# Article information:

We're failing to solve the world's 'wicked problems.' Here's a better approach
<https://theconversation.com/were-failing-to-solve-the-worlds-wicked-problems-heres-a-better-approach-64949>

# Article summary:

1. Large-scale problems such as the refugee crisis and climate change are considered "wicked" because they resist simple solutions due to complex cause-effect relations, urgency, lack of central authority, and difficulty in estimating magnitude.

2. "Grand solutions" from centralized political organizations have proven ineffective in making substantial progress on wicked problems. Instead, a modular approach that focuses on smaller-scale independent projects with attainable and measurable objectives may be more promising.

3. The success of sustainability standards in the global coffee industry is attributed to their modular architecture, which consists of multiple well-defined and measurable modules that are interconnected and build on each other. A modular approach can also be applied to various wicked problems such as climate change and the refugee crisis by tackling problems step by step, easing consensus among multiple stakeholders, and promoting knowledge exchange and replicable solutions.

# Article rating:

Appears moderately imbalanced: The article provides some useful information, but is missing several important points or pieces of evidence that would be required to present the discussed topics in a balanced and reliable way. You are encouraged to seek a more balanced perspective on the presented issues by exploring the provided research topics and looking at different information sources.

# Article analysis:

The article "We're failing to solve the world's 'wicked problems.' Here's a better approach" discusses the challenges of addressing large-scale problems that resist simple solutions, such as climate change and the refugee crisis. The authors argue that traditional approaches, such as grand solutions proposed by centralized political organizations, have proven ineffective in making substantial progress on these so-called wicked problems. Instead, they propose a more nimble approach based on small wins and modular governance architecture.

Overall, the article provides a well-reasoned argument for why small wins and modular governance architecture may be a promising alternative to tackling large-scale problems. The authors provide examples of how this approach has been successful in the coffee industry with sustainability standards. They also acknowledge that finding a single solution to climate change or the refugee crisis is too difficult because it is almost impossible to get multiple parties with diverging interests to reach a consensus.

However, there are some potential biases and missing points of consideration in the article. For example, while the authors argue that grand solutions proposed by centralized political organizations have proven ineffective in making substantial progress on wicked problems, they do not explore why this might be the case. It could be argued that political polarization and gridlock are major factors contributing to this ineffectiveness.

Additionally, while the authors provide examples of small wins in addressing climate change and refugee crises, they do not address potential risks associated with this approach. For example, small wins may not address underlying systemic issues that contribute to these wicked problems. Furthermore, small wins may not be sufficient to address urgent needs related to these issues.

Finally, while the authors acknowledge that finding a single solution to climate change or refugee crises is difficult due to diverging interests among multiple parties, they do not explore potential counterarguments for why grand solutions may still be necessary. For example, some argue that only coordinated global action can effectively address climate change.

In conclusion, while the article provides an interesting perspective on how small wins and modular governance architecture may be a promising alternative to tackling large-scale problems like climate change and refugee crises, it does have some potential biases and missing points of consideration. As such, readers should approach its arguments critically and consider other perspectives before drawing conclusions about how best to address these complex issues.

# Topics for further research:

* Why are grand solutions proposed by centralized political organizations ineffective in addressing wicked problems?
* What are the potential risks associated with relying on small wins to address complex issues like climate change and refugee crises?
* How can small wins be scaled up to address systemic issues contributing to wicked problems?
* What are the potential benefits and drawbacks of modular governance architecture in addressing complex issues?
* What are the counterarguments for why coordinated global action may be necessary to effectively address climate change?
* How can diverging interests among multiple parties be reconciled to find a consensus on addressing wicked problems?

# Report location:

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