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THE SUSTAINABLE DESIGN APPROACH

We have already seen that you have the know-how and that sustainable IT is an opportunity to do what we love. We will now take a look at how this comes together. It's called Sustainable Design.

The process is broken down into 6 steps:

1. Understand
2. Measure
3. Decide
4. Avoid
5. Reduce
6. Urbanization / Capitalization

The first step is fundamental: understanding what you are doing and being able to answer a simple question: WHY?

Why do one thing or another in our development? Why predict a particular usage? Why choose one computer architecture or technology over another? Why collect certain data and why keep it? Why are legal constraints imposed? We know that behind each answer lie significant impacts on the 3Ps: Planet, People, Prosperity.

Intuition is not always enough to make the right decisions. Our reasoning needs factual reference points that show our starting point and highlight our progress. The ability to measure this progress will shed light on the process and allow the whole team to share the same reference base and thus a common set of values. This will allow us to make the right decisions and fuel the continuous improvement of our services as recommended by accessibility guidelines.

The objectives of sustainable design are to avoid generating negative impacts, such as environmental debts, technical debts, security breaches, exclusion, manufacturing, use or end-of-life costs. No need to improve what we are not doing! Avoiding the unnecessary also results in more time, more brain power, more budgets available to do essential things.

Of course not everything can be avoided. It is necessary and important to deal with the functional and technical IT requirements of projects. When an IT user requirement cannot be avoided, it remains possible, even essential, to minimise it. The adage "less is more" takes on its full meaning in sustainable design.

Despite all our intelligence, there will always be residual elements that will have impacts, but we accept the extra cost, with full knowledge of the facts, knowing how to measure them. The solution to limit these debts is to urbanize our IS, and to capitalize on our methods and knowledge both internally and externally.

Sustainable design will mobilize your know-how, your desire to do well beyond writing lines of code. At the end of the day you can say to yourself: I feel good, what I did today is useful, efficient, respects the environment and my fellow human beings. Not bad at the end of the day, right?