material-savvy.

V: Making them aware of the large-scale impact?

C: Yes, but also making them understand. Now it is like a candy store. You pick, you specify, they will do all these chemical additions to materials in order to reach the specs you prescribe. And it should be a two-way process. You want these kind of properties, have you considered what it means? It will mean that your product will have way more impact because it will take more energy to develop a material with these kind of specifications: can you think of an alternative? That would be a new one. So those are just a few examples, and there are a lot of things to be changed about design methodology as well which is probably also technology, I don’t know. A wide open playing field.

V: And how do you think the activities of the companies should change. The activities to create and deliver value that customers are willing to pay for. So again, in the transition to the circular economy, and also a little bit in sustainable consumption in mind.

C: I have the feeling I have already gone over this a bit. Can you repeat the question?

V: So really the activities of the company, how should the company change the activities to create and deliver value that customers are willing to pay for?

C: In order to capture value in a circular economy you need to in some way either capture value from a very long living product. So that is a high end product that you sell for a lot of money and that will sort of help you capture value from the resources and energy embedded in the product over a long period of time. Or you need to find another way to capture value, which is by getting the product back, and that is a circular economy right? And so getting this product back in order to recapture the value from it again and hopefully again, you need probably to figure out new business models. The access and performance models you know so those would be logical. There may be other ways like subscription. I could even go towards things like sharing. I call it sharing but it is just a business model that enables multiple users to use a resource sequentially. The Airbnb and Uber are examples. So you need to be clever in figuring out how to maximize the value you can capture from the resource that you have put out there. That is basically what it’s about. And you would think that most companies would do this, but it is totally actually surprising when you look at the market that there are so many companies that have so much value out there that they don’t capture. Look at second hand market that shows exactly how much value there could have been captured by companies that they don’t. And I think you need either for the companies to let go of this and accept that second hand market will solve this, and then you might facilitate this. But it is a messy process, the second hand market. And in a true circular economy I would rather see that there would be a bit more structured value capture instead of this haphazard second hand market. Without guarantees and without quality. If you are lucky you have quality, and if you are not lucky too bad for you. That is the downside of the second hand market that I would like to see a bit more structured in a circular economy.

V: And in these business models that you just mentioned but also in other business models that you can imagine for circular economy, what would that mean for the contractor and the revenue streams? You also mentioned it a little bit like subscription for example. What also could you imagine?

C: That’s very simple actually. You get revenues either from selling a high end product or maybe combining a high-end product with short life consumables like the ink in an inkjet printer so that you get revenues from multiple streams or you get revenues from giving people access to a product. So basically giving people to pay for the use, or you just get revenues from the performance of the product like dry-cleaners. There’s not that many options I think. All the Airbnb and ubers are access models, so you give people access to a car or a house. It’s actually quite simple, there are about three or four revenue models that you can deploy in a circular economy. That’s at least my take on it.

V: And that is exactly what I am interested in.

C: I’m very much into the b to c world by the way. B to b a little bit as well, but I don’t look to it from an industrial quality perception where companies are sharing and exchanging. That is also very nice but that is not if you talk about consumers. I would talk more about b to c.

V: Yes I am also thinking more about consumers and I am interested in that area. So what distribution channels do you think should companies go for in the transition to circular economy. Do you think some distribution channels might be more favourable or might be favoured.

C: No idea. Depending on the approach you take. So if you want to keep more control as a company, you would probably want to use your own authorised retailers and service companies and that would make sense in a more controlled scenario and that is fine if the value of their product is high it might be a very interesting approach for them. In another model you would see more what is called co-development with customers and third parties, you could see more a network approach where companies are one of the players in a field where all the players together try to capture as much value from a product as possible. Hopefully helped by the company by making spare parts available or making at least the 3D print files available by which then other parties can make spare parts so there is all these options that suddenly arise so that would be way more virtual and messy. That would be completely different, I don’t think you can call these distribution channels. And I don’t like the word distribution channel because it is only in one way, whereas it is really about two way. It is also reverse supply.

V: And then partners in supply? You said it might not even be the company but other parties involved?

C: Absolutely. I think there is a whole spectrum there. Either the company does it all, or they have franchized or authorized or certified service companies or third parties doing the work with them. But very much under contract. Or you get a more loose model where you have this whole grey market of non-authorized repair companies or just amateurs doing repair maybe empowered by other companies like Ifixit or just customers doing it themselves so that is a whole playing field. And if you want to go for this world as one of the players you need to figure out where you are as a company and in what role you want to become a part of this. Also as a consumer it requires a relatively active role. The other scenario would be a way more passive consumer, here you would see a much more active consumer and it would very much depend on the product whether you could actually activate a consumer to be a part of this.

V: And what are for there key resources so tangible resources, intangible resources and human resources? What is the role of these in the transition? What do you think? Tangible like plants, equipment, cash reserves, those things. And also imput materials that we already talked about. Then intangible resources are patents, copyrights, brands.

C: Well the last one I want to comment on. Indeed in a more closed scenario the whole IP (intellectual property right) and patent discussion could become very important and in a way that is also what designers actually do. They create value from stuff and in principle you cannot capture this value. It is your value, for your company, you create something unique that you then sell so in that way companies want to protect it. That is normal, it is completely logical, it is increasingly under criticism in the more open approach where it is argued that we should be more transparent and that it should all be out there. Which is fine for some products, so it depends very much again on the kind of product and the kind of company you are and what position and role you want to take. And I sometimes worry that this open approach to what extent it can still lead to innovation. Because who is to profit when it is all open and transparent? So why would you then stick out your neck so to speak, and innovate, with all the risks involved. Whereas if you are still in a sort of like closed world it may still pay to innovate and protect your innovations. So that is something I sometimes think about. It would be interesting, maybe I have a wrong perception, but I would like to understand better how that works.

V: [10:27]

V: Yes the incentives for innovation.

C: Well there is lots to talk about: co-creation, and open innovation and open-source and everybody contributing and I’m thinking yea.. to what extent, and why? And if you have a brilliant idea and have it co-opted by a company and made commercial, then you are left by the wayside. And you may do this once and then you think ‘wait a minute, is this actually what I want to do?’ I wonder whether this open and transparency hype is going to be the death of innovation. I am making this up as you speak.

V: I have an idea about this but I will tell you after the interview. We are going back to the value capture aspect, we already talked about cost structure and revenue streams. What do you think about the growth strategy and growth ethos. How should companies in the transition change there?

C: I think there is nothing wrong with growth, for a company to at least you want to earn enough to be able to invest in new innovation, or at least you want to earn enough to maintain your business. That’s how I should say it. Look at Vitsoe, a company that has been selling the same shelving system for forty years, designed by Dieter Rams, they don’t really innovate but they still make good revenue because they just decided ‘we have this product, and we are going to sell it, and keep selling it for ever. And they develop some services around it, but it’s apparently enough for them to maintain themselves and that is good, and not actually a growth model. They may be frustrated, I have talked to companies who have furniture who have some really iconic designs, and they keep selling these iconic designs, but it also stops them from innovating. Because they make enough revenue from selling the iconic designs, and then where is the space to innovate? So there is also frustration with these companies but still I think it is a valid model but it is not for everyone. And off course companies should earn enough to maintain themselves and it can actually grow, why not. At a company level, I don’t have problems with growth. I have more problems with growth on a global level. This relentless push for growth, which I think is a bit silly because it doesn’t mean a lot really. If you measure it in terms of GDP it is even cleaning up Fukushima adding up to the economic growth of Japan. I have problems with this concept of growth, yes.

V: We are coming to a very interesting question, also with this example of Fukushima, value capture for others so for the environment and the society, and how it can be measured. What can you imagine how it can be measured? Because companies ideally would capture value not only for themselves but also for the environment and the society. Then the question is, how can that be measured?

C: That is the holy grail isn’t it. Where all the environmental reports are struggling with, so they measure CO2, glass waste, more recycled materials, so they found their own measurements and I think there is even standards about those, I have never looked into these very much. But I suppose there are answers, and they have found ways to measure it already, also the societal impact they have, the way they do auditing, no more than 60 hour work weeks for Chinese factory workers. I heard a company representative joke at one point: well I work more than 60 hours a week, but it is just enforcing the legislation that people in China don’t have to work more than 60 hours a week. She said many people in China actually want to work more than 60 hours a week and we don’t want that because it will actually make the production of the product less reliable. Because they start making mistakes if they work that much more. So it is for us also that we don’t want it, not just for them. But anyway my answer would be I think they already figured out ways to measure this. Or at least, they are trying. There are standards for this and I have little comment on that. Lot’s to be said about sustainable consumption really.

V: That’s perfectly fine. It’s often also that people believe it’s somehow implicit in circular economy that it will be more sustainable from the consumption side. Do you feel like there is any element missing in the sustainable business model framework?

C: Which sustainable business model framework?

V: The value proposition, value creation, delivery and value capture were the sub-elements.

C: I’m not a business model expert. I always use it and it looks fine. It is a good question because I have just done a business model practicum and I miss the ability to really think about a product after life, the business model can serve as a tool but also the whole idea of creation, delivery and capture it was written from a perspective of one product use. So what if you start adding new cycles, you would actually add business model canvasses. Not just one business model for one product, but there is actually multiple business models for one product. Not the one for the first use cycle, the one for the second use cycle, the one for the third use cycle and one for whatever happens at the very end of the product’s life. And that is perhaps what I miss a bit.

V: That is a good point, I try to picture that. And then I have a question about examples. Can you think of an outstanding example in which some of these business model elements played a role in the transition to the circular economy? So a company for example that you have been in contact with that is trying to implement circularity. And which of these elements have they especially worked on.

C: Well maybe you have heard but I was in Brussels last Thursday with apple and they had their whole environment team flown over from *Cortino*, so the ones who report to Lisa Jackson who immediately reports to Tim Cook so a very high-level team. And they presented their vision for Apple going circular. It is extremely ambitious because they want to totally close the materials loop and go for 100% recycled materials in their products and also do a really closed loop so they are going to recycle their products and reuse the materials in their products. So we are like : that is rather ambitious. And they said we know but we are going to do it. And if necessary we re-innovate the entire recycling process but we are just going to do it. So that was quite amazing. So that was an example where I thought well, it is not really in their business model, it’s not yet their core business. Because these were the environment CSR people so these are the tech guys and the supply chain managers and those are the ones beginning this transition towards circular economy within the Apple company. And it will, for the time being, just cost lots of money. So it will be a cost factor and not a revenue stream aspect. But in the longer term they expect when they can start closing these loops that they will be able to create and capture value from it. Just because they will have less material costs and they will also be able to deliver a product that is less impactful for environment and society. So that is what they want. No timeline, they said we usually are very strong on timelines but in this case because we know we will encounter so many difficulties along the way that we decided not to give ourselves the timeline.

V: Nice. Such a big company as well.

C: And they are pretty good at telling us that they are highly innovative and they are leaders in innovation and they actually showcasing it now through their transition to going circular. So that was quite cool.

V: Especially that they have it really so far up in their agenda.

C: Yes, and they also have the resources of course to take the next step in that aspect. I was really happy. Finally there is a company really taking the lead here instead of just blabla and then doing nothing.

V: I hope they are really going to implement that, I’d be curious to see that. My next question would have been for this company what are the next steps but I think they are just the steps towards the full circular economy so they are not just trying to implement it partially but really trying to develop a procedure for the whole company. So we can skip that question. How can circular business models lead to a sustainable consumption?

C: Well we don’t know actually, it is one of the most honest answers. That is one of the things I would love to have a PhD do research on. So how sustainable is circular? And I just had a graduate student look at Bugaboo, and at the flexplan. They have done a pilot, and currently there are still 25 strollers owned in a lease contract. They will get these strollers and they will refurbish them and we did an LCA looking at the environmental impact and which of these concepts, so the original model they had of just selling strollers, and then these strollers are high value so they go to second hand markets and they are re-used a couple of times. We modelled all this, and we looked at the flex plan, where the company basically retains more control over the resources, and they refurbished themselves with high-quality components, and then it goes back to the market, versus just a classical linear model of going to the dump after one use versus total control. There would not be a step towards the second hand market, they would control everything. Very disappointing results in the sense that we couldn’t really say which was better. The only thing that we could say was that the total linear model which they don’t have any way is just really bad. But it is actually rather environmentally friendly to have products on the second hand market. Because if you take them back and refurbish them with high level, high quality guaranteed parts that actually takes quite a bit of energy and environmental impact although you get a higher quality product back, it is very difficult to capture that value in the market. Whereas second-hand markets are way less critical, so they just re-use the thing instead of doing all new upholstery on a stroller they will just wash it and they are happy with it. But bugaboo of course needs to do it completely new and that really is an impact. Much as I would like to see these kind of refurbishment and recapture from a company perspective happen, it requires a lot of change to the product in order to make it sustainable. Whereas on the second hand market with much lower quality requirements, and no guarantee, it has its downsides as well, is in a way very much more sustainable.

V: And it is very local, right.

C: Not necessarily, people are willing to drive to Groningen for three hours to get a Bugaboo if it is 100,- cheaper than one they can get locally, so that is not true. But still usually yes, by a large. But the refurbishment model was also relatively local. So it was not like we were shipping the parts all over the world. Ofcourse the new part had to come from China, and they were assembled locally. It taught me that if you are going to go for these circular models, you are going to have to be very specific on how you are going to make those work with the least environmental impact. That is what the LCA was very useful for. So in principle, yes, it can be a benefit but you have to really design for it. And if you just take the current product and start doing things with it, it is no guarantee that it will actually lead to a more sustainable consumption. And you have the problem that consumers don’t appreciate products that they lease as much as products that they own. So the strollers that bugaboo got back were really badly used and damaged and dirty and there were sandwiches in between folds still and they were really ruggedly badly treated. They came back in such a bad state, it was really shocking for the company. Whereas if you buy one, you know you are going to sell it again on a second hand market after a year or two, then you are going to try and treat it nicely because you can get the value from it instead of bugaboo. So we learnt quite a bit from this experiment.

V: If you could even share that with the user, the value, that it has an incentive not to ruin that.

C: Apparently when they know ‘well, bugaboo will take it back and refurbish it, I don’t have to take care of it so much’. So the psychology part of this whole pilot was also unexpectedly negative for the flexplan pilot, for the lease pilot.

V: Super interesting, and a bit scary if you think about how little people care.

C: It was a very small sample so it may just have been bad luck, so we don’t know what it would do. I haven’t seen the contracts they made the people sign, so lord knows how they communicated this and without them wanting they created an incentive for people to mistreat that product. You can of course punish people for bringing products back like that. So probably they didn’t.

V: That is a question I had in mind, yes. To improve this, or what they can do.

C: What I learnt from this is if you want to go circular by new business models you really have to design everything starting with the product, the whole logistics process but even the way you communicate with customers. Everything needs to change.

V: And consider all these details, what people do while using and what the incentive is to treat it well.

C: Bugaboo tried to really do this all themselves and they ran into massive problems. Developing a contract, doing credit checks with customers whether they would be able to pay the monthly instalments, and even when they wanted to start refurbishing the strollers they learned there is no standards that they can test these bugaboo’s against for knowing that they still have the right quality. Because there is no test standards available for this product, so we can’t certify these strollers because there is just no standard and no test norms. So myriad problems. I am hoping their board will catch some of these learnings from her interviews. But I am not sure I can actually publish this. I am just telling you now but I am thinking this bugaboo story may not be public actually. The Apple story is public. Because the whole story of the stuff coming back dirty is not something I can share.

V: I will anonymize it or I will talk to you about it.

C: You can mention Apple because I am not saying anything that you cannot share, but the Bugaboo story needs to be edited.

V: I wrote down that it might be confidential.

C: I will check with them when I see them.

V: I might just talk about it in more general terms. The interview is nearly over. Last question, it is a bit going back to the first part. What do you think will be the key differences business will be done in the circular economy, from a user consumer perspective? So now not just talking about consumption but really if you are a user in the circular economy, what is different for you as a consumer? What do you think you will notice, what is different from the linear economy?

C: Again depending if you have a more closed perspective with a passive consumer, then you won’t notice a lot because the company will basically manage it. But in the more active and open scenario, you will be activated somehow. There will be businesses sprouting up like repair shops, cafés. There will be attempts to activate consumers more. And both are good. I think there are people who don’t want to become active they should be enabled as well. You can’t expect everyone to actively participate, so I think both scenario’s will be interesting to pursue and to do more research in.

V: There is a middle ground always.

C: Well it is either active or passive there is not a middle ground between being active or passive. It depends on the kind of product, for some products I will be active and for some I don’t want to be active.

V: That is what I meant at the high level of the total economy there could be some aspects that are more passive.

C: I would not want to generalize, it will be very product specific. Especially when it comes to more complex products, there is in general enormous reluctance for customers to engage and become active. Because it is just difficult and scary. But if you look at textiles, darning and mending is quite normal still so that is where easily you can see communities developing around that so it depends so much on the product.

V: Any final thoughts on things that you would like to share and haven’t shared yet?

C: The whole concept of sustainable consumption I find it difficult because what is sustainable consumption actually and who is to define? So it is very easy to talk about sustainable behaviour chains but I sometimes think who sets these norms here. When is certain behaviour sustainable and when isn’t it and who are we to decide? It is something that has not been discussed a lot. But again it is something that is a societal thing, cultures, shared norms, routines, things we find sustainable now may now be niche and become mainstream like we see more biological food. It is really amazing, when I was young there was nothing but now it is everywhere. There are lots of elements that you can think are we ever going to change? Are we maybe changing in a direction that we think is sustainable but appears not to be. There is this whole story about household electrification around so we are going to get rid of the natural gas and we are going to live with just electricity and I think, yes, not much resilience there. How sustainable is this really? Is this discussion ever held? How are we going to get this electricity then? And if we are going to put solar cells everywhere aren’t we doing a trade-off with all these precious metals which are in the solar panels. Are we going to be able to maintain those at end of life. Sometimes it seems so easy: we are just going renewable, but I see sometimes we don’t really think about what this means and there is lots of dogmatism in the sustainability world and therefore also dogmatism in the sustainable consumption world. It is a topic that needs to be treated with great care.

V: I had the impression sustainable consumption is often looked at in a very relative way, so ‘less bad than before’ rather than absolute.

C: True, that is probably the only way you can look at it. Even if you start saying we should get rid of oil, which I totally agree with, I think what is the alternative? Do we still need to maintain the same consumption levels but then powered by alternative power methods, or can we just consume less. And consuming less is just never discussed as a viable option. We always just do the same but then power it differently. Where is the sustainable consumption on this factor? That is my worry sometimes, like what are we talking about? Is it a direction we should be wanting to go, where is the bait? I sometimes find it a very difficult concept, sustainable consumption, to get my head around.

V: I am struggling with some things that you mentioned.

C: And about saying to consume less, who am I to say this?

V: It is a big thing, some people say that but how. Great. Those were all my questions.