

A Return to the Age of Greed? What Elon Musk's Trillion Dollar Pay Deal Means for Responsible Business

By Wayne Visser

Have we have regressed to the Age of Greed. In my book, *The Age of Responsibility*, I described 5 Ages and Stages of Corporate Sustainability & Responsibility (CSR):

1. **Defensive CSR** in the Age of Greed
2. **Charitable CSR** in the Age of Philanthropy
3. **Promotional CSR** in the Age of Marketing
4. **Strategic CSR** in the Age of Management
5. **Transformative CSR** in the Age of Responsibility

I argued that we can find companies at all stages but business was evolving through these stages of maturity, and that we needed to move beyond stages 1-4 (CSR 1.0) to stage 5 (CSR 2.0).

Little did I imagine then that a leader and company that I once held out as a pioneer of responsible and regenerative business (Elon Musk and Tesla) would drag us back into stage 1: the Age of Greed.

Is there any other explanation? No one needs a trillion dollars to incentivise them. That's just planet sized ego. No one is that valuable. Shareholders have voted purely to satisfy their own financial greed.

What a contrast to Mamdani's victory as the new mayor of New York. We really are in a bifurcated world of the billionaire oligarchs and plutocrat politicians versus the rest of us.

For more information, see this BBC article: [Elon Musk's \\$1tn pay deal approved by Tesla shareholders](#)

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