

# TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

Integrating Nature while Implementing the UN's  
2019 Sustainable Development Goals



4 QUALITY  
EDUCATION



8 DECENT WORK AND  
ECONOMIC GROWTH



10 REDUCED  
INEQUALITIES



13 CLIMATE  
ACTION



16 PEACE AND JUSTICE  
STRONG INSTITUTIONS



17 PARTNERSHIPS  
FOR THE GOALS



# TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

## Integrating Nature while Implementing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals

### CHIEF AUTHORS OF THE ENCLOSED REPORTS

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**Marilyn Fowler**, MA, PhD.,  
Department of Consciousness and Sustainable Development  
John F. Kennedy University

**Joan Kehoe**, MSC

**Maia Kincaid**, PhD.  
Founder of the Sedona International School for Nature and Animal Communication  
Consultant and International Lecturer

**Jill Lauri**, MBA, MSW

**Lee Samatowic**, ND

**Lisinka Ulatowska**, MA, PhD.  
UN Representative, AWN, AWC, IPS  
Coordinator, Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group

**Rob Wheeler**

Main UN Representative, Global Ecovillage Network

Produced by the Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group for the  
Partnership on the Right of Nature.

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### LAYOUT AND FORMATTING

---

**Tonny van Knotsenburg**

### COVER AND CHAPTER DESIGN

---

**Devin Lafferty**, CreativSense

### CONTACT

---

**Lisinka Ulatowska**, Coordinator  
CommonsActionUN@gmail.com

# CONTENTS

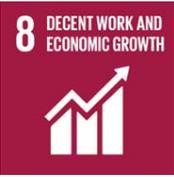
Introduction ..... 5

Executive Summary: Transforming our World in Harmony with Nature,  
Integrating Nature while Implementing the SDGs .....6

Part I: Integrating Nature with the UN’s 2019 Sustainable Development Goals ..... 37



SDG 4: Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote  
Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All.....38  
Introduction  
Targets



SDG 8: Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth,  
Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All.....57  
Introduction  
Targets



SDG 10: Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries.....104  
Introduction  
Targets



SDG 13: Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts.....130  
Introduction  
Targets



SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide  
access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels....155  
Introduction  
Targets

General Introduction: Part II as a Powerful Tool.....177

Environment and Nature.....179

**Introduction:** Consciously recognizing the role of Nature is playing in our daily living; and fashioning this into a powerful tool for sustainable development.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16.

Education and Research.....198

**Introduction:** Nature as an indispensable tool for the development of individual potential as well as well-integrated, benevolent societies.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16.

Society and Infrastructure.....222

**Introduction:** Nature-inspired building blocks for sustainable societies.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 8, 10, 13 and 16.

Culture.....236

**Introduction:** How Culture is rooted in geographic location in interaction with individual and social development; the problems that arise as our geographic environment spans the globe and how these might be resolved.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 8, 10, 13 and 16.

Economy and Financing Mechanisms.....241

**Introduction:** Nature-inspired approaches to sustainable economic development and its financing.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 8, 10, 13 and 16.

Development.....254

**Introduction:** How right relationship with Nature can help us address both material and spiritual poverty which are two sides of the same coin.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 8 and 10.

Technology.....262

**Introduction:** The relationship between Nature, technology and human evolution

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 8 and 10.

Policy and Law.....266

**Introduction:** Globally enforceable law seen from the perspective of evolution since the Big Bang.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 8, 10, 13 and 16.

Agriculture.....284

**Introduction:** Nature specifically as it relates to large, industrial monocultures.

**Means of Implementation:** To help us reach SDGs 8, 10, 13 and 16.

## General Introduction

Human beings are a part of Nature. Each of us is a tiny node affecting the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, the biosphere and the geosphere that together constitute the Earth System with every breath we take, everything we consume, the waste we produce and the actions we do—or do not—take.

When the United Nations adopted the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) that lie at the heart of *Transforming Our World, the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, UN Member States recognized that “The goals are integrated and indivisible and balance the economic, social and environmental.”

While the people that make up societies and the goods and services that constitute economies *originate* with Nature, the forms they take, are created by human beings. Human beings are thus able to stand apart and analyse these to determine what changes to make. But people are a minuscule part of Nature. While we can—and are—affecting the planetary boundaries that can support human life, we are unable to stand apart from the vast mysterious forces that inspire Life and Creation within the Universe we inhabit. Living in harmony with Nature requires a more integrated use of our mental faculties.

For this reason, the *Partnership on the Rights of Nature: Integrating Nature into the Implementation of the SDGs* consists of a range of professionals from quite diverse disciplines: Academics, Indigenous Peoples, people who live from the land and Nature Communicators. We consist of representatives of mainly UN ECOSOC accredited organizations as well as individuals.

This Report was written with world leaders in mind: Heads of State and Government, Government Ministers, professionals in governments at all levels and civil society innovators in the relevant fields.

This is the second report in a series that started in 2018. It consists of separate reports on how Nature can be integrated in the SDGs being focused on in 2019. These will be discussed at the High Level Political Forum with their accompanying targets, as well as during two Summits and one high level debate. All three of these will be held during the UN's High Level Segment of its General Debate, attended by Heads of State and Government.

To summarize, this book can be used as a tool:

- By *Heads of State and Government* when determining what they wish to mention when they address the United Nations High Level Meetings;
- By *Ministries and civil society*, including the private sector to check for ways in which they might wish to include Nature in their work; and
- By *all who wish* to explore in their day to day activities how clarity and effectiveness are increased when our actions align with the empowering forces in Nature.



**Addressing Goals**  
**4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17**  
Education  
Employment  
Sustainable Economy  
Equity  
Climate Change  
Peace & Justice

# **TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD IN HARMONY WITH NATURE**

## **Integrating Nature While Implementing the UN's Sustainable Development Goals**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

JUNE 2019

In addressing the three pillars—*Economy*, *Society* and *Environment (Nature)*—that support the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, much emphasis has been placed on the economic and social reforms needed to create a sustainable future. In 2019, the UN's High Level Political Forum will be looking specifically at the role that these same sectors can and do play in transitioning to a more sustainable society and world. This year the international community will be looking at how education, transitioning to a sustainable economy, creating employment opportunities, increasing equity, stabilizing the climate, and creating a world of peace and justice can help us in both transitioning to a sustainable future and ensuring that all people's basic human rights and needs can be met.

However, if we truly wish to meet the particular goals that are being discussed this year, it is essential that we pay just as much, if not more, attention to the third pillar, that of the Natural Environment, given that it is generally acknowledged that the implementation of the UN's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) will succeed only to the extent to which we succeed in living in harmony with Nature and within the carrying capacity that the Earth provides.

Nature and the natural environment provide the basic resources that are required to support all of life and to create and maintain a healthy economy. We have already degraded the natural environment to such an extent that we have rapidly depleted the natural resource base, are facing increasing shortages across many sectors

that are now impacting one another in a complex inter-connected manner, and are undermining even the ability of ecosystems to be able to heal and regenerate or restore themselves. The consequences from our actions are felt in economies and societies around the world as conflicts break out between people in many countries as they scramble for scarce resources.

Indeed, there is so much work that needs to be done to restore the natural environment, fully address climate change, and transition to a sustainable economy that this alone would provide more than enough well-paying and worthwhile jobs for everyone long into the future.

If we truly want to protect, restore, and promote the sustainable use of both natural resources and the natural environment while achieving all of the various SDGs, we will have to shift from the mind-set of controlling Nature to a mind-set of learning from Nature how to sustain existence in cooperation with all life. This will require that we teach and include education for sustainable development in as many schools as possible all over the world, as well as through the use of diverse media. Since the Earth System is one indivisible whole, it will also be necessary to make an assessment of the entire planet including all of its waterways and waterbodies, the terrestrial areas, the desert, and the quality of the air in order to determine where our attention and focus is most urgently needed.

By taking responsibility for the well-being of the entire planet we can join as one global community to own the impact of our activities from the past, understand the challenges we face today, and create a new beginning where together we can solve the challenges and issues which ultimately impact every human being. History has shown that when we come together knowing the issues and

take responsibility for the challenges and for resolving them, miraculous changes may occur. Feeling, listening, and considering the planet before taking action will bring clarity and understanding. The result will be a discontinuation of destructive actions and practices, a renewal of vitality of the earth, a thriving diversity of species, and a sense of pride and joy in community.

*The Partnership on the Rights of Nature: Integrating Nature into the Implementation of the SDGs*, with the help of the Commons Cluster of the NGO Major Group, have thus undertaken to draft recommendations for how humanity could best implement the SDGs while keeping Nature and the natural environment well in mind. We are thus including in this report a chapter on each of the SDGs being addressed at the High Level Political Forum on Sustainable Development in 2019. In this Executive Summary we are including a few of the most salient and we believe insightful points and recommended actions from this year's SDGs.

To read our more detailed analysis and all of the action steps you can read either the full report, the individual chapters, or a condensed version of the full report. Finally, in Part Two, we have summarized all of the actions recommended in the full reports and arranged them under the following headings:

- Environment and Nature
- Education (Formal and Informal) and Research
- Society and Infrastructure
- Culture
- Economy and Financing Mechanisms
- Development
- Technology
- Policy and Law
- Agriculture

This will make it easier for Ministries and other entities wishing to implement the

recommended actions to locate those that relate most to the topic areas under their jurisdiction. Read on below for a summary overview from each of this year's SDG reports.



**SDG 4:** *Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*

If we truly want to solve most of our common global challenges and achieve the SDGs by 2030, many changes and improvements will need to be made either to, or within, many, if not most of our educational institutions and systems around the world in order to help bring about paradigm and mind-set changes as an integral part of education for sustainable development. Fortunately, many of these changes have either been tried or carried out before and/or are still being tried and used in some places quite successfully.

Because we have undercut the ability of our natural environment and ecosystems to support human life and to remain in a healthy productive state in many places around the world, and because of the growing human population and the fact that our consumption and production practices are still a long ways from being sustainable, we are experiencing increasing levels of scarcity in many natural resources that are becoming increasingly worse year by year.

Similarly, “natural” disasters are increasing in both number and severity around the world in an on-going manner; while “natural resource wars” continue to impact humanity in an ever worsening manner - thus making it harder to achieve a number of the SDGs including particularly SDGs 16, 1, 6, and 10 (dealing with peace and security, poverty, access to clean and adequate water, and issues of human equity, etc.) In order to shift to more sustainable and regenerative practices it is essential that we include a focus on Nature in as many of our educational activities as possible.

### **From Domination to Learning from Nature**

Nature exemplifies on-going life-long learning. In this natural on-going learning process, species strengthen one another and also keep one another in check. This creates diversification and enables all aspects within the natural world to work together harmoniously. The greater the diversification, the stronger all aspects of Nature become. This increases human beings' ability to thrive sustainably, with clean air, an abundance of safe drinking water, food, and shelter.

Species develop and strengthen themselves naturally through the inherent challenges involved in living with other species. Human beings are the only species that entirely eradicate other species - currently around 140 each day. If we are to live sustainably, this disastrous downward spiral must be reversed and people must learn from Nature. This will require becoming conscious of the ongoing relationship and communication between human beings and natural phenomena.

### **Shifting the Paradigm**

To move into a more positive relationship with Nature, it is essential that we *clearly* step away from the past and envision

new ways to create partnership with the natural world. As a first step, this will require taking responsibility for our past actions and acknowledging the disastrous consequences we have wrought on so many other species living on this planet. To rebuild a healthy relationship with the natural world, we must be able to observe, listen and respond to the ongoing communication that Nature provides. This relational communication with Nature is our birthright, a basic skill that all of humanity has possessed from our evolutionary beginnings. Our current educational systems must empower all people to use and practice conscious communication with Nature. The specifics on how to do this can be learned from those who are already using this inborn capacity.

Education that promotes “Learning in Harmony with Nature” is student-centred and involves encouraging students to learn to consciously bring their intuition to bear on how to develop their own individual talents, while being sensitive to and working together with the world outside of themselves.

Such education develops effective learning outcomes by tailoring outcomes to what is needed for the individual child’s learning and growth, as well as their entry into society as a well-rounded person who gladly contributes to the common well-being. Here are some actions that can be taken:

- *Create curriculum that allows latitude for boys and girls to discover and follow their interests.*
- *Include Indigenous Peoples’ vision quests in education to help young people to find their vocations.*
- *Establish learning skills appropriate to each child’s age and level of development.*

- *Encourage boys and girls to develop skills appropriate to their environment. As they learn to relate at the family, local, national, and global levels, universal access to the Internet is extremely important.*
- *Build into the curriculum direct contact with Nature in the child’s formal and informal education, beginning with a pet or plant in the home, or plants around the settlement. Contact with Nature has been shown to allow both hemispheres of the brain to develop and with this, creativity and health to increase.*

Focus on the importance of natural phenomena both to human beings and other species. Using a process of appreciative inquiry, children can learn to value all aspects of the natural world and their relationship to humanity and other aspects of Nature.

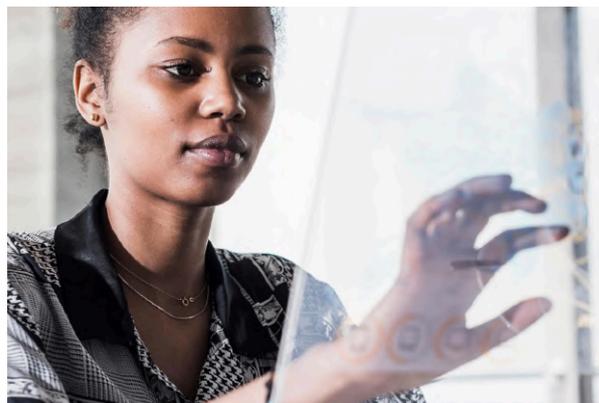
### **Nature Literacy and Numeracy**

Education has existed as long as human beings (and indeed many types of animals) have been on Earth. Existence depended on all living in harmony with Nature’s laws through close observation of natural processes. Education has been passed on from one generation to another, sometimes taking the form of religious teachings that branch out and have developed into the many forms of today’s religions. When science came into being centuries ago, scientific insights were also passed along to the following generations and were communicated from one culture to another - at first through word of mouth, then through the written and printed word, and now through the Internet. Although for a few centuries there has been a split between religion and science, this split is now fast being healed as science and religion come to many of the same conclusions.

It is very much to our advantage to base our innovations on what Nature teaches us. Where science and religion/spirituality is converging, often deep insights into the workings of Nature are found. Once those in specialized and tertiary education see the extent of our interdependence with Nature, they will understand the importance of learning from Nature and use their insights in their studies and work. On no account may we forget the importance of literacy and numeracy with regard to our ability to relate to Nature. Nature literacy and numeracy are absolutely essential when it comes to human survival.

By *Nature literacy and numeracy*, we are referring to accurately reading and interpreting the combinations of signs Nature gives us and recognizing our impact on Nature. Examples are reading the signs that spring is arriving through patterns of migration of birds, tracking changing weather patterns, and intuiting pending earthquakes in the same way that animals do. For instance, elephants moved to higher ground before the tsunami hit. Similar capacities can be reawakened in human beings. For instance, we can use Nature literacy and numeracy to recognize possible consequences of fracking, such as earthquakes.

The crises associated with climate change, global warming, and dwindling fish stocks, desertification, deforestation, acidification of the oceans, and lack of clean drinking water have developed because we did not accurately read the signs Nature was giving us in time. As a consequence, our actions and inaction are threatening human survival.



#### ***SDG 4.7: Education for sustainable development***

Education for sustainable development requires a fundamental shift in how we relate to the world around us—the Earth, the plants, the animals and their interacting systems. We must shift from hierarchical relationships with Nature, where we operate as human beings and dominate, to a horizontal relationship characterized by appreciation. This will require ongoing attention to changes in Nature and a willingness to respond with respect to her rhythms.

Many resources have been developed and are already being used that provide opportunities for teaching and learning about sustainable development and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. We are including information about a few of them that provide either whole frameworks and/or initiatives for either including or supporting Education for Sustainable Development in both formal and informal education.

The World's Largest Lesson has the mission of ensuring that every child in the world grows up knowing and caring about the Sustainable Development Goals and is inspired to take action to help achieve them. So far it has reached millions of children in over 100 countries, through the commitment of educators, civil society organizations, ministries and passionate

individuals working across sectors. In this section of our report we describe briefly and provide an overview of the World's Largest Lesson, the resources it provides and how it can be successfully used.

Similarly, UNESCO has developed a programme 'Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future' this a multimedia teacher education published by UNESCO. Its 25 modules provide around 100 hours of highly interactive activities designed to enhance the teacher's understanding of sustainable development and related themes. It also helps to develop practical skills for integrating sustainable development themes into the school curriculum, and for using the teaching methods best suited to the knowledge, values and citizenship objectives of educating for a sustainable future.

See: <http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/>

Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future is rooted in a new vision of education - a vision that helps students better understand the world in which they live, addressing the complexity and interconnectedness of problems such as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, health, conflict and the violation of human rights that threaten our future. The programme assists teachers to empower young people to face such local and global problems with hope and confidence.

### **Community Based and Led Sustainable Development Courses and Training Programs**

Both the Global Ecovillage Network and its sister organization, GAIA Education, offer various courses and training programs in support of community based and led development processes. For example, Ecovillage Design Education

programmes, often referred to as 'EDEs', provide participants of all ages with the knowledge and practical skills to design a society which uses energy and materials with greater efficiency, distributes wealth fairly and strives to eliminate the concept of waste. In this section we describe the various programmes that the Global Ecovillage Network and GAIA Education offer in over 50 countries on six continents and in eLearning Programmes.

For example, Gaia Education's online programme 'Design for Sustainability' provides students with whole systems design skills, analytical abilities and a wide range of methods and practical tools to support the redesign of the human presence on Earth - one local community and bioregion at a time. Graduates receive a Certificate of Completion in Design for Sustainability and contribute to the emergence of diverse regenerative cultures.



**SDG 8:** *Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all*

Sustainable economic development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Understanding the meaning of sustainable development and the necessity

to achieve it is perhaps more important than ever before in the history of our species, not only for the growth of the economy and employment, but also for our very survival on the planet.

In 2009 a group of scientists led by Johan Rockström deemed the Earth's Planetary Boundaries, including the nine planetary life support systems, to be absolutely essential for human survival. Of the nine planetary life support systems we have already crossed four of the Earth's planetary boundaries necessary for ongoing survival, and the remaining five are seriously threatened. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary\\_boundaries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary_boundaries)

In light of the environmental degradation being seen at this time it is important that we take stock of the thinking and way of living which has brought us to this precarious state where our very survival is in question. It is absolutely essential that we protect and restore the natural capital of the Earth now, even while increasing both economic productivity and opportunities and ensuring full and productive employment and decent work for all.

In our chapter on *SDG 8* we quote from Dr. Fritjof Capra from his recent book: "The Systems View of Life": *"Instead of assessing the state of the economy in terms of the crude quantitative measure of GDP, we need to distinguish between "good" growth and "bad" growth... Bad growth is growth of production processes and services that externalize social and environmental costs, are based on fossil fuels, involve toxic substances, deplete our natural resources, and degrade the Earth's ecosystems. Good growth is growth of more efficient production processes and services that fully internalize costs, involve renewable energies, zero emissions, continual recycling of natural resources, and restoration of the Earth's ecosystems."*

Sustainable economic growth will require that local, national, and global societies create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. It is necessary that we establish environmentally responsible and socially conscious policies and practices including sustainable use of resources and cultural and economic balance.

There are myriad positive movements arising within human communities, where people are sharing and working cooperatively. No matter their function, people participate in decision making and all share the proceeds from their labour. As a part of the Cooperative Identity, such for-profit businesses give back both to the communities where they are based as well as to the development of the global community. Cooperatives, which often do quite well in times of economic downturn, have more than one billion members worldwide.

In the chapter on *SDG 8* we also describe a number of business initiatives that are helping us to transition to a more sustainable economy and world including those of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development and the UN Global Compact which encourages and supports companies in adopting sustainable and socially responsible policies and requires them to report on their implementation. For example the World Business Council has put together a CEO Guide to the Sustainable Development Goals which supports businesses in helping to achieve the SDGs by taking action at the company-level along with its 2018 progress report on its Low-Carbon Technology Partnerships initiative which describes the more than 1300 commitments that 800 companies with USD \$116.9 trillion in market capital have made to take bold climate action.

The WBCSD also worked with the Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) to develop materials encouraging and helping businesses to adopt and carry out land degradation neutrality (LDN) strategies during the run up to the 2015 CCD Review Conference. One of their reports states: “Land resources, such as soil, water or biodiversity are the foundation of our economies and societies. However, 25% of usable land globally is degraded, at an estimated economic loss of US\$40 billion per year. Agriculture is an important driver of land degradation, responsible for approximately 80% of deforestation worldwide. But there are more pressures on land than just agriculture. Many industry sectors use land to meet the infrastructure needs that result from increased urbanization. Land degradation neutrality thus needs to be recognized as an investment that can help companies sustain their operations in the long run.”

We also mention a number of initiatives that report on efforts as well as what is needed to decouple natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic growth, along with efforts to mainstream the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services into decision-making at all levels of government through UNEP’s global initiative called the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB). We then describe the efforts being made to adopt policies to support businesses in this regard. For example, a TEEB for Business project examines economic sectors at strategic or operational levels, identifying both risks and opportunities that biodiversity and ecosystem services pose to that particular sector.

We also describe a number of initiatives and policies that are being undertaken to transition to a circular economy which aims at first minimizing and then eliminating waste while making the most of resources

addressing various approaches to enacting and carrying out sustainable consumption and production policies and practices.

In addressing *Target 8.1* on sustaining economic growth we describe the difference between quantitative and qualitative growth and observe that in order to have sustained economic growth we must curtail such challenges as the catastrophic costs of “natural” and climate related disasters and if we do not stop decreasing the natural capital of the earth and depleting the natural resource base, the consequences cannot be overstated. Indeed, a US report shows \$10 trillion of economic loss due to climate change. Likewise, growth of economic capital at the expense of social, cultural, and environmental capital is both unhealthy and unsustainable. It is also not so much per capita income as collective wealth and collective provision of services generated from a solidarity economy that can provide decent work and social security nets.

Sustaining per capita economic growth as needed and, in particular achieving at least 7% per annum GDP growth, begins with building upon the economic output and contribution of each individual within a community, and each community within a Nation. All people must be ensured access to decent work through sustainable development, and equitable access to goods and services. Indeed, we need to look at how wealth can be better shared. Implementing Land Value Taxation at the municipal level may be one of the best strategies for investing in jobs creation, revitalizing communities, providing urban services, investing in basic infrastructure, investing in protecting and conserving green belts, flood plains, parks and wild areas, and achieving the SDGs. It has been endorsed by and included in the outcome documents of UN Habitat I, II, and III and is supported by UN Habitat’s Global Land Tool Network.

In terms of economic productivity, it is important to remember that truly healthy economies only develop from healthy cultures and environments. We need to eliminate entirely any production practices which destroy the environment and/or harm people. We need new principles of fiduciary duty for global investment, new general indicators of cultural and environmental health as well as new economic measures. We need to re-evaluate how to re-localize our economic systems and make them sustainable in a way that serves all - starting with systems to ensure that all have necessary food, adequate shelter, and good health care, etc. Suggestions are then given for how we might best do so.

Under *Target 8.3* we describe the types of activities that can be undertaken to create job opportunities, support entrepreneurship, and encourage the growth of micro, small and medium sized enterprises while focusing on and investing in transitioning to highly sustainable practices, along with the types of educational approaches that will support such a transition. Then we suggest several means for financing such sustainable economic development including Green Bonds and a proposal to create a Sustainable Economic Opportunity Program. And again, we then describe a number of best practices and success stories that ought to be better scaled up and duplicated to help us restore the natural environment, adopt regenerative agricultural practices, and transition to green and natural building and other sustainable consumption and production processes.

*SDG 8.4* calls for increasing global resource efficiency while endeavouring to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, with developed countries taking the lead. In order to truly decouple economic growth from environmental degradation it is essential that we revisit

the indicators that have been agreed up and look instead or as well at the extent to which we are already approaching the thresholds that we cannot cross if we wish to maintain a healthy economy and a healthy environment.

In addition, if we want to decouple economic activities from their environmental impacts then all countries will need to develop full on National and Local Strategies for Transitioning to fully Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) practices and processes as a part of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP, and transition to fully circular economies. As a part of this we should focus on transitioning as rapidly as possible to full sustainability. One of the best ways for doing this would be to first adopt sustainable development as a fundamental operating principle of governance, or in other words, adopting legislation or an agreement that all decisions made within government would have to consider its impacts on Nature and sustainable development and how it could help to achieve the SDGs, the Rio Principles, and all other sustainable development priorities and agreements.

In order to transition rapidly to a fully circular economy and to adopt fully sustainable practices we should include education for sustainable development in all schools and curriculums and in formal and informal education while welcoming and including the participation of all students in both the development and implementation of such planning processes.

Given that seventy percent of the population in the developing world depends on subsistence agriculture for its very livelihood, we need to diversify the economy in rural areas and regions, provide support and invest in job creation for processing agricultural goods and services along with other natural resources, restore the health

of degraded soils and ecosystems along with natural water cycles, and reverse climate instability and global warming. And given that more than 2 billion hectares of land around the world are moderately or severely degraded (an areas as large as all of South America), it is essential that we reforest and/or restore all degraded areas and regions that were once forested.

Under *goal 8.5* we describe the means by which we can provide full and productive employment and decent work for all by transitioning to a fully circular economy, restoring the natural environment and improving our agricultural practices. We also describe the various programmes that have been developed under and through the United Nations that could be better scaled up and utilized in order to combat youth unemployment. Then under *goal 8.6* we describe a number of programmes that enrol youth in helping to protect and restore the natural environment, while learning important job skills that will be valuable in transitioning to a fully sustainable world and future.

We then turn to the need to address societal abuse. Modern slavery, forced labour, human trafficking, and child labour harms the victims, the perpetrators and society as a whole. Atrocities and even great inequity tend to breed feelings of fear, anger, enmity, conflict and general distrust for the victim, abuser and impact the whole of society. While there may be a sense of power and control, abuse and perpetration of trauma ultimately wellbeing is undermined for all. Solutions directed at resolving the above abuses at their root involve transforming the downward spiral by applying legal, policy, social, economic, educational, structural and other measures. This will turn the downward spiral of violence around and will promote the development of tolerant, economically and socially resilient societies based on unity in diversity.

We then describe how a similar such approach is needed to protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments for all workers and give a number of recommendations for how such rights can best be protected.

Turning then to sustainable tourism, we describe the opportunities it can provide for reducing unemployment and list resources that have been developed to help transition to more sustainable tourism as well as for how we can accelerate the shift towards a more sustainable tourism sector by aligning policies, business operations and investments with the SDGs. Similarly, we describe how Sustainable Tourism could be made more culturally appropriate and the need to include the respect for all of life.

We end this chapter with a look at how our financing mechanisms and services could be dramatically improved and what it would take to create a healthy economy, culture and environment; and conclude with what the United Nations is doing in regards to the multi-stakeholder partnership on Decent Jobs for Youth, the development of a Global Strategy for Youth Employment, and establishment of the Global Jobs Pact, along with the Universal Declaration of Peasants Rights and other people working in Rural areas.



**SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries**

In order to reduce inequality, we need to realize that it is equality we are striving for. Achieving equality requires that we understand what drives and perpetuates inequality. Inequality is not just about wealth and poverty. In this report, we encourage all to adopt a larger perspective, acknowledging that this is a complex issue which fosters divide between individuals, genders, nationalities, races, and even human vs Nature. For in order to increase equality within and among countries, we must recognize how our relationship to Nature and other beings on the Planet lie at the very heart of this issue and is, moreover, dangerously affected by it.

Inequality stems from inequity - the inability to have the same, similar, or equitable opportunities. Inequity stems from the failure to have equal opportunities and equal treatment in the past. The only way to achieve real equality is to provide better opportunities for some in the present and ongoing into the future in order to assure that remaining inequities can be overcome. Inequity arises from having a lack of basic resources, access to the capital needed to succeed, the information with which one can be successful, the belief that one can succeed, and the where-with-all to do what their heart and mind desires and knows is possible. This fundamentally comes down

to how one is treated and the opportunities they are afforded, or not afforded, by the community, the society, and the social, political and cultural order or systems, etc.

When extreme inequality exists between a government and its people it is challenging to bring about equality for all peoples and all nations. It seems impossible to even entertain the idea of equality amongst people and nations without resolving inequality of government officials and the people they are elected to serve, which, unfortunately, is still quite common within many countries. According to The Oxford Academic Journal of Legal Analysis from Harvard Law School, "When individuals violate the law, they face prison, fines, injunctions, damages, and any number of other unpleasant consequences. But, although law-breaking is ordinarily fraught with risk, it is not clear that this generalization applies to public officials."

One serious and rampant human rights violation is that of public officials taking paybacks from corporations and then removing or ignoring regulations and laws which would protect citizens from toxic chemicals or that are meant to protect the natural environment. The end result being that we are poisoned by those who are supposed to protect us. This current level of corruption, poisoning, loss of valuable life sustaining resources, and what amounts to genocide may well be one of the most extensive crimes against humanity, indeed against all life on this planet, of all time.

Citizens also often find it to be extremely difficult to gain political access to their representatives, to have their ideas and proposals be taken seriously, or to be able to influence the political dialogue or debate in any significant way as either an individual or even as a part of anything other than a major or national citizen's organization. The result is that there is

often a lack of political will to do many things that the populace at large broadly and quite urgently wants. It is essential, in order for equality to be experienced, that all individuals be afforded equal access to housing, food, transportation, the same quality of education, voting rights, property rights, access to health care and opportunities to make a living wage as well as equality of treatment; and the same wage for individuals working at the same job regardless of gender, beliefs, skin colour, age, etc. Indeed, if we are going to achieve real equality all over the world then a comprehensive system of and model policies, regulations and legislation, along with proactive efforts, are going to have to be made and upheld by the international community to ensure that this really is implemented all around the world.

In order to take such proactive measures, we need to recognize that all life that exists in the universe is inextricably woven together in the most beautiful of intricate tapestries or a complex harmonious symphony. Each thread of every colour and each note played by the smallest or largest instrument is absolutely necessary for the whole masterpiece to be what it is in all its glory. And so, it is with every continent, nation, district, city, town, village, home, family, and individual. And so, it is with every mountain, river, rock, tree, mammal, fish, bird, insect, mineral, drop of water, ocean, ecosystem, and microbe. Everything is equal, beautiful, and necessary and defies any kind of measure of better or worse, smarter or less, important or not important. In light of this, the equality of all of Nature and all peoples, communities and nations rightly can be honoured and upheld with the greatest of sanctity.

In order to achieve income growth for the bottom 40% of the population we need to recognize that they also have diverse talents, passions and skills to inspire and lift

all other peoples, and therefore can uniquely contribute to the economy. Consider the great diversity in Nature - between plants, animals, minerals and all things that make up Nature, to the individual species within each kingdom is something that amazes and delights most humans. In fact, our survival depends on this diversity. In human society we find this same rich variety where all people have a valuable role to play, and on which we depend, whether we choose to realize it or not. For instance, a person with Down's Syndrome might not be competitive in higher education, but this condition often brings with it a capacity to love and arouse love and caring in others that is a precious quality for every community.

We need to encourage poorer communities to generate their wealth from the inside out, including through the use of barter. People are the resource that needs to be built up, so that the community is not dependent exclusively on outside development assistance. Each community, region, state, and federal government ought to develop a concerted and detailed plan for lifting up the poorest sectors of their population for the purpose of obtaining equality amongst peoples so that all peoples have the ability to thrive going forward. This will require substantial investments in necessary resources of all types, including financing and supportive policies, programs and institutions etc. This can best be developed in direct and inclusive consultation with the populations in need along with those that have been supporting these people's needs and interests for years now.

If we wish to lift this poorest section of the population up it will also require that we transition as rapidly as possible to full sustainability for with the growing depletion of scarce resources across multiple sectors of the economy and society and ever increasing population growth, particularly in regions where most of those

facing extreme poverty live, it will probably be impossible to provide the needed resources in any other way. It is essential that we not only decouple economic growth from environmental impacts, in part by internalizing all externalities, but also by regenerating and restoring degraded ecosystems and the natural resource base in general.

Under *SDG 10.1* we describe the many benefits that can come from our efforts to restore degraded ecosystems and adopting regenerative agricultural practices while also providing employment opportunities for those most in need, for example by providing increased access to clean water, preventing ocean dead zones, and increasing agricultural productivity, etc. Similarly, we describe how such policies as Land Value Taxation can help to lower land and property prices, increase access to low cost housing, enable more people living in disaster prone areas to move to safer locations, increases in revenue will enable municipalities to provide more services, and increases in building construction - as well as renovation and repair - will help to provide jobs for low wage earners, etc., a win-win situation for all. We also include a number of recommendations for the types of policies and investments that will truly help to lift people out of poverty while contributing substantially to a more sustainable economy and society.

In order to ensure the social, economic and political inclusion of all, we ought to organize inclusive workshops and planning processes at all levels of governance to collect ideas and develop policies that include all peoples in government decision making, planning and implementation processes. With this we could establish or designate offices in each government that will be responsible for ensuring that such policies are adopted, enforced and carried out. Indeed, we include all people's

input into all aspects of governance using Town hall meetings and referenda. These meetings can start in small circles so that all have the chance to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Including the voice of all people for whom policies, programs, and political structures and decisions are to be established allows new and creative solutions to come from unexpected places, having greater impact on the totality in a way that can be lasting and sustainable. Government could also support the development and implement collaborative management of commons resources such as community forests, community gardens, ecosystem restoration processes, cooperative utility districts and waste management facilities, and establishing participatory processes for managing parks and wildlife sanctuaries, etc.

*SDG 10.3* calls for ensuring equal opportunity and reducing inequalities of income. There is a tremendous and ever-increasing disparity between the concentration of wealth, and the considerable resources needed to invest in achieving the SDGs in order to make the needed transition to full sustainability. Serious inequalities in what is possible to achieve in regard to a living wage, access to education and housing, and health care also compound the problem. In order to achieve this target, it will be important to provide equal opportunities for all to attend schools, be hired for employment opportunities, participate in recreational and cultural activities, and participate in governmental decision-making processes as well as to serve in government or as a civil servant, etc. We will likely also need to reduce inequalities of government officials' wages in comparison to those of the average worker and introduce policies and laws prohibiting kickbacks and benefits for those in positions of power.

As we focus on providing equal protections of income and well-being for all people, it is also essential that we focus on the equal protection and well-being of Nature. It is important that not only are all people able to get their basic human needs met and to be able to thrive, but that Nature is also treated the same. In fact, it is probably even more important that we ensure that Nature is able to thrive given that all of life depends on having healthy eco-systems and on the very services that Nature provides. Indeed if we do not ensure that Nature is able to continue to provide the natural resources that it always has and in an abundant manner, including that of healthy forests and soils, food, water, and clean air, etc. then we will probably not have the financial, economic, and other resources needed to be able to provide, as a society, the social, financial and economic resources that are needed and that we would like.

Similarly, we cannot have strong and stable financial markets, institutions and economies, much less human equality and equity, if they undercut either the well-being of people or Nature. As we develop needed improvements, regulations, and monitoring of our global financial markets and institutions, it is imperative that they also be based upon the need to ensure the well-being of all people and Nature. Under this target we suggest that policies need to be put in place to end the practice of forced buy-outs and leveraged hedge funds and that regulations and policies be adopted to ensure that no austerity programs are put in place that harm people or make it impossible to ensure that all peoples basic human needs can be met.

*SDG 10.6* calls for increasing the representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate

institutions. There are enormous disparities between the amount of financial, industrial and many other types of resources that are available to those in the developing world as compared to those in the developed world. It will be next to impossible to achieve the SDGs if such disparities are allowed to continue to the extent to which they have in the past.

In order to enhance the voice of developing nations in global institutions unity is necessary. Every country is already involved in keeping these international institutions alive. Here the lender and the borrower are of equal importance. The institutions do not exist if one falls away. What is at stake is more than money. It is a world that works for all and where all have a role to play. The more inequality in representation and decision-making in and between countries in global economic and financial institutions persists, the greater the likelihood this will contribute to the disparity among peoples and that this will erupt in conflict, violence and streams of refugees as people struggle to survive and create livelihoods for themselves and their families.

The United Nations and all UN Specialized Agencies are in fact based on an understanding that equality between nations is needed for more credible and effective institutions, and that this is imperative if we are to meet the challenges human-beings face today. Already huge advances have been achieved in almost all areas, including economic and financial, for this understanding is actually deeply embedded in the human psyche.

This collaborative consciousness, in turn, permeates all aspects of Nature, where all forms of life survive by virtue of their roles within healthy ecosystems. Here plant and animal species prosper through an equitable process of give and take for the survival

of their species. So the understanding that economic and financial prosperity depends on equal representation between developed and developing countries in international economic and financial institutions is deeply ingrained in the human psyche and, although now buried often by a multitude of fears and privileged desires, can still be drawn forth, especially where a plea is made that resonates deeply with the human heart.

For this reason, it is important to have an ongoing mass education process at all levels that accompanies any attempts to bring about structural change. This education needs to draw on and strengthen the sometimes unconscious knowing of our interdependence and the joys associated with working harmoniously together as equals, using stories and experiences that speak vividly to the heart and minds. Under this target we include a number of recommendations for improving our educational systems, accordingly, including through teaching about human rights education and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights - such as is called for in the actual preamble to this excellent and essential Declaration. Another example we provide would be to encourage all schools and districts to join the tens of millions of students that are already participating in the activities of the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child, thus introducing and teaching children about the abuses that many other children face around the world. See: [www.childrensworld.org](http://www.childrensworld.org).

Turning now to migration under *SDG 10.7* we suggest that migrant people provide an important role in many communities. Immigrants have historically provided a rich ingredient to the melting pot of American, as well as other, cultures around the globe. The mixing of diverse people provides the opportunity for expanding wisdom and experience for all. It is important that local,

national and global governments establish fair and responsible policies, practices and laws that benefit and meet the needs of all.

We point out that for the first time the world's governments have agreed upon and adopted a Global Compact on Migration in December 2018 and established a UN Migration Network to follow up on its implementation. Unfortunately, a number of countries voted against the Compact and have refused to join the network. It is imperative for the well-being of all of the world's people that all countries be encouraged to participate in the network and to implement the provisions of the Global Compact. The Network is tasked with establishing the capacity-building mechanism called for in the Compact. It is thus imperative that as many resources be provided to establish this mechanism as possible.

The UN says that there are now more than 258 million migrants around the world living outside their country of birth. And this figure is expected to grow for a number of reasons including population growth, increasing connectivity, trade, rising inequality, demographic imbalances and climate change. In addition, more than 65 million people around the world are now officially displaced from their homes by conflict, violence and persecution; and this number is only likely to rapidly increase due to climate change and its many impacts, as well as growing resource scarcity, during the years to come.

Meeting the basic human needs of all people will likely become increasingly more important and challenging as our global problems become worse. It is thus essential that the basic human rights and needs of all are prioritized and taken into account especially for those populations that are forced to move in response to "natural" disasters and other emergencies

of all kinds. Our basic sense of humanity depends upon this; and it is enshrined in Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which says that all peoples are “entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration can be fully realized.”

*SDG 10.a* calls for implementing the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries. If we are going to solve our common global challenges, then we must act together in concerted effort paying close attention to both the historical and present global context and situations. The principle of special and differential responsibilities is based largely on the recognition that many of our global challenges have been caused primarily by those living in the developed world while the most serious impacts are often felt by those living in the developing world - who often have the least resources available to be able to adequately deal or cope with them.

It is often said by those in the developed world that they are not able to do more because of budget constraints but given the total world situation, those in the developed world have far more economic resources, as well as other financial and technological advantages, than most of those in the developing world. If we are truly going to solve our global challenges and improve and sustain a good quality of life for all, then those of us that have more are going to have to spend more in order to achieve the scale of change that is needed; and we are going to have to spend more to help the others make the changes as well.

However, if we are going to make the changes needed to transition to a truly sustainable future and achieve the SDGs, then we are all going to have to do it together. People living in local communities

will have to take action on the ground. A lot of resources, as well as time and energy, will be needed to restore soil health, to produce cover crops, to quit using soil compacting equipment and produce smaller scale technologies and equipment that are actually more productive in the long run. Farmers will have to relearn how to compost and enrich and enliven the soils; and consumers, along with those all along the marketing chain, will have to compost and eliminate food wastes and return the nutrients again back to the soil.

Over the past 20 to 30 years investments in agriculture and agricultural research and development have dropped, at the same time as we have realized that major changes and increased investments to support this, are actually needed. 70-80% of those living in developing countries depend on subsistence agriculture for their basic livelihoods. Unfortunately, they do not have the resources needed to be able to make the required changes that will be needed on their own. But if we recognize as an international community what has to be done, then we can make the changes needed to ensure that all can prosper, and life will in the end be better for us all.

This then brings us to *SDG 10.b* which calls for encouraging ODA and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to states where the need is greatest. This target is a bit disingenuous given that UN adopted a resolution in 1970 (almost 50 years ago) agreeing to increase Official Development Assistance (ODA) to more than 0.7% of donor country GNP each year and for 0.15 - 0.20% of ODA to be dedicated to Least Developed Countries, and yet only 7 out of the world's 30 or so developed countries have managed to reach the first target. We must thus recognize that developed countries need the developing countries for, among other things, access to raw materials, markets, migrant labour,

indigenous wisdom and cultural practices, as well as peace and stability in the world. It is thus imperative that all peoples have the ability and resources needed to be able to meet their basic human rights and needs while also ensuring that they and we all can protect and sustain a healthy environment and sustainable resource base, etc.

We thus suggest a number of actions that could help to remedy this situation. For example, those that are taking responsible action could partner with like-minded developing countries, Specialized UN Agencies; and donor countries that have honoured their ODA agreements and are willing and able to abide by the development needs as perceived by the recipient countries. Trade exclusively with, or give preferential treatment to, likeminded nations and those that have upheld their ODA agreements. And developing countries could create development plans that strengthen the country's natural and human resources that form the basis of a strong economy. This might involve creating first an agricultural base and from there developing aspects of the economy that can bring in wealth through trade with like-minded countries.

Finally, *SDG 10.c* calls for reducing the transaction costs of migrant remittances. According to the World Bank, in 2018 overall global remittance grew 10% to US\$689 billion, including US\$528 billion to developing countries, thus dwarfing the amount of money that comes from ODA - at about \$135 billion each year. While it is thus important that the transaction costs for such remittances be reduced, it is equally important that we reduce the causes and factors that make such remittances so necessary.

Given the condition of the world as it is today, it is clear why migrant workers exist. In fact, they have become essential cogs

in the wheel of the economies where they settle. Their countries and the well-being of their families there, as well as the rest of the population, are a part of the give and take that is essential to global well-being. Here too, where poverty reigns - both abroad or at home, people are forced to degrade the environment to eke out a living. This contributes to the destruction of ecosystems which affects the capacity of the Earth to retain moisture. That in turn creates droughts which affects whole economies and causes civil unrest and wars. Wars, weaknesses in the global economy or imbalances in the environment cause heartbreak and profound suffering which spills over borders and affects people worldwide. Here too it is in the interest of all to follow Nature's example and ensure that all have a means to survive and thrive so that they can contribute rather than detract from the well-being of the whole.

Returning now to the issue at hand, remittance prices are high for many reasons, including underdeveloped financial infrastructure in some countries, limited competition, regulatory obstacles, and lack of access to the banking sector by remittance senders and/or receivers, and difficulties for migrants to obtain the necessary identification documentation to enter the financial mainstream.

However, the single most important factor leading to high remittance prices is a lack of transparency in the market. In addition, a lack of transparency in the market has had the impact of reducing competition, as consumers tend to continue to patronize traditional market players because they are not aware of and cannot compare services, fees, and speed of their existing remittance service against other products. We thus suggest that the UN make a study of how remittances can be dispatched and paid for in equitable and transparent ways; provide information on how to distinguish ones that

are fair and safe and of maximum benefit to migrants themselves; and that expert advisors be trained and positioned at border crossings both of countries that provide migrant labour and recipient countries to inform migrant labour of ways of getting sound advice when that is needed.



**SDG 13:** *Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts*

A crucial development in the global struggle to combat climate change and its impacts is the growing awareness that a major transformation of attitudes, approaches and beliefs is now required to enable humanity to achieve a prosperous, sustainable future. This transformation of mindsets must involve a shift towards living more harmoniously together with our Biosphere, within which humans are embedded and have evolved.

Humanity's ability to respond and adapt to climate change and global warming is dependent upon our relationship with Nature. Nature is the source of our economy and society, of every resource we need to survive, and indeed of life itself. The UN website *Harmony with Nature* ([www.harmonywithnatureun.org](http://www.harmonywithnatureun.org)) underlines this perspective, delineating the understanding that for humanity to thrive and even survive, Nature must also be allowed the right to

survive and thrive. This understanding is grounded in *“the recognition of the intrinsic value of Nature and of human-Earth relationships that are symbiotic, interconnected and subject to the natural laws of the Universe...in which human-Earth relationships are balanced within the greater web of life to live in Harmony with Nature.”* (Report of the UN Secretary General on Harmony with Nature of 15 Aug. 2013, A/68/325)

Climate change is exacerbated by efforts to manage, control and own that which is natural, that which should be left untouched for all to appreciate and benefit from. Humanity's desire to profit from the use of natural resources has often led to prioritizing ownership and control over the development of balanced, interconnected human-Earth relationships. Rather than ceding ownership of the natural environment to the highest bidder, we must foster ownership that protects and restores Nature.

The earth is changing. In our lifetime we are witnessing extremes in temperatures and climactic events unparalleled in recent history. We are being reminded of the power of Nature to continually find balance. Fear of extinction, the loss of scarce resources, or the increasing impacts coming from climate induced disasters can be powerful motivating forces. In this time of global peril, we have the choice, indeed the environmental imperative, to actively collaborate with Nature so that we can realize our place in the community of life and thrive alongside our fellow species.

Dr. Jem Bendell, Professor of Sustainability Leadership and co-author of the 2012 WEF report on the Sharing Economy, has done an extensive review of the scientific literature on climate change, taking a look at the most current data, accumulated since 2014. He has documented just how severe

the environmental and climatic changes are that we have already caused, along with the expected coming calamities that we are just now beginning to recognize and face. See: [www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf](http://www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf)

In his 2018 paper entitled “Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy”, Professor Bendell describes just how threatening the situation is. For example, “The warming of the Arctic has reached wider public awareness as it has begun destabilizing winds in the higher atmosphere, specifically the jet stream and the northern polar vortex, leading to extreme movements of warmer air north into the Arctic and cold air to the south. At one point in early 2018, temperature recordings from the Arctic were 20 degrees Celsius above the average for that date (Watts, 2018). The warming Arctic has led to dramatic loss in sea ice, the average September extent of which has been decreasing at a rate of 13.2% per decade since 1980, so that over two thirds of the ice cover is already gone (NSIDC/NASA, 2018).”

“Given the reduction in the reflection of the Sun’s rays from the surface of white ice, an ice-free Arctic is predicted to increase warming globally by a substantial degree. Writing in 2014, scientists calculated this change is already equivalent to 25% of the direct forcing of temperature increase from CO<sub>2</sub> during the past 30 years (Pistone et al, 2014). That means we could remove a quarter of the cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the last three decades and it would already be outweighed by the loss of the reflective power of Arctic sea ice. One of the most eminent climate scientists in the world, Peter Wadhams, believes an ice-free Arctic will occur one summer in the next few years and that it will likely increase the warming caused by the CO<sub>2</sub> produced by human activity by 50% (Wadhams, 2016).”

About half of the world’s coral reefs have died in the last 30 years, with higher water temperatures and acidification due to higher CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in ocean water being key (Phys.org, 2018). In the ten years prior to 2016 the Atlantic Ocean soaked up 50 percent more carbon dioxide than it did the previous decade, measurably speeding up the acidification of the ocean (Woosley et al, 2016).”

“The climate models today suggest an increase in storm number and strength (Herring et al, 2018). They predict a decline of normal agriculture, including the compromising of the mass production of grains in the northern hemisphere on a scale of 20 - 40% and intermittent disruption to rice production in the tropics. The loss of coral and the acidification of the seas is predicted to reduce fisheries productivity by over half (Rogers et al, 2017). The rates of sea level rise suggest they may be soon become exponential (Malmquist, 2018), thus posing significant problems for billions of people living in coastal zones (Neumann et al, 2015). Environmental scientists are now describing our current era as the sixth mass extinction event in the history of planet Earth, with this one caused by us. About half of all plants and animal species in the world’s most biodiverse places are at risk of extinction due to climate change (WWF, 2018). The World Bank reported in 2018 that countries need to prepare for over 100 million internally displaced people due to the effects of climate change (Rigaud et al, 2018), in addition to millions of international refugees.”

It has thus become obvious that humanity and the international community need to go well beyond the climate change commitments and agreements that have been made to date and take much more substantial action.

It is also important to remember that

Nature, left to her own devices, is inherently sustainable and has evolved naturally to where it supports and nourishes life. One might say that it has built up expertise over billions of years. We have a tendency to think that we are separate from Nature and so we talk about ‘the environment’ as if we are not part of it. We must remind ourselves that we are all part of the Earth and the Earth is literally what sustains us. We cannot live without it. Whatever we do which results in our environment being poisoned, whatever we do to harm the balance of species, we do to ourselves and all species. We are all in this together. We must learn from Nature, and follow the natural rhythms, to keep its harmony and balance.

The question is how we can live in a manner that naturally honors the wisdom of Mother Nature. It’s up to each of us to treat Mother Earth with respect and care for her as we care for ourselves. It is up to us to treat our only home with great care, love, and reverence. We must make the changes needed to make a better world together. We could start by restoring and regenerating ecosystem health not only to respond to climate change but also to mitigate and prevent it. This would also mean changing our agricultural practices so that they are less fossil fuel dependent, are much more resilient, can weather the increasing severity of “natural” disasters, lead to greater soil health and natural productivity, and provide conditions that are more amenable to growing healthy and productive plants.

We also need to restore large- and small-scale natural water cycles and invest in water retention landscaping, restore ecosystem health and in the process reverse dryland degradation and desertification. Restoring natural ecosystems will also help to stabilize the climate, prevent both regional and global warming, and reduce the threat of climate induced disasters. We

should also develop plans to reverse or counter acidification of our oceans and/or provide other means to cope with the loss or diminishing productivity of fisheries and coral reefs and habitats, etc. - all of which is due to the huge amount of carbon dioxide that we have released which ends up in the ocean.

*SDG 13.1* calls for strengthening resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries. In this section of our report we recognize that it is natural to worry about floods and other disasters stemming from climate change. However instead of giving into fear and fighting with other people for control of or to protect natural resources, we suggest that it would be more advisable to act from a deep understanding of both the dynamics of Nature that produce climate change and those that allow all species and all of Nature to thrive. One of the best and most important ways to create resilience would thus be to restore our natural ecosystems, create water retention landscapes, and regenerate our large- and small-scale watersheds in order both to avert and respond to climate change by working with the forces inherent in Nature, which have fostered resilience and an increase in diversification of life forms for billions of years.

Eventually, human survival depends on living in harmony with Nature and that would be greatly enhanced if we learned once more to *consciously* use our inborn capacity for ongoing communication with the Earth System. As a first step in re-establishing conscious communication with the Earth System and creating transformative regenerative processes, we can work with those who already consciously use that capacity. Among these are many Indigenous Peoples, small scale farmers who depend for their living on accurate assessment of how to live in

harmony with Nature, a growing number of people who have been conscious from an early age of their capacity to communicate with Nature and those now learning Nature communication skills, as well as with scientists who can measure subtle changes in life energy and those who live close to the land.

We suggest that in regions where massive environmental disruption is clearly possible, and where the usual social, economic and other infrastructure may no longer function effectively, it will be necessary to build cooperative working relationships among all people in a community so that potential survivors of climate-related natural disasters can work together in already formed teams to begin to deal with the aftermath of disasters while waiting for help from the outside world. Trainings in schools, at work, and community education would all help to prepare survivors to work together and create a strong sense of cooperation that will benefit communities in many other ways as well. Indeed, such training ought to begin well before any disasters actually strike and part of their function should include both development projects as well as climate mitigation, emergency planning and preparedness, adaptation readiness activities, etc.

We then describe a number of programmes and initiatives that ought to be put in place dealing with Education, Disaster Relief, Ecosystem Restoration, and the Restoration of both Watersheds and Natural Water Cycles.

Under *SDG 13.2* which calls for integrating climate change measures into national policies, strategies, and planning, we describe specific types of measures which if fully implemented would be sufficient to prevent further global warming and could stabilize weather patterns and the climate.

At all levels and across all sectors of the economy and society it is important to consider how our environmental policies and relationships with Nature can directly impact various other societal functions and well-being. For example, forests, sustainable agricultural practices, and regenerative land management policies can add to the ability to sequester large amounts of carbon, add to soil health and prevent soil depletion, prevent land erosion, run-off and thus mass flooding, provide buffer zones to prevent “natural” disasters, and more. There are a lot of sensible solutions for doing such things as this that can and ought to be included in national policies, strategies and planning processes and which are still not all that well known about as of yet.

For example, we can sequester gigatons of carbon through the production and use of biochar and thus move rapidly towards stabilizing the Earth’s climate system. Biochar is typically produced by pyrolyzing woody matter or waste materials, thus burning them without oxygen, while avoiding giving off greenhouse gases and instead capturing the burnt carbon in the remaining biochar which is produced. This biochar, which will last and sequester the carbon for thousands or millions of years, can then be used to enhance soil quality, strengthen or replace building materials, or be combined into goods and products of all kinds.

Similarly, it is widely recognized that there are more than 2 Billion hectares of land that are degraded and need to be restored around the Earth. One promising idea for creating a more effective carbon trading system would be to lease the service of carbon removal on an annual basis, subject to strict verification. Under the UNCCD’s No Net Degradation standard, ratified into international law a few years ago, lands that are steadily degrading

would need to purchase more of these sorts of carbon service leases while those that are steadily being regenerated as carbon stores, such as those under care of Ecosystem Restoration Camps, would earn a steady revenue from the leases, one that presumably appreciates every year.

In any case the essential focus here is on drawing down carbon and sequestering it for years to come. A book entitled *Project Drawdown* describes 100 best climate solutions that are designed not just to stabilize, but to actually reduce the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Drawdown is about technologies and solutions that are already in place, understood, measured, documented and growing. Project Drawdown includes such best practices as rooftop solar to educating girls, from conservation agriculture to refrigerant management, from plant-rich diets to heat pumps, from agro-forestry and reforestation to regenerative agricultural practices, from alternative cement to indigenous people's land management. Most are "no regrets solutions" that we'd be wise to pursue even if there were no climate crisis. If the international community wants to get serious about reversing global warming and stabilizing the climate system, then all governments ought to undertake to put in place and support as many of these climate solutions as possible.

After exploring various means of sequestering carbon and other greenhouse gases we then turn to the need to restore natural ecosystems, particularly deserts which are a major contributor to global warming and climate change. Degraded soils or desert/arid areas, have a limited ability to retain water, thus causing the area to heat up and contribute to warming our planet. Desertification also disrupts both the hydrological and natural water cycles, thus causing the further loss of biodiversity and green growth. Re-greening of deserts and

restoring the ecosystems can be combined with the creation of wetlands, thus bringing back the rich abundance of life.

Broken watersheds, or rather hydrological cycles, lead to additional problems as well, due to the relatively high concentrations of water vapour released into the upper zones of the atmosphere. This is a danger because water vapour higher up contributes more to the greenhouse effect. It is also believed that water vapour higher in the atmosphere causes more extreme weather events. Instead of being part of a healthy hydrological cycle in balance with the ecosystem, water is "lost" in arid areas and also causes extreme weather elsewhere on the planet.

On a related note France launched a 4 per 1000 Initiative on regenerative agriculture at the Paris Climate Summit Conference in 2015 with the goal of increasing the amount of carbon in soil by 0.4% a year thus sequestering carbon, reducing soil loss, creating much healthier soils, increasing climate resiliency, and reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. If this could be done on all of the land that we farm around the world we could halt the annual increase of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere.

The Commonwealth group of countries is also taking action to support Regenerative Development to Reverse Climate Change. It has held 3 symposiums bringing together the world's experts and best practitioners over the past several years and launched the Common Earth Initiative in 2018 at its Heads of Government Meeting in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Innovation Hub. Common Earth provides support to the 53 member states to strengthen regenerative efforts around their local regions. According to the website, "Common Earth is a worldwide community supporting effort to regenerate the wealth of Earth's commons and meet

the 2030 agenda.

The global commons are the dynamic, living systems that are the basis of life on Earth.”

“Humanity’s social and economic well-being are dependent on the health of our common land, oceans, and atmosphere. Caring for them properly requires valuing human dignity and understanding that true wealth derives from a healthy biosphere and web of life.” It is hoped that all of the members of the Commonwealth will take good advantage of this initiative and that the Secretariat will ensure that the needed support is provided to all countries to truly take the needed action to restore the Earth and in the process prevent global warming and re-stabilize the climate. For more information see: <http://cominnowealth.org/discovery/common-earth>.

Where governmental policies do not take into account the full know-how that is inherent in the cultures of their peoples, invaluable experience is missed that is directly connected to their specific geographic region, has in many cases taken centuries to develop, and would be almost impossible to duplicate through other channels especially before 2030. Indigenous Peoples have scientifically observed plant, insect, bird, and other animal populations over generations and have learned to employ this knowledge to mitigate climate change. UN Member States could learn valuable environmental lessons by supporting indigenous policies to mitigate and survive climate change, including respecting their forms of government, which themselves are often examples of social forms that are rooted in Nature.

Indigenous Peoples’ organizations must be included in negotiations for climate change and climate mitigation measures in order

to achieve productive national policies, strategies, and planning. Unfortunately, many UN Members still undermine world security by continuing short-sighted urban and industrial development without the Free Prior and Informed Consent described in Resolution 61/295, ILO169 and the Convention on Biological Diversity. It is essential that all such treaties and other legal agreements are fully honoured, and all human rights are respected.

*Goal 13.3* focuses on the need to improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning. If we view climate change as an opportunity rather than a problem, we inspire the will to learn to live in harmony with all life. This shift in perspective inevitably produces new insights, ideas and actions. Only by respecting and appreciating Nature will we be able to make the changes and choices needed to limit our energy and natural resource usage and ensure that there is enough for all. In this way will we be able to give up our fossil fuel dependency and move instead to renewable energy sources that Nature produces.

Nature models for us freedom and a vibrant life flow. There is a rhythm within each element of Nature and between discreet entities. It is through this “natural dance” that energy is released, and great power can be found. Our energy systems need to mimic these understandings. Our technologies should not be created in such a way that they obliterate and replace Nature where they are located, but instead work with and draw from Nature. As well, these technologies should be recyclable, manufactured in such a way that their components can be returned to Nature, without releasing toxic waste. The health of the soil, forests, grasslands and watersheds determine the wellbeing of our large and

small-scale water cycles. And likewise, the natural functioning of the watersheds is essential to ensure that we can adapt to our changing climatic conditions.

Recreating and protecting healthy soils can and will reverse desertification and over time result in recreating healthy watersheds. Restoring the health of our soils will also provide us with the ability to feed the world's people even with expanding population - even at times of drought - if we adopt resilient and climate friendly farming practices. Re-greening dry lands, capturing water in water retention landscapes, swales and check-dams, and planting and restoring billions of acres of forests and trees will enable humanity to restore our natural water cycles. But if we do want to be able to do these things, we will have to change how we produce our energy and process our wastes. It is essential that we listen to and learn from Nature as we do so. In the end it is Nature that provides us with the means to live and thrive. It is essential that we respect and learn to live in harmony with her.

Nature signals us in many ways that we are off target. Climate Change is one of these indicators. If we are open, and willing to listen with our hearts and courageous enough to take appropriate action, we can change the course of history. We can restore the beauty and balance in Nature that has been gifted to us. We thus describe a number of ways in which we can foster Education inspired by Nature and opportunities for learning and teaching about Regenerative Agriculture, Restoring Natural Ecosystems, Replenishing Watersheds and Ground Water, and Restoring Natural Water Cycles.

*Goal 13.a* addresses the need to mobilize financial resources. It has been well documented that the financing invested as we transition to more sustainable practices and processes more than pays for itself

and is minuscule as compared to what it will cost to repair things and restore the earth's regenerative abilities to nurture life if we are not able to achieve the climate goals and targets, particularly this one on the need for increasing levels of finance.

One of the most difficult roadblocks to accessing adequate funding for climate change and mitigation efforts is the ongoing denial by many in the United States and elsewhere regarding scientific proof of the existence of climate change. When people are finally in agreement that climate change exists, the movement to transform and deal more adequately and responsibly with the matter will move forward rapidly, enabling us to safeguard life with new awareness and practices. Over and over in our history we have changed course swiftly and effectively when the need arose, averting numerous disasters. At this critical juncture, what is most required is a quorum of dedicated change agents committed in action to securing the future of life on the planet. Here again we list and describe many ways in which the international community can help to raise awareness and ensure that adequate financial and other resources will be forthcoming.

Finally in regards to raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing states, particularly among women, youth and local and marginalized communities, we must first recognize that our strongest ally in developing effective plans for managing climate change is the Earth System itself that is constantly involved in balancing all of its subsystems and components. Thus, those who have learned to live in harmony with Nature are a precious resource. In the least developed nations, people, particularly women, often live close to the land and have traditions that encourage them to be stewards of Nature. In some instances,

people in nations more technologically advanced might learn much from them.

In communities where people still depend largely on Nature for their daily living, it can be more socially acceptable for women (and men) to develop their intuitive connection with Nature, for this is our umbilical cord to Mother Nature. In technologically more advanced regions, culture and development have been more dependent on human beings developing “abstract” thinking that often has caused the very dissociation with Nature now threatening human and other life on the planet.

The UN Member States agreed at the Rio Earth Summit Conference to develop and implement National Sustainable Development Strategies. Along with this they agreed that all communities should develop Local Agenda 21s or Sustainable Community Plans and to provide sufficient assistance to local communities so that they could carry them out. In addition, many cities and municipalities, along with businesses, have signed onto various programmes and campaigns to either address climate change, transition to renewable energy, and/or achieve carbon neutrality including through ICLEI, the Global Compact, etc. Similarly, there have been any number of programs created that focus on sustainable community planning as a whole, including the Urban Environmental Accords that were developed for World Environment Day in San Francisco, California in 2005. It is imperative that all of these efforts be integrated both horizontally and vertically, that is across levels of government and sectors of the economy and society, and that a particular focus be included as a part of this process to raise capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management processes.

It is even more important that assistance and funding be provided at a global level

to ensure that LDCs and SIDS have the resources needed to both carry out and implement such processes and that they include a specific focus on women, youth, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized communities. In addition, such strategies and plans should include and be based on transitioning to a circular economy, decoupling economic development from its related environmental impacts - thus internalizing all externalities, reducing the use and preventing further depletion of our natural resource base, and restoring the natural environment.



***SDG 16: Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels***

As we strive to create more peaceful, just, and inclusive societies there is much that we can learn from Nature. Species and communities within species, including human beings, have ways of caring for themselves as individuals while also benefitting the communities of which they are a part. It is important to foster and strengthen this tendency and not lend energy and resources to that which tears down and diminishes other beings, communities and Nature as a whole.

Seeing ourselves as separate from Nature helps to create an illusion of being single

entities disconnected from other Beings. This ultimately leads to disconnection from ourselves and increases our sense of insecurity and of material and spiritual poverty. In contrast, there lies at the very core of our humanity a longing for community, caring, and sharing that is rooted deeply in our human development as a social species. If we decide to work with this deeper aspect of human nature, we shall be able to build on the deep yearning for connectedness and belonging that lies within each human being and in the process take significant steps towards achieving this goal.

Ensuring that all peoples' basic human needs can and are met, will go a long way towards creating just, inclusive, and peaceful societies. We can begin by developing respect first for ourselves and then respect for each other. This can then lead us to consider how we can deal responsibly and effectively with those that harm others or the natural environment. Focusing on the need to heal and restore Nature, and to recognize that there is plenty to share for all is a first step in addressing *SDG 16* as a whole.

In order to reduce all forms of violence we must first recognize that violence comes from a feeling of powerlessness, of being misunderstood, of having no voice or say in someone's life (at one time or another), feeling like a victim, fearful and stressed about one's survival, of having limited options for employment, feeling a responsibility and concern about how to provide for family members, and feeling disrespected. These kinds of feelings can generate intense frustration and anger, which can lead to a sense of desperation and with that the possibility to commit acts of violence and even homicides. Feeling powerless and concern about one's survival often leaves a person focused on themselves and with a lack of interest or respect for other beings.

Unfortunately, humanity has long lived in a competitive world where there has historically not been enough to go around and where those from the lower classes have had to struggle to get their daily human needs met. This has led to discipline systems based on fear, control and punishment - all of which has led to a world with quite a bit of violence and force being used by individuals and groups to try to either control others or try to get their own way. If we want to overcome this, we will have to learn how to live cooperatively together and find ways to effectively deal with those who use violence and force to abuse and control others. Similarly, systems of law, including regulations, legislation and policies, along with social and cultural norms must be strengthened and established to hold all of those accountable that abuse or cause physical and emotional harm to others.

Connecting with and remembering Nature as our foundation can also help to heal the fear and upset which drives conflict amongst peoples. Historically, connecting with Nature has been successfully used to balance mental problems, behavioural problems, emotional turmoil, and to strengthen physical well-being. It provides the opportunity for those who are troubled to experience their own true nature, their strengths and weaknesses, and to develop compassion and caring for themselves and others.

If human beings take responsibility for the fact that we have poverty and violence in our current situation and own it we can transform it. Realizing that someone else's poverty is our poverty; someone else's act of violence is our violence is what it will take to transform it. Part of what is needed is accepting that this is how it is, that we are fallible beings, making mistakes, having compassion and making different choices. We can then be an unstoppable force creating opportunities, harmony and

abundance for all.

In order to shift society as a whole it is imperative that we teach about and implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Social and Economic Covenants, the Rio Principles, and the Earth Charter. We have these to help people acknowledge our interconnection and deeply understand the need to and the ways to work in peaceful cooperation with each other and all of Nature.

Turning now to *SDG 16.2* which focuses on ending abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children, it is important for us to remember that we are all children in the vast macrocosm and have all been children in our own societies. Abuse, exploitation, and all forms of violence against children can only take place by individuals who have lost their remembrance of what it means to be a child and have separated from the awe and reverence for all life that was innate in them at birth.

It is important for adults to acknowledge children as teachers, for they are often more connected to their original seed form and spiritual essence. In fact, adults can often benefit from taking their lead. Maintaining child-like wonder and being in awe of life itself is a powerful way to establish enduring peace, love, and joy, and ultimately keep the earth and all its Beings healthy and thriving. If we begin now with the raising of the current new-borns in an environment of love and nurturance and respect, then the acts of violence against children are less likely to be perpetuated in future generations. As well, if we are all looking out for the well-being of the children, then perpetrators have less opportunity and more visibility. Lastly, there needs to be greater movement towards redirecting, rehabilitating, and retraining those who abuse. Here we include many suggestions

for teaching and learning how we can all become more respectful and nurturing members of society and our international community.

In regards to promoting the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensuring equal access to justice for all, when it comes down to creating and upholding law within human societies, it is important that we look less at ways to pronounce judgment and punishment and look to create policies and social structures that ensure that no one does harm to another and that promote the restoration of health and harmony to individuals and communities in ways that are reflective of Natural Law. This all-encompassing legal structure should be built on deep recognition that what Nature provides, and the laws of Nature are the foundation from which all else operates.

Furthermore, the rule of law is not just what has been written down in law books to govern humans. The ultimate rule of law is that of the laws of Nature. All of Nature, in fact all of the Universe, runs by Natural Law, which supersedes all human based laws. The most fundamental of all of Natural Law is that of Love for all life. The second would be that of Respect for all life. The third is that of Harmony. Harmony means having the respect for the ways of being of each member of Life and that of the Natural Law that governs the balance of thriving within all species. Natural Law provides for all the needs of all its species, and each member of each species has the coding for the Law of Harmony for its survival as well as thriving. When we, as humans, understand and master our place of co-habiting on this planet and maintaining Natural Law as a guide, we will not only continue to thrive and survive, but will continue to evolve into the physical, mental, and spiritual true greatness we are meant to become.

*SDG 16.4* calls on the international community to significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets, and combat all forms of organized crime. We thus need to acquire a bird's eye view so powerful as to change the course of human thinking and sentiment, in a similar way as when the first astronauts were able to see the whole of the earth from space. We suggest a thorough examination and assessment of the motivations behind illicit financial and arms flows, stealing of assets, and organized crime in order to understand the thread that connects these acts irrespective of nationalities. It is also necessary to see these heinous acts and events not just as crimes against peoples, but to understand the impact on Nature, and the deleterious effects on Nature these events have had. All of humanity needs to acknowledge the crimes that have been done to others and the natural environment over time, make any necessary reparation and restitution and move forward making different choices to benefit all.

Under Article 26 of the UN Charter, almost all arms flows are in fact illicit, which is defined as being forbidden by law, rules, or custom. Indeed Article 26 states, "In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments."

In addition, Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights insists that "all peoples have the right to life, liberty, and security of person" - which we have repeatedly seen does not exist where

any government has access to inordinate military personnel, equipment and expenditures, and where the international community continues to allow countries to attack one another with impunity. It is thus the collective responsibility of all of our governments to ensure that the Security Council creates, and the UN General Assembly adopts, a plan and system for regulating armaments and ensuring that the least amount of money is spent to establish and maintain international peace and security as possible. And in fact, it is the responsibility of the UN General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council to take action both to prevent and then to sanction and hold responsible any country, along with its political leadership, that attacks another country or poses a direct threat to international peace and security.

Corruption and bribery thrive when they are kept secret and there is fear and confusion. When children are asked, "Did you do that?" and are punished if they admit, the truth teaches them to lie and hide mistakes or missteps. It is important to make it safe for people to take personal responsibility, bring mistakes out into the open, review natural consequences with compassion, and to find resolutions that are in the best interest of all. In Nature there are consistent natural consequences that provide learning and evolution of consciousness.

Corruption and bribery also thrive where there is concentration of wealth based upon the ownership and profits deriving from the control and abuse of land and natural resources rather than the benefits accruing equitably to all peoples through the collective ownership and management of common or scarce resources. Indeed, much corruption and bribery exist where illegal mining, logging, capture and killing of endangered species, and other such practices are allowed to flourish. The

consequences must be enough to deter further bribery and corruption by giving understanding of the negative impact these actions have on themselves, others, and the natural environment, promoting healing and instilling a healthy sense of self that motivates people to naturally act in the interest of the greater good of all.

*SDG 16.6* focuses on the need to develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels of government. A first step in creating this type of institution would be to get rid of or end corruption. Corruption by officials, especially those in positions of leadership, is the worst betrayal as they are in office to serve the highest good for all. A good example is the genetically modified foods being imposed on society because of deals between large corporations and governmental officials. Corrupt officials' selfish actions have devastating consequences on the whole culture economically, spiritually, physically, mentally, and emotionally and the health of all. They are polluting the whole planet with their mindset, beliefs, and actions such as using toxic chemicals (pharmaceuticals, herbicides, pesticides), fracking, and irresponsible use of natural resources, and the endangerment of many species.

We suggest that one of the best ways to ensure accountability would be to create a network of councils whose members come from a diversity of backgrounds and regions - from the local level to the International level - for the purpose of monitoring established institutions that may already be engaged in bribery and corruption and holding them accountable to practices that are effective, transparent, accountable, and follow the rule of law and the Laws of Nature. We then suggest specific examples of what such councils could do.

Councils could also be created to ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and

representative decision-making at all levels of government as well. They are most effective when they are inclusive, cooperative, and participating together by putting consideration of the ways and needs of their people in the context of what is good for Nature and in ensuring proper stewardship, particularly of shared or common resources. People working together can provide creativity and inspiration and serve as resources for solving issues and resolving conflict in ways that promote the greater good for each individual as well as communities and the world community.

Under *SDG 16.7* we also list and describe a number of examples of inclusive participatory decision-making processes and initiatives including citizen referenda's, indigenous councils, town hall meetings, participatory peoples' budget processes, Cooperatives, and government pension plans, etc.

*SDG 16.8* calls for broadening and strengthening the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance. We suggest that even though many of those living in the developing world, particularly those facing extreme poverty, often have the largest per capita impact on the natural environment, they also are in a position of great potential to avoid the polluting and resource-depleting stages of industrialization, and to adopt new, clean and more resource-efficient technologies. These countries are very much feeling the effects of environmental change and the degradation of their natural resources. Relevant policies from the direct input of these developing countries who have positions of value in the institutions of global governance can create added value to their natural assets, develop new markets, and create and sustain more and better jobs that will better address a more "green" and sustainable

future. Through investment and policy reform designed to enhance livelihoods for the poor, create employment opportunities and reduce poverty, these essential assets can be translated into economic growth and sustainable development.

The participation of the developing countries in global governance can also provide mutual benefit. Whereas the wealthiest, most developed countries have the largest impact on resource use and consumption and depletion of the natural resource base, developing countries provide much of those resources. Giving the developing countries broader and strengthened participation in the institutions of global governance, along with investments in the skills development for the building of greener economies, is a way to achieve sustainable development, poverty eradication, and a more sustainable future for the natural resources that the rest of the world depends upon.

If we are going to ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedom then we should first recognize that the right to access information held by public bodies is an integral part of the fundamental right of freedom of expression, as recognized by Resolution 59 of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1946, as well as by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that the fundamental right of freedom of expression encompasses the freedom “to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”. It is particularly important that reports are regularly filed as pertains to the management of and effects on the natural environment. Legislation supporting this should be adopted at the national level as a part of implementing each country’s SDG strategy and plan. We again provide a number of suggestions for how access to information could better be provided and supported.

Under *SDG 16.a* our governments have agreed to strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime. Indeed, there is a need for international and local institutions and governance to provide relevant institutions, protections, and governance for a safe, just, peaceful, and inclusive society. These must be in place for the safety, protection, nurturance and inclusion of all peoples as well as Nature. We need to create new types and systems of penal institutions that focus on healing and regeneration instead of punishment, along with instituting truth and reconciliation systems and commissions. International tribunals need to be established to provide findings and make recommendations for how the international community can respond to and deal with repressive and/or controlling/authoritarian governments - particularly those not established through democratic processes. Penalization is a harsh word but what we mean by this is to provide opportunities for those prone to terrorism or crimes to essentially serve time in the caretaking of Nature. There is nothing as nurturing and healing as being in the presence of Nature.

And finally, *SDG 16.b* calls for promoting and enforcing non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development. Here we suggest that every human has a place and purpose for being in their life on Earth, and no individual’s place or purpose is more important or worthy than any other individual’s. It is the birthright and in the best interest of all if each individual is provided with equal opportunity to express and manifest their personal purpose in light of the good of all. Equal rights, if not superior rights for Nature will provide better opportunity for the continued survival and thriving of humans.

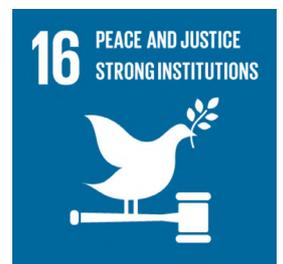
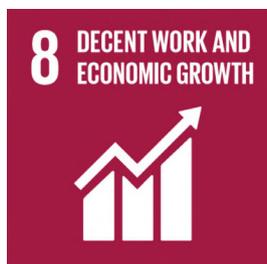
In light of this, the personal fulfilment of each individual comes to fruition when in the context of all life and the cosmic expression of life which includes both Nature and humanity, being that humanity fundamentally is a part of Nature. In other words, the Earth is her own being with the sole purpose to express herself as life, and all Beings, including humans, are a part of that expression. Therefore, all Beings are encouraged to fulfil their purpose and live without discrimination, and all laws created, promoted, and enforced should have at their core the development and furthering of the human and Nature Soul.

It is important to keep our eyes on the goal. What we attend to is key. What we attend to will take root and grow strong and healthy. If we focus on the things that we do not

want, fear, anger and distress will continue to build, and problems will gain intensity. It is essential that we cease to give energy to those elements that are out of balance. It is vital that we develop communities committed to remaining grounded and focused on the vision of a just, cooperative, peaceful and flourishing world. We need to be tenacious, fearless in moving forward, adventurous, inclusive, and constant in navigating the shifts and changes toward expanding respect for all life. The key is to be fully present to issues, think in new ways, and focus on resolution. Exploring creative living in which each individual's needs as well as the needs of society as a whole are met, is the kind of fresh, productive, and exciting modus operandi that will greatly help us accomplish the fulfilment of a sustainable future, and all the SDGs.

# TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

## Part I: Integrating Nature with the UN's 2019 Sustainable Development Goals



# QUALITY EDUCATION

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 4: Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All

### TARGETS

- 4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes
- 4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education
- 4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including University
- 4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations
- 4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy
- 4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles
- 4c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teachers training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states



# **BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

## **SDG 4**

### **Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All**

#### Prepared by

**Marilyn Fowler, MA, PhD.,**  
Department of Consciousness and Sustainable Development  
John F. Kennedy University

**Dr. Maia Kincaid, PhD.,**  
Founder of the Sedona International School  
for Nature and Animal Communication

**Rob Wheeler**  
Main UN Representative, Global EcoVillage Network

**Jill Lauri, MBA, MSW**

**Lee Samatowic, ND**

**Joan Kehoe, MSC**

**Lisinka Ulatowska, MA, PhD.**  
Coordinator Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
UN Representative  
Institute for Planetary Synthesis

#### Endorsers

John F. Kennedy University  
Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
South Eastern Peoples  
California Institute of Integral Studies  
The Sedona International School of Animal and Nature Communicators  
The Institute for Planetary Synthesis  
The All Win Network  
The Association of World Citizens

Contact: Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com

## **Executive Summary**

*This report proposes specific steps to implement inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all, with the imperative to do this in harmony with Nature. To implement an educational perspective that promotes respect for the natural world and honors the lessons we can learn there will require nothing less than a paradigm shift in how we view Nature and how we understand our relationship to other species.*

*To that end, the document discusses the role of Government in achieving this shift while keeping the cost of education down and leaving no one behind. It also explains the type of curriculum needed to help human beings revive their inborn capacity to interrelate with Nature and live in harmony with both our human and non-human communities.*

*The information examines a number of targets from the perspective of how they can be implemented without harm to Nature, how Nature can help to inspire human creativity and innovation, and how people can become more sensitive to Nature, by recognizing that we are an integral part of the natural world.*

### **Specifically:**

**Target 4.1** *examines the ethics involved in ensuring both boys and girls can benefit from complete free and equitable quality primary and secondary education, incentives to make the necessary changes, and how to produce effective learning outcomes.*

**Target 4.2** *discusses how to bring about the necessary shift to ensure that all boys and girls have access to early childhood care and pre-primary education.*

**Target 4.3** *stresses the importance of providing universal access to the Internet and explains how the mass media can be used to inspire those involved in tertiary education to learn from Nature.*

**Target 4.5** *explains how appreciation of Nature and regard for human diversity is a parallel learning process to that of eliminating gender issues and other disparities in education.*

**Target 4.6** *details how ensuring that all attain literacy and numeracy is also a first step to achieving Nature literacy and numeracy, an essential skill set that will enable us to come to grips with climate change. This section shows how this can be achieved.*

**Target 4.7** *deals with education in sustainable development and a shift from hierarchical to horizontal relationships characterized by appreciation, ongoing attention and what can be achieved by spending more time in Nature.*

**Target 4c** *discusses increasing the number of qualified teachers in developing countries, emphasizing South/North cooperation whereby Nations with large indigenous populations can contribute much needed learning in living in harmony with Nature.*

## INTRODUCTION

If we truly want to solve most of our common global challenges and achieve the SDGs by 2030, many changes and improvements will need to be made either to, or within, many if not most of our educational institutions and systems around the world. Fortunately, many of these changes have either been tried or carried out before and/or are still being tried and used in some places quite successfully.

Because we have undercut the ability of our natural environment and ecosystems to support human life and to remain in a healthy productive state in many places around the world, and because of the growing human population and the fact that our consumption and production practices are still a long ways from being sustainable, we are experiencing increasing levels of scarcity in many natural resources that are becoming increasingly worse year by year.

Similarly, “natural” disasters are increasing in both number and severity around the world in an on-going manner; while “natural resource wars” continue to impact humanity in an ever worsening manner - thus making it harder to achieve a number of the SDGs including particularly SDGs 16, 1, 6, and 10 (dealing with peace and security, poverty, access to clean and adequate water, and issues of human equity, etc.) as well. If we do not manage to deal more responsibly with and fully address and solve most of our global challenges and problems, it will become even more important for us to improve our educational systems for we will have to live with the consequences which will likely be rather extremely and increasingly challenging.

### **From Domination to Learning from Nature**

Nature exemplifies on-going life-long learning. In this natural on-going learning process, species strengthen one another and also keep one another in check. This creates diversification and enables all aspects within the natural world to work together harmoniously. The greater the diversification, the stronger all aspects of Nature become. This increases human beings' ability to thrive sustainably, with clean air, an abundance of safe drinking water, food, and shelter.

Species develop and strengthen themselves naturally through the inherent challenges involved in living with other species. Human beings are the only species that entirely eradicate other species - currently around 140 each day. If we are to live sustainably, this disastrous downward spiral must be reversed, and people must learn from Nature. This will require becoming conscious of the ongoing relationship and communication between human beings and natural phenomena.

### **Shifting the Paradigm**

To move into a more positive relationship with Nature, it is essential that we *clearly* step away from the past and envision new ways to create partnership with the natural world. As a first step, this will require taking responsibility for our past actions and acknowledging the disastrous consequences we have wrought on so many other species living on this planet. To create something new, fresh, and freeing, we must first rid ourselves of the old, dark, and confining thought processes that have dominated our actions to date.

Most of the crises we face today are produced for two reasons. First, humanity is out of step with the natural order and thereby at war with creation. Second, humans forfeit

the powerful help Nature can give us. All living species and aspects of the Earth System empower one another to diversify and thrive, while at the same time keeping one another in check. Together, they stabilize planetary boundaries, within which the human species can also thrive.

To rebuild a healthy relationship with the natural world, we must be able to observe, listen and respond to the ongoing communication that Nature provides. This relational communication with Nature is our birthright, a basic skill that all of humanity has possessed from our evolutionary beginnings. Our current educational systems must empower all people to use and practice *conscious* communication with Nature. The specifics on how to do this can be learned from those who are already using this inborn capacity.

Many Indigenous Peoples have maintained ongoing conscious communication with Nature through their own cultural practices. In Westernized societies, the number of “Nature and/or Animal Communicators” is growing as the overwhelming need for such skills becomes increasingly apparent. This skill must be learned through practice. Many Nature Communicators teach via the Internet and can thus reach people worldwide.

It is possible to make such resources available to people everywhere through universal access to the Internet. Nations such as Rwanda have achieved universal access despite severe financial and other constraints.

### **ACTIONS**

1. The UN Specialized Agencies, especially with the help of UNEP, UNESCO in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, and other Nature and Animal Communicators can help to jump-start types of education specifically directed at developing people's inborn capacity to communicate and to collaborate harmoniously with Nature.
2. Beside this direct form of communication living in harmony with Nature requires people to become sensitive to their own needs and that of their environments and to work together in a spirit of benevolence.
3. Governments can take actions to promote formal and life-long forms of education among their peoples which enables them individually to become more closely attuned to and to communicate with Nature.

### **What does Education to Live in Harmony with Nature involve?**

Education that promotes “Learning in Harmony with Nature” is student-centred and involves encouraging students to learn to consciously bring their intuition to bear on how to develop their own individual talents, while being sensitive to and working together with the world outside of themselves. This can be done in almost all subjects. In so doing, education will be implementing article 26 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is directed at empowering students to develop their unique potential throughout their lives and strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

## Teaching Approaches

Some teaching approaches that can help actualize a student's inner capacities and potential include the following:

- Assignments that encourage students to internally reflect on their personal feelings related to topics of interest to them.
- Lessons that present ways in which other individuals are participating in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in their own lives, with assigned projects that require students to take action on one or more Sustainable Development Goals of their choosing. This will enable students to integrate their actions as part of the worldwide effort.
- Language classes in which students are asked to write a few sentences about their own interests in the language they are studying. This will help to reflect on what truly interests them and develop the vocabulary to discuss it.
- Geography and Sociology classes that include consideration of natural environments where students themselves live, places they visit, and environments in the world they would like to explore. This will encourage personal involvement in their own natural communities and others that fascinate them.
- Biology classes that create a forum that invites students to practice their capacity to communicate intuitively with animals and plants.
- All courses, including Art, where students are asked to write essays, create works of art, or develop projects that deal with the implementation of relevant SDGs and the role they can individually play in their implementation.

### **Here are ways of creating a collaborative learning environment:**

Collaboration in which all participants share the responsibility for decision-making and benefit equitably from the results is important in the full development of people's personalities and unique potential. This is often referred to as a commons approach, which, in this context, addresses how people can work together for the good of all, (including Nature) while at the same time maintaining the respect of their personal integrity and privacy.

Project learning is one form that collaborative learning can take. It provides a useful vehicle for implementing the SDGs in students' individual lives. If executed in a spirit of mutual support and appreciation, it can contribute to individuals' potential development, as they receive praise from both faculty and peers. What is learned through this process can then be brought to bear on an individual student's inner development in sessions with their advisors. Project learning can also be used to solve problems in the communities where students reside or their own natural environment.

For such learning to be internalized and if a shift is to take place in how people relate to one another and Nature, a shift must also take place at all levels of education that will affect how students and faculties relate to one another. For true student-centred learning requires a relationship of trust between students and teachers. Many student-centred learning establishments encourage teachers to support students in their growth by allowing students to choose teachers of their own free will and without pressure.

Abuse of power by counsellors must be discouraged using very strong measures. For personal abuse at an early age often leads those abused to become abusers later on in life. Students could anonymously evaluate their teachers/advisors, with a reasoned explanation, to be followed up by more widespread inquiries if abuse is cited. Confidential investigation could be held to determine malpractice.

### **Financing such education**

The UN and its Specialized Agencies can help to make the above forms of education easier to finance and implement by ensuring that potential teachers in each of the above fields, including that of direct Nature communication, can attend courses being offered by UN Special Agencies in collaboration with those other institutions offering classes at the global level. Nature communication is often taught via the Internet and so are many other subjects. Some of the most prestigious universities are teaching classes to 10s of thousands of students in this way.

National Governments can then employ those who have attended the courses offered internationally to develop courses for schools nationally and to train teachers in teacher training colleges. By making all this education available through the Internet both globally and nationally, the costs of training large numbers of teachers can be substantially reduced, since it would eliminate costs for travel, board, lodging, seminar space and much more. Teachers who have benefited from such education can then be asked to translate what they have learned into their national language(s), while adapting it to national situations.

## **TARGETS SDG 4**

### **4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes**

It is deeply saddening that at a young age, many children are performing adult tasks instead of attending school. Poverty and the lottery of birth force too many girls and boys to be denied education in order to survive.

If we are able to intervene by providing them access to education, they can develop to their full potential to contribute to future generations in a substantial way. We can accomplish this by changing the system that gives privileges to few and burdens to many. To help create a new educational system, Governments can offer incentives for boys and girls to go to school and make it attractive for parents to focus on education for their children—for example, by giving free meals to those who attend school, as has been done in Brazil.

Additionally, governments must ensure that the quality of the education is excellent and is truly equitable amongst *all* people, including girls and boys, women and men. They can also make systemic changes in educational outcomes by directly and consistently rewarding dedication to education as a student or as a teacher by means of increased economic security so that education is valued and leads toward being of service to others.

To complement changes in the educational system itself, a marketing campaign that is inspiring and engaging (similar to some popular products) could be a good way to quickly introduce and popularize this new education model.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Provide examples to the whole population of women in schools and their subsequent contributions to the home, family and communities so that the enormous advantage of giving women equal rights becomes apparent. Here it is important to show how women with equal rights and opportunities actually help those in power (mainly men) to achieve their own goals without in any way demeaning them.
2. Develop effective learning outcomes by tailoring outcomes to what is needed for the individual child's learning and growth, as well as their entry into society as a well-rounded person who gladly contributes to the common well-being.

Here are some actions that can be taken:

- Create curriculum that allows latitude for boys and girls to discover and follow their interests.
- Include Indigenous Peoples' vision quests in education to help young people to find their vocations.
- Establish learning skills appropriate to each child's age and level of development.
- Encourage boys and girls to develop skills appropriate to their environment. As they learn to relate at the family, local, national, and global levels, universal access to the Internet is extremely important.
- Build into the curriculum direct contact with Nature in the child's formal and informal education, beginning with a pet or plant in the home, or plants around the settlement. Contact with Nature has been shown to allow both hemispheres of the brain to develop and with this, creativity and health to increase.
- Create curriculum that includes applied use of the students' intuitive faculties (See under 4.0)
- Focus on the importance of natural phenomena both to human beings and other species. Using a process of appreciative inquiry, children can learn to value all aspects of the natural world and their relationship to humanity and other aspects of Nature. This will enable education to overcome our abuse of Nature that is a simple step if Nature is seen to be an object without feelings. Here it is important to accompany first-hand experience of Nature with education in the Life Sciences where they will see that a definition of life is that it has consciousness, emotions, and capacity to act. It has been proven possible to move even well-educated, cultured and otherwise kind individuals, to perpetrate horrific crimes on whole sections of their own population where they could be persuaded that a social group has no feelings or are "subhuman". Thus, recognizing that all of life is sentient is an important step to preventing the abuse of Nature.
- Develop report cards that focus on student strengths and acknowledge children's relationship to Nature.

Encourage elders (parents, teachers, and those in government) to see the importance of this type of education for all concerned. This can be achieved by international and national sharing of best practices via the UN, governments at all levels, and schools.

#### **4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education**

Above we have described how to approach the necessary paradigm shift to involve learning from Nature. A similar shift must take place in the quality of education by recognizing that excellence and equality come from new beginnings where materials and procedures of the past are set aside. Our educational systems have served us in the past, but they fail to align with our current human vision of equality and excellence for all. We can build a more evolved foundation if we start anew and create from the awareness that we are human beings with new possibilities and new understandings that were not available when our present educational systems began.

We are now ready to create a new and expansive foundation for education based on what we wish to provide for *every* child on the planet. History has taught us that we have capacities that are not acknowledged before they are called into play. Attachment to the educational structures of today—which are of the past—can block insight into what would help us achieve the highest and best potential for all.

#### **ACTIONS**

1. Mimic Nature where-in young mammals stay with the "family" to learn initial skills from siblings and adults. In today's fast changing world, pre-schoolers will benefit from being allowed to find their own paths by giving them supervised time to explore and learn from their peers, in the home, village or community, and in Nature. This supervised time could include activities organized in the community that encourage the development of skills appropriate to their age group as determined by the culture of the settlement or family. While requiring time and caring adult supervision, it will foster self-directed and impassioned human beings who are capable of being at home in a fast- changing, global world. Once pre-schoolers have experienced this form of education, they will find it easier to include supervised preschool exploration in their family and community life when they are adults.

#### **4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including University**

Education has existed as long as human beings (and indeed many types of animals) have been on Earth. Existence depended on all living in harmony with Nature's laws through close observation of natural processes. Education has been passed on from one generation to another, sometimes taking the form of religious teachings that branch out and have developed into the many forms of today's religions. When science came into being centuries ago, scientific insights were also passed along to the following generations and were communicated from one culture to another - at first through word of mouth, then through the written and printed word, and now through the Internet. Although for a few centuries there has been a split between religion and science, this split is now fast being healed as science and religion come to many of the same conclusions.

Through the Internet women and men are gaining access to this fount of learning from Nature. Those enjoying this type of specialized and affordable higher education are the future shapers of our societies. The more this level of education takes into account a respect for Nature, the more responsive and sensitive whole societies will become to Nature's dictates and wisdom for the following reasons.

- It will be seen that each new material structure, each new plant and animal species has grown out of forms that have been tried and that have proven themselves over eons.
- Each new species is very delicate at the outset but as it procreates and establishes itself, it can be used in Nature as a basis for new forms of matter and life.
- Each change tends to be small and is built on a long history of well-tried ways of functioning.
- By contrast, human made substances tend to fall apart much more easily than the ones that have been formed by Nature over long periods of time. In addition, many human-made substances have negative side effects that become a disadvantage to human beings in the long run

For this reason, it is very much to our advantage to base our innovations on what Nature teaches us. Where science and religion/spirituality are converging, often deep insights into the workings of Nature are found. Once those in specialized and tertiary education see the extent of our interdependence with Nature, they will understand the importance of learning from Nature and use their insights in their studies and work.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Ensure universal access to the Internet with the help of local experts. This can involve establishing internet cafes or centres staffed with an expert who can help people access the information they need within walking distance of one another. Here it is essential that the experts are selected so that they neither discriminate against women or young people nor abuse their position to harm them in any way.
2. Ensure that teacher training courses at all levels include learning about Nature and applying what has been learned to develop Nature-inspired insights.
3. Include study of the life sciences in the educational curriculum, combined with individual periods spent in personal experience and observation of Nature as a means to gain new insights.
4. Encourage the media, world leaders, grass-roots leaders and journalists to publicize best practices with regard to learning from Nature and also provide inspiring examples of people who have been inspired by Nature.
5. Use social and other media to jumpstart "learning from Nature movements" and the effectiveness of Nature-inspired education. These leaders could include key people, such as experts from UNDP, UNESCO and other UN Specialized Agencies, Ministers of Education, Indigenous people well-versed in their age-old cultural practices, nature-communicators and other teachers, and Nature Centers.

These can make the understanding of our interdependence with Nature relevant to their diverse contexts, including those in vocational and higher education.

**4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations**

Everything in nature, including individual human beings, has a value and a unique role to play. Some people have a purpose that may not be initially evident yet provide qualities in society that are essential. For instance, children with Down's Syndrome are known to elicit feelings of warmth and love. This helps to strengthen social cohesion.

With the awareness that each person has undiscovered and immeasurable value, we can motivate all members of society to ensure that those most vulnerable get the education that honors their individuality.

People tend to be inspired by those who make a difference against all odds. In our new paradigm, we can empower all children by teaching them that they are an invaluable part of the precious future of our species.

There are of course disparities between genders—for instance women can bear children and men cannot. At the same we see that for the rest in the animal kingdom there is no disparity in the roles each plays. For instance, sometimes the males nurture the young. Also, in the human realm we can see that women are as capable of high sporting achievements as are men. Also, men are intuitive in the same way that women are, even though this is often seen as a woman's domain. For this reason, it is important from an early age to allow the young in growing up to develop in their own individual ways. (See above for further details)

**ACTIONS**

Please refer to the actions as stated under: 4.1, 4.2

**4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy**

On no account may we forget the importance of literacy and numeracy with regard to our ability to relate to Nature. We have described above in some detail how this can be achieved. Nature literacy and numeracy are absolutely essential when it comes to human survival.

By *Nature, literacy and numeracy*, we are referring to accurately reading and interpreting the combinations of signs Nature gives us and recognizing our impact on Nature. Examples are reading the signs that spring is arriving through patterns of migration of birds, tracking changing weather patterns, and intuiting pending earthquakes in the same way that animals do. For instance, elephants moved to higher ground before the tsunami hit. Similar capacities can be reawakened in human beings. For instance, we can use Nature literacy and numeracy to recognize possible consequences of fracking, such as earthquakes.

The crises associated with climate change, global warming, and dwindling fish stocks, desertification, deforestation, acidification of the oceans, and lack of clean drinking

water have developed because we did not accurately read the signs Nature was giving us in time. As a consequence, our actions and inaction are threatening human survival.

To date, we have used scientific approaches and instruments to measure natural phenomena. Another valid method is to be in ongoing intuitive communication with Nature. Here we learn to read what Nature is telling us in the here and now.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Invite Indigenous People and those who have experienced Nature survival courses as well as Nature communicators to be guest teachers in each school. Young people could regularly be encouraged to be with Nature to relax and also as a way of gaining "Nature literacy and numeracy." They could spend alone time in Nature alternated with times in consultation with peers and teachers. Indigenous People living in natural environments like those in Ecuador can provide international internships. Some Universities are already teaching about vision quests and other Indigenous Practices.
2. The Internet under UNEP can help with the necessary training.

#### **4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles**

Education for sustainable development requires a fundamental shift in how we relate to the world around us—the Earth, the plants, the animals and their interacting systems. We must shift from hierarchical relationships with Nature, where we operate as human beings and dominate, to a horizontal relationship characterized by appreciation. This will require ongoing attention to changes in Nature and a willingness to respond with respect to her rhythms.

A more sensitive relationship will come about naturally as people are encouraged to spend more time in Nature. Nature produces profound emotional and spiritual experiences in people who take the time to experience their natural surroundings. At the same time, Nature thrives when people express care and gratitude for what she provides. Indigenous People offer current examples of this. Governments can help their people create more of these opportunities, using some of the approaches mentioned above. This can only be successful if the integrity of what Indigenous People and Nature Communicators have to offer remains intact.

Over the past thirty years, a new systemic conception of life has emerged at the forefront of science. New emphasis has been given to complexity, networks, and patterns of organization, leading to a novel kind of 'systemic' thinking. Fritjof Capra and Pier Luigi Luisi in their book, *The Systems View of Life: A Unifying Vision*, weave the ideas, models, and theories underlying the systems view of life into a single coherent framework. Their book discusses the implications of the systems view of life for health care, management, and our global ecological and economic crises and thus provides a crucial insight into the complexly interrelated subsystems of our planet which are the focus of the Sustainable Development Goals. This work is of particular importance to all those who recognize that it is possible by making a fundamental positive change in how we deal with one of the goals, we will be affecting all other

goals positively. This book is a tool that could be crucial to us all, if we are to reach the SDGs by the 2030 deadline.

Many resources have been developed and are already being used that provide opportunities for teaching and learning about sustainable development and the UN's Sustainable Development Goals. We are including information about a few of them that provide either whole frameworks and/or initiatives for either including or supporting Education for Sustainable Development in both formal and informal education.

### **The World's Largest Lesson**

The World's Largest Lesson has the mission of ensuring that every child in the world grows up knowing and caring about the Sustainable Development Goals and is inspired to take action to help achieve them. So far it has reached millions of children in over 100 countries, through the commitment of educators, civil society organizations, ministries and passionate individuals working across sectors. <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/>

The lessons and materials are available in many different languages at: <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/languages>.

**To find out more about using the World's Largest Lesson and/or to access all of the materials which are described below you can take the online teacher's training course at:**

<https://preview.education.microsoft.com/course/72e17f8d/overview>.

The World's Largest Lesson includes over 30 lesson plans, all of which have been created by school teachers and experts in development education and global citizenship from across the world. Different lessons were developed for different age groups, are grouped and posted according to whichever of the 17 SDGs they address, and all include learning objectives.

See: <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/#the-goals> or <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/all-lesson-plans/>

The course includes five introductory videos. The first video introduces the idea that we all need to live cooperatively together on our one planet earth. It describes the primary global challenges that the Global Goals were designed to address including climate change, the need for equity and to meet basic human needs, and to help people live healthy lives. It then goes on to say that we have a plan developed by the world's 193 countries through the United Nations to achieve the UN's 17 Sustainable Development Goals. It ends by saying there are things that everyone can do to help, then names, and shows a few of them.

A second video describes a few of the challenges that are addressed by the 17 goals and suggests the types of things that everyone can do to help achieve them. Then there are three more short videos that present the rationale and principles behind the goals in a kid friendly format that can also be used in the classroom.

The first would be for older students and provides a good introduction to what the SDGs are all about, and then briefly tells what each of the goals means and is trying to achieve.

The second includes a humorous take on the need for and value of having a good plan.... like the Sustainable Development Goals.  
Finally, the third suggests that we only have one home and we need to look after it.

The World's Largest Lesson also includes a whole series of comics that focus on efforts to help achieve the SDGs, along with suggestions for how they can be used in the classroom.

See: <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/using-the-power-of-comics> and <http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2016/07/COMICS-USER-GUIDE1.pdf>

If every school in the world teaches children about these goals, we will help them become the generation that changed the world. In partnership with UNICEF, the World's Largest Lesson reaches out through education networks around the world to enable children across the world to learn about the SDGs through their schools. Awareness is the first step and activation is the next step. The comic series aims to encourage children to become inspiring service heroes in their own communities, and in the process learn how they can be active participants in shaping the world around them into a better place for all.

The World's Largest Lesson also includes two excellent Guides to the goals catering to students of different ages and abilities - including a full set of posters that can be displayed in schools and classrooms - one for each of the goals. Both guides share the detail of the Goals in an appropriate and easy to understand manner. Students can use the Guides for research into the Goals, for producing presentations, or understanding some of the complex interdependence between the Goals.

The World's Largest Lesson also includes a few frameworks and toolkits for longer action projects.

See: <http://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/student-led-change-projects/>

### **Whole School Approaches to using the World's Largest Lesson**

Action for the SDGs can start with whole schools as well as at an individual educator and student level. The #SchoolsForSDGs campaign by Worldview Education is a global movement to exemplify the immense potential power that schools themselves hold in catalysing the sustainable development agenda for 2030. Find out more about whole school actions with these SDG Action toolkits at

[http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2018/09/SDG-Action-Kit\\_Final.pdf](http://cdn.worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/2018/09/SDG-Action-Kit_Final.pdf)

Everyone can also become part of the World's Largest Lesson Living Archive. You can put yourself on the map and become part of the story uniting a generation to change the world by 2030; and you can also upload images or experiences to inspire other educators with your work. You can connect with like-minded educators on Twitter or encourage your students to share their own project work and pledges for the Goals and explore those of others.

See: <https://worldslargestlesson.globalgoals.org/map>.

Help us see how far the mission to spread the Goals has travelled here: <https://preview.education.microsoft.com/course/72e17f8d/27>.

The World's Largest Lesson also has a new board game for learning about the Global Goals. The purpose of it is to help children understand the SDGs, how they impact

their lives, and what they can do every day to help and to achieve the 17 goals by 2030. The game is perfect for reminding students about the Goals during the year and a great activity if you have a spare moment. Download it here at <http://go-goals.org>.

### **Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future**

Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future is a multimedia teacher education programme published by UNESCO. Its 25 modules provide around 100 hours of highly interactive activities designed to enhance the teacher's understanding of sustainable development and related themes. It also helps to develop practical skills for integrating sustainable development themes into the school curriculum, and for using the teaching methods best suited to the knowledge, values and citizenship objectives of educating for a sustainable future.

See: <http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/>

Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future is rooted in a new vision of education - a vision that helps students better understand the world in which they live, addressing the complexity and interconnectedness of problems such as poverty, wasteful consumption, environmental degradation, urban decay, population growth, health, conflict and the violation of human rights that threaten our future. The programme assists teachers to empower young people to face such local and global problems with hope and confidence.

There are over 60 million teachers in the world – and each one is a key agent for bringing about the changes in lifestyles and systems we need.

Professors, lecturers and others responsible for developing teacher education curricula will find many opportunities for using Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future in their courses.

For example, as:

- A stand-alone course on Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future
- A selection of modules integrated into a stand-alone course on a specific education topic
- A selection of modules integrated into other courses on specific education topics as enrichment material

In all of these cases, Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future can be studied on-line or from the CDROM – in class-time, as pre- or post-class activities, or as a full e-learning experience.

Each module in Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future takes approximately 4 hours to complete. This provides 100 hours on learning; the amount of time students could generally be expected to study in a 10-14-week term or semester course. However, selections and groupings of modules can be made to suit local decisions about term/semester length, the balance of in-class contact versus independent study in a course, assessment requirements, etc.

The course and curriculum include a focus on the following Contemporary Issues:

10	Culture & religion for a sustainable future	11
	Indigenous knowledge & sustainability	
12	Women & sustainable development	
13	Population & development	
14	Understanding world hunger	
15	Sustainable agriculture	
16	Sustainable tourism	
17	Sustainable communities	
18	Globalization	
19	Climate change	

As an example, the section on sustainable agriculture examines and includes a range of sustainable farming practices and case studies. As such, it develops an understanding of how sustainable farming can both enhance food production and ensure that natural resources are managed in the best way possible for long-term sustainability, so that everyone can be adequately and nutritiously fed without over-exploiting the Earth's ecosystems.

Some of the ways in which Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future can be used are illustrated in five sample course designs in the 'Getting Started' section of the programme. There is also a dissemination and training toolbox which includes ways that it can be used to plan workshops to facilitate the use of: *Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future*. [www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt\\_index.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt_index.html)

### **TeachSDGs**

TeachSDGs is a global organization that connects educators working towards the SDGs, hosts free resources and projects, and conducts advocacy and outreach to inform education stakeholders including students, faculty and parents. The organization also regularly trains and certifies TeachSDGs ambassadors, who are then available to guide and assist in projects and initiatives in the global community.

TeachSDGs also enables educators and project providers to connect with local TeachSDGs ambassadors who can volunteer their time and knowledge towards assisting various initiatives or projects. Others can also apply to become an ambassador for the future.

The TeachSDGs website includes Instructional Materials with Guides & Program Kits, Digital Artefacts, Videos, Collections by Global Goal, & a Book Collection; Free Courses; Teaching Tools; and Publications. <http://www.teachsdgs.org>

### **Community Based and Led Sustainable Development Training Programs**

Both the Global Ecovillage Network and its sister organization, GAIA Education, offer various courses and training programs in support of community based and led development processes. For example, Ecovillage Design Education programmes, often referred to as 'EDEs', provide participants of all ages with the knowledge and practical skills to design a society which uses energy and materials with greater efficiency, distributes wealth fairly and strives to eliminate the concept of waste.

Participants become change agents and sustainability designers, taking active roles in transitioning their existing communities, institutions and neighbourhoods, to more sustainable patterns of production and consumption, as well as leading more joyful,

more meaningful and healthier lives. EDE programmes are based on the four core dimensions of Gaia Education's Ecovillage Design Curriculum: The Social, Worldview, Ecological and Economic dimensions of sustainability.

Since 2006, Gaia Education has successfully supported the delivery of more than 300 programmes in 50 countries over six continents, reaching over 17,000 students. The EDEs have been offered in settings ranging from tribal and traditional communities to intentional ecovillages, from urban slums to universities and training centres. The duration of these programmes are around 125 hours over a full month or just 20 hours in an immersion programme.

See: <https://gaiaeducation.org/face-to-face/ede-programmes>

GAIA Education also offers a variety of on-line or e-learning courses ranging from *Design for Sustainability* to *Renewable Energy* and *Local Water Solutions to address Global Challenges*.

See: <https://gaiaeducation.org/elearning-programmes>

Gaia Education's online programme 'Design for Sustainability' provides students with whole systems design skills, analytical abilities and a wide range of methods and practical tools to support the redesign of the human presence on Earth - one local community and bioregion at a time. Graduates receive a Certificate of Completion in Design for Sustainability and contribute to the emergence of diverse regenerative cultures. The yearlong programme is the best that we know of for learning the basic skills of designing and creating a small scale or village level regenerative, sustainable community. This 10-month course totals 400 hours of study, leading to the Certificate of Completion; however, one can take just one or more of the 4-dimension courses instead, if that is all that they are primarily interested in.

See: <https://gaiaeducation.org/elearning-programmes>.

You can also find information about all of the Global Ecovillage Network's educational programmes and activities at: <http://ecovillage.org/education>.

## **ACTIONS**

1. In 2017, schools in 118 countries took part in the World's Largest Lesson, reaching over 4 million students and teachers registered over 130,000 students on our map. While this is a good start, every student in the world ought to know about the Sustainable Development Goals, what they contain, and what people around the world are doing to help achieve them. It is thus imperative that all governments take the actions needed to ensure that the World's Largest Lesson, or some other appropriate means, is used to educate their students and to engage them in taking action to help achieve the targets and goals. Every school district should provide opportunities for their teachers to become familiar with and training in using the World's Largest Lesson; and where this is not possible, incentives should be provided to encourage the teachers to make use of the on-line materials and/or take the on-line course. Schools should be encouraged to make use of one or more of the Whole School Approaches to using the World's Largest Lesson.
2. Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future ought to be used by teachers in all countries around the world. Education Departments at all levels of government should encourage schools and school districts to use the materials and could

provide guidelines and training programs instructing teachers on how they can best do so. UNESCO is ready to work with government ministries, regional organizations, teacher education institutions, and curriculum developers etc. to translate and adapt the programme for different cultures and languages. Teacher education institutions are invited and encouraged to work collaboratively and with relevant Ministries of Education to help facilitate such changes. Teaching and Learning has developed guidance to assist in doing so at: [http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt\\_adpt\\_01.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt_adpt_01.html)

3. Every Education Department, School, School District and government should provide incentives to encourage their teachers and educators to become Advocates and Ambassadors through Teach SDGs and provide awards and publicize the efforts of those who do so. All teachers should be encouraged to make use of the tools and materials that are on the Teach SDGs website.
4. All of the efforts to promote and include Education for Sustainable Development and education about the SDGs in school curriculums should be included in the National and Local Strategies and Planning Processes in all countries and in a fully integrated manner. Through such processes all students should be invited to participate in both the development and implementation of the strategies and action plans.
5. Given the multitude of development challenges that are typically faced in small and rural communities and impoverished neighbourhoods around the world, it is imperative that more, or rather all governments support the development and holding of Ecovillage Design Education Training Programmes at the local and national levels. These courses could or should be included as a part of the Ecovillage Development Programme that will hopefully be established, Network and GAIA Education offer Training for Trainers Courses. The international community ought to provide incentives to train as many trainers as possible in each country around the world, who will then be able to lead training programmes and train others. It is particularly important for governments to encourage their staff and employees to participate in such programmes as this.
6. Given the fact that there are more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands that need to be restored around the planet, efforts must be made to train as many people as possible in how to do the regenerative restoration and management work. The Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation is rolling out a global program to establish Camps, staffed by volunteers, to do such restoration work in countries around the world. They will also offer and provide both Permaculture Training Courses along with EDE programmes. The international community should thus do everything possible to support the development of these camps and training programmes. See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org).

**4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teachers training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states**

Nature is the ultimate teacher about sustainable behaviour. In this respect, teachers are mediators who create learning situations whereby students learn through direct

experience of Nature. These "Nature Teachers" may not necessarily originate from technologically advanced nations. They may come from nations with large indigenous populations, where people live close to Nature, far from the industrialized world.

Developing countries can contribute to worldwide learning in the context of sustainability by sharing these teachers with the rest of the world. UNEP and UNESCO can help make these teachings more widely available. UNESCO has representation in many nations and UNEP may have listings or information on useful projects. UN Agencies and Governments can keep track of teachers and initiatives, and how their expertise can be made more widely available without distorting what they have to offer. They could list the courses and how people can participate.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Teachers from a variety of countries who are able to facilitate learning from Nature can submit their classes and teaching approaches to a combined panel of UNESCO and UNEP. These courses can be arranged in curricula that are made available to people worldwide via the Internet.
2. Teachers and students from around the world can apply to take courses and to teach them.
3. Each country sends a few teachers to take these courses in one of the 6 official languages of the UN and then to return to their own countries where they train teachers from all regions and from schools throughout the country. These can then translate the coursework into their own languages and dialects and make them available to students nationwide.

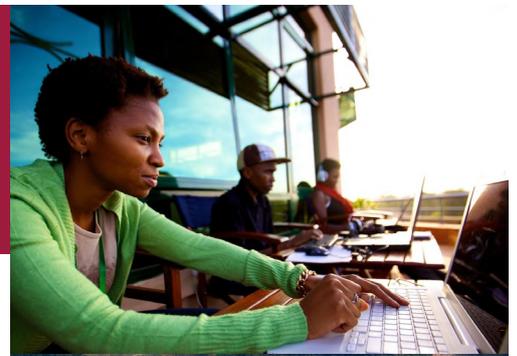
# DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 8:

Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All

### TARGETS

- 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries
- 8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors
- 8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services
- 8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead
- 8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value
- 8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training
- 8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms
- 8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment
- 8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products
- 8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all
- 8.a Increase Aid for Trade Support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries
- 8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization



# **BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

## **SDG 8**

### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for all**

#### Prepared by

**Marilyn Fowler, MA, PhD.,**  
Department of Consciousness and Sustainable Development  
John F. Kennedy University

**Dr. Maia Kincaid, PhD.,**  
Founder of the Sedona International School  
for Nature and Animal Communication

**Rob Wheeler**  
Main UN Representative, Global EcoVillage Network

**Jill Lauri, MBA, MSW**

**Lee Samatowic, ND**

**Joan Kehoe, MSC**

**Lisinka Ulatowska, MA, PhD.**  
Coordinator Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
UN Representative  
Institute for Planetary Synthesis

#### Endorsers

John F. Kennedy University  
Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
South Eastern Peoples  
California Institute of Integral Studies  
The Sedona International School of Animal and Nature Communicators  
The Institute for Planetary Synthesis  
The All Win Network  
The Association of World Citizens

Contact: [Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com](mailto:Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com)

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 8

### INTRODUCTION

Sustainable economic development is development which meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

Understanding the meaning of sustainable development and the necessity to achieve it is perhaps more important than ever before in the history of our species, not only for the growth of the economy and employment, but for our very survival on the planet.

In 2009 a group of scientists led by Johan Rockström deemed the Earth's Planetary Boundaries, including the nine planetary life support systems, to be absolutely essential for human survival. Of the nine planetary life support systems we have already crossed four of the Earth's planetary boundaries necessary for ongoing survival, and the remaining five are seriously threatened.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary\\_boundaries](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Planetary_boundaries)

In light of the environmental degradation being seen at this time - for instance air pollution, polluted drinking water and waterways, ocean acidification, resource scarcity, depletion of the natural environment, pollution of the soil essential for growing food, and the extinction of 140 species a day - it is important that we take stock of the thinking and way of living which has brought us to this precarious state where our very survival is in question. It is absolutely essential that we protect and restore the natural capital of the Earth now, even while increasing both economic productivity and opportunities and ensuring full and productive employment and decent work for all. If we are going to meet SDG 8 and the targets associated with it, then we are going to have to do so in such a way that protects, restores and sustains our natural resource base and the health of the natural environment.

According to Meyer & Nørgård (2010), "With few exceptions, economics as a discipline has been dominated by a perception of living in an unlimited world, where resource and pollution problems in one area were solved by moving resources or people to other parts". Our current global economy, which depends largely on proportionally increasing resource consumption with little consideration of environmental or cultural concerns, is a perfect example of this.

### **The Conditions Needed for Sustainable Economic Growth and Full Employment**

In Dr. Fritjof Capra's recent book: "The Systems View of Life" and on his website <http://www.fritjofcapra.net/qualitative-growth/> he clearly describes challenges we face and expresses ideas to promote sustainable economic growth while at the same time reaching or achieving all of the SDG's. Humanity has largely ignored the seriousness of the problems created by destroying or degrading so much of our natural environment. Capra emphasizes that economic growth at any cost on a finite planet involves a willingness to place the well-being of one person, group, business, country, etc. above the greater well-being and survival of other human beings and all species. We have prioritized short term benefits for a few individuals or groups over the ongoing well-being of all life on the planet. In Capra's own words:

*Instead of assessing the state of the economy in terms of the crude quantitative measure of GDP, we need to distinguish between “good” growth and “bad” growth and then increase the former at the expense of the latter, so that the natural and human resources tied up in wasteful and unsound production processes can be freed and recycled as resources for efficient and sustainable processes. Bad growth is growth of production processes and services that externalize social and environmental costs, are based on fossil fuels, involve toxic substances, deplete our natural resources, and degrade the Earth’s ecosystems. Good growth is growth of more efficient production processes and services that fully internalize costs, involve renewable energies, zero emissions, continual recycling of natural resources, and restoration of the Earth’s ecosystems.*

Sustainable economic growth will require that local, national, and global societies create the conditions that allow people to have quality jobs that stimulate the economy while not harming the environment. It is necessary that we establish environmentally responsible and socially conscious policies and practices including sustainable use of resources and cultural and economic balance. Environmental responsibility and equal opportunity (acting for the highest good of all) and services for all peoples go hand in hand. This is the type of economic growth that preferences qualitative growth rather than quantitative economic growth and development.

There needs to be increased access to financial services to manage incomes, accumulate assets and make productive investments. Increased commitments to mutually beneficial trade, banking, financial assistance for appropriate development, and agricultural infrastructure combined with regenerative and restorative practices will also help increase productivity and reduce unemployment levels both among those facing extreme poverty in the developed world as well as in the world’s most impoverished regions. Job opportunities and decent working conditions are also required for the entire working age population.

### **Cooperatives and the Sharing Community**

There are myriad positive movements arising within human communities, where people are sharing and working cooperatively. No matter their function, people participate in decision making and all share the proceeds from their labour. As a part of the Cooperative Identity, such for-profit businesses give back both to the communities where they are based as well as to the development of the global community. Cooperatives, which often do quite well in times of economic downturn, have more than one billion members worldwide.

There are individual people and stakeholder groups working collaboratively to revamp failing economies. They do this by using innovative financing approaches such as the Local Economic Trading Systems that use local currencies and community finance to help people find employment while helping to regenerate local economies.

A good example of a cooperative business structure is the Alvarado Street Bakery, a thriving business for 35 years located in San Francisco, California. What is unique about the bakery is that it is worker owned and supports sustainable agricultural practices and healthy living. Their organic sprouted whole grain breads are some of the healthiest and most delicious on the planet. In addition, the company’s mission is

to function as a sustainable "green" bakery by continually reducing its carbon foot print on the environment. This bakery uses the oldest energy source on the planet. As in the ancient days of Egypt, their breads are baked in ovens with 40% of the electricity coming from the sun. Their areas of environmental focus are:

- Energy conservation and green energy production by use of solar panels
- Water conservation by workers' training and involvement
- Waste reduction and proper recycling techniques
- Pollution prevention in every facet of their business

A whole collaborative partnership economy is flowering on the Internet where the world's leading universities provide free courses. Farmers work together to develop local irrigation systems for their lands. Healthcare professionals are working together to provide care for people in need. There are multiple examples of people working cooperatively to adopt more sustainable practices, thus increasing productivity and resiliency over the long run, protecting the natural resources base, recycling and conserving scarce resources, and creating a more circular, harmonious economy. Regenerative farming uses processes to restore and conserve soil fertility. We need to be sure we are focused on such eco-friendly solutions.

### **Sustainable Business Initiatives**

Similarly, many leading multinational corporations are also leading the way towards adopting more sustainable business practices, producing sustainable goods and services, and transitioning to a circular economy. For example many businesses are now developing and implementing sustainable business strategies and transition plans. Sustainable business councils and networks have been developed around the world, and many sustainable business associations have been established focusing on different sectors of the economy or types of industries, etc. It is essential that governments welcome proposals and policies that such associations put forward and pass laws that support the types of best practices championed by these businesses, etc. And that the media and general public promote and purchase the goods and services that they produce.

More than 8000 businesses and 4000 other organizations have signed on to the UN Global Compact which encourages and supports companies in adopting sustainable and socially responsible policies and requires them to report on their implementation. These companies are then expected to live up to ten principles for businesses addressing the areas of human rights, labour, the environment and anti-corruption. Under the Global Compact, companies are brought together with UN agencies, labour groups and civil society. Cities can also join the Global Compact through the Cities Programme. The UN Global Compact and its signatories are deeply invested and enthusiastic about supporting work towards achieving the SDGs, and all stakeholder groups, governments, and industries ought to encourage as many other businesses to sign onto and live up to the Global Compact as possible.

See: [www.unglobalcompact.org](http://www.unglobalcompact.org)

There are also many other types of business initiatives that are helping us to transition to a more sustainable economy and world as well, including those of the World Business Council on Sustainable Development. For example, the WBCSD has put together a CEO Guide to the Sustainable Development Goals.

See: [www.wbcsd.org/Overview/Resources/General/CEO-Guide-to-the-SDGs](http://www.wbcsd.org/Overview/Resources/General/CEO-Guide-to-the-SDGs).

The guide supports businesses in helping to achieve the SDGs by taking action at the company-level to:

- Understand and measure externalities: Develop a thorough understanding of how your company's business activities translate into economic, environmental and social impacts in the context of the SDGs.
- Set goals: Plot a course towards enhancing positive and mitigating negative SDG impacts.
- Develop business solutions: Apply an SDG lens at the strategic level to harness your organization's potential to engineer business solutions that make your company more successful and sustainable.
- Communicate: Consider regular and transparent communication of SDG performance and progress.

Similarly, at COP24 in Poland, the World Business Council released its 2018 progress report on its Low-Carbon Technology Partnerships initiative (LCTPi). Under this initiative over 800 companies with USD \$116.9 trillion in market capital have made over 1,300 commitments to bold climate action.

For the report see:

[https://docs.wbcsd.org/2018/12/LCTPi\\_progress\\_report\\_2018.pdf](https://docs.wbcsd.org/2018/12/LCTPi_progress_report_2018.pdf)

or in order to track their progress, go to:

[www.wbcsd.org/Programs/Climate-and-Energy/Climate/Low-Carbon-Technology-Partnerships-initiative](http://www.wbcsd.org/Programs/Climate-and-Energy/Climate/Low-Carbon-Technology-Partnerships-initiative)

In addition, the WBCSD worked with the Secretariat of the Convention to Combat Desertification (CCD) to develop materials encouraging and helping businesses to adopt and carry out land degradation neutrality (LDN) strategies during the run up to the 2015 CCD Review Conference. The objective of LDN is to maintain or even improve the amount of ecologically healthy and productive land resources over time, and to do it in line with national sustainable development priorities.

They drafted and published two papers: a Land Degradation Neutrality Issue Brief for Business and a report entitled Land Degradation Neutrality: a Business Perspective. This report, which is targeted at private and public decision-makers, aims to provide a business perspective on the LDN target and what it will take to scale it up. It is based on the assumption that business has an important role to play in moving the world towards land degradation neutrality and explores how LDN can be implemented in a company's direct and indirect areas of influence.

See: [https://docs.wbcsd.org/2015/10/WBCSD\\_LD\\_N\\_BizPerspective.pdf](https://docs.wbcsd.org/2015/10/WBCSD_LD_N_BizPerspective.pdf)

According to the report, "Land resources, such as soil, water or biodiversity are the foundation of our economies and societies. However, 25% of usable land globally is degraded, at an estimated economic loss of US\$ 40 billion per year. Agriculture is an important driver of land degradation, responsible for approximately 80% of deforestation worldwide. But there are more pressures on land than just agriculture. Many industry sectors use land to meet the infrastructure needs that result from increased urbanization. Land degradation neutrality thus needs to be recognized as an investment that can help companies sustain their operations in the long run."

## **Decoupling Environmental Impacts from Economic Growth**

Much work has also been done looking at how we might dramatically reduce our natural resource use and impact on the natural environment. For example, UNEP's International Resource Panel published an excellent report entitled, "Decoupling natural resource use and environmental impacts from economic growth" in 2011.

See: [www.resourcepanel.org/reports/decoupling-natural-resource-use-and-environmental-impacts-economic-growth](http://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/decoupling-natural-resource-use-and-environmental-impacts-economic-growth).

One of the goals of decoupling identified in the report is to use fewer resources per unit of economic output—for instance, requiring less energy, water, or land for a set amount of industrial or agricultural production. A second goal is to shrink the environmental impact of resource use of an economic activity, such as reducing pollution from mining operations or curbing carbon dioxide emissions from transportation.

A second report published in 2014 focuses on technological possibilities and opportunities for both developing and developed countries to accelerate decoupling and reap the environmental and economic benefits of increased resource productivity. See: [www.resourcepanel.org/reports/decoupling-2](http://www.resourcepanel.org/reports/decoupling-2).

The Resource Panel has produced numerous other reports on how we can reduce resource use and live more harmoniously with nature and chronicles the extent to which we are rapidly depleting the natural resource base that we all depend upon. See: <http://www.resourcepanel.org/>. It is essential that the international community take advantage of this work and do what is required so that we can live within the carrying capacity of the earth and share our remaining natural resources in a more equitable manner.

## **Recognizing the Value of Ecosystem Services and Biodiversity**

UNEP also has a global initiative called the Economics of Ecosystems and Biodiversity (TEEB) which focuses on "making nature's values visible". Its principal objective is to mainstream the values of biodiversity and ecosystem services into decision-making at all levels. It aims to achieve this by following a structured approach to valuation that helps decision-makers recognize the wide range of benefits provided by ecosystems and biodiversity, demonstrate their values in economic terms and, where appropriate, suggest how to capture those values in decision-making.

Capitalizing on the momentum created from the TEEB reports and a growing network of partners, the initiative has moved into an ongoing phase of implementation, where study findings and the 'TEEB approach' are sought to be applied at different levels of policymaking as well as integrated into different *biomes* and *sectors*.

At the country level, this shift responds to numerous requests and interest by governments to build national, regional, and local government capacity to produce tailored economic assessments of ecosystems and biodiversity, and support to mainstream this information into policy-making. TEEB offers support in various forms, including developing guidance material, organizing capacity-building workshops, providing technical expertise, and much more in order to ensure effective implementation.

To visit the TEEB website, click here: <http://www.teebweb.org/about/the-initiative>

Businesses again have a huge role to play in how we manage, safeguard and invest in our natural capital. TEEB in Business and Enterprise provides important evidence of growing corporate concern about biodiversity loss, and offers examples of how leading companies are taking action to conserve biodiversity and restore ecosystems.

As TEEB moves into the implementation phase, governments have also shown a keen interest in undertaking TEEB for Business. TEEB for Business studies, at the national level, inform public policies, particularly as they relate to important economic sectors of the country. Specifically, a TEEB for Business project examines economic sectors at strategic or operational levels, identifying both risks and opportunities that biodiversity and ecosystem services pose to that particular sector. The output of a TEEB for Business study would be recommendations (in public policies or business standards) that would help government and businesses address these risks and opportunities. Several countries have initiated “TEEB for Business” projects at the national level, including Brazil, Germany, and The Netherlands. Similar such standards, projects and policies ought to be adapted and carried out by all countries. See: <http://www.teebweb.org/areas-of-work/teeb-for-business/>

### **Transitioning to a Circular Economy**

One of the most important things that we could possibly do if we want to create a truly sustainable economy would be to transition as rapidly as possible to a fully circular economy which aims at first minimizing and then eliminating waste while making the most of resources. To achieve models that are economically and environmentally sustainable, the circular economy focuses on areas such as design thinking, systems thinking, product life extension, and recycling.

There are literally hundreds if not thousands of initiatives that have been created that are pioneering and helping to move us in such a direction. This would include efforts to create and establish Eco-Industrial Parks around the world, where-in the wastes from one business and process is re-used to provide the nutrients or basic materials to produce or supply another business or product etc., in a circular cascade of mutually supportive enterprises.

Another important example is the development of policies that focus on Extended Producer Responsibility. There are all different kinds of EPR initiatives, but the basic thrust is that the business that produces a product or service takes responsibility for it throughout its life cycle and especially for the take-back, recycling, and final disposal. EPR often makes use of financial incentives to encourage manufacturers to design environmentally friendly products by holding producers responsible for the costs of managing their products at end of life. The most effective policies would be those requiring all companies to internalize the externalities and thus ensure that there are no adverse impacts from the production or use of a product or service on the natural environment.

Another component in transitioning to a circular economy would be to require all companies to label all products in such a way that they can be easily taken apart and then all of the parts and materials can then either be re-used or recycled. Two of the

areas where EPR policies are commonly in place already around the globe are in packaging (especially for bottles and plastic bags) and electronic waste. See: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extended\\_producer\\_responsibility](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Extended_producer_responsibility) for more on EPR.

Quite a number of counties and municipalities are now collecting food and other organic wastes and are operating composting facilities. Given the large percentage of such wastes that typically make their way into the waste stream, the amount of methane that is produced when it decomposes, and the loss of nutrients that then ends up in landfills and dumps when they are not collected and reprocessed, it would be well worth their while for most communities to establish and run such collection programs and composting facilities. State and national governments should establish programs and initiatives to support this.

Many if not most countries have now enacted programs and legislation to support and encourage recycling, but still to this day humanity still recycles well less than 50 percent of the goods, building materials, and appliances, etc. that we produce - thus further depleting scarce resources and drawing down our natural resource base. While many countries are continuing to set goals for collecting a larger percentage of the waste produced, the target that all governments should really strive for would be to produce and achieve zero waste. Incentives and laws should thus be developed. Implementing that will take us rapidly in this direction, therefore a repository of best legislation, regulations, incentives and practices should be established through the UN's 10 Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production to support this.

If we truly want to create a sustainable economy and decouple the environmental impacts resulting from economic growth, then governments around the world should adopt legislation requiring businesses to enact sustainable practices and processes and to produce only sustainable goods and services as a part of their Chartering process. In other words, companies and businesses that are not operating in a sustainable manner and/or do not transition to more sustainable processes could either be required to make the changes needed accordingly or have their charter to do business revoked. Establishing composting programs, moving more rapidly towards zero wastes, and requiring all businesses to adopt policies and strategies for transitioning to sustainable practices and producing more sustainable products would take us a long way towards transitioning to a circular economy.

China has been one of the first countries to establish a national circular economy law and has also developed quite a number of eco-industrial parks, along with provinces that have model circular economy projects underway. The European Union is also taking a lead with first a C2C EU Network and initiative that features the best examples demonstrating circular economy practices throughout the continent. See: [www.c2c-centre.com/home](http://www.c2c-centre.com/home). And now an European environmental research and innovation policy has been adopted providing a set of strategies, actions and programmes to promote more and better research and innovation for building a resource-efficient and climate resilient society and economy which is in sync with the natural environment.

Likewise, a Circular Economy Package was adopted in 2018 to implement Europe's circular economy action plan which will pave the way towards a climate-neutral,

circular economy where pressure on natural and freshwater resources as well as ecosystems is minimized.

See: [http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/circular-economy/index_en.htm)

Among the key actors that are helping us to transition to a circular economy is the Ellen MacArthur Foundation which works with businesses, cities, governments and the academic community in designing and transitioning to more circular processes along with producing case studies, reports, videos, policy toolkits and design guides etc. See: [www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org](http://www.ellenmacarthurfoundation.org)

Again, the only way we can have sustainable economic growth would be by greatly reducing our impacts on, and restoring the natural environment, while also beginning to regenerate rather than deplete our natural resource base. This means at the same time transitioning to a fully circular economy where we first greatly reduce and then eliminate waste. The business community, along with governments, academic institutions, and all other stakeholder groups, have a big role to play in all of this.

## **TARGETS SDG 8**

### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

It is important to remember that by looking only at crude quantitative measure of GDP we fail to consider the ongoing survival of our species and all others on the planet. And, simply put, this way of measuring economics is not as effective as a fuller approach to understanding economic and social development would be. More importantly, this way of measuring has brought us to a very precarious life-threatening situation which is not sustainable. These systems are breaking down as we face the threat of our very own survival. So, as was stated in the above quote by Dr. Fritjof Capra, we must consider good and bad growth of GDP and have that be the basis for determining growth per annum.

Still as most development experts would agree, economic development will be essential to lift hundreds of millions of people, particularly those in the least developed countries, out of extreme poverty. The question is how can we provide such development opportunities in such a way that leads to better qualities of life, along with protecting and restoring the natural environment and sustaining our natural resource base?

In order to have sustained economic growth we must curtail such challenges as the catastrophic costs of "natural" and climate related disasters and if we do not stop decreasing the natural capital of the earth and depleting the natural resource base, the consequences cannot be overstated. For we are constantly and increasingly overstepping 2 of the core planetary boundaries - the loss of biosphere integrity and climate change - which have already been transgressed and must be respected if the Earth System is to support human life as we know it. A US report shows \$10Trillion of economic loss from climate change. Thus, it is imperative that all countries transition to a circular regenerative economy which eliminates waste while supporting the re-use of natural resources and materials and develop plans to adopt fully sustainable consumption and production practices.

Growth of economic capital at the expense of social, cultural, and environmental capital is both unhealthy and unsustainable. It is also not so much per capita income as collective wealth and collective provision of services generated from a solidarity economy that can provide decent work and social security nets.

<https://thenextsystem.org/learn/stories/solidarity-economy-building-economy-people-planet> Therefore, we need to carefully reassess the detailed goals and indicators to avoid trading off a focus on short term gratifications for neglect of cultural and environmental integrity.

Such things as taking action to restore and protect the natural environment and degraded landscapes, investing in water retention landscaping, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices, and investing in transitioning to sustainable practices offer some of the best opportunities for increasing both economic growth and well-being as well as job opportunities, and all in a sustainable manner. This would also include such things as investing in renewable energy technologies, resource efficiency, small scale and local businesses, sustainable manufacturing processes, elements of transitioning to a circular economy, biological waste treatment facilities, and high tech and technical training programs and institutes such as have been developed in China and India, etc.

Sustaining per capita economic growth as needed and, in particular achieving at least 7% per annum GDP growth, begins with building upon the economic output and contribution of each individual within a community, and each community within a Nation. All people must be ensured access to decent work through sustainable development, and equitable access to goods and services. For sustainable and healthy growth of our communities, we must recognize that there are contributions that indirectly support the healthy growth of the economy which are not generally acknowledged. Such things as caring for family members (young, disabled, and elderly), time contributed to community services, voluntary care for the animals and natural environments, artistic and cultural endeavours, all support the economic, emotional and spiritual needs of the community.

We need to look more at redistribution of wealth than at growth. For this reason implementing a Land Value Tax can be important. As land value increases due to developments in neighbourhoods and communities, land owners accrue unearned gains and benefits. According to Oxford University Press's Academic Insights for the Thinking World, Land Value Tax may be the best way to fund local government because land cannot be moved to another area to avoid the tax. This policy action can provide further economic funding and may be the best strategy for investing in jobs creation, revitalizing communities, providing urban services, investing in basic infrastructure, investing in protecting and conserving green belts, flood plains, parks and wild areas, and achieving the SDGs. It has been endorsed by and included in the outcome documents of UN Habitat I, II, and III and is supported by UN Habitat's Global Land Tool Network.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant to topics taught in formal education.

- Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximizing economic output, optimize collective use of resources - natural and financial etc., and use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit, as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all. In the long run build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realization of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.
  - Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.
  - Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognize that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
2. Transition all countries to a circular regenerative economy which eliminates waste and develop plans to adopt fully sustainable consumption and production practices.
  3. Create a real increase in productivity, wealth, and well-being by investing in ecosystem restoration, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices,

repairing natural water cycles, sustainably managing scarce resources such as water, land, and forests etc., and transitioning to full sustainability.

4. Build upon the economic output and contribution of each individual within a community by providing decent work opportunities that contribute to healthy, sustainable development, and provide equitable access to goods and services.
5. Provide financial support for voluntary contributions that benefit community members, their community and the natural environment as a whole.
6. Implement Land Tax Value in all communities as a method for more equitably distributing wealth, collecting revenue based on an increase in value that was created by the community as a whole, and providing further economic funding.
7. Optimize collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc, using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

Truly healthy economies only develop from healthy cultures and environments. We do not necessarily need higher levels of productivity. We do, however, need to eliminate entirely any production practices which destroy the environment and/or harm people. We need new principles of fiduciary duty for global investment, new general indicators of cultural and environmental health as well as new economic measures. We need to re-evaluate how to re-localize our economic systems and make them sustainable in a way that serves all - starting with systems to ensure that all have necessary food, adequate shelter, and good health care, etc.

Establishing localized food-based programs has many benefits: it is more efficient, more economical, creates local jobs, and promotes more responsible stewardship, care and compassion while eliminating toxic food production practices. These local food-based programs empower the community with independence, cooperation and pride and are self-sustaining especially if they are meant to be the primary food source for a community. When food is grown for faraway places it is less cost effective, there is less care and pride in the product, and there is a tendency to have toxic production practices.

For instance, it is advantageous to use practices such as agroecology (regenerative farming which restores and conserves soil fertility), natural, sustainable green building practices, and the elimination of waste by using by-products from one production process to feed another. It needs to be a priority to value the eco-system services that nature naturally provides us when it is left intact and in a healthy condition. We also need to ensure that so-called eco-friendly alternatives (such as alternatives to plastic or meat) do not overuse another finite resource such as water and ensure that their carbon footprint is as neutral as possible. In terms of sustainable local food systems, agroecology is based on high diversification, which leads to resilience to climate change/pests etc., and therefore ultimately viable productivity. It is more labour intensive and, particularly where food is sold locally through direct/short supply chains,

ensures good prices for producers and agricultural workers as well as environmental and social justice.

Similarly, UNEP has found that organic agriculture is 2 - 4 times as productive as conventional agriculture in the developing world. It typically uses less water, is more resilient, builds and retains soil health, and is better for both humans and the natural environment. What better way could there be to increase economic productivity while also increasing diversity, bio-diversity, and ensuring that it is high value added.

New technologies and innovation are urgently needed in all countries to quickly transform our destructive ways of living on the planet. We will also need to build the infrastructure to support their development and implementation. Corruption by those meant to serve has perhaps been one of the biggest obstacles to living sustainably - that along with the undue influence upon governments by those businesses and industries with vested interests. Many life-saving technologies have failed to be implemented due to the severe roadblocks placed on the inventors by corporations that they would compete with and the public officials who defer to these same corporations. It is also imperative that we ensure that new innovations and technologies respect traditional biodiversity and Nature. This presents an opportunity for all people to be involved in the important work of creating a new way of living on the planet in harmony and cooperation. Using our ingenuity, heart and spirit to solve problems/challenges we are unstoppable. The joy experienced in working in collaboration becomes as important as the development of new solutions to these issues.

## **ACTIONS**

### **Agriculture**

1. Establish localized food-based programs utilizing agroecology and other regenerative agricultural practices which create local jobs, promote more responsible stewardship, and eliminate toxic food production practices.

### **Education, Technology**

2. Energize the building economy by training in and utilizing natural, sustainable green building practices.

### **Economic**

3. Create new technologies that do not overuse finite resources such as water, ensure that the carbon footprint is as neutral as possible, and eliminate waste by using by-products from one production process to feed another.

### **Policy and Law**

4. Require our governments to publicly acknowledge and clearly express the types of problems we face and put out a call to action for and support the increased development of new technologies and innovations. Terminate any spin which confuses the issue (for instance on Climate Change) of the reality we all currently face seeing our future survival in jeopardy. It is essential that governments clearly state the situation and what has led us to this reality.

5. Dismiss and prosecute individuals, government officials and organizations that are putting obstacles in the path of new sustainable and regenerative technologies and innovation.

### **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

This target involves three challenges:

1. To promote policies that will ideally empower all inhabitants of a nation.
2. To empower as many people as possible to be creative, innovative and productive individually and in collaboration with others in such a way that this benefits society as a whole.
3. To do this in harmony with Nature, since all the resources needed for human endeavour, including energy, are derived from Nature.

Promoting policies that empower all will require that those who develop and implement policies are motivated to do so and recognize that it is in their individual and collective interest to empower all inhabitants of their nation; that economic and social well-being exists to the degree that all can participate as producers and recipients/buyers of products and services; and that marginalizing any is a loss to all those in the society. This inclusive, collaborative approach is based on the collaborative aspect that exists between species in Nature's ecosystems.

To meet these three challenges, we need new standards to measure healthy cultural and environmental growth to spark development of decent employment opportunities, support entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation. We need to develop policies and practices that support sustainable re-localization of production of food, goods and services through solidarity economy (including energy and financial services) can create decent work, creativity and sustainable solidarity economy. Community projects are opportunities for collaboration of skills, materials and support bringing the community together. Individuals' unique abilities along with the cooperation and generosity of community members can be celebrated along with the satisfaction of making a difference. It is the distribution of wealth and collective dynamic that can achieve the goal.

There are many examples of this, especially through the development of workers' coops and women's coops. In many African countries there are small-scale processing co-ops that perform this role. Some other examples include: Building infrastructure, homes for those in need, and centers for health, activities, recreation and learning. Working together to develop these projects can foster richer relationships, balanced ecosystems and result in healthier communities.

The only way to produce real wealth is to learn how to do things in a fully sustainable manner. Our use of current practices for productivity and wealth creation have proven to be unsustainable as they create costly challenges to clean up and resolve (such as

waste creation, pollution, nutrient loss, resource depletion, toxic build up, etc. Thus, the best way to support productive activities, create job opportunities, support entrepreneurship, and encourage the growth of micro, small and medium sized enterprises is to focus on and invest in transitioning to highly sustainable practices. Examples include:

- Developing best technologies for clean, sustainable energy production endemic to local areas such as wind, small scale hydro, solar, solar thermal, geo-thermal, biogas digesters, etc.
- Implementing agro-ecology, bio-dynamic farming, and permaculture practices for local food production, including inner-city production in empty lots, and rooftop gardens.
- Transitioning to sustainable building practices utilizing renewable and recycled materials, and energy efficient design.

We need to establish an educational approach to help students recognize the value of each task that must be undertaken and to value those who do it well; the need for all, no matter the present status of the task, to be empowered to do their task to the best of their abilities and that there is in fact no hierarchy, since each aspect of the project must be carried out well if all others are to succeed. Each student contributes to the formulation of what needs to be done and each can assume one task within the whole, while teaching and learning from all others. Each will come to appreciate that the successful completion of the project requires all to be empowered to collaborate constructively in the process as a whole.

### **Financing Options**

The biggest challenge in meeting the goals set out in SDG 8.3 might well be the need to raise the capital and funding needed to implement the required programs and initiatives. However, climate or green bonds are a relatively new source of funding that local and state governments are using to finance renewable energy and sustainable development projects that could be used to really help meet this need. The total volume of climate bonds was estimated to have a worth of 160 billion dollars in 2016; of which 70 billion were actually issued in 2016. Like normal bonds, green bonds can be issued by governments, multi-national banks or corporations. The issuing entity guarantees to repay the bond over a certain period of time, plus either a fixed or variable rate of return or interest. Most climate bonds are asset-backed with investors being promised that all funds raised will only go to specified climate-related programs or assets, such as renewable energy plants or climate mitigation focused funding programs.

The growth of bond markets provides increasing opportunities to finance the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, Nationally Determined Contributions and other green growth projects. Green bonds are becoming an increasingly prevalent form of green finance, particularly for clean and sustainable infrastructure development and their large funding needs. They offer a vehicle to both access finance from the capital markets and deliver green impacts that can be verified against standards. In developing countries, green bonds are already financing critical projects, including renewable energy, urban mass transit systems and water distribution.

As the world community begins to recognize both the need and the benefits that can and will come from transitioning to full sustainability as rapidly as possible, green bonds can provide a most important means of raising the revenue needed to do so.

### **Other Inspiring Approaches:**

- It has also been suggested that some type of a Sustainable Economic Opportunity Program ought to be developed and implemented on either a national or global scale. Such a program would work like a typical community development program and fund. It would be financed either by the international community or by national governments; and it could be set up in part like a bonds program in which anyone could invest. The funds would be used to finance particular sustainable development projects, services, and/or businesses which would be carried out either as public, private, or joint endeavours. The types of projects which could receive funding would be determined by local, state, and/or national development commissions which are established to carry out this task; but the primary objective and criteria would be to help achieve the SDGs and other local, state, or national sustainable development goals.
- Given that most of those facing extreme poverty, particularly in the developing world, depend on rain-fed subsistence agriculture for their very livelihoods and to get their basic human needs met, and given that much of the land that these farmers depend upon is either significantly or severely degraded and face further and increasingly severe threats due to climate change and global warming, it is essential that support be given to those facing such challenges to transition to more sustainable and resilient ways of farming, to invest in ecosystem restoration and retention management, and to adopt more sustainable lifestyle practices.
- As noted above, UNEP has found that organic agriculture is 2 - 4 times as productive as conventional agriculture in the developing world. Others have demonstrated that regenerative agricultural practices of varying types can have quite substantive results and benefits including improvement of soil health, resiliency in the face of flooding or draughts, prevention of run-off of toxic chemicals and soil nutrients, along with increased productivity and healthier produce. Examples of the types of best practices and success stories that can be beneficial can be found at: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions).
- Agroforestry, agro-ecology, integrated pest management, conservation agriculture, the use of permaculture design processes, and analog forestry are just a few of examples of the type of restorative and regenerative agricultural practices that ought to be much better scaled up and instituted at both the national and global level. The training and use of such practices ought to be included and taught in all Agricultural Extension Programs with the Extension agents being trained in how to develop and carry out such practices.
- One exciting program carried out in Tanzania demonstrates the rewards that can come from such an approach and best practices. Unfortunately, climate change is having a profound impact on the country. Tanzania's Mount Kilimanjaro has lost over half its glacier in the last 50 years and by 2031 scientists expect the mountain will be entirely ice free. It's one of the world's most visible reminders that climate change is real and happening right now. Villagers across the country have paid a

high price, as they have faced: six droughts in the last 30 years due to erratic rainfall and higher temperatures, making their already poor region, poorer. The EU's Global Climate Change Alliance program has set out to address this.

- The program has funded an eco-village project in Chololo village as a model of good practice in climate change adaptation. As a part of the project, the community has tested, evaluated and taken up 20 climate change related innovations in agriculture, livestock, water, energy, and natural resources. They have planted 17,500 trees, reaching a 75% survival rate. Ten domestic biogas plants have also been constructed to supply villagers with power for cooking and lighting. Those still using firewood for cooking have now access to 60 improved stoves that supply the same quantity of energy with twice less wood. Even the school roof is being used in the battle to combat the negative effects of climate change. It's been fitted with special rainwater catchers to gather tens of thousands of litres of fresh water. After just one year the community recorded improved harvests - doubling productivity, better food security and increased household incomes.
- In addition, they have learned how to and set up new micro-enterprises including bee keeping, aquaculture, non-toxic natural leather tanning and goods production, and animal husbandry. They have replaced the use of kerosene with solar water pumps and generators and have gained access to clean water. By integrating many if not most aspects of sustainable community development as a part of one project, the community has managed to solve multiple problems and challenges in a most effective and coherent manner. A sister project in the Pemba villages on Zanzibar Island has focused more on renewable energy production and agroforestry, along with regenerative farming practices with equally impressive results. Providing sufficient funds for integrated, multi-sectoral approaches and programs that are carried out at a village or community level in rural areas like this, particularly in the developing world, will enable countries to reach SDG 8.3 while also making headway on other SDGs as well.
- A number of international programs have been established that ought to much better support the provisioning of such funding and program development. This includes the Green Climate Fund which was initially supposed to fund civil society as well as government led initiatives but has seemed to be going in the opposite direction since then; the Ten Year Framework of Programmes (10YFP) on Sustainable Consumption and Production and more particularly its Sustainable Lifestyles and Education and its Sustainable Tourism Programmes; and the 4/1000 Regenerative Agriculture Network which has been spear headed by France.
- Another area that is included in the 10 YFP on Sustainable Consumption and Production that could provide great opportunities for transitioning to more sustainable building practices while also providing decent job creation, entrepreneurship, and the growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises would be Green and Natural Building processes and practices. Examples of this type of building are also included at: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions). Many of such small and medium sized businesses have been established all over the world that specialize in such sustainable design and construction processes. For a skilled builder they are not hard to learn and provide an excellent means for

helping to achieve multiple goals under the SDGs. Indeed, if policies could be adopted in most countries that enact Green Building Standards, such as the LEED Standards being carried out through the US Green Building Council in the United States, this would not only increase employment opportunities for small businesses and builders but also help us to achieve the SDGs focusing on water and energy use, sustainable consumption and production, human settlements, and the natural environment, etc.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Develop regional and country programs to determine which renewable energy, appropriate technologies, and sustainable agricultural and/or building practices might work best in various regions and locales. Provide subsidies and assistance to those that are providing access to and/or are engaged in such sustainable business practices and processes.
2. Support the development of training programmes and bio-regional resource and service centers that support local communities in carrying out sustainable development planning and design processes and adopting such best practices as this.
3. Develop, support and/or provide micro-credit programs and loans that are targeted towards developing sustainable business opportunities such as are mentioned above.
4. Encourage international programs and funding initiatives, such as the Green Climate Fund, 10 YFPs on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and the 4/1000 Regenerative Agriculture initiative to do considerably more to support and fund such community design processes and the types of best practices and initiatives that are carried out at a local or community level as are mentioned above.
5. Use group projects as an educational approach where groups of students are encouraged to solve an environmental, social or economic problem together.
6. Develop and institute curriculum activities that focus on transitioning to more sustainable practices using popular education and solidarity economy.
7. Support the development of Demonstration Eco-Houses or Centers.
8. Provide and support the development of circular, solidarity economy and agroecology student training programs and internships.

#### **8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead**

Measuring environmental impact of growth in terms of “consumption divided by wealth” is perhaps our most available data, but this keeps us in the dark as to the state of the

natural resources which we depend upon for our survival. Perhaps the use of this approach is why our natural resources are in such a dire state.

**It is essential that we take into account that the current indicators of successful implementation of 8.4 completely fail the test of sustainability.** The error is defining sustainability by the impact intensity ratios (impact quantities divided by population or divided by GDP). As the population or GDP grows, the intensity ratio of impact per person or per dollar declines while the impacts (on the natural environment) continue increasing at accelerating rates just as before. The reason for defining indicators this way is to separate the "decoupling" of the economy from the non-sustainable impact on the planet. All that is currently done is to divide thousands of tons of human consumption by the billions of dollars of GDP, dividing a benefit by wealth. This manner of measuring success fails to consider the limits of the natural world nor the distance to the stability threshold for the economy.

### **Indicators**

**(currently listed on SDG 8.4 - which fail the test of determining sustainability):**

- 8.4.1 Domestic Material Footprint - material footprint per capita, and material footprint per GDP
- 8.4.2 Domestic Material Consumption - domestic material consumption per capita, and domestic material consumption per GDP

**Suggested New Indicators – (which pass the test of determining sustainability).  
Replace the above listed indicators with:**

- 1) The true measures of related environmental impacts for the particular resource use or type of consumption, plus
- 2) Estimates of the distance to the actual threshold for the related impact and
- 3) The likely time to reaching it. Only then can people assess the threat and urgency of finding alternates or planning for termination.

**This same serious flaw (that of calling products/\$ "decoupling") is in seven other major SDG environmental impact measures.**

The serious challenge seems to come from the general tendency to measure sustainability with "efficiency," also called "decoupling" which has nothing to do with the actual sustainability of the resources. The idea was that accelerating growth using more efficient processes would separate the expanding economy from its negative impacts on the environment. Instead the evidence shows this not to be the case, and that creating "efficient" economic growth has the tendency to be just as, if not more harmful, to the

environment. "Evidence of Decoupling Still Zero."

<http://synapse9.com/signals/2018/06/18/evidence-decoupling-still-zero/>

Accessed from 2019

<https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/2298SCP%20monitoring.pdf>

The whole list is:

- 7.3.1 Growing energy use reduced to energy use per dollar GDP
- 8.4.1 Growing material footprint reduced to material footprint per dollar GDP
- 8.4.2 Growing material consumption reduced to material consumption per dollar GDP
- 9.4.1 Growing CO2 emissions reduced to CO2 emission per dollar GDP
- 11.3.1 Growing land consumption reduced to land consumption per capita
- 11.5.2 Growing disaster losses reduced to disaster losses per dollar GDP
- 11.5.2 Growing economic disruptions reduced to economic disruptions per dollar GDP
- 12.2.1 Same as 8.4.1 but for global “footprint”
- 12.2.2 Same as 8.4.2 but for global consumption

### **Specific Areas of Focus:**

1. All countries need to develop full on National and Local Strategies for Transitioning to fully Sustainable Consumption and Production (SCP) practices and processes as a part of the 10 Year Framework of Programmes on SCP, and transition to fully circular economies. Developing such strategies and action plans should be integrated with the same processes and plans for developing and implementing a National and Local Strategies for Sustainable Development and for achieving the SDGs. All of these should focus on transitioning as rapidly as possible to full sustainability. One of the best ways for doing this would be to first adopt sustainable development as a fundamental operating principle of governance, or in other words, adopting legislation or an agreement that all decisions made within government would have to consider its impacts on sustainable development and how it could help to achieve the SDGs, the Rio Principles, and all other sustainable development priorities and agreements.

In addition, such strategy plans should include such things as the recommendations we suggested in the introductory section of this SDG 8 Report for transitioning to a circular economy. Obviously, a key component in any such efforts would be to include education for sustainable development in all schools and curriculums and in formal and informal education and to welcome and include the participation of all students in both the development and implementation of such planning processes.

2. Seventy percent of the population in the developing world depends on subsistence agriculture for its very livelihood. Thus we need to diversify the economy in rural areas and regions, provide support and invest in job creation for processing agricultural goods and services along with other natural resources, restore the health of degraded soils and ecosystems along with natural water cycles, and reverse climate instability and global warming.
3. Given that more than 2 billion hectares of land around the world are moderately or severely degraded, it is essential that we reforest all degraded areas and regions that were once forested. Due to our cutting of forests, disruptive agricultural practices, and the destruction of natural ecosystems, we have severely degraded natural landscapes and created additional deserts and dryland regions around the globe. In the process we have disrupted both large- and small-scale natural water cycles and decimated watersheds. It is thus imperative that we invest in water

retention landscaping and re-green the earth. Similarly, we need to totally change our agricultural practices, so they become fully restorative in nature and regain all lost soil health and productivity, etc. Meanwhile we will need to clean up polluted rivers and ensure that all waste water is totally clean by using biological waste treatment processes before re-entering the watershed. These are the only ways that we are likely to be able to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation and ensure global resource efficiency because anything less will unfortunately lead to further depletion and degradation of the natural environment. Supporting and participating in efforts like the Bonn Challenge on reforestation and the 4/1000 regenerative agriculture initiative championed by France will certainly help.

4. Toxic products are used prevalently in and around our homes and in farming, impacting the health of people and animals through our environments, our foods, air and our drinking water. For example, pesticides and herbicides are known to be causing death to birds and bees. There is compelling evidence that chemicals commonly used in foods and household products are toxic and even lethal to humans and animals. They are not banned, however, due to influences of powerful and wealthy individuals and organizations with vested interests - these poisons are often deemed to be safe by the EPA and FDA in the US despite concern and compelling evidence to the contrary.

#### **ACTIONS:**

1. Immediately prohibit the use of ALL products with toxic ingredients.
2. All products, including food and pesticides, be legally required to clearly/transparently disclose all ingredients including supposedly inert ingredients and their original sources fully informing consumers.
3. Identify which production methods need to be eliminated immediately based on practices which are harmful to the environment, therefore harmful to all life. For Example: Genetically Modified Organisms.
4. Develop sustainable technology and innovations which fully internalize costs, involve renewable energies, zero emissions, continual recycling of natural resources, and restoration of the Earth's ecosystems. Ensure that these innovations and technologies respect traditional biodiversity and nature.
5. Implement regenerative farming in all communities to provide food and restore soil.
6. Establish sustainability within communities by growing food, developing technology and cooperative efforts to lift the entire population through practices which are life giving and allow citizens to share their unique contributions.
7. Require all environmental agencies - such as the EPA and FDA - to investigate and stand for what is in the best interest of all and not make policies and laws based primarily on the interests of wealthy, powerful organizations.

8. Review existing environmental legislation in light of changes that need to be made for a greater partnership with Nature, decoupling economic growth from negative environmental impacts, and all around increasing sustainable measures.
9. Adopt new laws to promote care and stewardship of the natural environment.

### **8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

Ensuring the presence of a social protection net and minimum living wage is essential. It is only if a minimum living wage and social protection are in place that the goals can be achieved. There is also the culture clash between global finance and the goal of cultural development. "Decent work" should mean work that provides everyone with the opportunity to contribute to the well-being of their community or society if they so desire. We also need to ensure that non-monetized traditional community practices are recognized, such as childcare, care for the elderly etc.

Governments face the challenge to put policies in place within which their people—individually and collectively—can develop while maximizing the relationship between the individual characteristics of their people and the context within which that nation is developing, and from this starting point gradually allow their nation to develop in constructive interaction with the needs of the rest of the world. This involves developing socio/economic and educational systems that are best suited to their individual circumstances. When these forces are interacting optimally the whole system can thrive and each individual part is "employed" in such a way that its individual qualities are put to optimum use.

If we focus on transitioning to a fully sustainable economy and at the same time fully restoring the health of the natural environment while adopting fully regenerative agricultural practices, we will find that there is plenty of work for all. And at the same time we will create such an incredible boost to real wealth and productivity that there will be plenty enough for all of us to share, for the first time in human existence, the rich bounty of the earth and all that this can bring to us.

#### **Re-Localizing and Collectivizing the Economy**

The key aspects that need to be underlined in SDG 8 are that by introducing policies from local to national to global levels that re-localize and collectivize the economy, we create decent work. This applies to community energy, community health systems, community banking etc. The most developed at global level is probably sustainable local food systems grounded in agroecology. This is widely supported by FAO, and materialized in the FAO 10 elements of agroecology:

[www.fao.org/3/I9037EN/i9037en.pdf](http://www.fao.org/3/I9037EN/i9037en.pdf)

In terms of decent work, the agricultural/food processing/catering sectors are among those that have historically lagged furthest behind. The Declaration of Peasants Rights and Rights of people working in rural areas goes a long way towards providing a useful tool for implementing SDG 8 in this sector. Also, in Community Supported Agriculture, the fact that producers are paid a decent price by consumers also implies that agricultural labour on CSA farms will receive a decent wage. The definition of CSA is

now broader in developing countries and encompasses the notion of Local Solidarity Partnerships between Producers and Consumers. This enables decent work through solidarity economy and direct sales in short distribution chains that cut out the middlemen. There are many successful examples in West Africa.

According to the RIPESS network, "The Social Solidarity Economy" is an alternative to capitalism and other authoritarian, state dominated economic systems. In SSE ordinary people play an active role in shaping all of the dimensions of human life: economic, social, cultural, political, and environmental. <https://unsse.org/>

SSE strives to overcome inequalities, including all classes of society. SSE has the ability to take the best practices that exist in our present system (such as efficiency, use of technology and knowledge) and transform them to serve the welfare of the community based on different values and goals. Collective enterprises – a sector of the solidarity economy - and the more holistic and alternative approaches of solidarity economy practices and communities are needed.

### **Adopting a Holistic, Integrated Approach to Economic Development**

One of the first things that thus ought to be done when attempting to achieve full productive employment and decent work for all, would be to first develop a complete strategy and plan for transitioning as rapidly as possible to full sustainability, which is mentioned above. Only in such a way will we be able to make the investments needed to create a real health economy that supports the well-being of both the human community and all of life. Within such a national strategy and planning process when included in a fully integrated and cohesive manner - both horizontally and vertically - would be the development and implementation of local Agenda 21 or rather sustainable community plans.

Because everything that we do is so interconnected with everything else, it is essential that such holistic planning processes be undertaken so that what we do in one sector does not undermine what we do in others and so that we can make the best use of any resources, both financial and otherwise, that are made available. As a key part of this, it must be determined what investments will need to be made in order to transition to full sustainability, and how the money needed can best be raised or provided to do so.

### **Opportunities for Employment in the Farming, Education and the Health Sectors**

As mentioned above, a first priority will have to be to transition to a fully circular economy where waste, depletion of natural and scarce resources, and pollution are eliminated, and a major effort is undertaken to protect and restore the natural environment. By investing in such things as this, our investments will more than pay off and people will be provided with what is truly productive employment. Obviously if we want to see to the well-being of future generations, as well as our own, then we will have to give preference to preparing youth and our leaders of tomorrow to help in making such a transition. What better way could there be to ensure and provide productive employment and decent work for all - but particularly for young people, the disadvantaged, and those with disabilities, etc.

Fortunately, there are many examples of how this can be done. For example, in Egypt there is a biodynamic organic farm and ecovillage community at the edge of the desert near Cairo that grows certified organic cotton and herbal healing teas. It was established some 40 years ago and now employs thousands of people both in growing the crops, in providing a medical clinic that treats more than 40,000 local villagers each year, packages and markets the teas throughout Europe, and produces goods on site from the cotton that is grown there. The Sekem farm and community also runs a number of schools at the farm running a toddler program on through a secondary school with a special program for youth with disabilities along with a vocational and technical education program for high school students. There the students can learn any aspect of working at the farm including plumbing, mechanics, carpentry, garment production, electronics, basic administration, welding, etc. through hands-on on-the-job training.

See: [www.sekem.com/en/cultural-life/vocational-training-center](http://www.sekem.com/en/cultural-life/vocational-training-center)

Sekem could very well be called The Miracle in the Desert; because that was all that was there when it was founded 40 years ago. Now it is a lush, fertile community and farm that has a wonderful visitor's center for those that are interested in learning more about Sekem and how it was established and operates. They also have several wonderful videos and a book entitled "Sekem: A Sustainable Community in the Egyptian Desert" that can be ordered off the internet that tells all about the community and farm. See: [www.sekem.com/en/media/videos](http://www.sekem.com/en/media/videos).

In addition, Sekem established the Heliopolis University for Sustainable Development in 2009 - the first University in the Middle East with a primary focus on sustainable development, which offers degree programs in Engineering, Business and Economics, Pharmacy and Drug Technology, Physical Therapy, and Organic Agriculture. The degree programs offered at Heliopolis University address the concepts and theories of sustainable development through a multi-disciplinary holistic approach that integrates teaching, learning, research, and practice.

See: [www.hu.edu.eg](http://www.hu.edu.eg).

Then in Nigeria PaxHerbal Clinic and Research Laboratories has developed a number of programs that are training thousands of local farmers, students, and entrepreneurs to work together to preserve ingenious knowledge using modern technology. These programs are located at and run by the Ewu Monastery. PaxHerbals have been training hundreds of university students from different Nigerian universities and polytechnics in various natural science disciplines such as biochemistry, botany, microbiology, pharmacy, pharmacognosy, laboratory science and others. This includes the Student Industrial Work Experience Scheme - a federal government program that aims to equip students with practical experience and skill to complement their theoretical university knowledge. Every year some 40-60 students from as many as seven Nigerian universities spend six months to one year at PaxHerbals undergoing intensive training. Again, programs and initiatives such as this could and should be replicated and scaled up throughout the developing world.

See: [www.paxherbals.net](http://www.paxherbals.net)

### **Global Trends for Youth Employment**

This need to focus specifically on youth employment is particularly important. According to the findings of the Global Employment Trends for Youth 2013 report,

“The global youth unemployment rate, estimated at 12.6 per cent in 2013, is close to its crisis peak. 73 million young people are estimated to be unemployed in 2013. At the same time, informal employment among young people remains pervasive and transitions to decent work are slow and difficult.”

The report goes on to state that “Skills mismatch on youth labour markets has become a persistent and growing trend. Over-education and over-skilling coexist with under-education and under-skilling, and increasingly with skills obsolescence brought about by long-term unemployment. In developing regions where 90 per cent of the global youth population lives, stable, quality employment is especially lacking. As much as two-thirds of the young population is underutilized in some developing economies, meaning they are unemployed, in irregular employment, most likely in the informal sector, or neither in the labour force nor in education or training. In the Developed Economies and European Union, the situation is almost unbelievably even worse, with the youth unemployment rate in 2012 estimated to be at 18.1 per cent. In Europe, an increasing proportion of employed youth are involved in non-standard jobs, including temporary employment and part-time work.”

See: [www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth](http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/work-for-youth) and [www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/youth/2013](http://www.ilo.org/global/research/global-reports/youth/2013)

As of 2014, 36.7 per cent of the global unemployed were youth, while youth made up only one-sixth of the global population and are therefore strongly overrepresented among the unemployed. In addition, the problem can be bad even for those that can find work. Youth in developing countries continue to be plagued by working poverty stemming from the irregularity of work and lack of formal employment and social protection. In 2013, more than one-third (37.8 per cent) of employed youth in the developing world were living on less than US\$2 per day.

In most low-income countries the situation is even worse, at least three in four young workers fall within the category of irregular employment, engaged either in own-account work, contributing family work, casual paid employment or temporary (non-casual) labour. Nine in ten young workers remain in informal employment. This compares to an only slightly improved share of two in three youth in the middle-income countries.

Certainly, the international community must do considerably more to respond to such challenging situations as this. Fortunately, youth employment is now considered to be a top policy priority in most countries across all regions, and at the international level is being translated into the development of a global strategy for youth employment and embedded into the 2030 development agenda.

### **The United Nation's Youth Employment Network**

Along with the efforts made to restore and protect the natural environment there are many other opportunities and programs focusing on youth employment that ought to be better supported and taken advantage of. For example, the Youth Employment Network (YEN) is a partnership of the United Nations, International Labour Organization, and the World Bank that was created back in 2001 to mobilize action on the commitment of the Millennium Summit for decent and productive work for young people. It appears now, from the closing of websites, that YEN has been phased out, but if so then it has been replaced by a new initiative under the ILO, Decent Jobs for Youth. In any case, YEN provided a global platform to prioritize youth employment on

the development agendas and to exchange on policies and programs to improve employment opportunities for youth. The major achievements of YEN have included:

- Revision of the Lead Country Network: 17 countries have recommitted to the network since major revisions were made in 2009.
- Mobilization of 10 Million USD in 2009 from various donors to support activities of the Network, including pilot initiatives to create and support youth employment opportunities.
- Development and dissemination of various publications and advocacy products on youth employment.
- Training of over 1500 youth representatives as advocates on youth employment.

YEN funded a number of pilot programmes for youth employment that should still be replicated and scaled up around the world. For example, the YEN collaborated with ILO to deliver a youth entrepreneurship programme for East Africa running from 2010 - 2015. This included the Youth-to-Youth (Y2Y) Fund for Entrepreneurship Promotion: a competitive grant scheme to identify and support youth-led entrepreneurship development projects as a means to create decent employment for youth. The Fund was a tool to identify, support and promote innovative, small-scale projects on youth entrepreneurship, conceptualized, submitted and implemented by youth-led organizations. It gave youth an opportunity to contribute to youth employment as active development partners rather than just beneficiaries.

Through this 'Idea Laboratory', the youth-led organizations with the most innovative project ideas received a grant and complementary capacity building to help them implement their projects and test the viability of their ideas. Successful project ideas were promoted in order for them to be replicated and scaled-up for increased impact. The key achievement of the Y2Y Fund project was the identification of 23 grantees, along with the successful implementation, scaling-up and replication of innovative entrepreneurship project ideas that led to the creation of 650 businesses and generated 1170 jobs for young people. In the first round of the pilot program 270 applications were received and only 15 grants were awarded, thus showing the great need for such programs.

See: [www.ustadi.org/youth-to-youth-fund.html](http://www.ustadi.org/youth-to-youth-fund.html) and [www.oecd.org/dev/47834333.pdf](http://www.oecd.org/dev/47834333.pdf).

The Asia-Pacific Youth Employment Network has a great series of reports on Youth Employment and Education and other such topics including Youth and rural development: Evidence from 25 school-to-work transition surveys; 'Is education the solution to decent work for youth in developing economies?' and 'Promoting youth employment through activation strategies'. See <http://apyouthnet.ilo.org/resources> to source the reports.

### **The ILO's YouthPOL Youth Employment Analysis**

The ILO has also developed a global database on youth employment policies that have been adopted and enacted around the world called the YouthPOL eAnalysis. See the YouthPOL homepage. There are different types of search options found on the side toolbar, as well as filters for country, region, policy area and more. It contains information on 65 countries with a total of 485 documents, which is a good start but not near what there would be if all countries were participating.

It has been providing quality information on youth employment across countries, regions and target groups in 6 areas:

- Macroeconomic and sectoral policy
- Enterprise development
- Education and training
- Labour demand
- Labour law and legislation
- Labour market policy

### **The ILO's Youth Employment Programme**

In addition, the ILO has a Youth Employment Programme (YEP) which provides assistance to countries in developing coherent and coordinated interventions on youth employment. It provides data collection on the nature and dimensions of youth employment, unemployment and underemployment; analysis of the effectiveness of country policies and programmes; technical assistance in formulating and implementing national youth employment programmes; and the development of strategic partnerships to promote cross-country and global peer networks, inter-Agency cooperation, and collaboration between the private and public sectors to support youth employment.

See: [www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/WCMS\\_118114](http://www.ilo.org/employment/areas/youth-employment/WCMS_118114)

While what the Youth Employment Network was doing is great, it was still pitiful as compared to the need. All countries ought to be actively participating in such a program and network and the funding for it should have been scaled up quite substantially. In fact, due to the lack of training opportunities most students leave high school or even college with almost no training for getting started with a future career. It is thus essential that substantially more support be provided for the development of the new initiative, Decent Jobs for Youth, and that funding for the types of initiatives featured there be increased quite substantially.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Develop small scale sustainable agriculture using parks, empty lots and rooftops to grow food.
2. Provide incentives for people to focus on their primary needs.
3. Ensure that actions are sustainable, and people are aware of their dependence on a resilient and healthy natural environment.
4. Ensure the presence of a social protection net and minimum living wage.
5. Create a step by step development plan that will allow individuals to develop skills that will allow them to operate profitably socially and economically in a global context.
6. As reorganization of governments and communities take place, the population should be educated regarding the steps they can participate in, such as the referendum process.

7. Provide facilities where people can connect with educational and informational resources both in person and via the internet. Provide support systems to offer direction, guidance, and instruction.
8. Create development plans that take into consideration the natural resources along international borders, the peoples of the region, and what is best suited to their geopolitical situation.
9. Provide government support for the people that will allow them and the nation as a whole to develop sustainably while remaining independent of corporations or individual entities that are creating unsustainable environmental, social, and political relations.
10. Create communities in the manner of Sekem Farm in Egypt along with ecovillages all over the world, which tend to be leaders in the conscious design of communities that support the regeneration of social and natural environments.
11. Encourage companies to bring in student interns to help them transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in sustainable processes and practices. Governments would profit by developing programs and policies to support this.
12. Convert existing industrial parks into Eco-Industrial Parks in which businesses cooperate with each other and with the local community in an attempt to reduce waste and pollution, efficiently share resources (such as information, materials, water, energy, infrastructure, and natural resources), and help achieve sustainable development, with the intention of increasing economic gains and improving environmental quality.
13. Develop and support the establishment of programs and initiatives that educate and train students and youth in vocational and technical education and other job skills while focusing on the need to transition to sustainable and regenerative development.

#### **8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

All governments need to invest in their youth. The youth of today will become the institutional leaders and trainers for tomorrow. Youth needs to be seen as an investment for where we are going in the future. While some people are born into loving families in societies where they can grow and develop their potential, find inner fulfilment and meaningful work, many are born into less than optimal social conditions and fall victim to the violence of other humans in societies too poor to create adequate educational and employment opportunities. There are two challenges when it comes to the training and education of youth: creating societies in which young people have the opportunity to be educated and creating the type of education and training that makes for fulfilled, happy and socially minded human beings.

Ecosystem restoration efforts can provide more than enough jobs for everyone. The

health sector needs to include such things as parenting skills, inter-personal relationship, peaceful conflict resolution and mediation skills, mental health, preventative health, nutrition and plant-based cooking and diets, human powered mobility, composting and processes of green and food wastes, phasing out of toxic chemicals and products, integrated pest management and phasing out of the use of pesticides and herbicides which are destroying the health of the soils and water.

### **Youth Employment Opportunities, Education and Training in Ecosystem Restoration and Conservation Programmes**

Various types of programs and initiatives have been developed around the world to protect, restore and better manage the natural environment that provide excellent opportunities for youth to contribute both to societal well-being as well as to the condition and health of the natural environment, while also learning valuable job skills. In the developing world this might include some type of an earth ranger program where youth are hired to manage and protect wildlife reserves or to ensure that endangered species are not captured or preyed upon or forests that have been re-planted are not cut, etc.

In the developed world it could include programs in which either high school students or young adults are hired to become crew members or leaders within conservation corps - which provide such work as trail maintenance, water shed management, stream run-off abatement, erosion prevention and repair, invasive species removal, tree planting, and the like. In the United States this type of a summer high school work education program is called the Youth Conservation Corps. It is an excellent federal program that has run for well more than 50 years doing public works projects at the national, state and local levels including trail maintenance, ecosystem and stream restoration, improving wildlife habitat, environmental education planning and teaching, historic building preservation, and erosion control etc.

See: [www.nps.gov/subjects/youthprograms/ycc.htm](http://www.nps.gov/subjects/youthprograms/ycc.htm)

Another such program that has changed the lives of more than 120,000 young adults is the California Conservation Corps. During their year of service, Corps members work on environmental projects and respond to natural and man-made disasters, while learning skills that transfer directly to a range of career pathways, including firefighting, trails, energy, construction, corps leadership, and more.

See: <https://ccc.ca.gov>

In Zimbabwe and other countries in Southern Africa there is an excellent program for school students called ReSCOPE, Regional Schools and Colleges Permaculture Programme. This program trains and teaches students to re-green barren landscapes surrounding their schools, growing market gardens, and learning the fundamentals of permaculture education and sustainable community development design processes. Not only do the students learn how to better manage degraded environments but also teaches them to care for Nature and to learn how to maintain healthier agricultural systems and practices.

See: <http://www.seedingschools.org>

The need to protect, restore and manage the natural environment offers us an excellent opportunity to provide youth with employment, education, and/or training programs. According to the Conservation Council of Nations, there is a tremendous

lack of the institutional capacity in developing nations needed to effectively manage their natural resources. This capacity gap leads to the deterioration of biodiversity, water, fisheries, and forests, thereby constraining the potential for sustainable economic development for future generations.

To protect their most important natural assets, nations have placed large amounts of territory into public lands such as national parks, both terrestrial and aquatic, but most lack the capacity needed to manage them well. Ever-increasing pressures from the continuous growth in human populations and consumption make it imperative to help overcome this global management deficit to ensure that economic benefits perpetually convey from ecosystems to the forestry, fish, and wildlife sectors, the tourism industry, and agribusiness.

### **The International Conservation Corps provides Capacity Development and Training Programmes**

To help address this challenge, the International Conservation Corps (ICC) selects from an elite class of veteran conservation professionals and skilled workers, who have retired from US natural resource agencies, to transfer the knowledge, experience, and best practices needed by partner nations to address host-country priority conservation needs. The ICC fills a gap in conservation efforts and complements the Conservation Council of Nations' (CCN) global network of legislators which collaborates and exchanges best practices and solutions for conservation policies. CCN creates opportunities for legislators and International Conservation Corps leaders to develop solutions to address natural resource management and the policies that will best support protected area systems.

Through partnerships with North American conservation agencies, their corresponding retiree organizations, and CCN's corporate and NGO partners, the International Conservation Corps organizes and exports carefully selected and highly skilled teams of experts to work directly with developing country government officials and NGO partners to design protected area systems; to build up the managerial capacity to maintain the systems; and to transfer and adapt the best practices developed in the U.S. and elsewhere.

The International Conservation Corps has the systemic capacity to channel the experience and talent of these respective agencies and retired experts to meet the specific needs of partner nations and provide the necessary funding and in-country political support through the Conservation Council of Nations. It has on-going projects in Colombia, Kenya, Thailand, China, the Bahamas, and Jamaica.

See: <http://councilofnations.org/conservation-corps>

Just imagine if a major part of this program would be to educate and train youth while preparing them for employment in order to protect and restore the natural environment in their home countries.

### **An Exemplary Youth Employment and Training Programme**

There are a number of other examples of best practices and success stories that provide youth with employment, education and training all at the same time and ought to be replicated in other countries around the earth. One of the best was the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA), a program established by

Congress in the United States in the 1970's that ran for ten years to train workers and provide them with jobs in public service. CETA funds were administered in a decentralized fashion by state and local governments, on the assumption that they could best determine local needs.

The program offered work to those with low incomes and the long term unemployed as well as summer jobs to low income high school students. Full-time jobs were provided for a period of 12 to 24 months in public agencies or private not for profit organizations. The intent was to impart a marketable skill that would allow participants to move to an unsubsidized job. It was an excellent program that was unfortunately ended by a conservative congress in the 1980s; that ought to be replicated by other governments around the world.

In addition, such a program and pool of money could be used to train young adults in job skills that focus on transitioning to more sustainable practices and producing more sustainable goods and services including in the private sector or in research and development through institutes and academic institutions. Indeed, CETA funds were often used to establish such things as recycling centers, conservation services, and energy efficiency programs in the US.

### **Demonstration Centers, Permaculture Training Institutes, Design for Sustainability Courses, and Ecosystem Restoration Camps**

Similarly, much of the best work that focuses on developing new processes and technologies in such fields as agriculture, renewable energy, sustainable production, and transitioning to a circular economy has and is still being done by institutes that have been established and research work carried out within academic institutions. Many demonstration sites have also been created showing best practices and success stories such as the Campus and other Centers for Appropriate Technologies, Ecovillage Training Centers, permaculture institutes and training programs, and various types of farming and gardening programs carried out at or linked with public schools.

While not providing paid employment, there is an excellent series of educational programs that are available to people of all ages that is recognized as an exemplary program under UNESCO's Global Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development. These programs are organized and led by GAIA Education; and the more rigorous ones do provide the knowledge needed to be able to pursue many different sustainable development employment opportunities. These programs include both an introductory and a year-long Design for Sustainability on-line course, hands-on project based month-long or 20-hour immersion Ecovillage Design Education training programs, and the Training of Trainers program most of which are offered in more than 50 countries with 17,000 graduates. These programs cover all aspects and elements of regenerative sustainable development and cover pretty much the same material as the SDGs. See: <https://gaiaeducation.org>

Given the tremendous need that there is to restore ecosystems around the Earth - more than 2 billion hectares of land are degraded, it is essential that as many people as possible gain the skills needed to be able to help restore and protect the natural environment. The Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation has established a program with the goal of creating and developing camps staffed by

volunteer workers to restore degraded ecosystems all around the earth - with the first programs being established in Spain, Mexico, California and Africa. Those that participate in such programs will gain valuable skills that can lead to further employment opportunities as humanity undertakes this enormous challenge of Restoring the Earth.

See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation) for more information.

In China, the Rural Regeneration programme has successfully attracted many young people back to rural areas from cities and actively contribute to sustainable local food systems through Community Supported Agriculture.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Educate and train youth encouraging them to actively participate in achieving all 17 SDGs.
2. Replicate, scale up, fund, and support many of the best programmes for educating young adults and youth while training them to do ecosystem restoration and conservation work, etc.
3. Support the development, use, and implementation of community planning and design processes that involve and support youth.
4. Fund programs that provide youth employment opportunities coupled with training programs which focus on developing the skills needed to transition to full sustainability.
5. Encourage meetings of the community - including women and young people of all ages - to look at problems that exist within the community and build on the ingenuity of all the people to find and implement solutions. It is important to ensure that young people's ingenuity is taken into account and that they are given an opportunity to participate in implementing solutions in ways that allow them to learn as they help in improving their community.
6. Use barter or Local Economic Trading (LETSsystem) to finance this process. These are used to finance economic activity in areas where money is not readily available.
7. Provide support for local currencies, community finance, community energy schemes and water management to increase the number of paying jobs for young people. Ensure access to land and water, guarantee social security and minimum living wage as social-economic rights.
8. Request help from outside by involving multilateral agencies, particularly of the UN, and provide instruction on how to access the Internet using mobile phones and if possible, ensuring that each area has Internet access.
9. Support and fund experience-sharing and capacity building that enable scaling out and dissemination of existing good practices.

## **8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms**

To achieve this goal, we will need to remove government officials and corporate big wigs who indulge in drugs, sex trafficking, corruption and all manner of destructive behaviour with impunity. Not only do they indulge in these behaviours, they foster and encourage them in society. While verbally speaking against and making policies against them, they are actively promoting and profiting from these nefarious deeds behind the scenes. We need leaders who are honest and willing to be examples of sane and balanced living in harmony with all life, making policies and taking action that takes into account the needs of all and is ultimately in the best interest of all, enriching the whole planet. It is time for us to stand up and protest when government officials are put in charge of the very agencies that are supposed to regulate and oversee the industries that these same people were representing as corporate leaders or lobbyists. It is time for us to close the revolving door that exists between government agencies, companies, trade associations, and lobbying firms, etc.

Forced labour brings about apathy or aggression in those forced to work. The resulting quality of work is adversely affected.

The abuse of one group by another leads to all members of that society consciously or unconsciously feeling threatened. There is a constant feeling of dis-ease, which can result in anxiety, unfounded suspicion of others' motives, the need to find artificial relief in increased power, status and wealth. This is often at the expense of the natural environment and social cohesion, which in turn lies at the heart of the problems that lead to people abusing one another through forced and/or child labour, modern slavery and human trafficking.

Modern slavery, forced labour, human trafficking, and child labour harms the victims, the perpetrators and society as a whole. Atrocities and even great inequity tend to breed feelings of fear, anger, enmity, conflict and general distrust for the victim, abuser and impact the whole of society. While there may be a sense of power and control, abuse and perpetration of trauma ultimately wellbeing is undermined for all.

Solutions directed at resolving the above abuses at their root involve transforming the downward spiral by applying legal, policy, social, economic, educational, structural and other measures. This will turn the downward spiral of violence around and will promote the development of tolerant, economically and socially resilient societies based on unity in diversity.

In general, as in Nature, human societies thrive on the general well-being, energy, creativity and collaboration among their members. To the degree that all have found ways to develop their unique individual potential, it is more likely that most will not feel the need to abuse others.

Focusing on healing generational traumas, opening opportunities for healthy expression of passions and access to decent employment is key to achieving this goal. We will need, as individuals and as communities, to choose wholesome lifestyles, sane, balanced behaviour and eschew the drama and adrenalin rushes from addiction,

drama and chaos by developing close knit communities with policies and practices that support protection of our youth from abuse, slavery and warfare. We need to provide education and opportunities for healthy growth and development. It is important to help each to develop his or her unique potential, to increase their acceptance among their fellows and provide a skills base that can also be of used internationally and thereby increase the strength of the economy of origin. The more fulfilling the work, the less the tendency to want to abuse other people. Pay careful attention that none are cast out by their peers and if this happens find ways of reintegrating them into the group in ways that make use of their potential and draw out their strengths.

Taking action to increase empathy and respect for one another is another important part to achieving this goal. Examples of helping to create empathy within the hearts of those who have harmed others (not necessarily children) have been truth and reconciliation commissions, programs for prisoners to train dogs that have been abused, and for hardened criminals to care for bison that are old and sick. The effectiveness of such forms of restitution increases to the degree that empathetic connections are built between those who abuse others and those who have been abused, thereby transforming relationships within communities from ones that further breed fear, anger, and enmity to ones that are based on love, empathy, benevolence and caring.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Structure education so that students are encouraged to follow their passions and master the basic skills necessary to function well in society, so that as adults they will not be tempted themselves to abuse children.
2. Encourage empathy, inclusiveness, and respect among students in the educational environment.
3. Build a national economy where all can find decent and fulfilling employment.
4. Ensure that there is an easy transition from education to work opportunities, and that innovative ideas are put into practice to diversify and strengthen the economy.
5. Provide alternative forms of employment for slave traders who feel forced by their societies to take dangerous work because no other means of earning a living is available.
6. Strictly enforce human rights instruments, including the Rights of the Child. Here it is important to pay attention to the capacity for all to develop their unique potential in their individual ways.
7. Enforce the rule of law to create right relationship between people and the desire to live in harmony with other species and Nature as a whole.
8. Assist offenders in making restitution by placing them in conditions where they can identify and empathize with those they have wronged. This can be by showing films where the young tell their stories and show the consequences of

the abuse they have suffered both physically and psychologically, and then enlisting their help in trying to reverse the damage they have helped to create.

9. Stop allowing the rich and powerful to keep economically profiting from forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking. Enforce the laws against these activities for ALL citizens. It is time for responsible governments and the international community to bring cases against such people and activities before international courts and tribunals as well as to prosecute them where possible within their own countries.
10. Create economic incentives for employers to offer employees decent opportunities that are beneficial to all.
11. Create universal laws and standards establishing age requirements for employment, working conditions, hours of employment, environmental protection policies, and limiting the outsourcing of employment to other countries. Universally enforce Fair Labour Standards Act.

### **8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment**

Human working conditions are often negatively influenced because global standards are not adhered to and there is enmity and discrimination toward groups of people be it through gender discrimination or fear of what seems to be foreign competition. Yet, it is in the interest of all, that, as humans, we have a level playing field to create secure working environments.

Individuals, institutions and governments can overcome fear and prejudice to ensure whole-hearted and full respect for all workers including migrant workers, and those in precarious employment by constantly emphasizing their importance to the well-being of all, their dignity, their humanity and the important contributions they are making in the context of the society within which they are active. In this way, it will be possible to ensure their rights are implemented and backed both by legal machinery and the empathy of the society as a whole as precious fellow human beings.

As fellow human beings with similar feelings and life experiences, it is important to create an empathetic connection between all people, especially including those who come from abroad, or belong to groups that have been affected by discrimination, including women, and those in precarious employment. By telling stories through media and providing formal and informal education, the beauty, ingenuity, perseverance, dignity, humanity and other important attributes of those performing those tasks others are loath to perform can be emphasized and understood.

#### **ACTIONS**

1. Create a level playing field for all workers within each nation. As a foundation, encompass all fundamental human rights and other relevant agreements, including those made under auspices of ILO, UNIDO, UNCTAD, etc., all other norms and standards that have been created to enhance the well-being and performance of workers such as the Declaration of Peasants rights and rights of those living in rural areas, and that standards be created as needed. This will empower workers to perform optimally.

2. Enable documentation and social security nets as well as access to affordable education and healthcare for those in countries of immigration.
3. Make widely known the contributions being made by migrant labour and the value to society provided by those willing to perform essential employment others are loathed to do.
4. Use all forms of education to overcome fear, prejudice and lack of empathy, including the media to ensure that ALL groups of people are seen in the important role they play for a country as a whole.
5. Create platforms to engage individuals in activities such as storytelling, drama, art and music to foster understanding and community building between people of different cultures.

### **8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products**

Efforts to achieve Target 8.9 should include both sustainable tourism and ecotourism. According to the UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), sustainable tourism is tourism development with a balance between environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects: *“Sustainability principles refer to the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development. A suitable balance must be established between these three dimensions to guarantee its long-term sustainability”*

While for the International Ecotourism Society (TIES), ecotourism is defined as: *“Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment, sustains the well-being of the local people, and involves interpretation and education”*. Ecotourism should thus provide direct financial benefits for conservation and local people and is focused on the conservation of natural resources. Obviously support and policies to promote and encourage both are needed.

Sustainable tourism already provides a very large number of employment opportunities; but could provide many more well-paying jobs. For example, by 2019, more than 212 million people will be unemployed, up from the 201 million in 2015, while at the same time, tourism provides 292 million (2016) or 1 in 10 of all jobs in the world. Tourism is a vital contributor to GDP in those most vulnerable employment regions of the world like Sub Saharan Africa, South East Asia and Latin America, by giving access to decent work opportunities in the tourism sector, society – particularly youth and women – can access and benefit from increased professional development and skills.

Unfortunately, many of those working in the tourism industry are paid very little and face any number of other challenges - ranging from a lack of health and other social benefits, to poor working conditions, and lack of educational opportunities. For a good overview on the connection between sustainable tourism, employment and right livelihoods.

See: [www.earth-changers.com/purpose/employment-livelihoods](http://www.earth-changers.com/purpose/employment-livelihoods).

**Here are some other important resources:**

- UNEP and the World Tourism Organization have put together a guidebook entitled, “Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers”, that includes a comprehensive set of instruments for governments ranging from planning regulations to economic instruments and the application of certification and indicators, and it sets out 12 aims for sustainable tourism and their implications for policy. The Guide is based on practical experience, illustrated by numerous examples and case studies across the world. You will find a link to this guidebook, along with a number of other resources addressing sustainable tourism, including a link to CBD’s Biological Diversity and Tourism Case Studies at: <https://sustainabletourism.net/case-studies/reports/policy>.
- The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has also developed a full series of webinars with an aim to share and exchange information on sustainable tourism and its connection to the circular economy. The first webinar of 2018 is the result of collaboration between two programmes of the One Planet network: Sustainable Building & Construction and Sustainable Tourism under the theme "Sustainable Business Models on Circularity in the Built Environment". You can view the video presentations by going to: <http://sdt.unwto.org/webinars-oneplanet-stp>
- The UNWTO has also produced a booklet entitled, *Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030* which aims to build knowledge, empower and inspire tourism stakeholders to take necessary action to accelerate the shift towards a more sustainable tourism sector by aligning policies, business operations and investments with the SDGs.  
See: <http://publications.unwto.org/publication/tourism-and-sustainable-development-goals-journey-2030-highlights>
- The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) also organizes an annual conference focused on the advancement of sustainability goals for the tourism industry. The Ecotourism and Sustainable Tourism Conference offers invaluable learning and networking opportunities, where innovative minds gather to discuss ideas and solutions that inspire change. Promoting policies and practices benefiting businesses and communities, the ESTC helps to reinforce the role of tourism in building a more sustainable future.  
See: [www.ecotourismconference.org](http://www.ecotourismconference.org)

### **Making Sustainable Tourism More Sustainable**

Most importantly, the One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, under the UN’s Ten Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production, has the overall objective of enhancing the sustainable development impacts of the tourism sector by 2030 by developing, promoting and scaling up sustainable consumption and production practices that boost the efficient use of natural resources while producing less waste and addressing the challenges of climate change and

biodiversity. You will find the Portfolio of Work along with a listing of 166 initiatives and 28 resource materials at: <http://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sustainable-tourism/about>

Given how un-sustainable tourism can be in general it is particularly important that all countries, along with government at all levels, develop and adopt a full set of policies promoting and supporting both sustainable tourism and ecotourism. Such policies should include efforts to reduce the high ecological impact or footprint caused or incurred by tourism facilities and the industry - this would include the siting of such facilities in or near coastal and marine as well as other vulnerable natural or pristine areas, the high carbon cost of transport as well as impacts on the marine environment, and the impacts on the local and indigenous cultures. Indeed to the extent possible all externalities caused by tourism and the tourism industry will have to be internalized if we wish to meet target 8.9 and the rest of the Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Making Sustainable Tourism More Culturally Appropriate**

Culture has developed from many levels of connection between people of a particular region through their shared geography, history, religion and spirituality, communal experiences, and through their bonds both with their natural surroundings and the spirits of their ancestors buried there. Culture provides the basis for deep and meaningful relationships and solidarity for those who are in need of support. Peoples whose culture has been destroyed tend to be rudderless. Many turn to alcoholism and drugs for solace and social relationships fall apart.

A holistic understanding of an area can be developed when tourism shines a light on a people's relationship to their environment and how this relates to their histories and their cultural practices. Tourism can define the unique value of their society and highlight what makes it special and what others can learn from it.

Monetizing a culture runs the risk of detracting from the value of the culture itself and may create a preoccupation with its monetary value. Moreover, where tourists are unaware of the deep significance of the artefacts they buy, the cultural expressions they witness, and the depth of the cultural heritage being shared, they can easily, often unwittingly, seem to show lack of respect for what is being offered, which in turn can cause resentment between those sharing their culture and those on whose money they feel they depend.

When it comes to objects of art, show what makes them important and their special meaning for those whose culture tourists are visiting. Bring out everything within the culture, including the religious, social, and other aspects involved that others can learn from and value. Include insights into the social fabric, the best practices of the people and also the challenges they face and how they are approaching coming to grips with these. Above all bring out the sense of wonder and appreciation that such a learning experience can create.

Tourism that monetizes local culture and the products it offers can, on the surface, create a more vibrant economy in the short term. In the long-term, however, it is important that each individual/unique culture is safeguarded from becoming trivialized and that the life of humans, animals and plants in the region are not diminished, endangered or destroyed.

Sustainable tourism must go hand in hand with safeguarding the sanctity of cultures visited and the products these produce. Where developed with care, tourism can enhance local/national economies, while building bridges between people, and bringing cultures together in mutual appreciation.

Cultures can only be understood when all parts are seen as they relate to the whole. The more this is understood when policies are developed the more tourism can build on this many-sided experience, combining the cultural experience with the social and economic conditions of a people.

It may be important to define terms such as "Ecotourism" and "Agro tourism" and have universal standards to be followed by those using the terms to define their business.

### **Respecting All of Life**

Those developing tourism need to demonstrate respect for all life sharing the environment and have positive cultural and socio-economic impact for all. Practices which may bring in more money but bring harm to any form of life in the region or to the environment need to be banned. Strong relationships can be built, and communities can thrive, promoting local culture and products while allowing the local life and environment to thrive.

It is important that animals not be forced to work in tourist activities which are harmful for them, or to live in confinement or any type of abusive situation, living a poor quality of life at the expense of making money for their owners. For example, unfortunately there are many elephants working in tourist activities. These elephants live their entire lives chained up unless they are working. They often die of a disease of the foot which is caused by their living conditions and the work they are required to do. It is important we apply tenets on equality to the animals as well as humans. Some tourist activities employing animals are simply inhumane and should be discontinued. Others may be redesigned with the wellbeing of the animal as priority. Respecting the culture of the animals and what is correct for them goes hand in hand with respecting the unique cultures of the human species. If we hold that all beings of life be treated with kindness, respect and care, the touristic experience will be sustainable. And, when their working days are complete, they be retired to sanctuaries as a part of a normal practice.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Provide strict regulations regarding the treatment of animals within the tourist trades, and provide diligent monitoring to ensure quality of life, health, safety, and welfare of all animals. Terminate any activities which cause harm to the animals, and any businesses failing to honour and respect their needs. Tourist enterprises using animals must provide sanctuary for animals retiring from work.
2. Ban any practices that bring harm to any form of life in the region or to the environment.
3. Provide strict regulations within the tourism trades that provide protections for the people and the natural environment within a region.
4. Safeguard the sanctity of cultures visited and the products they produce.

5. Use tourism as a means of building bridges between people, bringing cultures together in mutual appreciation, building meaningful relationships between people, helping to transform non-caring superficial relationships into life-changing experiences, fostering peace, understanding, and people to people development, while contributing to a global community based on mutual caring and constructive collaboration.
6. Implement all fundamental human rights, agreements, standards and norms to ensure optimal working conditions for all regardless of gender or nation of origin or form of employment.
7. Develop a comprehensive set of programs and policies that support and promote both sustainable tourism and ecotourism. Include such policies and initiatives in local and national action plans and strategies on Sustainable Consumption and Production in a fully integrated manner to ensure that effective action is taken towards achieving all of the Sustainable Development Goals.

#### **8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all**

Cultural awareness and service orientation of the financial services offered is essential. Despite current and popular corporate orientation, financial institutions, insurance, and financial services are meant to be in service to the individuals, local business, and communities they serve, rather than the other way around. This more correctly means that the appointment of financial services managers needs to be approved by the communities served, based on the approved statement of socially and environmentally responsible and culturally appropriate financial services they agree to provide. In that way a culturally aware financial industry would grow in every country.

The value of financial services depends heavily on the culture of entrepreneurship in any community, and so relies heavily on the growth of the entrepreneurial culture within communities. Communities benefit economically, socially, and culturally from the development of entrepreneurial endeavours. Providing business, financial, and creative support for entrepreneurs and their businesses will encourage this important culture to flourish.

Besides banks, there are also a large variety of financing approaches that are being provided alongside those provided multilaterally by governments, by civil society itself along with the private sector. While these might not be official national institutions, they should be considered seriously. For instance, the fast-growing Sharing/Partnership Economy that is being made possible by the internet already provides 10% of the French economy.

The document, ***Unleashing Financing and other Resources for a World Based on the Well-being of All People and Nature*** --- **click here to read or download** [www.allwinnetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/UNLEASHING-FINANCING-AND-OTHER-RESOURCES-2016-07.pdf](http://www.allwinnetwork.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/UNLEASHING-FINANCING-AND-OTHER-RESOURCES-2016-07.pdf) --also provides a sampling of the huge variety of alternative and innovative financing mechanisms available. This document was initially developed under the name: **A Listing of Financing Mechanisms**, by

some 80 NGOs in the lead-up to the Earth Summit Conference in 1992 by request of the Chair of the **Governmental Working Group on Financing**. It has been steadily updated in the more than 2 decades that have followed and consulted regularly in the context of the UN's work. For instance, it was sent out to all Experts on the **Intergovernmental Committee of Experts on Sustainable Development Financing (ICESDF)** by its Co-Chair, Mr. Mansur Muhtar.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Create policies and monitor financial institutions so that they provide service to and assist communities in growing and developing and are not just focused on self-interests.
2. Provide culturally appropriate financial services.
3. Develop policies and practices that support entrepreneurs with sustainable business plans, which respect and benefit all life and the environment.
4. Create local financial solutions that emphasize and meet the needs of the local economy for any particular community.

#### **8.a Increase Aid for Trade Support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries**

An important form of aid for developing countries is to support cultural growth and bolster local communities through understanding the needs and interests of the country.

As developed countries learn what is effective in re-evaluating and creating sustainable economic systems that serve all, they can collaborate with lesser developed countries and provide assistance in implementing these practices. For example, establishing localized food-based programs, workers coops, ecotourism, agroecology, bio-dynamic farming and permaculture practices for local food production (including in inner-cities), and sustainable building development utilizing renewable and recycled materials and energy efficient design.

More developed nations can support lesser developed nations in adopting best technologies for clean, sustainable energy production for that particular region, support responsible stewardship of the land, teach proven and effective practices for productivity and sustainable economic growth, including support for creation of opportunities for decent employment and entrepreneurship.

Healthy local cultures and environments are what make truly healthy economies. We do not necessarily need higher levels of productivity. We do, however, need to entirely eliminate any production practices which destroy the environment. We need new principles of fiduciary duty for global investment, new general indicators of cultural and environmental health as well as new economic measures. We need to re-evaluate how to re-localize our economic systems and make them sustainable in a way that serves all - starting with systems to ensure that all have necessary food.

Establishing localized food-based programs has many benefits: it is more efficient, more economical, creates local jobs, and promotes more responsible stewardship, care, and compassion while eliminating toxic food production practices. These local food-based programs empower the community with independence, cooperation and pride and are self-sustaining especially if they are meant to be the primary food source for a community. When food is grown for faraway places it is less cost effective, there is less care and pride in the product, and there is a tendency to have toxic production practices.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Build mutually supportive relations with local and global partners in which life for all is enhanced.
2. Create fair trade agreements that benefit all.
3. Wealthier nations can provide aid without strings to nations in need (needs and aid that have been defined by the nation in need rather than assumed by the nation providing aid).
4. Support development of sustainable (re)localized economies through recognition of informal economies and Solidarity Economy in LCDs.

### **8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization**

#### **The UN Youth Strategy**

It is still not clear how a global strategy for youth employment will be created and operationalized by 2020; however a UN Youth Strategy was officially launched at a high level UN General Assembly meeting in September of 2018 in order to scale up global, regional, and national actions to meet young people's needs, realize their rights, and tap their possibilities as agents of change. The Youth Strategy will run until 2030 and an initial action plan will be developed that will cover the first four years of the initiative and then be reviewed, adjusted, and renewed for the subsequent quadrennial phases.

One of the five key priorities of this Youth Strategy addresses the need for Economic Empowerment through Decent Work and thus supports young people's greater access to decent work and productive employment. It is assumed that the UN Youth Strategy could thus provide the process through which the global strategy for youth employment will also be created and implemented. The full 14-page strategy can be read or downloaded at: [www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-un](http://www.un.org/youthenvoy/youth-un).

As a part of the strategy the UN is committing, along with many other things, to:

- Ensure that a Youth Focal Point is established in each UN country team and mission to support the system-wide country level coordination on youth.
- Establish regular online and off-line engagements between young people and UN Senior managers, including the Secretary-General.
- Develop a system-wide repository with easy access to all youth-related knowledge and programmes across the UN; this could include a clearinghouse of good practices, case studies, research material, etc.

- Provide targeted and enabling support to youth-led organizations and initiatives to pilot new models and interventions. Disseminate results widely.
- Undertake polling initiatives among young people at global, regional, national and local levels to gather their perspectives and inform the UN's work and dedicated processes.
- Create an online umbrella platform to attract and direct investment in youth-related programming towards strengthening existing UN funds that support youth and key UN youth initiatives.
- Formulate a common, innovative and coordinated resource mobilization strategy and identify funding solutions for under-financed areas such as support for youth-led initiatives, movements, networks and organisations, youth participation mechanisms, and youth policy work.

These are all things that could be targeted towards and used to strengthen Youth Employment. And then more specifically in regards to a Global Strategy for Youth Employment, the UN Youth Strategy also says that the UN will uphold global commitment by “renewing and strengthening efforts toward decent work for young people by focusing on evidence-based, scalable and innovative solutions and alliances that translate into positive outcomes for all, locally and globally, including in fragile situations.”

The UN will also “ensure access of young people - who are navigating a school-to-work transition in an increasingly dynamic context - to integrated and adequate services as well as productive resources, such as land, finance, digital and other technology related resources, both in rural and urban areas.”

And the UN will “foster a just transition to a low-carbon and green economy by engaging Member States and other partners to accelerate the transition towards green and climate friendly economies through mitigation and adaptation strategies that improve energy efficiency and limit greenhouse gas emissions; and similarly, support Member States and other partners in enhancing the capacity of the green economy to create more and better employment opportunities for young people, in wage and self-employment.”

Detailed plans must thus be developed and included in the Action Plan for the UN Youth Strategy in order to carry out and implement these types of commitments. However, these are just the things that the United Nations itself is committing to do. A global strategy for youth employment will have to include much more than this.

### **The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth**

It is not yet apparent how such a strategy will thus be created; but one would assume that it will also include other UN led initiatives such as the Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth which is an action-oriented partnership platform for promoting youth employment organized by the ILO. The strategy of the partnership is to pursue one overarching goal: to leverage knowledge, alliances, and resources to create action that leads to tangible results for young people. Decent Jobs for Youth prioritizes action across eight thematic areas: green jobs, digital skills, quality apprenticeships, the rural economy, fragile situations, hazardous occupations, entrepreneurship and self-employment, and transitions to the formal economy. There seem to be excellent reports and toolkits covering most of these thematic areas at:

<https://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/communications-material>.

As a multi-stakeholder partnership, Decent Jobs for Youth claims to secure high level commitments from local and international actors of all types. It connects its partners with funding opportunities and other types of resources or programmes that support youth employment and the web platform, and is well worth browsing through. See: [www.decentjobsforyouth.org/strategy](http://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/strategy). The partnership also identifies and promotes effective, innovative and evidence-based strategies and interventions to tackle the youth employment challenge. Unfortunately, however, there is no information on the website about how the initiative will or is doing these things nor how this can better be supported.

The Global Initiative on Decent Jobs for Youth recognizes the important role played by local, regional and national governments, social partners, youth & civil society, parliamentarians, the private sector, the media, the United Nations, academia, foundations, regional institutions and other key stakeholders in making decent jobs a reality for young women and men. All of these stakeholders are invited to register individually or in joint commitments in pursuit of decent jobs for youth.

One can become a partner of Decent Jobs for Youth by committing to action on the youth employment challenge, endorsing its strategy, subscribing to the founding principles, and submitting a commitment in support of decent jobs for youth.

See: [www.decentjobsforyouth.org/become-a-partner](http://www.decentjobsforyouth.org/become-a-partner)

### **The Global Strategy for Youth Employment must be based on living in harmony with Nature and caring for Mother Earth**

In order to adequately address the global and local challenges that are the result of humanity putting the natural environment in peril, our number one priority has to focus on the need for all aspects of society to adopt and transition into more Nature-centric and sustainable practices. However, when people cannot meet their own needs due to joblessness, their ability to care about the environment also goes down.

The focus moving forward for our global conversion to a sustainable world will need to emphasize education for youth and adults in how to live in harmony with Nature and in cooperation with one another on the planet. An analogy can be made - it is as if all countries, all peoples, all life live on a ship on the ocean. Whether the ship carries on and all aboard thrive depends on cooperation, teamwork and partnership, living in honour and care of the ship. Without the ship (Mother Earth) no one survives or thrives. This transition to sustainable living will require open minds to living in harmony and cooperation with fellow human beings in an all-win attitude, along with open-mindedness to new sustainable technologies and exciting new fields of employment.

While each UN organization creates and implements their agreements, it would behoove them to ask the questions - how can we make this a Nature-centric, sustainable-world agreement, and how can we build new and better jobs that support this movement for a healthier world.

### **Implementing the Global Jobs Pact**

In 2009 the international community developed and agreed to implement the Global Jobs Pact in order to respond to the economic catastrophe that the world was then

facing. See: [www.ilo.org/jobspact](http://www.ilo.org/jobspact). While it is essential that all countries live up to all of the commitments and recommendations included in the Pact, we wish to draw particular attention to a few of the key commitments that are still far from being fulfilled and would move us rapidly towards a much more earth-centric and sustainable economy.

In short, the world's governments have agreed to:

- Invest in workers' skills development, skills upgrading and re-skilling to improve employability, in particular for those having lost or at risk of losing their job and vulnerable groups;
- Recognize the contribution of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and micro-enterprises to job creation, and promote measures, including access to affordable credit, that would ensure a favourable environment for their development;
- Recognize that cooperatives provide jobs in our communities from very small businesses to large multinationals and tailor support for them according to their needs;
- Implement a supportive regulatory environment conducive to job creation through sustainable enterprise creation and development; and
- Increase investment in infrastructure, research and development, public services and "green" production, and services as important tools for creating jobs and stimulating sustained economic activity.
- For developing countries in particular our governments agreed that they see the need to:
  - Promote the creation of employment and create new decent work opportunities through the promotion and development of sustainable enterprises;
  - Provide vocational and technical training and entrepreneurial skills development especially for unemployed youth;
  - Recognize the value of agriculture in developing economies and the need for rural infrastructure, industry and employment;
  - Enhance economic diversity by building capacity for value-added production and services to stimulate both domestic and external demand.

It is high time that major efforts be undertaken at a global level to truly support such things as this and that the funding needed to establish and implement the necessary programs and initiatives is finally put in place so as to be able to achieve these noble goals.

Employment opportunities are often available around the world yet most young people have to discover these opportunities for themselves. Any global strategy for youth employment will benefit from focusing on the transition to a sustainable world, as well as using the Internet to both provide a wide array of often free opportunities to develop potential and to locate training and employment in the new sustainable technologies and practices.

The Universal Declaration of Peasants Rights and other people working in Rural areas (<http://undocs.org/A/C.3/73/L.30>) offers many important inputs, especially articles 4g and 4i on decent employment.

## ACTIONS

1. Ensure universal access to the Internet. Here the United Nations can play a pivotal role. It can provide training for a small group of people in each nation, who can then train facilitators in each region of their own country. As local communities are empowered, through access to the Internet and the partnership economy that they then have access to, they will become more prosperous and costs can be recaptured directly from users of such Internet centres or via taxes.
2. Implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially art. 26 (2) to ensure students can develop their individual potential and are motivated to do so. This could include having Internet Centres within easy reach from all parts of the nation, especially outlying areas. These should ideally be staffed by someone who is both able to help people to clarify what information they are looking for and help them to locate the necessary support via the Internet.
3. Use the motivational force in students to inspire learning, personal development and creativity in making connections worldwide that can lead to employment opportunities
4. In schools, use project learning, so that students learn the required subjects (reading writing, arithmetic, for instance) in the context of realizing the projects that are closest to their own heart. For instance, arithmetic as a way of pricing their projects, reading, writing and geography as a way of marketing them, etc.
5. Include Nature-centric principles and respect for the environment in schools at an early age. As students progress and begin finding that which they have a proclivity for, help them understand that their interests are useful and transferable into skills for employment and entrepreneurial endeavours relevant in the development of a more sustainable world.
6. Educate young people to use the Internet skilfully to locate what they need, including connections that are relevant to their personal and professional development, so that they can grow in a global context, and thereby maximize opportunities for gainful and fulfilling employment;
7. Teach students to use the Internet as a way of connecting with like-minded people to share information on what they are most interested in pursuing as a possible career and to create collaborative alliances.
8. Follow up on the need to raise sufficient funding in order to be able to fully carry out the commitments made in the Global Jobs Pact at and through the ILO conferences and proceedings, as well as through the Financing for Development process. Continue to hold such discussions and meetings until sufficient funding is put in place to fully achieve the goals and commitments that have been agreed to.

# REDUCED INEQUALITIES

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 10: Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries

### TARGETS

- 10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average.
- 10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status
- 10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard
- 10.4 Adopt policies especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality
- 10.5 Improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen implementation of such regulations
- 10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions
- 10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies
- 10.a Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with WTO agreements
- 10.b Encourage ODA and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to states where the need is greatest, in particular LDCs, African countries, SIDS, and LLDCs, in accordance with their national plans and programs
- 10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%



# **BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

## **SDG 10**

### **Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries**

#### Prepared by

**Marilyn Fowler, MA, PhD.,**

Department of Consciousness and Sustainable Development  
John F. Kennedy University

**Dr. Maia Kincaid, PhD.,**

Founder of the Sedona International School  
for Nature and Animal Communication

**Rob Wheeler**

Main UN Representative, Global EcoVillage Network

**Jill Lauri, MBA, MSW**

**Lee Samatowic, ND**

**Joan Kehoe, MSC**

**Lisinka Ulatowska, MA, PhD.**

Coordinator Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group

UN Representative

Institute for Planetary Synthesis

#### Endorsers

John F. Kennedy University

Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group

South Eastern Peoples

California Institute of Integral Studies

The Sedona International School of Animal and Nature Communicators

The Institute for Planetary Synthesis

The All Win Network

The Association of World Citizens

Contact: [Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com](mailto:Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

In order to reduce inequality, we need to realize that it is equality we are striving for. Achieving equality requires that we understand what drives and perpetuates inequality. Inequality is not just about wealth and poverty. In this report, we encourage all to adopt a larger perspective, acknowledging that this is a complex issue which fosters divide between individuals, genders, nationalities, races, and even human vs Nature. For in order to increase equality within and among countries, we must recognize how our relationship to Nature and other beings on the Planet lie at the very heart of this issue and is, moreover, dangerously affected by it.

The idea that we are not equal stems perhaps from an illusion of disconnection as well as from socio-cultural norms and learnings that are often passed down from one generation to another and shared or perpetuated within one's own social groupings. Humans have a tendency to be disconnected from our own essential truth and to fear strong emotion. This fosters defensiveness and feeds the illusion of other. This in turn engenders fear and perceived threat of that which we view as other (and often, therefore, judge as wrong). The fear leads to discrimination, discriminatory practices, policies, and legislation. For example, unequal treatment for same behaviour and unequal access to resources and opportunities.

Similarly many cultures and/or social groups have developed and passed on the belief that they are "better than" others in a myriad of ways - whether from religious teachings (i.e. - we are God's chosen people and another group are just heathens) or social and ethnic prejudices, from the development of different types of caste systems or the taunting of others in classroom settings and on school playgrounds, etc.

When we don't see that other human beings (wherever they are from, whatever their skin colour, race or customs) have similar concerns, interests and values that we hold in common we lose the sense of value that others hold and provide. We allow other forces to step in. Fear is one such powerful force. Fear is a great chameleon, masked by many names. We fear that we are not enough, and that we will not have enough. We even fear the word "fear" itself. It can be recognized by discrimination of many things - fear of gender, of nationality, of race, of religion. The fear of poverty breeds greed. The fear of not being enough or having enough results in the idea of scarcity and behaviours of hoarding and competition (vs cooperation), with the end goal of oppressing others and/or winning at any cost.

The challenge is that the more deeply entrenched we are in the illusion of separateness or that we are better than or more important, the more normal, justified and, indeed, invisible inequality becomes. We no longer value differences and divides grow wider. That which is perceived as unequal grows into greater inequality. For instance, poverty, denial of basic human rights, not having a venue for one's voice to be heard, and unequal access to public goods, services, and education results from, and then further leads to, increasing levels of inequality.

**Inequality stems from inequity** - the inability to have the same, similar, or equitable opportunities. Inequity stems from the failure to have equal opportunities and equal treatment in the past. The only way to achieve real equality is to provide better opportunities for some in the present and ongoing into the future in order to assure that remaining inequities can be overcome. Inequity arises from having a lack of basic

resources, access to the capital needed to succeed, the information with which one can be successful, the belief that one can succeed, and the where-with-all to do what their heart and mind desires and knows is possible. This fundamentally comes down to how one is treated and the opportunities they are afforded, or not afforded, by the community, the society, and the social, political and cultural order or systems, etc.

When extreme inequality exists between a government and its people it is challenging to bring about equality for all peoples and all nations. It seems impossible to even entertain the idea of equality amongst people and nations without resolving inequality of government officials and the people they are elected to serve, which, unfortunately, is still quite common within many countries.

Consider that in the United States, a country that much of the world looks to as an example of an effective democracy affording equality and justice to its citizens, it is all too common for individuals who have served as corporate leaders in various industries, to be appointed as heads of government agencies charged with regulating those corporations' activities. During their time in office they often then consult primarily with, and legislative policies and proposals are even provided by, other corporate leaders from the same industries that they are already familiar with. Regulations can then be dismantled or discarded even in violation of federal or state law. Meanwhile, it is legal and sanctioned by government for lobbyists and campaign action committees to spend hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars on political campaigns in order to influence, gain the support of, or elect congress people that will do the bidding of these same corporations and industries - which undermines the well-being of the people that these agencies are meant to serve or protect. For instance, in some countries there is what is considered to be a "revolving door" between government, lobbying firms, and large or corporate businesses, which is quite lucrative for those, involved. These individuals are often exempt from being held accountable for violations of the law, including serious human rights violations whereas normal citizens of a country are subject to the standards of the law. Or even worse citizens are subject by ruling authorities to abuses of and/or by law.

According to The Oxford Academic Journal of Legal Analysis from Harvard Law School, "When individuals violate the law, they face prison, fines, injunctions, damages, and any number of other unpleasant consequences. But, although law-breaking is ordinarily fraught with risk, it is not clear that this generalization applies to public officials." One serious and rampant human rights violation is that of public officials taking paybacks from corporations and then removing or ignoring regulations and laws which would protect citizens from toxic chemicals. Unfortunately there are an abundance of situations where toxins are being put into our environment, including: our foods, our air, our oceans, our soil and our drinking water because government officials have taken bribes in the form of money to allow corporations the opportunity to make profits at the expense of human lives, the natural environment, and the ongoing survival of our species.

Not only are citizens and the planet being poisoned by corrupt government officials and corporations, the populace of countries around the world is suffering the daily torture and ongoing stress knowing they are being poisoned. Along with the stress of knowing we are being poisoned, there is the frustration and utter sense of being powerless to change a terrible situation and the knowing that this leaves a legacy of

distress for future generations as well. Essentially, we are being poisoned by those who are supposed to protect us. This current level of corruption, poisoning and what amounts to genocide may well be one of the most extensive crimes against humanity, indeed against all life on this planet, of all time.

In far too many cases, citizens all over the world have to fight for their lives, as well as for human rights and the right to a clean environment while the officials elected to serve them continue to hold more value in immediate financial gain for themselves, betraying the people they were elected to represent and serve as well as all of life on the planet.

Citizens also often find it to be extremely difficult to gain political access to their representatives, to have their ideas and proposals be taken seriously, or to be able to influence the political dialogue or debate in any significant way as either an individual or even as a part of anything other than a major or national citizen's organization. The result is that there is often a lack of political will to do many things that the populace at large broadly and quite urgently wants - including promoting equal freedoms and access to resources for all people as well as such things as reducing and eliminating nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, enacting and enforcing environmental laws and protections, providing health services and protections, and funding and instituting economic and social policies, etc.

**In order to ensure equality for all, we need to face such disparities head on and resolve them.**

It is essential, in order for equality to be experienced, that all individuals be afforded equal access to housing, food, transportation, the same quality of education, voting rights, property rights, access to health care and opportunities to make a living wage as well as equality of treatment; and the same wage for individuals working at the same job regardless of gender, beliefs, skin colour, age, etc. To implement this there is a need for non-discriminatory legislation, policies and practices that provide protection from unequal treatment based on discrimination (egg. Non-Discrimination Act - introduced at every congress since 1974 has not yet been passed by the upper house of parliament or in the US, the Senate).

It is important that all, including those in positions of power, be held accountable for their actions and be afforded equal treatment and equal access to resources and opportunity. It is essential for those in positions of power to recognize and honour their sacred duty to represent, serve, and stand for the highest good for all people, and all life on the planet. For a person of integrity this means putting their community, their nation, and the planet as a whole priority above their own personal agenda and personal gain.

**Indeed, if we are going to achieve real equality all over the world then a comprehensive system of and model policies, regulations and legislation, along with proactive efforts, are going to have to be made and upheld by the international community to ensure that this really is implemented all around the world.**

Adopting the higher perspective of connectedness and inclusiveness, we realize that if one person is polluting a water source it becomes toxic for all; if one nation pollutes

a stream, river or ocean that nation then is likely polluting another nation, other nations, future generations and even the planet as a whole. The decisions and actions of each individual and every nation impact all life on the planet. If we learn to be individuals, communities, and nations of integrity, then we will likely think of all life and act based on the highest good for all.

Indeed, all life that exists in the universe is inextricably woven together in the most beautiful of intricate tapestries or a complex harmonious symphony. Each thread of every colour and each note played by the smallest or largest instrument is absolutely necessary for the whole masterpiece to be what it is in all its glory. And so, it is with every continent, nation, district, city, town, village, home, family, and individual. And so, it is with every mountain, river, rock, tree, mammal, fish, bird, insect, mineral, drop of water, ocean, ecosystem, and microbe. Everything is equal, beautiful, and necessary and defies any kind of measure of better or worse, smarter or less, important or not important. In light of this, the equality of all of Nature and all peoples, communities and nations rightly can be honoured and upheld with the greatest of sanctity.

Educating people to overcome the inner dynamics of disconnection and fear of "the other", working together to have universal standards for human rights and to find effective and innovative ways of implementing the Economic, Social and Political Covenants as well as other international laws will foster equality among people within and amongst individual nations.

As we reduce inequality and ensure that all peoples' basic human rights and needs are met, our efforts will lead to restoring and renewing the natural environment and lift up whole cultures and societies. This in turn can lead to greater prosperity and well-being for one and all and likewise ensure that we are better able to achieve all of our shared and common goals.

## **TARGETS SDG 10**

### **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

Appreciating diversity goes hand-in-hand with creating and maintaining equality; both are the foundation of achieving sustainable income for all. It is important to acknowledge that the "bottom 40% of the population" has diverse talents, passions and skills to inspire and lift all other peoples, and therefore can uniquely contribute to the economy. Consider the great diversity in Nature - between plants, animals, minerals and all things that make up Nature, to the individual species within each kingdom is something that amazes and delights most humans. In fact, our survival depends on this diversity. In human society we find this same rich variety where all people have a valuable role to play, and on which we depend, whether we choose to realize it or not. For instance, a person with Down's Syndrome might not be competitive in higher education, but this condition often brings with it a capacity to love and arouse love and caring in others that is a precious quality for every community.

Between countries there is also a completely diverse capacity to provide and contribute to the world as a whole. One country might have a spectacular natural environment where people can relax, be nurtured, and be inspired to invent nature-

inspired, durable artefacts or solutions to help us with challenges, and to move us in a positive direction. Another nation might specialize in matters relating to transportation and yet another with manufacturing or to providing access to much needed minerals, medicines, and other natural resources. These are starting points for each nation, as they build up economies that are more balanced, they can support their populations, and then find ways of diversifying. This diversity is in the interest of all nations in today's global world.

Nature is more than just a resource for humans; however, it is life itself, and without it in its healthiest form, we all are the poverty-stricken ones. Not only do we share the responsibility to put the health and integrity of Nature in the forefront, but we ALL, regardless of class, religion, creed, or gender are dependent upon how well we take care of the Earth. People trying to eke out a living from subsistence agriculture on degraded lands, or in areas where there is inadequate acreage are forced to further degrade the soil and the very ecosystems upon which agricultural productivity depends. UNEP has found that ninety percent of waste water goes back untreated into the watershed in the developing world and particularly in the parts of the world where more than 2 billion people still do not have access to a toilet. This poses a huge health hazard and threat from water borne diseases, and is polluting water courses that the whole community, or in many cases whole countries, depend upon.

Such problems are not just problems of a few. Like the interwoven tapestry described above, these issues of inequality affecting the land upon which these people live ripple out affecting the health, the economics, and even the very quality of life of others, even at great distance, and for generations to come - as well even as entire ecosystems and, as we are now coming to learn, the survival of whole species of plants, animals and even birds and insects.

We need to encourage poorer communities to generate their wealth from the inside out, including through the use of barter. Allow all to play a part, bringing their gifts, skills, passions, and resources to benefit the community. People are the resource that needs to be built up, so that the community is not dependent exclusively on outside development assistance. As they find their strengths allow these to determine what the outside help should provide so that it assures the community is sustainable in the years to come.

Each community, region, state, and federal government ought to develop a concerted and detailed plan for lifting up the poorest sectors of their population for the purpose of obtaining equality amongst peoples so that all peoples have the ability to thrive going forward. This will require substantial investments in necessary resources of all types, including financing and supportive policies, programs and institutions, along with many others. This can best be developed in direct and inclusive consultation with the populations in need along with those that have been supporting these people's needs and interests for years now. These plans should be developed and implemented in an integrated manner both vertically and horizontally, thus across all levels of government and sectors of the economy and society. They also ought to include a focus on implementing all of the SDGs together as a part of one effort at the same time.

If we wish to lift this poorest section of the population up it will also require that we transition as rapidly as possible to full sustainability for with the growing depletion of scarce resources across multiple sectors of the economy and society and ever increasing population growth, particularly in regions where most of those facing extreme poverty live, it will probably be impossible to provide the needed resources in any other way. It is essential that we not only decouple economic growth from environmental impacts, in part by internalizing all externalities, but also by regenerating and restoring degraded ecosystems and the natural resource base in general.

For example, we are losing so much top soil due to water and wind erosion and run-off that it will become impossible to feed all of the people adequately unless we turn this around and increase soil fertility, stem erosion and run-off, capture water in restored natural environments, and increase agricultural productivity at the same time. The result however will be the prevention of such things as the spread of ocean dead zones due to chemical and nutrient run-off; sequestration of massive amounts of carbon in mulch, compost, plants and soils; and the regeneration of natural small and large-scale water cycles as well as watersheds. So many of those facing extreme poverty depend for their livelihoods on subsistence and rain fed agriculture. Because of this, climate change must be addressed starting from a local level which will ultimately transform climate change on the global level, providing the resources needed to begin to lift all out of poverty and solve multiple problems at the same time. The benefits coming from restorative and regenerative actions will more than pay for themselves over time but major investments will need to be made in order to truly support these people and lift them up quickly in a rather dramatic fashion before the multiple local to global challenges we are facing make it even more difficult for them to recover from the debilitating impacts.

Similar such benefits can also occur from doing such things as replenishing decreasing ground water tables and restoring natural stream flows; replanting cut over forests while investing in such things as agro-forestry while also rebuilding soil health with biochar carbon sequestration and using clean burning kilns and cook stoves; or restoring damaged ecosystems through water retention landscaping enhanced with contouring and based upon creating new water catchments and swales. Examples of these best practices and success stories that are being carried out in ecovillage communities around the world can be found at: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions). A new program supported by the International Renewable Energy Agency and the World Agroforestry Centre under CGIAR is being developed in many countries in Africa called the Evergreen Agriculture Partnership.-Here they couple nitrogen fixing trees and shrubs with food crops and livestock to create more sustainable and productive agricultural systems for small holder farming families. This is also improving income generation through coppicing the plants for fuel wood as well as renewable energy production while also sequestering carbon in the plants and soils. See: <http://www.evergreenagriculture.net>

Of equal importance for those living in inner city and slum areas, particularly those that are living in disaster prone areas that are subject to "natural" disasters due to such things as flooding and mudslides and that are facing multiple water and sanitation challenges along with building collapse hazards etc. would be the Land Value Taxation policies referred to in the introduction above. Such policies have been proven to

substantially reduce the assessed value and prices of land and property and with this the cost of housing. Lower costs for housing and increases in the amount of low cost housing that is made available will enable more people living in disaster prone areas to move to safer locations, increases in revenue will enable municipalities to provide more services, and increases in building construction - as well as renovation and repair - will help to provide jobs for low wage earners, etc., a win-win situation for all.

If we focus on transitioning to a fully sustainable economy and at the same time on fully restoring the health of the natural environment while adopting fully regenerative agricultural practices going forward, we will find that there is plenty of work for all. And at the same time, we will create such an incredible boost to real wealth and productivity that there will be plenty enough for all of us to share, and for the first time in human existence, the rich bounty of the earth and all that this can bring to us. Indeed 70% of those facing extreme poverty live in rural areas in the developing world and depend largely on subsistence farming. Much of the rest live in slum areas in cities in both the developing and developed world. If we pay particular attention to what would be needed and invest in transitioning to fully sustainable practices and ways of living in those areas and communities then we will naturally provide work and employment opportunities for those most in need of it.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Reduce taxes levied on the bottom 40% of the populace. In part this can be achieved through Land Value Capture and Taxation as taxes and fees are gradually taken off of sales and income and collected instead based on the value of land ownership, which is typically held by those with much higher incomes. This tax will typically result in under-utilized properties or lands that are being held for speculative purposes being fixed up or built upon thus increasing available housing and reducing land and property costs and rents while also making more available housing available.
2. Adoption of Land Value Capture and Taxation will also enable communities to collect and provide additional funding for such things as infrastructure and services as well as to support training and jobs for low income wage earners to build low cost housing in the communities where they live. Encourage the use of low cost natural and sustainable building technologies - including the beautiful compressed earth block construction which has been demonstrated in ecovillage communities around the world and that is taught through the Auroville Earth Institute in India which holds the UNESCO Chair in Earth Architecture and has trained tens of thousands of people in Earth Block Construction - see: <http://www.earth-auroville.com>. For additional examples of Natural and Green Building again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions) which was put together by Rob Wheeler, the Global Ecovillage Network's main UN Representative and a principal author/editor of these SDG reports.
3. Provide funding, infrastructure, and services to support training and jobs for low income wage earners in municipal areas to integrate small scale sustainable agriculture using parks, empty lots and rooftops to grow food, integrate water catchments and filtration systems, and renew and create natural areas into and around new and existing housing.

4. Provide initial investments and training for people to produce green and environmentally friendly products, particularly those that are food based, which support a sustainable community and economy by enlisting the interests and input of large segments of their populations. These products can be competitive in global markets and thus broadly increase the standard of the whole population at the same time, while supporting a green and environmentally sustainable future.
5. Provide relevant educational facilities either directly or by allowing people to connect with Intergovernmental Agencies and educational resources available via the Internet. It is important to use these since many are free of charge and come with "no strings attached."
6. Put policies in place within which their people—individually and collectively—can develop while maximizing the relationship between the individual characteristics of their people and the context within which that nation is developing. And from this starting point to gradually allow their nation to develop in constructive interaction with the needs of the rest of the world.
7. Create a step-by-step development plan that will allow a government's specific population to develop skills that will allow them to operate profitably socially and economically in a global context as a nation.
8. Develop, fund, and implement a growing network of resource, service and learning centers at a national and global level to assist all peoples living in impoverished and/or rural areas to learn about more sustainable development and agricultural practices and to acquire the skills, materials, and expertise needed to uplift their lives. This can be coupled with the teaching of Ecovillage Design Education training programs in local communities and bioregions around the world such as have already been organized and held in hundreds of locales and in more than 42 countries by GAIA Education and the Global Ecovillage Network. See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/> and <http://gaiaeducation.org>
9. Support and adopt El Salvador's proposal to establish and carry out a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration thus restoring more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands around the world and in the process fund and provide jobs for low income people by engaging them in helping to regenerate and restore the Earth. Invest in water retention landscaping employing local people in efforts to revitalize the natural environment, restore agricultural productivity, and dramatically increase the level of ecosystem services.
10. Invest in transitioning to regenerative agriculture practices and training programs, especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture, that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood. Again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions).

11. Create organizations that provide cooperative opportunity for nations to work together with others in the same region that are facing similar geographic and developmental challenges.
12. Capitalize on the inherent strengths of a people and region to internally build up their own economy. Take inventory of cultural, environmental, technological, artistic, and agricultural strengths and resources of underserved communities that would be of interest to the rest of the world. This can include sites of interest to research, internships for people who wish to learn topics specially characteristic of that region, opportunities to study native ways of approaching sustainable problem solving - whether high tech or low tech - or internships to help set up new structures, communications' systems, Agro forestry, artistic techniques unique to the region, etc.
13. Have companies bring in student interns to help them to transition to sustainable practices. Colleges and universities need to partner with businesses to train students in such sustainable processes and practices. Governments need to develop programs and policies to support this. Eco-industrial parks.

**10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status**

Empowering and promoting inclusion of all individuals is key to resolving the world's problems. Prioritizing inclusivity in planning and policymaking is key to allowing creative solutions to unfold. Working together to achieve common goals, opening doors and allowing anyone who wants to help to be part of the process, interacting with respect and loving hearts toward all will promote an inclusive society. All people have something valuable to offer. Each individual has unique perspectives, needs, and contributions. Perhaps most important of all is to put Nature's need to stay healthy and balanced at the forefront in all governmental and private agencies, policies, planning, strategies, and goals for our own survival and ability to thrive.

It is particularly important for Least Developed Countries to develop and implement strategies to promote development assistance as well as to provide forbearances on paying back loans, borrowing additional monies, etc. The Poverty Reduction Strategies should then be fully integrated with the SDG Plans and with all other sustainable development processes, goals and agreements etc., again both vertically and horizontally. These policies and plans should then be implemented thru each government's SDG plans, National Strategies for Sustainable Development, and National Poverty Reduction Strategies.

A way forward is to include all people's input into all aspects of governance using Town hall meetings and referenda. These meetings can start in small circles so that all have the chance to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Including the voice of all people for whom policies, programs, and political structures and decisions are to be established allows new and creative solutions to come from unexpected places, having greater impact on the totality in a way that can be lasting and sustainable. Each voice is essential to build an inclusive society, perhaps especially that of children, Nature, and those closely attuned to Nature.

## ACTIONS

1. Organize inclusive workshops and planning processes at all levels of governance to collect ideas and develop policies to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all peoples in government decision making, planning and implementation processes. Establish or designate offices in each government that will be responsible for ensuring that such policies are adopted, enforced and carried out.
2. Include people's input into all aspects of governance using Town hall meetings and referenda, starting with meetings in small circles where all are able to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Develop People's Participatory Budget Processes at the local level to ensure that the desires and needs of all peoples are fully included in deciding how government monies will be allocated and spent.
3. Support the development and implement collaborative management of commons resources such as community forests, community gardens, ecosystem restoration processes, cooperative utility districts and waste management facilities, and establishing participatory processes for managing parks and wildlife sanctuaries, etc.
4. Create opportunities within the schools to tap into the visions of the children, bring their ideas together, and disseminate to the higher organizations for inclusion.
5. Create festivals whereby celebration fosters the atmosphere of inclusion and optimism. Utilize these gatherings as a forum of diversity whereby all fit together in the manner of mapping or puzzle. The pieces can appear at first as islands or unrelated factions, but in the environment of festivity one is reminded of the fundamental needs and values of inclusion, community, happiness and joy. It is from this feeling place of inclusion from the basics of life that the best policies, actions, and organizations can be established.
6. Create High World Council made up of individuals from all walks of life regardless of age, gender, disabilities, economic status, religion, or race, from all regions and countries. These individuals would have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgment or alliance. They serve on a rotating basis and are educated before their term so that they are well versed in their role to empower and promote social, economic, and political inclusion for all, including, and from the perspective of Nature. Their position is to uphold Natural Law as the gold standard, and to evaluate all other created laws, policies, and standards for the governance of people and their communities within the Natural Law of equality. They hold the great responsibility of being the voice of Nature where these laws affect Nature and therefore all life.
7. Form Regional and National Councils. This structure allows a forum to which lawmakers and decision makers can bring their proposed laws, strategies, plans for evaluation and consideration as they pertain to Natural Law and the Equality of all. Proposed changes with a potential of greater impact would be brought to the High World Council for final evaluation. The purpose is to maintain the voice and consideration of Nature and the Laws of Nature that govern all of us, and to

maintain equality, so that the planet and all its inhabitants can move forward in the healthiest way possible.

8. Fully integrate National Poverty Reduction Strategies (NPRS) with the SDGs and all other sustainable development processes, goals and agreements etc. both vertically and horizontally.
9. Develop government policies and inclusive planning processes at all levels of government in order to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all peoples. These policies and plans should then be implemented through each government's SDG plans, National Strategies for Sustainable Development, and National Poverty Reduction Strategies and in a fully integrated manner, both across these planning processes and vertically and horizontally - thus across all sectors of society and levels of government.

### **10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard**

There is a tremendous and ever-increasing disparity between the concentration of wealth, and the considerable resources needed to invest in achieving the SDGs in order to make the needed transition to full sustainability. Serious inequalities in what is possible to achieve in regard to a living wage, access to education and housing, and health care also compound the problem.

For example, government officials in the US have a quality of health care, which is not available to many, if not most, citizens of the country. They are paid a wage of (\$174K/year) for being in office, which is unattainable by most Americans. They continue to receive (\$44K - \$55K per year retirement) for the rest of their lives along with health care for their families, even if they only serve 2-5 years in office. It can behoove the individual to seek out the office of Senate or Congress for these extraordinary benefits alone. Similar inequity exists in countries worldwide.

In light of the extreme inequality of this structure how can we expect our elected officials and those in power positions to be effective and fair? In addition, the lack of integrity and unfair policies make any attempts at creating equality of people's and countries null and void.

The same types of processes could be established and used to develop government policies and plans for this target as are suggested for SDG 10.2 on social, economic and political inclusion. This is particularly important as it is those that are most directly affected by discriminatory laws and practices that will likely know what is most needed in order to overcome and fix this. It is thus necessary to involve them in political planning, development and legislative processes in order to develop political processes that are truly viable and that will have the understanding and support of the people.

This will require a shift from outer-directedness to inner-directedness in education, and in governance. It will also require a new type of leadership that focuses on facilitation rather than imposition. A shift from rigid structures to processes which are open to all. This will require a different approach to education--student-centered. A new type of

business--cooperatives where all are managers, and all are workers and all share both in the decision making as well as in the profits; and politics from local to global levels.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Ensure that all public spaces both indoors and out are accessible to all people and regardless of the type of disability experienced.
2. Provide equal opportunities for all to attend schools, be hired for employment opportunities, participate in recreational and cultural activities, and participate in governmental decision-making processes as well as to serve in government or as a civil servant, etc.
3. Reduce inequalities of government officials' wages in comparison to those of the average worker
4. Introduce policies and laws prohibiting kickbacks and benefits for those in positions of power. Establish severe, stiff, strong, really mean and nasty consequences and precedents to deter these practices.
5. Identify and eliminate discriminatory laws, policies, and practices and promote fair and impartial practices, legislation, and actions.

#### **10.4 Adopt policies especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality**

As we focus on providing equal protections of income and wellbeing for all people, it is also essential that we focus on the equal protection and wellbeing of Nature. It is important that not only are all people able to get their basic human needs met and to be able to thrive, but that Nature is also treated the same. In fact, it is probably even more important that we ensure that Nature is able to thrive given that all of life depends on having healthy eco-systems and on the very services that Nature provides.

Indeed if we do not ensure that Nature is able to continue to provide the natural resources that it always has and in an abundant manner, including that of healthy forests and soils, food, water, and clean air, etc. then we will probably not have the financial, economic, and other resources needed to be able to provide, as a society, the social, financial and economic resources that are needed and that we would like.

In order to have healthy fiscal and social protection policies and growth we need to work in collaboration with Nature. It is thus essential that we ensure that policies are established that protect the equality as well as fiscal, economic and social wellbeing which benefit all people as well as the natural environment at the same time.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Provide equal protections of income and wellbeing for all people. Invest much more heavily in all efforts to achieve the SDGs, provide jobs, lift people up, and transition to a fully sustainable economy and society thus substantially reducing the amount of resources that need to be provided for wage and social protection policies and programs.

2. Provide protections that ensure the wellbeing of the forests, soils, food, water, and air on which we are dependent upon for our fiscal, social and physical wellbeing and invest in restoration of the natural environment.
3. Provide education that increases appreciation for diversity and the importance of equality.
4. Establish policies that provide for social protection and fiscal growth, while also decoupling the economy from harm to the natural environment and resource depletion - through such things as transitioning to a circular economy and investing in efforts to achieve all of the SDGs simultaneously.

### **10.5 Improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen implementation of such regulations**

We cannot have strong and stable financial markets, institutions and economies, much less human equality and equity, if they undercut either the wellbeing of people or Nature. As we develop needed improvements, regulations, and monitoring of our global financial markets and institutions, it is imperative that they be based upon the need to ensure the wellbeing of all people and Nature. Protections must be put in place to ensure that there are no market collapses, that people will not lose their homes through no fault of their own, that they are not enabled to take out loans that they may not be able to make the payments on if there is a downturn in the economy, etc.

Similarly, forced buy-outs have ruined numerous companies and caused them to operate in a most unsustainable manner, particularly when the company's resources are liquidated to pay-off the leveraged monies that were used to purchase the company in the first place. For example, The Redwood Pacific Lumber Company in Northern California was a family owned company that practiced sustainable sustained yield forestry for decades before it had to go public and was bought out in a hostile take-over by Charles Hurwitz and his MAXXAM corporation in 1985 following which the timber harvest was doubled and thousands of acres of old-growth redwood forests were liquidated to pay off the junk bonds that Hurwitz had gotten from Michael Milken to finance the take-over. See: <https://www.nytimes.com/1988/03/02/us/ancient-redwoods-fall-to-a-wall-street-takeover.html>

#### **ACTIONS**

1. Take steps to ensure that global financial markets and institutions are based first and primarily on protecting the wellbeing of all people and Nature over individual profit motive.
2. Restore the health of ecosystems and regenerate natural capital and ecosystem services to ensure the well-being of society and the economy and ensure that there are stable financial markets along with adequate financial as other resources in order to provide for all peoples' basic human needs
3. Put in place policies to end the practice of forced buy-outs and leveraged hedge funds.

4. Adopt regulations and policies to ensure that no austerity programs are put in place that harm people or make it impossible to ensure that all peoples basic human needs can be met.
5. Put in place policies and practices to ensure financial stability and prevent financial collapse runs on banks, concentration of wealth and corporate consolidation.
6. Ensure adequate labour practices are implemented as adopted by the ILO.
7. Put in place policies, regulations and practices to ensure the protection, health, and safety of all Peoples and Nature.

#### **10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions**

There are enormous disparities between the amount of financial, industrial and many other types of resources that are available to those in the developing world as compared to those in the developed world. It will be next to impossible to achieve the SDGs if such disparities are allowed to continue to the extent to which they have in the past. It is thus essential that the representation and voice of those from developing countries is significantly increased in international economic and financial institutions. However, it must be recognized that there are also great disparities within the developing world as well and that many, if not most of their political leaders come from a privileged class and tend to focus more so on their own well-being rather than on the well-being of all of their people. It is thus essential that representatives from civil society are also included fully in such processes.

In order to enhance the voice of developing nations in global institutions unity is necessary. Every country is already involved in keeping these international institutions alive. Here the lender and the borrower are of equal importance. The institutions do not exist if one falls away. What is at stake is more than money. It is a world that works for all and where all have a role to play. The more inequality in representation and decision-making in and between countries in global economic and financial institutions persists, the greater the likelihood this will contribute to the disparity among peoples and that this will erupt in conflict, violence and streams of refugees as people struggle to survive and create livelihoods for themselves and their families.

One problem is that financial aid is seen as a giving up of power and well being by those in a position to provide aid instead of as a means of helping to bring about greater well-being, more harmony and a better basis for communications, economic and social infrastructure for the donor as well as for the recipient. By portraying aid in this larger context of building a more peaceful, diverse, creative and prosperous world for all, there can be a paradigm change in the modus operandi. Economic and financial organizations can be effectively motivated to become fairer and more representational in how decisions are made.

Instead of building on what was created in the past it may be important to courageously make a clean start where deemed essential for creating new institutions based on integrity, transparency, and equality for all.

In fact, this possibility is much closer at hand than many might realize. The United Nations and all UN Specialized Agencies are in fact based on an understanding that equality between nations is needed for more credible and effective institutions, and that this is imperative if we are to meet the challenges human-beings face today. Already huge advances have been achieved in almost all areas, including economic and financial, for this understanding is actually deeply embedded in the human psyche. It harks back to prehistoric times when people lived mainly peacefully together in hunter-gatherer economies where people were confronted daily with the need to collaborate as equals, since their immediate survival was at stake.

This collaborative consciousness, in turn, permeates all aspects of Nature, where all forms of life survive by virtue of their roles within healthy ecosystems. Here plant and animal species prosper through an equitable process of give and take for the survival of their species. So the understanding that economic and financial prosperity depends on equal representation between developed and developing countries in international economic and financial institutions is deeply ingrained in the human psyche and, although now buried often by a multitude of fears and privileged desires, can still be drawn forth, especially where a plea is made that resonates deeply with the human heart.

For this reason, it is important to have an ongoing mass education process at all levels that accompanies any attempts to bring about structural change. This education needs to draw on and strengthen the sometimes unconscious knowing of our interdependence and the joys associated with working harmoniously together as equals, using stories and experiences that speak vividly to the heart and minds and illustrate:

- that developed and developing countries are interdependent for their capacity to create rewarding lives for their peoples.
- that their ultimate self-interest lies in working together on the basis of equality, whereby each can fully develop its individual strength as a nation and a people;
- that this expresses itself among many other things in an increase of wealth through trade between equals, mutual appreciation, safety and diversity of life experience because all are contributing to all others;
- that the present inequality in decision making in international institutions carries over into an inequality of opportunities and wealth within developing countries and that this, in turn, breeds enmity, resentment, violence and conflict both between nations and within nations which is resulting in political and economic refugees and migrants, which in turn breeds fear and resentment among the rich in developed countries.

This message might have to be spelled out as a whole and in such a way that it speaks vividly to the hearts of those who are (often through fear) creating/perpetuating inequalities within and between countries. Here governments, groups and people can work together through formal education, the media including the social media.

As this insight takes place, it will be easier to take the next steps:

- Decrease the disparity of resources between the developed and the developing world by increasing the representation and voice of those from developing countries in international economic and financial institutions.
- Provide incentives for institutions to be fair and representational of the best interests of all.
- Build institutions founded on integrity, transparency and equality for all.
- Recognize that in order to uphold the agreements and commitments that have been made by the international community, including those under the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its associated Conventions along with the Rio Conventions and other Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements, it will be essential to ensure that developing countries are empowered to have just as strong of a voice and vote in global decision making processes as the developed world in order to ensure that these agreements can and will indeed be carried out by all concerned.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Focus formal education on developing the conscious use of that part of the brain (the right hemisphere) that fosters connection by, for instance, beginning the school day with activities that afford a feeling of connection. This can be through prayer, singing together, group meditation, class meetings where students welcome one another and express appreciation of each other at the start of and during the day. Or by playing background music--music that has survived the test of time, such as Mozart, whose music is often quoted as being particularly powerful to enhance a positive connection with one's own learning capacity and thus a sense of unity within.
2. Provide tasks for students to use their ingenuity to deal with environmental problems and restore Nature. This will help them connect with the natural world and other species. Examples might include developing school gardens to enhance nutrition in schools while learning about the marvels of Nature.
3. Implement article 26(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: enabling students to develop their full potential, by allowing them a certain amount of choice in what they learn, and when. (e.g. The Montessori method, The Steiner method).
4. Use collaborative forms of learning. For instance, give groups of students a social or community problem to resolve as a team. This encourages each student individually to develop their own specific talents, be recognized for their accomplishments and learn the joys and benefits of collaboration, thus nurturing the sense of unity with their own creativity and with other members of the team. This is also an educational approach that can strengthen their personal understanding of how each person can contribute or detract from the well-being of the community as a whole--thereby strengthening ties among community members.
5. Teach about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and post it in every classroom - as is called for in the Preamble of the Declaration. Make standards of equality and equity such as those outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Earth Charter both a part of the curriculum and implement them within the schools.

6. Teach international standards of human, civil and political rights.
7. Encourage all schools and districts to join the tens of millions of students that are already participating in the activities of the World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child, thus introducing and teaching children about the abuses that many other children face around the world. See: [www.childrensworld.org](http://www.childrensworld.org).
8. Make students aware of the national and international agreements made by their governments and how such legislation relates to the challenges they themselves face.
9. Introduce role-playing in schools and other methods to bridge the gap between social groups, and build understanding between people, including those who are abusing their power. It is important that people understand one another's weaknesses--why they have a need to cling to power, to harm other people, etc. both as a means of preventing others following in the footsteps of those who use power to harm others and also to find solutions that deal with crooked human development at its roots.

#### **10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies**

Migrant people provide an important role in many communities. Immigrants have historically provided a rich ingredient to the melting pot of American, as well as other, cultures around the globe. The mixing of diverse people provides the opportunity for expanding wisdom and experience for all. It is important that local, national and global governments establish fair and responsible policies, practices and laws that benefit and meet the needs of all.

Some migration and mobility is based on economic hardship and is disruptive to harmonious and supportive family and community life. If we ensure that peoples' needs are met where they live and with investment in rural development fewer people will feel pressed to migrate from communities and countries in which they are already supported, connected, and live.

For the first time the world's governments have agreed upon and adopted a Global Compact on Migration in December 2018 and established a UN Migration Network to follow up on its implementation. Unfortunately, a number of countries voted against the Compact and have refused to join the network. It is imperative for the well-being of all of the world's people that all countries be encouraged to participate in the network and to implement the provisions of the Global Compact. The Network is tasked with establishing the capacity-building mechanism called for in the Compact. It is thus imperative that as many resources be provided to establish this mechanism as possible.

The UN says that there are now more than 258 million migrants around the world living outside their country of birth. And this figure is expected to grow for a number of reasons including population growth, increasing connectivity, trade, rising inequality, demographic imbalances and climate change. The Global Compact includes 23

specific objectives for better managing migration at local, national, regional and global levels and for dealing with these challenges. Each objective contains a commitment, followed by a range of actions considered to be relevant policy instruments and best practices. It is imperative that all countries take concerted action to achieve as many of these essential objectives as possible and in a timely manner. The Global Compact can be downloaded and read at: <https://refugeesmigrants.un.org/migration-compact>. The objectives are contained in Article 16 and are followed there-after by the commitments and best practices. All governments should do all they can to promote and make their people aware of these commitments and required actions.

Additionally, more than 65 million people around the world are now officially displaced from their homes by conflict, violence and persecution; and this number is only likely to rapidly increase due to climate change and its many impacts, as well as growing resource scarcity, during the years to come. However, the vast majority of people are displaced within their country of origin or remain close to it. The international community must thus go beyond migration policies to support the responsible caring for the displacement and movement of people where-ever it occurs.

Meeting the basic human needs of all people will likely become increasingly more important and challenging as our global problems become worse. It is thus essential that the basic human rights and needs of all are prioritized and taken into account especially for those populations that are forced to move in response to "natural" disasters and other emergencies of all kinds. Our basic sense of humanity depends upon this; and it is enshrined in Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which says that all peoples are "entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration can be fully realized."

Secretary-General Guterres has stressed that the Compact "calls for greater solidarity with migrants in situations of appalling vulnerability and abuse," that it "underscores the need to anticipate future trends", and that it "highlights the imperative of devising more legal pathways for migration." Such challenges must be addressed and undertaken as a first order of business by the UN Migration Network.

The Center for Migration Studies also developed a list of actionable commitments to be considered for inclusion in the Compact during the preparatory process. See: <http://cmsny.org/global-compact-migration-issues-play> Some of these were included and some not. They remain worthy of consideration by the Migration Network.

Wisdom must shape planning and policies in order to ensure a solid foundation for safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people. We must look to serving the needs of all to build healthy communities and have quality life available for all. Discernment, careful planning and thoughtful wording will benefit the process of developing these plans and policies with support for people's ability to stay close to their roots when this is a healthy choice and support for responsible and mutually beneficial mobility and migrancy. Migration ideally facilitates growth- for the individual and the community and nation as a whole.

### **ACTIONS**

1. All countries must establish reasonable and responsible immigration and migration policies.

2. All countries should join the UN Migration Network and take substantive actions to implement and achieve the objectives and commitments of The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration.  
See: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/12/1028941>

3. Increase economic opportunities and invest in both impoverished urban as well as rural development, decreasing the need for people to migrate to other cities or countries.

#### **10.a Implement the principle of special and differential treatment for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, in accordance with WTO agreements**

If we are going to solve our common global challenges, then we must act together in concerted effort paying close attention to both the historical and present global context and situations. The principle of special and differential responsibilities is based largely on the recognition that many of our global challenges have been caused primarily by those living in the developed world while the most serious impacts are often felt by those living in the developing world - who often have the least resources available to be able to adequately deal or cope with them.

Many in the developed world do not want to have to give up the privileged position and advantages that they were born into. But if they were to look at the rest of the world with a truly open mind, they would perhaps realize that others, through no fault of their own, do not have the same benefits and opportunities as they have. It has thus been recognized time and again at the UN, even though many with privileged positions and circumstances often argue against it, that those that have more ought to and do need to do more to solve our common global problems - particularly given that many of those same problems and challenges have and continue to be exacerbated more-so by those enjoying these same advantages.

It is often said by those in the developed world that they are not able to do more because of budget constraints but given the total world situation, those in the developed world have far more economic resources, as well as other financial and technological advantages, than most of those in the developing world. If we are truly going to solve our global challenges and improve and sustain a good quality of life for all, then those of us that have more are going to have to spend more in order to achieve the scale of change that is needed; and we are going to have to spend more to help the others make the changes as well.

It can be challenging to live in a family where one person is born totally healthy while another child is born with some type of a disease or disability. The rest of the family and community are going to have to do more to help the one with a disease or other challenges that they will have to contend with throughout their life. This does not make one of us better than the other, it just means that we have to be honest about our differences and to take care of and provide for each other's needs in different ways. And truly it is a great learning opportunity and blessing to be able to help others when they need a helping hand. Each of us has our own disabilities of all different types anyway that we have to contend with throughout our lives and need a helping hand in all sorts of different ways as well. So, let us respect and support one another as we

try to find a good and productive way to make the local to global changes that are needed. We can help one another grow beyond what is expected and then finish the task at hand to achieve greatness as one.

Recognizing special and differentiated responsibilities does not mean that one should not do what they can to help as well; it just means that some will do different things than others to deal more responsibly with our global challenges. The same is true in the developed world as in the developing world. We are finally realizing that our whole agricultural system will have to be transformed if we are going to adequately deal with climate change and a whole host of other global challenges (running from preventing agricultural run-off and nutrient loss that leads to ocean dead zones to a loss in agricultural productivity and soil loss). Farmers around the world, no matter where they live, are the ones who are going to have to roll up their sleeves, get their hands dirty, and do the real work on the ground to make the changes needed. But others in government, the financial sector, etc. are going to have to help to make this possible.

A lot of resources, as well as time and energy, will be needed to restore soil health, to produce cover crops, to quit using soil compacting equipment and produce smaller scale technologies and equipment that are actually more productive in the long run. Farmers will have to relearn how to compost and enrich and enliven the soils; and consumers, along with those all along the marketing chain, will have to compost and eliminate food wastes and return the nutrients again back to the soil. A concerted global effort will be needed, by all parties, to make such changes as this in a holistic interdependent manner. Those with the resources will have to do more to help those on the ground, particularly in the developing world, to make the changes needed.

Over the past 20 to 30 years investments in agriculture and agricultural research and development have dropped, at the same time as we have realized that major changes and increased investments to support this, are actually needed. 70 -80% of those living in developing countries depend on subsistence agriculture for their basic livelihoods. Unfortunately, they do not have the resources needed to be able to make the required changes that will be needed on their own. But we all need them to make these changes to assure our survival as a species.

Target 10.7 calls for the development and implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies. Such policies and planning must include provisions to support people being able to live well where they are now as is called for in the Global Compact. If those of us in the developed world will help ensure that those in the developing world have the resources needed to adopt more productive, ecological and healthy agricultural practices then that will do much to help solve our migration challenges at the same time, while ensuring that we do have enough food to feed everyone well long into the future.

## **ACTIONS**

1. In all international negotiations it is imperative that the developed countries keep the principle of Special and Differential Treatment in mind and be generous in adopting agreements that ensure that those in the developing world will have the resources needed to fully carry out and implement the agreements being negotiated.

2. Resources must particularly be developed and provided to support small scale and subsistence farmers whose basic livelihood and wellbeing depend upon their ability to produce the food they need to eat while increasing soil health and protecting and restoring the natural environment.
3. Un-sustainable subsidies need to rapidly be phased out and new subsidy policies and tariff agreements will need to be enacted to ensure that those in the developing world have the ability to compete with those in the developed world - particularly in regard to agricultural products, natural resources, and basic commodities.
4. Developing countries are encouraged to let those in the developed world know that they are more than willing to do their part to address global problems and challenges if the support is forthcoming that will enable them to do so.

**10.b Encourage ODA and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to states where the need is greatest, in particular LDCs, African countries, SIDS, and LLDCs, in accordance with their national plans and programs**

Since the UN adopted a resolution in 1970 the international community has agreed to increase Official Development Assistance (ODA) to more than 0.7% of donor country GNP each year and for 0.15 - 0.20% of ODA to be dedicated to Least Developed Countries; and yet only 7 out of the world's 30 or so developed countries have managed to reach the first target. 0.7% of GNP is such a minuscule amount - it is way less than what we spend on pet food each year in the developed world, or on cosmetics, or candy or other "junk foods". Indeed we could take just a small portion of what is spent on cigarettes, alcohol, and other things that make our lives less rather than more healthy and spend that on increasing the well-being of others who are not as well off, again through no fault of their own but just because of where they happen to have been born - or even worse due to the real crimes of colonialization, slavery, resource grabbing and wars, etc., then it would be easy to honour such commitments as this.

Similarly, governments could raise such revenue just by adding a small tax to the purchase price of such things as this and then use that money to increase ODA, foreign direct investment, and other such financial flows.

In today's world wealth and power are often seen as the means to security and happiness and giving away wealth by complying with agreements around ODA and other financing agreements can be experienced as an erosion of power and wealth and with that one's security base. There are other reasons that increases in ODA and development assistance are not forthcoming as well, including reluctance among political representatives to spend money on people outside of their country, to increase funding for social programs, to do things that special or vested interests might oppose, etc. Seen from this perspective, one can perhaps understand why so many have not yet reached ODA targets and development assistance is not forthcoming. But given the relative wealth of those living in developed countries as compared to those in developing countries and the difference in purchasing power and capacity or the sheer amount of resources and material things that each has and owns, it makes no sense at all.

All these and many other reasons are contributing to the fact that ODA has not been forthcoming and when it has it has often been motivated by the desire of some corporations in developed countries to expand their markets and to maximize their profits in the process.

### **ACTIONS**

Actions that governments in developing countries can take to ensure that the ODA targets will be met and that those living in the developing world will have the resources needed to be able to secure their basic human needs and to do their part to achieve the SDGs include:

1. Recognize that developed countries need the developing countries for among other things access to raw materials, markets, migrant labour, indigenous wisdom and cultural practices, as well as peace and stability in the world; and it is thus imperative that all peoples have the ability and resources needed to be able to meet their basic human rights and needs while also ensuring that they and we all can protect and sustain a healthy environment and sustainable resource base, etc.
2. Partner with like-minded developing countries, Specialized UN Agencies; and donor countries that have honoured their ODA agreements and are willing and able to abide by the development needs as perceived by the recipient countries. Trade exclusively with, or give preferential treatment to, likeminded nations and those that have upheld their ODA agreements.
3. Create development plans that strengthen the country's natural and human resources that form the basis of a strong economy. This might involve creating first an agricultural base and from there developing aspects of the economy that can bring in wealth through trade with like-minded countries.
4. At the same time, build up people to people connections worldwide by providing universal access to the internet. This can be done initially by having internet centers within walking distance of one another. Such Internet cafes or community resource and learning centers can go hand in hand with a multilateral training in Internet use for selected people of each participating country who can then go back to their countries and train local experts to help women and men in each community to use the Internet for their own personal and community development or to provide such training at a national, regional and/or bio-regional level.
5. Seek out and allow subsequent economic development to be inspired by the talents that emerge among the people.
6. Develop a protocol, task force, and/or multi-stakeholder partnership initiative that will take action to develop a set of best policies and practices and/or encourage and provide support for all countries to meet their ODA commitments and to establish effective development policies that meet the desires and needs of those living in developing countries.

**10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%**

In Nature there is a free give and take between species that benefits all concerned. This situation of a mutually beneficial give and take also consists in the contest of migrant workers and is detracted from where the free flow of remittances is burdened by high fees that are not compensated in other ways.

According to the World Bank, in 2018 overall global remittance grew 10% to US\$689 billion, including US\$528 billion to developing countries, thus dwarfing the amount of money that comes from ODA - at about \$135 billion each year. Transaction costs typically cost around 5 - 10% of the money transferred.

For a summary on the direction in which we need to head and are already beginning to head to reduce transactions costs see:

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/peoplemove/remittance-reality-getting-3-and-beyond>

While it is of course important that we reduce transaction costs on remittances, what would be even more important would be to address the value of currency exchanges and how this disadvantages those living in the developing world.

Building on the natural processes discussed above, it is clear why migrant workers exist. In fact, they have become essential cogs in the wheel of the economies where they settle. Their countries and the wellbeing of their families there as well as the rest of the population are a part of the give and take that is essential to global well-being. Here too, where poverty reigns, people are forced to degrade the environment to eke out a living; this contributes to the destruction of ecosystems, which affects the capacity of the Earth to retain moisture. That in turn creates droughts, which affects whole economies, and causes civil unrest and wars. Wars, weaknesses in the global economy or imbalances in the environment cause heartbreak and profound suffering which spills over borders and affects people worldwide. Here too it is in the interest of all to follow Nature's example and ensure that all have a means to survive and thrive so that they can contribute rather than detract from the well-being of the whole.

Reducing inequality does not mean that everyone has to be or live the same. It is about finding solutions that work for all and benefit all. Our differences really are our strengths and attributes. Addressing inequality just means to give a helping hand where needed so that we all have the resources required to make the changes that are needed as well.

The website listed below provides data on the cost of sending and receiving small amounts of money from one country to another. Called remittances, these international transfers are often initiated by migrant workers. The aggregate cash flows and the number of participants are enormous. In fact, the World Bank estimates that remittances totalled \$575 billion in 2016, \$429 billion of which went to developing countries, involving some 232 million migrants.

<https://remittanceprices.worldbank.org/en/about-remittance-prices-worldwide>

*Remittance Prices Worldwide* covers 365 "country corridors". The corridors include 48 remittance sending countries and 105 receiving countries. In many cases, the cost to consumers of these remittance transactions is expensive relative to the often-low incomes of migrant workers, the amounts sent, and the income of remittance recipients. Therefore, any reduction in remittance transfer price would result in more

money remaining in the pockets of migrants and their families and would have a significant effect on the income levels of remittance families. Indeed, if the cost of sending remittances could be reduced by 5 percentage points relative to the value sent, remittance recipients in developing countries would receive over \$16 billion dollars more each year than they do now. This added income could then provide remittance recipients more opportunity for consumption, savings, and investment in local economies.

Remittance prices are high for many reasons, including underdeveloped financial infrastructure in some countries, limited competition, regulatory obstacles, and lack of access to the banking sector by remittance senders and/or receivers, and difficulties for migrants to obtain the necessary identification documentation to enter the financial mainstream.

However, the single most important factor leading to high remittance prices is a lack of transparency in the market. It is difficult for consumers to compare prices because there are several variables that make up remittance prices. Prices for remittances are frequently made up of a fee charged for sending a certain amount, a margin taken on the exchange rate when remittances are paid and received in different currencies, and, at times, a fee charged to the recipient of the funds. These fee components may also vary according to how the receiver is paid (i.e. cash or by crediting an account), the speed of the transfer, and the ability of the sender to provide information about the recipient (i.e. bank account number).

In addition, a lack of transparency in the market has had the impact of reducing competition, as consumers tend to continue to patronize traditional market players because they are not aware of and cannot compare services, fees, and speed of their existing remittance service against other products.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Request the UN to make a study of how remittances can be dispatched and paid for in equitable and transparent ways.
2. Determine how to distinguish ones that are fair and safe and of maximum benefit to migrants themselves.
3. Train expert advisors and position them at border crossings both of countries that provide migrant labour and recipient countries to inform migrant labour of ways of getting sound advice when that is needed. These advisors should be clearly distinguishable from false advisors wishing to abuse the situation.

# CLIMATE ACTION

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 13: Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts

### TARGETS

- 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries
- 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning
- 13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning
  - 13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible
  - 13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing states, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities



# **BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

## **SDG 13**

### **Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts\***

*\*Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change*

#### **Prepared by**

**Marilyn Fowler, MA, PhD.,**  
Department of Consciousness and Sustainable Development  
John F. Kennedy University

**Dr. Maia Kincaid, PhD.,**  
Founder of the Sedona International School  
for Nature and Animal Communication

**Rob Wheeler**  
Main UN Representative, Global EcoVillage Network

**Jill Lauri, MBA, MSW**

**Lee Samatowic, ND**

**Joan Kehoe, MSC**

**Lisinka Ulatowska, MA, PhD.**  
Coordinator Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
UN Representative  
Institute for Planetary Synthesis

#### **Endorsers**

John F. Kennedy University  
Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
South Eastern Peoples  
California Institute of Integral Studies  
The Sedona International School of Animal and Nature Communicators  
The Institute for Planetary Synthesis  
The All Win Network  
The Association of World Citizens

Contact: Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com

## BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SDG 13

### **Take Urgent Action To Combat Climate Change And Its Impacts\***

*\*Acknowledging that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change is the primary international, intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change*

#### **INTRODUCTION**

A crucial development in the global struggle to combat climate change and its impacts is the growing awareness that a major transformation of attitudes, approaches and beliefs is now required to enable humanity to achieve a prosperous, sustainable future. This transformation of mindsets must involve a shift towards living more harmoniously together with our Biosphere, within which humans are embedded and have evolved.

Humanity's ability to respond and adapt to climate change and global warming is dependent upon our relationship with Nature. Nature is the source of our economy and society, of every resource we need to survive, and indeed of life itself. The UN website *Harmony with Nature* ([www.harmonywithnatureun.org](http://www.harmonywithnatureun.org)) underlines this perspective, delineating the understanding that for humanity to thrive and even survive, Nature must also be allowed the right to survive and thrive. This understanding is grounded in *"the recognition of the intrinsic value of Nature and of human-Earth relationships that are symbiotic, interconnected and subject to the natural laws of the Universe...in which human-Earth relationships are balanced within the greater web of life to live in Harmony with Nature."*

(Report of the UN Secretary General on Harmony with Nature of 15 Aug. 2013, A/68/325)

Human activity has caused fundamental shifts in four crucial planetary boundaries—climate change, loss of biosphere integrity, land system change, and altered biogeochemical flows (or rather the nitrogen/phosphorus cycle)—to the point where they are no longer fully supporting human life. It is therefore essential that we learn to once more live in harmony with Nature.

See: [www.stockholmresilience.org/research/planetary-boundaries.html](http://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/planetary-boundaries.html) and [www.stockholmresilience.org/research/research-news/2015-01-15-planetary-boundaries---an-update.html](http://www.stockholmresilience.org/research/research-news/2015-01-15-planetary-boundaries---an-update.html)

Climate change is exacerbated by efforts to manage, control and own that which is natural, that which should be left untouched for all to appreciate and benefit from. Humanity's desire to profit from the use of natural resources has often led to prioritizing ownership and control over the development of balanced, interconnected human-Earth relationships. Rather than ceding ownership of the natural environment to the highest bidder, we must foster ownership that protects and restores Nature. (See the Report of the UN Secretary General on Harmony with Nature of 15 Aug. 2013, A/68/325)

Humans are Nature's children as well as Nature's stewards. In Nature, no individual species has sole ownership of its habitat. Plant and animal species sustain themselves and thrive by sharing their environment with others. This is a valuable lesson for humanity. If we can appreciate the profound beauty and richness, we have

available to us on Mother Earth, and practice ways to share and steward it, we can birth a new human awareness, a new human being.  
See [www.harmonywithnatureun.org](http://www.harmonywithnatureun.org).

Living in harmony with the natural forces of Nature nourishes all living beings. When all species thrive, then people individually and the whole human species will be able to thrive. When other species do not thrive then neither do human beings. Realizing our place as fellow members in this balanced community of Nature gives us both the opportunity and the responsibility to respect and live in that balance.

Taking the path of living in harmony with Nature involves living in alignment with the highest and best for our species and for all life. To accomplish this it is not necessary to break down our old systems, if this could even be achieved, if we can just replace or transform them instead. We just need to think creatively going forward and take actions that are in alignment with all life. When we stop fearing Nature and instead seek to understand her wisdom and work *with* her systems and processes, we operate from a position of true power.

The earth is changing. In our lifetime we are witnessing extremes in temperatures and climactic events unparalleled in recent history. We are being reminded of the power of Nature to continually find balance. Fear of extinction, the loss of scarce resources, or the increasing impacts coming from climate induced disasters can be powerful motivating forces. In this time of global peril, we have the choice, indeed the environmental imperative, to actively collaborate with Nature so that we can realize our place in the community of life and thrive alongside our fellow species.

Dr. Jem Bendell, Professor of Sustainability Leadership and co-author of the 2012 WEF report on the Sharing Economy, has done an extensive review of the scientific literature on climate change, taking a look at the most current data, accumulated since 2014. He has documented just how severe the environmental and climatic changes are that we have already caused, along with the expected coming calamities that we are just now beginning to recognize and face.  
See: [www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf](http://www.lifeworth.com/deepadaptation.pdf)

In his 2018 paper entitled “Deep Adaptation: A Map for Navigating Climate Tragedy”, Professor Bendell describes just how threatening the situation is. For example, “The warming of the Arctic has reached wider public awareness as it has begun destabilizing winds in the higher atmosphere, specifically the jet stream and the northern polar vortex, leading to extreme movements of warmer air north into the Arctic and cold air to the south. At one point in early 2018, temperature recordings from the Arctic were 20 degrees Celsius above the average for that date (Watts, 2018). The warming Arctic has led to dramatic loss in sea ice, the average September extent of which has been decreasing at a rate of 13.2% per decade since 1980, so that over two thirds of the ice cover is already gone (NSIDC/NASA, 2018).”  
“Given the reduction in the reflection of the Sun’s rays from the surface of white ice, an ice-free Arctic is predicted to increase warming globally by a substantial degree. Writing in 2014, scientists calculated this change is already equivalent to 25% of the direct forcing of temperature increase from CO<sub>2</sub> during the past 30 years (Pistone et al, 2014). That means we could remove a quarter of the cumulative CO<sub>2</sub> emissions of the last three decades and it would already be outweighed by the loss of the reflective

power of Arctic sea ice. One of the most eminent climate scientists in the world, Peter Wadhams, believes an ice-free Arctic will occur one summer in the next few years and that it will likely increase the warming caused by the CO<sub>2</sub> produced by human activity by 50% (Wadhams, 2016)."

"Between 2002 and 2016, Greenland shed approximately 280 gigatons of ice per year, and the island's lower elevation and coastal areas experienced up to 13.1 feet (4 meters) of ice mass loss (expressed in equivalent-water-height) over a 14-year period (NASA, 2018). Along with other melting of land ice, and the thermal expansion of water, this has contributed to a global mean sea level rise of about 3.2 mm/year, representing a total increase of over 80 mm or about 3 feet, since 1993 (JPL/PO.DAAC, 2018); and this is now increasing in a non-linear manner."

How, we might then ask, is this effecting humans? "Climate change has reduced growth in crop yields by 1–2 percent per decade over the past century (Wiebe et al, 2015); and FAO reports that weather abnormalities related to climate change are costing billions of dollars a year and growing exponentially. We are also seeing impacts on marine ecosystems. About half of the world's coral reefs have died in the last 30 years, with higher water temperatures and acidification due to higher CO<sub>2</sub> concentrations in ocean water being key (Phys.org, 2018). In the ten years prior to 2016 the Atlantic Ocean soaked up 50 percent more carbon dioxide than it did the previous decade, measurably speeding up the acidification of the ocean (Woosley et al, 2016)."

"The climate models today suggest an increase in storm number and strength (Herring et al, 2018). They predict a decline of normal agriculture, including the compromising of the mass production of grains in the northern hemisphere on a scale of 20 - 40% and intermittent disruption to rice production in the tropics. The loss of coral and the acidification of the seas is predicted to reduce fisheries productivity by over half (Rogers et al, 2017). The rates of sea level rise suggest they may be soon become exponential (Malmquist, 2018), thus posing significant problems for billions of people living in coastal zones (Neumann et al, 2015). Environmental scientists are now describing our current era as the sixth mass extinction event in the history of planet Earth, with this one caused by us. About half of all plants and animal species in the world's most biodiverse places are at risk of extinction due to climate change (WWF, 2018). The World Bank reported in 2018 that countries need to prepare for over 100 million internally displaced people due to the effects of climate change (Rigaud et al, 2018), in addition to millions of international refugees."

It has thus become obvious that humanity and the international community need to go well beyond the climate change commitments and agreements that have been made to date; and take much more substantial action.

The Earth System goes through natural warming and cooling trends during which climatic conditions are created that can either support or inhibit human life. Relevant examples include the most recent Ice Ages, through which some humans were able to survive while many others perished. Scientific evidence of current global climate phenomena largely supports the view that a significant factor in the planetary warming taking place today is due to human activities. For that reason, it is important that we not further accelerate global warming, but instead reverse and mitigate the impacts still occurring to the extent possible by keeping human activity within the planetary boundaries needed for human survival.

It is also necessary to prepare to confront the consequences of global warming, by:

- Using science and technology to create environments and support systems (food, shelter, water, heating and cooling systems) that are conducive to human well-being even when these have been affected by global warming.
- Developing disaster relief systems that can meet crises associated with global warming.
- Restoring and regenerating ecosystem health in order to help people not only to respond to climate change but also mitigate climate change and prevent it.
- Changing our agricultural practices so that they are less fossil fuel dependent, are much more resilient, can weather the increasing severity of “natural” disasters, lead to greater soil health and natural productivity, and provide conditions that are more amenable to growing healthy and productive plants.
- Restoring large- and small- scale natural water cycles and invest in water retention landscaping to restore ecosystem health and in the process reverse dryland degradation and desertification. Restoring natural ecosystems will also help to stabilize the climate, prevent both regional and global warming, and reduce the threat of climate induced disasters.
- Developing plans to reverse or counter acidification of our oceans and/or provide other means to cope with the loss or diminishing productivity of fisheries and coral reefs and habitats, etc. - all of which is due to the huge amount of carbon dioxide that we have released which ends up in the ocean.

It is important to remember that Nature, left to her own devices, is inherently sustainable and has evolved naturally to where it supports and nourishes life. One might say that it has built up expertise over billions of years. We have a tendency to think that we are separate from Nature and so we talk about 'the environment' as if we are not part of it. We must remind ourselves that we are all part of the Earth and the Earth is literally what sustains us. We cannot live without it. Whatever we do which results in our environment being poisoned, whatever we do to harm the balance of species, we do to ourselves and all species. We are all in this together. We must learn from Nature, and follow the natural rhythms, to keep its harmony and balance.

We are currently in a precarious situation because we have not lived in harmony and respect for the Earth and our fellow species.

The question is how may we quickly transform the manner in which we have been living on the planet? How may we go forward in such a way that we look beyond our own individual needs, in the moment, and instead stand for the ongoing well-being of all species and the Earth.

If we fail to do so, it is quite possible that we may either face the extinction of our own species or conditions that are quite harmful or detrimental to our very way of life, as well as that of many others.

The question is how we can live in a manner that naturally honors the wisdom of Mother Nature. It's up to each of us to treat Mother Earth with respect and care for her as we care for ourselves. It is up to us to treat our only home with great care, love, and reverence. We must make the changes needed to make a better world together.

We have a tendency to think that we are separate from Nature and so we talk about the 'environment' as if we are not part of it. Before anything else, we must remind

ourselves that we are all part of the Earth and have a responsibility to follow the rhythms of Nature, to keep its harmony and balance. If we fail to do so, it is quite possible that we may either face the extinction of our own species or conditions that are quite harmful or detrimental to our very way of life, as well as that of many other species.

### **Considerations for How to Use Education to Promote a Paradigm Change**

- Make it a habit to look at Nature without prejudice: simply observe and be aware of all that is.
- Consider that Earth's resources are finite, contributed to humanity by other living beings. Take only what you need.
- Be mindful that change is possible when we realize that people and planet are one and the same.
- Remember that we are all part of the Earth and have a responsibility to follow the rhythms of Nature, to keep its harmony and balance.
- Learn to listen—to ourselves, to our own hearts, to each other, as well as to Nature, animals, trees, and plants.
- Think and act in ways that are inclusive of the well-being of all species.
- Consider that Nature just naturally does what is required to be sustainable and life supporting. As stewards, it is our responsibility to support and enable these natural capacities.

### **TARGETS SDG 13**

#### **13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries**

It is natural to worry about floods and other disasters stemming from climate change. But instead of giving into fear and fighting with other people for control of or to protect natural resources, it is more advisable to act from a deep understanding of both the dynamics of Nature that produce climate change and those that allow all species and all of Nature to thrive.

One of the best and most important ways to create resilience is to restore our natural ecosystems, create water retention landscapes and regenerate our large- and small-scale watersheds in order both to avert and respond to climate change by working with the forces inherent in Nature, which have fostered resilience and an increase in diversification of life forms for billions of years.

Eventually, human survival depends on living in harmony with Nature and that would be greatly enhanced if we learned once more to *consciously* use our inborn capacity for ongoing communication with the Earth System. (See SDG 13.3—Education.) This capacity is functioning *unconsciously and/or semiconsciously* in all people (response to light and darkness, temperature, air quality, sensing of danger, and the like). Our lives depend on this. But being in ongoing *conscious* communication with Nature will enable people to live in cooperation with other species and the planet on which all life depends and help us to learn to live within those planetary boundaries that can support human life.

As a first step in re-establishing conscious communication with the Earth System and creating transformative regenerative processes, we can work with those who already consciously use that capacity. Among these are many Indigenous Peoples, small scale farmers who depend for their living on accurate assessment of how to live in harmony with Nature, a growing number of people who have been conscious from an early age of their capacity to communicate with Nature and those now learning Nature communication skills, as well as with scientists who can measure subtle changes in life energy and those who live close to the land.

When we study early Earth history, it is evident that the current change in the climate may in part be a natural phenomenon that has been severely aggravated by human activities. Because we do not yet know the extent to which its impacts can be mitigated, it is important to prepare in all countries for climate-related hazards and natural disasters.

As part of this preparation, all nations and cultures can benefit from a *global* exchange of best practices. These best practices should include the wisdom of those who live close to Nature and are knowledgeable about land-based practices that can provide valuable resources for the rest of the world.

In cases of massive environmental disruption, where the usual social, economic and other infrastructure may not be functioning effectively, it will be necessary to build cooperative working relationships among all people in a community so that potential survivors of climate-related natural disasters can work together in already formed teams to begin to deal with the aftermath of disasters while waiting for help from the outside world. Trainings in schools, at work, and community education would all help to prepare survivors to work together and create a strong sense of cooperation that will benefit communities in many other ways as well. Indeed, such training ought to begin well before any disasters actually strike and part of their function should include both development projects as well as climate mitigation, emergency planning and preparedness, adaptation readiness activities, etc.

In a crisis, community members may have to learn to cope without medicines, tools, implements and public services. They will then depend on those who know how to locate uncontaminated fresh water sources and use complementary healing modalities, including such things as energy healing, using energy from the sun, etc.

Throughout history when humans have been confronted with seemingly insurmountable challenges, our inborn creativity and ingenuity has enabled us to take a new course of action. We must now pay attention to, and understand, the new technologies and opportunities available to us to prepare ourselves for the resulting conditions, hazards, and natural disasters associated with our changing climate.

## **ACTIONS**

### **Education**

- Reawaken and kindle the inherent conscious connection that each person now has unconsciously with Nature with the help of scientists who have finely tuned instrumentation; Indigenous Peoples; small-scale farmers and others whose livelihoods depends on accurately interpreting the signs Nature is constant giving us; and the increasing number who are consciously aware of their

ongoing connection with Nature as well as those learning conscious Nature communication.

- Implement student-centered education to increase people's creativity—the gift that has helped humanity overcome seeming unsurmountable challenges in the past.

### **Disaster Relief**

- Heads of State and UN staff can facilitate a global exchange of best practices to mitigate the effects of various types of climate-related disasters.
- Governments can organize and train disaster relief teams at the local, regional, state, and national levels, in advance of major crises.
- Disaster relief teams can be trained in the use of emergency medical modalities that go beyond typical equipment and medicines, emphasizing common items likely to be available when normal medical supplies cannot be obtained, making use of naturally available resources, such as the heat from the sun, underground water resources, etc.
- Other groups can be trained in innovative techniques for dealing with climate-related disasters, using emerging technologies and creative scenario planning.

### **Ecosystem Restoration**

- All stakeholder groups should support and take action to help restore degraded ecosystems, increase resiliency, and create buffer zones that will protect people and human settlements from, as well as prevent, the increasing severity of “natural” disasters.
- School courses and programs should provide information about “natural” disasters as well as about what can be done to prevent and respond to them, particularly through the usage of ecosystem services and restorative practices.
- The international community should support the development of a *Call and Campaign to Restore the Earth* and do everything possible to support the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration including through the establishment of restorative programs as a part of their national sustainable development strategies and plans.
- Full support should be also provided to establish Ecosystem Restoration Camps in all countries in an effort to re-green the earth.  
See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org)

### **Water Retention Landscaping and Restoration of both Watersheds and Natural Water Cycles**

- A full-scale plan should be developed to restore the health and viability of large and small scale water cycles all around the earth, including by investing in water retention landscaping and by providing incentives to land owners who wish to do so.
- Such a plan should be modelled or based on the Global Action Plan for the Restoration of Natural Water Cycles and Climate, put forward by the Global Ecology Institute.  
See: [www.tamera.org/article-the-secret-of-water-as-a-basis-for-the-new-earth](http://www.tamera.org/article-the-secret-of-water-as-a-basis-for-the-new-earth) and [https://bio4climate.org/downloads/Kravcik\\_Global\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](https://bio4climate.org/downloads/Kravcik_Global_Action_Plan.pdf)

- Efforts should be undertaken as a part of national strategy plans and attempts to achieve the SDGs that focus on preventing salt water intrusion, replenishing water tables and depleted ground water, and ensuring that enough water flows into and is left in water courses to sustain ecosystem health and make sure they still run out to the sea.

### 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

At all levels it is important to consider how our environmental policies and relationships with Nature can directly impact various other societal functions and well-being. For example, forests, sustainable agricultural practices, and regenerative land management policies can add to the ability to sequester large amounts of carbon, add to soil health and prevent soil depletion, prevent land erosion, run-off and thus mass flooding, provide buffer zones to prevent “natural” disasters, and more. There are a lot of sensible solutions for doing such things as this that can and ought to be included in national policies, strategies and planning processes and which are still not all that well known about as of yet.

#### **Burn: Using Fire to Cool the Earth: A Biochar Solution**

Albert Bates, the author of *Biochar Solution* and the founder and director of the Ecovillage Training Center at The Farm in Tennessee and Kathleen Draper, board member of the International Biochar Initiative and moderator for its biochar education webinar series, have authored a new book that has just been published entitled: *Burn: Using Fire to Cool the Earth* which describes a multitude of ways by which we can sequester gigatons of carbon through the production and use of biochar and thus move rapidly towards stabilizing the Earth’s climate system.

Biochar is typically produced by pyrolyzing woody matter or waste materials, thus burning them without oxygen, while avoiding giving off greenhouse gases and instead capturing the burnt carbon in the remaining biochar which is produced. This biochar, which will last and sequester the carbon for thousands or millions of years, can then be used to enhance soil quality, strengthen or replace building materials, or be combined into goods and products of all kinds.

In a recent blog Bates says: “We will have to challenge some commonly-held ideas about biofuels, bioenergy and energy cropping, particularly that energy crops pose an inherent threat to ecosystems. Certain energy crops certainly can do a great deal of harm to the natural environment; but what about using integrated agroforestry and silvopasture energy crops to strategically enhance ecosystem functions and build regional bio economies, as India is doing? What about cascading functions so that the same energy crop makes leaf protein extracts, animal feed, fish feed, furniture, and musical instruments before what remains is carbonized for electricity and biochar?”

Bates goes on to say that, “Choosing appropriate practices and policies requires an understanding of how soils, climate, farm types, infrastructure, markets, and social organization can stimulate a regenerative, circular economy. In this moment of crisis, we are blessed with emerging technologies, cognitive sciences and holistic management practices that open previously undisturbed system dynamics to our thoughtful, meticulous, deliberate consideration.” It will not be easy, but we can do it. However, we are going to have to reduce the ecological footprint of human civilization,

something we will be doing anyway because of Peak Everything. Holding to the 2-degree goal requires us to embark immediately upon the IPCC's 7-percent glide path, halving emissions from all sources every decade. It will involve a vast, worldwide change to fossil fuel-free production that prizes handcrafted wooden buildings and objects, durable and simple design, ease of repair and material conservation. This is not like upgrading your computer to the next version of your present operating system. It is more like switching to a completely new operating system. It will take some time to learn."

### **Launching a Campaign to Restore the Earth**

There are more than 2 Billion hectares of land that are degraded and need to be restored around the Earth. Again, we know how to do this, but it will take a lot of work and effort. The question thus becomes how we can finance such an initiative and launch a Campaign to Restore the Earth. Bates writes that his Swiss research colleague Hans-Peter Schmidt "has an idea for repairing the carbon trading system's corruption by leasing the service of carbon removal on an annual basis, subject to strict verification. Under the UNCCD's No Net Degradation standard, ratified into international law a few years ago, lands that are steadily degrading would need to purchase more of these sorts of carbon service leases while those that are steadily being regenerated as carbon stores, such as those under care of Ecosystem Restoration Camps, would earn a steady revenue from the leases, one that presumably appreciates every year. Investors are happy, purchases are verifiable, and more camps can be built." See: <http://ecosystemrestorationcamps.org>.

In any case it is essential that all stakeholder groups support efforts to drawdown as much carbon out of the atmosphere as rapidly as possible using natural biological processes - such as through investing in and transitioning to agro-forestry, regenerative agriculture, and the associated production and use of biochar.

### **Project Drawdown**

Meanwhile Paul Hawken and a team of 77 climate and permaculture researchers have done a rigorous study and published a book called Project Drawdown which describes 100 best climate solutions that are designed not just to stabilize, but to actually reduce the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere and thus achieve "Drawdown". Hawken claims that, "Drawdown is about technologies and solutions that are already in place, understood, measured, documented and growing. This is a path to opportunity and wellbeing, as opposed to a tax or a loss."

Project Drawdown includes such best practices as rooftop solar to educating girls, from conservation agriculture to refrigerant management, from plant-rich diets to heat pumps, from agro-forestry and reforestation to regenerative agricultural practices, from alternative cement to indigenous people's land management. Most are "no regrets solutions" that we'd be wise to pursue even if there were no climate crisis.

If the international community wants to get serious about reversing global warming and stabilizing the climate system, then all governments ought to undertake to put in place and support as many of these climate solutions as possible. For a good summary overview of the book go to and see the 2017 article "We're Not Doomed": [www.thenation.com/authors/tom-athanasiou](http://www.thenation.com/authors/tom-athanasiou) or go to the Project Drawdown website at: [www.drawdown.org](http://www.drawdown.org) which provides a good analysis of the costs and benefits of implementing each of the solutions on a global scale.

## Re-Greening the Deserts

Now let's turn to how we can re-green the deserts thus helping to stabilize the climate. Ecologist John Todd has been an early pioneer in designing and popularizing many appropriate technologies that are key to transitioning to a more sustainable future. He is perhaps best known for using biological treatment to clean up polluted waterways. He writes in his 2018 book, *Healing Earth: An Ecologist's Journey of Innovation and Environmental Stewardship*, about an astounding proposal and project underway to transform the whole Sinai Peninsula and desert into a green fertile oasis and in the process help to reverse the impacts from global warming while also stabilizing the climate in much of South East Asia.

"The Sinai has been identified as the place on Earth whose restoration will have the largest impact on ecological, social, economic and security issues," says John D. Liu, Chinese American film-maker and ecologist. "In order to best address climate change, we need to invest in organic life and restore CO<sub>2</sub> into the soil by photosynthesis: carbon sequestration."

Degraded soils or desert/arid areas, have a limited ability to retain water, thus causing the area to heat up and contribute to warming our planet. Desertification also disrupts both the hydrological and natural water cycles, thus causing the further loss of biodiversity and green growth. Re-greening of deserts and restoring the ecosystems can be combined with the creation of wetlands, thus bringing back the rich abundance of life.

Broken watersheds, or rather hydrological cycles, lead to additional problems as well, due to the relatively high concentrations of water vapour released into the upper zones of the atmosphere. This is a danger because water vapour higher up contributes more to the greenhouse effect. It is also believed that water vapour higher in the atmosphere causes more extreme weather events. Instead of being part of a healthy hydrological cycle in balance with the ecosystem, water is "lost" in arid areas and also causes extreme weather elsewhere on the planet.

Restoration of a hydrological cycle in a watershed starts, in contrast, with the infiltration of water by increasing the retention capacity of the soil. The restoration work should start at higher areas, so up hill. This can be done by constructing terraces, swales, and ponds, etc. and covering the soil with mulch or ground cover and cover crops. By planting trees with longer roots that go deep into the earth, we can draw up water which the trees will then give off through transpiration to control their temperatures, thus bringing water back into the local ecosystem and helping to restore degraded and dryland regions.

A group called the Weather Makers has been working with the Dutch government and has developed a plan for restoring the Sinai desert, an area that was once forested and teeming with life. The Sinai is connected with the Mediterranean basin and the Indian Ocean and has an extremely large influence on the weather in both hydrological systems. Re-greening the Sinai could have a beneficial impact on the wind patterns. Today humidity from the Mediterranean gets transported to the Indian Ocean, increasing the typhoon occurrences. Lowering temperatures in Sinai could change the wind direction and bring back humidity to the Sinai but also to North Africa. The project is proposed to take place in three stages over a period of ten years and would

likely have beneficial impacts on the whole region. See: <http://theweathermakers.nl/wp-content/uploads/2017/09/Beleidsplan-stichting-The-Weather-Makers.pdf> for their full proposal.

Going back now to John Todd, he has put together a plan for using geodesic greenhouse domes to create mini-oases to aid in growing and restoring plants and wildlife in the Sinai desert. The domes would be covered with heavy duty plastic and inside there would be translucent tanks filled with seawater. During the day the water would evaporate and moisten the air; and then at night it would condense on the inside the plastic. In the morning it could then be shaken off thus watering plants, including even fig trees, growing inside the greenhouse dome. Once the plants are well established (within a couple of years) and have grown deep roots so that they can survive the harsh conditions, the greenhouse dome could be moved somewhere else nearby and the process started all over again. Meanwhile seaweed, clams, oysters, shrimp and fish could also be grown in the saltwater tanks. All elements of this design have already been proven to work and are in use elsewhere.

This approach to harvesting and providing fresh water to heat tolerant plants could thus be used in deserts around the world to begin to re-green dry-land regions and reverse climate change. John has provided a detailed description in his book of how this would work which you can read on-line or in a hard copy beginning on page 160: <https://books.google.com/books?isbn=1623172985>. The rest of the book is well worth reading as well and provides countless ways for re-greening the planet.

### **Sequestering Carbon to Create Healthy Soils**

On a related note France launched a 4 per 1000 Initiative on regenerative agriculture at the Paris Climate Summit Conference in 2015 with the goal of increasing the amount of carbon in soil by 0.4% a year thus sequestering carbon, reducing soil loss, creating much healthier soils, increasing climate resiliency, and reducing greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. If this could be done on all of the land that we farm around the world we could halt the annual increase of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere. All stakeholder groups including local, national and regional governments, companies, trade organizations, farmers and farmer organizations, NGOs, research facilities, and others are invited to join the initiative and to make a commitment to help achieve this goal. Such help could take the form of:

- The application at a local level of agricultural and environmental management methods conducive to the restoration of soils, increasing their organic carbon stock and protecting carbon-rich soils and biodiversity.
- Provision of training and popularization programs to encourage such methods.
- Financing projects for the restoration, improvement and/or preservation of soil carbon stocks.
- Definition and application of suitable public tools and policies.
- Development of agricultural product supply chains protective of soils.

You can learn more about or take action to join the initiative at: <http://4p1000.org>. There you will also find guidelines, reports, videos and other information that will aid you in doing so.

### **Regenerative Development to Reverse Climate Change:**

### **a Commonwealth Initiative**

The Commonwealth group of countries is also taking action to support Regenerative Development to Reverse Climate Change. It has held 3 symposiums bringing together the world's experts and best practitioners over the past several years and launched the Common Earth Initiative in 2018 at its Heads of Government Meeting in partnership with the Commonwealth Secretariat and Innovation Hub. Common Earth provides support to the 53 member states to strengthen regenerative efforts around their local regions. According to the website, "Common Earth is a worldwide community supporting efforts to regenerate the wealth of Earth's commons and meet the 2030 agenda. The global commons are the dynamic, living systems that are the basis of life on Earth. Humanity's social and economic well-being are dependent on the health of our common land, oceans, and atmosphere. Caring for them properly requires valuing human dignity and understanding that true wealth derives from a healthy biosphere and web of life."

In June 2017 Cloudburst Foundation and the Commonwealth Secretariat convened more than 50 stakeholders from the international finance community to discuss strategies for funding regenerative projects in the 53 member states. This meeting explored modalities for shifting financial flows to support the health of Earth's living systems. Importantly participants discussed approaches to creating new investment opportunities that optimize planetary health and work to do most good instead of do less bad—a cornerstone of regenerative development.

It is hoped that all of the members of the Commonwealth will take good advantage of this initiative and that the Secretariat will ensure that the needed support is provided to all countries to truly take the needed action to restore the Earth and in the process prevent global warming and re-stabilize the climate.

For more information see: <http://cominnowealth.org/discovery/common-earth>.

Such efforts and policies should be put in place in all related Ministries and at all levels of government from the local to national. The best steps and actions to take can be ascertained both by observing and communicating directly with Nature, as is more often being practiced now by those fluent in the use of permaculture, bio mimicry, green economy, and even circular economy practices. Those with expertise in these complementary practices and economies should be encouraged to participate in such planning and implementation processes.

Where governmental policies do not take into account the full know-how that is inherent in the cultures of their peoples, invaluable experience is missed that is directly connected to their specific geographic region, has in many cases taken centuries to develop, and would be almost impossible to duplicate through other channels especially before 2030. Indigenous Peoples have scientifically observed plant, insect, bird, and other animal populations over generations and have learned to employ this knowledge to mitigate climate change. UN Member States could learn valuable environmental lessons by supporting indigenous policies to mitigate and survive climate change, including respecting their forms of government, which themselves are often examples of social forms that are rooted in Nature.

Indigenous Peoples' governments, including treaty organizations, confederations, nation-states, city-states, villages, and other types of indigenous structures must be

included in negotiations for climate change and climate mitigation measures in order to achieve productive national policies, strategies, and planning. UN Resolution 61/295, the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, was crafted for this purpose. Unfortunately, many UN Members still undermine world security by continuing short-sighted urban and industrial development without the Free Prior and Informed Consent described in Resolution 61/295, ILO169 and the Convention on Biological Diversity.

Peaceful work to mitigate climate change is possible where treaties and other legal agreements are fully honoured and all human rights are respected, including those of Indigenous Peoples. Lack of respect for international treaties undermine all of our global efforts and deprive humanity of indispensable wisdom.

Climate change can be construed as the combined result of human activities and natural fluctuations in the Earth System itself. Optimistically, all want to believe that the effects of climate change can be mitigated, but it is evident that every living being will be affected, and this awareness must be considered as its effects are studied. For this reason, climate change measures must be included in national policies, strategies and planning.

## **POTENTIAL ACTIONS**

### **Policy integration**

- National governments can effectively plan, develop and convey policies, strategies and actions to be implemented locally.
- Governments can develop and share solid information with their citizens about how climate change and its effects can be mitigated.
- Governments can share with each other best practices on climate mitigation and ways to communicate measures to the grass roots.
- Local governments can mobilize grass roots efforts to take effective, ongoing action.
- Channels can usefully be created to allow input by “the people” to governmental decisions in the area of climate change to ensure that policy, strategies and planning are maximally informed by people throughout the population as well as governments at all levels.

### **Prerequisites and Best Practices**

- Many cities, states, and governments around the world have been announcing plans and targets to transition to 100% renewable energy. This is an essential step that ought to be taken in all countries to more adequately address climate change and reverse global warming.
- Others are pledging to achieve carbon neutrality which means sequestering as much carbon as is emitted into the natural environment - thus preventing any more from flowing into the atmosphere. It is essential that we develop plans to achieve this as well in all jurisdictions.
- El Salvador has introduced, and the UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution to enact a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. It is imperative that all countries take action as a part of this Decade to Restore the Earth - thus re-greening the more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands around the earth.

- All governments should consider what they can do, at all levels, to best support and join the 4 per 1000 regenerative agricultural initiative and ensure that we can continue to feed all of the earth's people while re-sequestering gigatons of carbon in plants and soils.
- Considering that humanity does almost nothing in a fully sustainable manner and that our whole economy is still primarily based on the use of fossil fuels for energy, it is essential that we take steps to transition to a fully circular economy as rapidly as possible. All countries and governments must thus adopt policies for eliminating waste, transitioning to sustainable means of consumption and production, and ensure that everything that we produce is either recycled or reused in one manner or another.

### **Education**

- Create programmes for sustainable development at all levels. UNESCO has a vast array of resources:
  - <https://en.unesco.org/esd-repo/> is UNESCO's resource bank and lists many resources for sustainable development and public awareness raising.
  - <https://en.unesco.org/gap/resources> is UNESCO'S Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development
- Introduce into school curriculums environmental education for sustainable development programs that include measures to mitigate and deal with the effects of climate change.
- Incorporate climate mitigation training into young children's play at school and as extracurricular activities (such as survival training, making fires using natural materials, creating places where children take care of other children, and games where they learn confidence and independence to lessen fear and anxiety).
- Encourage students at all levels to work with these skills, building on what is often already taught in environmental education programs - such as using the sun to warm, making fires, using leaves and snow to insulate from the cold, using energy healing to heal when medications are unavailable, observing Nature for early warning signs of storms, changing weather patterns, approaching tsunamis, earth quakes, and communicating with Nature using time honoured methods still in use by some Indigenous Peoples, small-scale farmers and others living in close contact with Nature, Nature communicators, etc.
- Teach teamwork in all subjects to ensure that people collaborate well when disasters hit.

It is essential that climate change measures be included in national, state and local policies, strategies and planning. The sooner governments acknowledge climate change as a serious concern the sooner measures can be included in strategies and planning locally and state-wide. Countries where climate mitigation actions and policies are already being introduced are leading the movement. They may proudly celebrate their role in bringing new awareness to advance human survival.

### **13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning**

If we view climate change as an opportunity rather than a problem, we inspire the will to learn to live in harmony with all life. This shift in perspective inevitably produces new insights, ideas and actions.

Only by respecting and appreciating Nature will we be able to make the changes and choices needed to limit our energy and natural resource usage and ensure that there is enough for all. In this way will we be able to give up our fossil fuel dependency and move instead to renewable energy sources that Nature produces.

This section of our report will therefore focus on how we can learn from, respect and better care for Nature.

Our indigenous colleagues and other Nature communicators have suggested the following educational processes as a first step: *Learn to communicate with Nature*. What we learn can then also be incorporated into our efforts to implement the SDGs.

The challenge is for us to summon the courage to stop being afraid of Nature as this lies at the heart of our desire to control everything else on earth. We must embrace our vulnerability, for this is our greatest beauty and power. When we learn to live inspired by Nature without having to control her then the solutions for reversing and ending climate change will come easily.

Nature models for us freedom and a vibrant life flow. There is a rhythm within each element of Nature and between discreet entities. It is through this "natural dance" that energy is released and great power can be found.

Our energy systems need to mimic these understandings. Our technologies should not be created in such a way that they obliterate and replace Nature where they are located, but instead work with and draw from Nature. As well, these technologies should be recyclable, manufactured in such a way that their components can be returned to Nature, without releasing toxic waste.

The health of the soil, forests, grasslands and watersheds determine the wellbeing of our large and small-scale watersheds. And likewise the natural functioning of the watersheds is essential to ensure that we can adapt to our changing climatic conditions.

Recreating and protecting healthy soils can and will reverse desertification and over time result in recreating healthy watersheds. Restoring the health of our soils will also provide us with the ability to feed the world's people even with expanding population - even at times of drought - if we adopt resilient and climate friendly farming practices. Re-greening dry lands, capturing water in water retention landscapes, swales and check-dams, and planting and restoring billions of acres of forests and trees will enable humanity to restore our natural water cycles. By ensuring that water can flow year round once again, we can halt the declining water tables and in many cases bring them back, and end the usage of brackish, polluted or even highly toxic drinking water.

But if we do want to be able to do these things, we will have to change how we produce our energy and process our wastes. It is essential that we listen to and learn from Nature as we do so. In the end it is Nature that provides us with the means to live and thrive. It is essential that we respect and learn to live in harmony with her.

We need to produce energy in such a way that it adds as little carbon and other greenhouse gases as possible to the atmosphere; as well, we need to begin to sequester as much carbon and other greenhouse gases from the atmosphere as possible using natural processes. In Nature there is no waste. Everything is recycled back into the ecosystem through natural processes. Humanity must also begin to live in these ways.

It is important that we speak up on behalf of Nature and our Planet, while we still have options and opportunities to turn the tide. Nature signals us in many ways that we are off target. Climate Change is one of these indicators. If we are open, and willing to listen with our hearts and courageous enough to take appropriate action, we can change the course of history. We can restore the beauty and balance in Nature that has been gifted to us.

By approaching Nature with the receptivity, sensitivity and inquisitiveness of a child, sharing the fragrance of flowers, the sense of grounding that we get when we feel the Earth beneath our feet and move with the flow of life, we can reconnect with our natural home and remember our place in the web of life. In this way, it is possible for people to teach one another to see afresh, to move with the motion of change and growth, and break through the obstacles caused by their habitual ways of thinking.

## **POTENTIAL ACTIONS**

### **Education in general**

Please note that reference is made above to UNESCO's educational resources for sustainable development both for formal education and also for all parts of civil society.

### **Education inspired by Nature**

Students and workers within organizations/corporations/educational institutions and governments at all levels can be educated in the following ways:

- Participating in classes to increase understanding of how the effects of Climate Change express themselves and the precise causes that bring these about. This process should take place in both developed and developing countries and neighbourhoods of all socio-economic backgrounds.
- Sensitizing people to their integral position within the Earth System, to the interconnection of all life and how it contributes to their individual wellbeing and capacity to survive.
- Restoring the inborn capacity of human beings to communicate with Nature, building on the contributions of many Indigenous Peoples and other Nature communicators.
- Sharing best practices and ways of combatting climate changes and mitigating its effects in the diverse situations faced both by rich, poor and in diverse geographical and social situations.
- Building the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their own independent, decolonized institutions of higher learning where they can share their wisdom and knowledge or where their knowledge will be respectfully received.
- Creating competitions in schools, organizations, corporations and human settlements to raise contributions in currency and in kind, as well as ideas for combatting the effects of climate change.

## **Education for Regenerative Agriculture, Restoring Natural Ecosystems, Replenishing Watersheds and Ground Water, and Restoring Natural Water Cycles**

- Permaculture Training Programmes are offered all around the world that provide essential training in regenerative and restorative practices. All governments should take advantage of such courses and provide incentives for civil servants to participate in them.
- Invest in transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices and training programs - especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture - that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood.  
See: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions).
- Develop regional rural extension programmes that offer hands-on education and training courses to community members focusing on ecosystem restoration, water retention management, and restoration of watersheds and natural water cycles, etc.
- GAIA Education offers a range of educational programs that are available to people of all ages that is recognized as an exemplary program under UNESCO's Global Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development. These programs include both an introductory and a yearlong Design for Sustainability on-line course – a month-long or 20 hour immersion hands-on project based Ecovillage Design Education training program - and the Training of Trainers program. These programs cover all aspects and elements of regenerative development and cover pretty much the same material as the SDGs. See: <https://gaiaeducation.org>
- The Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation has established a program with the goal of creating and developing camps staffed by volunteer workers to restore degraded ecosystems all around the earth. It is essential that these camps be set up all around the world In order to train people in how to help restore degraded lands in all bio-regions. The Camps will also offer permaculture classes, workshops and training programs. Those that participate in such programs will gain valuable skills that can then be used as humanity undertakes this enormous challenge of Restoring the Earth.  
See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation) for more information.

### **13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible**

The Green Climate Fund is one of the financing mechanisms most accessible to civil society organizations and networks. Such organizations are often at the forefront, applying local solutions that best serve the needs of people while addressing major global challenges in a decentralized but effective manner.

It is essential that funding be provided at increasing levels for scaling up and replicating climate mitigation practices, including such undertakings as creating water

retention landscapes, using natural building practices, regeneration of natural water cycles, solar and wind installations, water harvesting, climate friendly and organic farming practices, agro-ecology, carbon sequestration in soils and plants, eco-system restoration, reforestation and agroforestry, and various types of entrepreneurial activities based on such sectors.

Implementing and operationalizing the Green Climate Fund is vital for the survival of humanity. It must receive the highest priority for implementation, as it provides the possibility for ensuring the ongoing sustainability of our species and all others in the balance.

It is thus imperative that all countries take action to help to meet this target through providing government funding, assistance, support and programs for reversing climate change and sequestering carbon, while also reducing greenhouse emissions. It has been well documented that the financing invested as we transition to more sustainable practices and processes more than pays for itself and is minuscule as compared to what it will cost to repair things and restore the earth's regenerative abilities to nurture life if we are not able to achieve the climate goals and targets, particularly this one on the need for increasing levels of finance.

One of the most difficult roadblocks to accessing adequate funding for climate change and mitigation efforts is the ongoing denial by many in the United States and elsewhere regarding scientific proof of the existence of climate change. When people are finally in agreement that climate change exists, the movement to transform and deal more adequately and responsibly with the matter will move forward rapidly, enabling us to safeguard life with new awareness and practices. Over and over in our history we have changed course swiftly and effectively when the need arose, averting numerous disasters. At this critical juncture, what is most required is a quorum of dedicated change agents committed in action to securing the future of life on the planet.

Financing has traditionally been conceived of in terms of money, forgetting that this is but one type of system to enable the exchange of goods and services. The fast-growing collaborative/sharing/partnership economy illustrates a shift of perspective in which people see the joy of producing and sharing as a part of the reward. In this way, the giving and receiving of resources free of charge has become an important factor in acquiring resources directly without the need for financing and purchasing. By mobilizing people to counter the effects of climate change, a much more powerful approach to financing is created because people are changing their behaviour patterns and inspiring others to do the same. It is important to note that this fast-growing popular form of economy where there is a give and take between people worldwide is parallel to what happens in natural ecosystems where all parts of the ecosystem live in a balanced give and take where all give to the whole and in return receive the means for their species to survive.

## **POTENTIAL ACTIONS**

### **Education**

Use education:

- to show both how rich and poor depend on one another to deal with climate change and that financial flows from developed to developing countries are in the survival interest of all;
- to help citizens understand the need to support their governments in choosing to honour their international financing obligations rather than insisting that they choose to use it all on more narrow national objectives.

Here are some actions that can help achieve this:

- Encouraging all to participate in classes (including those that are available via the Internet) to increase understanding of how the effects of climate change express themselves and the precise causes that bring these about while stressing the importance of the financing and other agreements that have been made by governments to deal with these challenges. This process should take place in both developed and developing countries and in neighbourhoods of all socio-economic backgrounds to enable the necessary bottom-up understanding and bottom-up pressure required in order to deal more responsibly with this to build.
- Sensitizing people to their integral position within the Earth System, to the inter-connection of all life and how it contributes to their individual well-being and capacity to survive, while stressing how the financing agreements that have already been made, to which their nation is a party, are needed to achieve this end.
- Showing how monies to help developing nations deal with climate change-related issues (including those that go to activating the Green Climate Fund) are in the end for the benefit of all and showing that there are a number of effective ways in which these can be used by, for instance, sharing best practices and ways of combatting climate changes and mitigating its effects in the diverse situations faced both by rich, poor and in diverse geographical and social situations.
- Showing the contributions made by all people to dealing with climate change, including the central role that can be played by indigenous peoples - including in developing countries, in order to encourage that some monies be used for building the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their own independent, decolonized institutions of higher learning where they can share their wisdom and knowledge or where their knowledge will be respectfully received.

### **Financing**

- Creating competitions in schools, organizations, corporations and human settlements to raise contributions in currency and in kind, as well as ideas for combatting the effects of climate change.
- Encouraging all governments to decide on a quota that their people can pay in taxes toward the mitigation of the effects of climate change. This is important both as a consciousness-raising tool and also as a means to mitigate its effects.
- Providing funding to support civil society initiatives, capacity building, and ecosystem restoration.
- Making funding available for such initiatives as are described in Project Drawdown and in Albert Bates' book on biochar as a first priority.

### **Social**

- Sharing best practices on the Internet, including to list all awards given to citizens and groups for their efforts by their own governments. A web site can be created for this purpose. (See below.)
- Creating awards for innovative ideas to combat and mitigate the effects of climate change. Those who have won prizes can become tax exempt for their contributions in other ways. Possibly people can be given an option as to how their tax money will be spent in the context of plans in developed and developing countries. (See below.)

## **Social Actions**

### **In developing countries**

To maximize the satisfaction of donors and their confidence that donations will be used to full effect, people and governments in developing countries can enumerate specific areas and situations where the effects of climate change must be mitigated in their own countries. This can include:

- Specific steps that must be taken for implementation of these steps (who will do what, when and timelines for each step).
- Specific amounts of money or help in kind that are needed for each step, so that all contributions are put to good use within the above mentioned plans.

### **In developed countries**

To maximize the satisfaction of donors and their confidence that donations will be used to full effect, people and governments in developed countries can also enumerate specific areas and situations where the effects of climate change must be mitigated in their own countries. This may include:

- Enumerating specific steps that must be taken for implementation of these steps (who will do what, when and timelines for each step).
- Specifying specific amounts of money or help in kind that are needed for each step, so that all contributions are put to good use within the above mentioned plans.
- Determining how much they will contribute to developing countries (this can also include helping the latter make well-constructed plans).
- Allowing their citizens, a say in how their climate taxes and other contributions will be spent.
- Issuing reports on successes and remaining unresolved challenges so that citizens can follow the effects of their donations in currency and in kind; and where failures occur, they can focus on how to remedy these.
- Publishing outcomes of climate mitigation projects.

## **Infrastructure**

### **Global Sharing of Expertise via a Web Site on the Internet**

The more people have access to the Internet and are encouraged to place their individual strategies for the implementation of the SDGs, the more people will be able to help and inspire one another and the less likely that anyone will be left behind.

Such a giant website can provide all people, agencies, organizations, corporations, educational and governmental establishments including the UN with individual pages on which to describe all are doing individually for the implementation of all goals. This

site must include a search engine that allows people in similar circumstances to support and help one another. Facilitators in each area would facilitate access to the web site for all, even those who are not Internet literate.

### **13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing states, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities**

Our strongest ally in developing effective plans for managing climate change is the Earth System itself that is constantly involved in balancing all of its subsystems and components. Thus, those who have learned to live in harmony with Nature are a precious resource. In the least developed nations, people, particularly women, often live close to the land and have traditions that encourage them to be stewards of Nature. In some instances, people in nations more technologically advanced might learn much from them.

In communities where people still depend largely on Nature for their daily living, it can be more socially acceptable for women (and men) to develop their intuitive connection with Nature, for this is our umbilical cord to Mother Nature. In technologically more advanced regions, culture and development have been more dependent on human beings developing “abstract” thinking that often has caused the very dissociation with Nature now threatening human and other life on the planet. Intuitive Nature communication must be reinstated with the help of those who use it, including those living close to the earth, many Indigenous Peoples, and animal and Nature communicators.

At the same time, it is often the poorest populations who, in their desperate attempts to find or grow food deplete the land and make it difficult for biodiversity to thrive. It is therefore important that these people (and others) also learn about the interconnection of all life within the Earth System and how all actions can either reinforce its nurturing qualities with regard to human life or destroy these. It is thus crucially important that these people’s needs for capacity development are addressed in all planning and management processes.

The UN Member States agreed at the Rio Earth Summit Conference to develop and implement National Sustainable Development Strategies. Along with this they agreed that all communities should develop Local Agenda 21s or Sustainable Community Plans and to provide sufficient assistance to local communities so that they could carry them out. In 2006 these commitments were re-confirmed by the United Nations. The UN has also agreed that such strategies and plans should be implemented in an integrated manner linking the local with the national efforts. This has included the development of both local and national Sustainable Development Councils. Many countries are now developing plans and taking steps to implement strategies to achieve the SDGs. Support is still needed and it is well past time that every country and every community takes action to transition as rapidly as possible to full sustainability.

In addition, many cities and municipalities, along with businesses, have signed onto various programmes and campaigns to either address climate change, transition to renewable energy, and/or achieve carbon neutrality including through ICLEI, the Global Compact, etc. Similarly, there have been

any number of programs created that focus on sustainable community planning as a whole, including the Urban Environmental Accords that were developed for World Environment Day in San Francisco, California in 2005. It is imperative that all of these efforts be integrated both horizontally and vertically, that is across levels of government and sectors of the economy and society, and that a particular focus be included as a part of this process to raise capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management processes.

It is even more important that assistance and funding be provided at a global level to ensure that LDCs and SIDS have the resources needed to both carry out and implement such processes and that they include a specific focus on women, youth, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized communities. In addition, such strategies and plans should include and be based on transitioning to a circular economy, decoupling economic development from its related environmental impacts - thus internalizing all externalities, reducing the use and preventing further depletion of our natural resource base, and restoring the natural environment. Please see our SDG 8 and 10 Reports for more information and suggestions on how to do so.

The Global Ecovillage Network has also established a global Ecovillage Development Program that is beginning to be developed and carried out on all continents and in many countries. The program includes community based and led planning processes and addresses all aspects and elements of sustainable development, and thus also most of the SDG targets and goals. It is developed in partnership with local, regional, and/or national governments and supports communities in shifting towards regenerative development processes. For examples of the types of activities, technologies, and building projects that may be included see:

[www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions) and <https://ecovillage.org/solutions> and for a full description of the Ecovillage Development Program see: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/ecovillage-development> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y6JaV7yCv3M>.

Similarly, both the Global Ecovillage Network (GEN) and its sister organization, GAIA Education, offer Ecovillage Design Education Training Programs. Their programs are often included to provide a foundational basis for the development of the Ecovillage Development Programs. They have been recognized as best practices under UNESCO's Global Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development. Both GEN and GAIA Education also offer certified courses in Training for Trainers. All of the courses and training programmes include modules on climate change related planning and development processes.

See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/gen-trainings/> and <https://gaiaeducation.org/face-to-face/ede-programmes>.

## **POTENTIAL ACTIONS**

### **Institutional**

- Revisit and recommit to developing local and national sustainable development strategies and integrate all efforts to combat climate change as a part of them.

Focus on how these local and national strategies can provide a foundation for achieving the SDGs and how the SDGs can be used to scale up the level of ambition.

- Provide funding at the global and national level to ensure that all LDCs and SIDS have the resources needed to both carry out and implement local and national action plans and strategies to achieve full sustainable development and to carry out effective climate change related planning and development processes, and include a specific focus on women, youth, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized communities.
- Provide funding and support for establishing Ecovillage Development Programs and conducting Ecovillage Design Education Training Programs in as many countries as possible around the earth.

### **Social**

Climate change can provide the opportunity to instil leadership, a real sense of community and pride in being a part of a powerful movement to transform lives. This can be aided by promoting leadership and community in women, and training youth in leadership and awareness programs implemented in all the schools, communities, and governments from the local to the state and national level.

Here are some ways in which people using their diverse capacities in relating to Nature can help others re-establish their connection with Nature and perhaps even have a leadership effect on the rest of the world in doing this. People can:

- Be encouraged to share with those in more technical dominant cultures both in developed and developing countries how to communicate with and live more closely to Nature.
- Learn how the interconnectedness of all within the Earth System makes it essential to pay attention to the effect of all our actions on the Earth System as a whole, by understanding how all animals, plants and humans as well as the subsystems of the Earth are integrally interconnected and must be cared for and treated with sensitivity.
- Understand the personal implications of the implementation of paragraph 26 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the right for all to develop the full human personality. This includes developing and using intuition.

In the past, humankind has been capable of initiating huge global changes that although still on-going attest to the fact that global change is possible. By building on the movements to mobilize all those who have been discriminated against or marginalized, we are creating potential partnerships with the very people who can help us build a more harmonious relationship with Nature. This is vital because when it comes to climate change, Nature can both teach us and support us to be maximally effective.

# PEACE AND JUSTICE

## SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 16:

Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels

### TARGETS

- 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere
- 16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- 16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all
- 16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime
- 16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels
- 16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels
- 16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance
- 16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime
- 16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development



# **BEST PRACTICES ON INTEGRATING THE ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVE INTO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

## **SDG 16**

### **Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels**

#### Prepared by

**Marilyn Fowler, MA, PhD.,**  
Department of Consciousness and Sustainable Development  
John F. Kennedy University

**Dr. Maia Kincaid, PhD.,**  
Founder of the Sedona International School  
for Nature and Animal Communication

**Rob Wheeler**  
Main UN Representative, Global EcoVillage Network

**Jill Lauri, MBA, MSW**

**Lee Samatowic, ND**

**Joan Kehoe, MSC**

**Lisinka Ulatowska, MA, PhD.**  
Coordinator Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
UN Representative  
Institute for Planetary Synthesis

#### Endorsers

John F. Kennedy University  
Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group  
South Eastern Peoples  
California Institute of Integral Studies  
The Sedona International School of Animal and Nature Communicators  
The Institute for Planetary Synthesis  
The All Win Network  
The Association of World Citizens

Contact: [Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com](mailto:Lisinka.Ulatowska@gmail.com)

## INTRODUCTION

As we strive to create more peaceful, just and inclusive societies there is much that we can learn from Nature. Species and communities within species, including human beings, have ways of caring for themselves as individuals while also benefitting the communities of which they are a part. It is important to foster and strengthen this tendency and not lend energy and resources to that which tears down and diminishes other beings, communities and Nature as a whole.

Seeing ourselves as separate from Nature helps to create an illusion of being single entities disconnected from other Beings. This ultimately leads to disconnection from ourselves and increases our sense of insecurity and of material and spiritual poverty. In contrast, there lies at the very core of our humanity a longing for community, caring, and sharing that is rooted deeply in our human development as a social species. If we decide to work with this deeper aspect of human nature, we shall be able to build on the deep yearning for connectedness and belonging that lies within each human being and in the process take significant steps towards achieving this goal.

There are countless examples of communities having low crime rates where there is also a sense of belonging, ownership, and sovereignty for one's own life. As a part of this sense of belonging and ownership people developed respect, love and care for both other humans and all other forms of life. If we wish to create effective, peaceful inclusive societies where there is accountability, justice and well-being provided for all then we too must embrace and spread such an honouring and respect for all of life. Fostering this kind of relationship within human communities, as well as the Human-to-Nature relationship has within it the possibility of supporting the targets for SDG 16 as well as all the SDG's.

When we remember our interconnected place within the cycle of life, and understand our role in the evolution of consciousness, our experience of loneliness and disrespect for other living Beings and the Earth can be replaced by reverence, a sense of wholeness, belonging, and peace. This is a very deep level of experience that seems to permeate Nature and is a part of our own evolution. The specific targets of SDG16 address human and Nature inclusive approaches to remedy the challenges that have arisen in our societies as a result of this forgotten yet deeply rooted need for connection to each other and to Nature.

We have been given a great gift, that of life, and in return need to remember how we can and ought to share this gift and give it back to others (people as well as the plant and animal kingdom) every day. Indeed, the Native Americans, as well as pretty much all other indigenous cultures, have created ceremonies to celebrate not only the gift of life but to honour all aspects and elements of Nature that provide the very foundation for rich and abundant lives.

Attending to the basic needs of all our fellow humans in such a way as stewardship, equity, justice for all, reducing pollution, providing a decent standard of living without undue hardships, or having to walk long distances to access clean water and fuel wood. Decent quality of soil, farmlands, and food are the basics that all humans need. Ensuring that all peoples basic human needs can and are met will go a long way towards creating just, inclusive and peaceful societies. We can begin by developing respect first for ourselves and then respect for each other. This can then lead us to

consider how we can deal responsibly and effectively with those that harm others or the natural environment. Focusing on the need to heal and restore Nature, and to recognize that there is plenty to share for all is a first step in addressing SDG 16 as a whole.

## **TARGETS SDG 16**

### **16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere**

Violence comes from a feeling of powerlessness, of being misunderstood, of having no voice or say in someone's life (at one time or another), feeling like a victim, fearful and stressed about one's survival, of having limited options for employment, feeling a responsibility and concern about how to provide for family members, and feeling disrespected. These kinds of feelings can generate intense frustration and anger, which can lead to a sense of desperation and with that the possibility to commit acts of violence and even homicides. Feeling powerless and concern about one's survival often leaves a person focused on themselves and with a lack of interest or respect for other beings.

Unfortunately, humanity has long lived in a competitive world where there has historically not been enough to go around and where those from the lower classes have had to struggle to get their daily human needs met. This has led to discipline systems based on fear, control and punishment - all of which has led to a world with quite a bit of violence and force being used by individuals and groups to try to either control others or try to get their own way. If we want to overcome this, we will have to learn how to live cooperatively together and find ways to effectively deal with those who use violence and force to abuse and control others. Similarly, systems of law, including regulations, legislation and policies, along with social and cultural norms must be strengthened and established to hold all of those accountable that abuse or cause physical and emotional harm to others.

Much of the violence in the world today also stems from child abuse which has occurred within families and that still exists within some school systems. This is in part a generational problem and pattern that can perhaps best be interrupted through the establishment and use of programs that teach respectful and appreciative parenting, self-empowerment, and effective classroom management skills.

Connecting with and remembering Nature as our foundation can also help to heal the fear and upset which drives conflict amongst peoples. Historically, connecting with Nature has been successfully used to balance mental problems, behavioural problems, emotional turmoil and to strengthen physical well-being. It provides the opportunity for those who are troubled to experience their own true nature, their strengths and weaknesses, and to develop compassion and caring for themselves and others. Connecting with Nature renews a sense of empowerment, which often leads to a sense of fulfilment and a desire not only to heal ourselves, but to assist others.

Environmental Outdoor Education is becoming an integral part of supporting teenagers and young adults at risk of dropping out of school or of falling into lives of crime, addiction, and poverty. Interaction with Nature individually or through an outdoor education program can give a new sense of unity and cooperation with all life, acceptance, calm, and understanding of self and others and with that lead to a

reduction in various types of violence. Outdoor Education combines recreational activities with civic engagement and environmental stewardship to build stronger community members and leaders. For example, since the year 2000, an outdoor Nature Education organization called Outdoor Outreach has served more than 9,000 local youth in the San Diego, California area and data shows 96 percent of participants develop better interpersonal skills, a stronger ability to set and achieve goals, and a greater sense of teamwork. Nearly 100% of the students who participated in the outdoor education program graduated from high school. These statistics are common for At-Risk Youth attending Outdoor Education Programs around the world.

According to Ben McCue, Executive Director of Outdoor Outreach: “The outdoors can provide a physical and mental refuge that helps us process and deal with the stress of daily life. This can be especially transformative for youth who, growing up in underserved communities, are disproportionately affected by violence, unemployment, and school drop-outs. “A strong connection to the outdoors and positive role models can enable these youth to safely challenge themselves, explore new possibilities and inspire them to pursue their full potential. Through the San Diego Foundation’s support, Outdoor Outreach has helped youth realize significant increases in their physical and mental health, social skill development, academic achievement, civic engagement and employment potential.

All of life simply seeks to freely and deeply be who and what it is meant to be. The right to live one’s own life to its fullest extends to all of Nature and all peoples and is a benchmark ideal for which we can strive. Respect for the value of all life is essential to harmonious co-existence. Support for each and every Being to be fully itself - human or otherwise - is the remembrance of its and our own connection to all the rest of Nature and the Universe. To deny this of another by way of violence is to deny it of oneself, which is perhaps the biggest crime of all. When we remember we are a part of Nature - an entire community of life which has inherent intelligence - we have a sense of ease, understanding and that all is good. Being in Nature can feel like having a renewal of our system bringing us back to our original pace in life and the kind of ease and peacefulness of another time. In Nature we often will slow down naturally without even thinking about it. We may experience a sense of release, relief and relaxation. Perhaps if more people had the opportunity to remember we humans are beings of Nature, we would experience more peace of mind which may bring about peace amongst warring countries and warring peoples.

If human beings take responsibility for the fact that we have poverty and violence in our current situation and own it, we can transform it. Realizing that someone else's poverty is our poverty; someone else's act of violence is our violence is what it will take to transform it. Part of what is needed is accepting that this is how it is, that we are fallible beings, making mistakes, having compassion and making different choices. We can then be an unstoppable force creating opportunities, harmony and abundance for all.

## **ACTIONS**

### **Policy and Law**

1. Implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Social and Economic Covenants, the Rio Principles, and the Earth Charter which help people

acknowledge our interconnection and deeply understand the need for and ways to work in peaceful cooperation with each other and all of Nature.

## **Education**

*What is done to children they will do to society –  
Dr. Karl Menninger 1893 - 1990.*

Implement the following in order to prepare the next generation for the world  
we want to promote:

1. Education that follows the child's natural curiosity, draws out the innate wisdom of each individual and nurtures the expression of each child's unique passions and gifts.
2. Teach children to trust their own inner wisdom, to respect and cooperate with all life.
3. Sponsor Nature Outdoor Education programs in which people interact with Nature to facilitate the resolution of emotional conflict.
4. Teach healthy ways to manage emotions.
5. Expand foreign exchange programs to connect students in differing locations and situations.
6. Teach nonviolent communication, conflict resolution, mediation skills and teach that at the core we are all one in our humanity.
7. Create opportunities for all people to express their feelings, be heard without judgement and have their value to the whole community acknowledged.
8. Teach parenting in schools to prepare young adults to be parents.
9. Promote respectful and appreciative parenting and classroom management.
10. Training in effective, respectful interpersonal communication and building healthy relationships.

Employ the following tenets in schools, communities, and societies:

1. Each individual is responsible for SDGs and for how things are on the planet and for transforming and changing anything that we want to see change.
2. Encourage residents of neighbourhoods and communities to come together in the creation of the type of neighbourhoods, communities, towns, and cities they wish to live in. Allow each member of the community to contribute as a valuable voice to be heard to foster confidence and wellbeing.
3. Design communities to promote positive social interaction, a sense of community, connection and mutual support.
4. Implement natural design elements in cities, towns, and public spaces that instil a sense of peace, calm, and beauty. Preserve and incorporate Nature in and around streets and buildings.
5. Provide quiet spaces and times.
6. Embrace the understanding that; “All children are our children”, meaning all adults share in the responsibility for supporting the wellbeing and healthy development of all children on earth.
7. Safeguard childhood as a time of stress-free unstructured play and opportunities to learn naturally and according to inner guidance.
8. Encourage curiosity, creativity and acceptance of mistakes. Create environments, neighbourhoods, and communities in which each individual feels heard, and each

ones contributions are accepted and celebrated, building confidence and well-being.

9. Each person has a responsibility to listen with compassion and honesty to fellow human beings and a right to have their perspective heard and emotions accepted without judgment.
10. Deliberately choose not to focus on struggle and fear, and instead practice looking for the things to be grateful for and for the innate goodness of people and the everyday miracles which are all around us.
11. Provide opportunities to all citizens for Nature sabbaticals, so that they can connect with the peace, calm, and healing time of the Self and which Nature can foster.

## **16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children**

Remembrance that we are all children in the vast macrocosm and have all been children in our own societies is fundamental. Abuse, exploitation, and all forms of violence against children can only take place by individuals who have lost their remembrance of what it means to be a child and have separated from the awe and reverence for all life that was innate in them at birth.

The societies in which these individuals reside hold some responsibility in that they have not provided the supportive resources and environment that reflects and fosters respect for life, for Nature, for children, for one's Self. To truly put an end to such acts against children will require a simultaneous bottom up and top down approach. What this means is a full spectrum sweep to bring children into the center of the societies' awareness. Focusing on the children is key to supporting the sense of awe, wonder, connection to one's Self, and to each other. When we draw out the innate wisdom in each child and adult, we nurture curiosity and passion for life in each human being.

It is important for adults to acknowledge children as teachers, for they are often more connected to their original seed form and spiritual essence. In fact, adults can often benefit from taking their lead. Maintaining child-like wonder and being in awe of life itself is a powerful way to establish enduring peace, love, and joy, and ultimately keep the earth and all it's Beings healthy and thriving. If we begin now with the raising of the current new-borns in an environment of love and nurturance and respect, then the acts of violence against children are less likely to be perpetuated in future generations. As well, if we are all looking out for the wellbeing of the children, then perpetrators have less opportunity and more visibility. Lastly, there needs to be greater movement towards redirecting, rehabilitating, and retraining those who abuse.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Immediately start providing support for the physical and spiritual birth right of each society member to foster the next generation of good and well-intentioned adults.
2. Provide support and resources parents to care for and love their new-borns, so that the new-borns know at birth and going forward in life they are valued members of the community.
3. Take into account the misguided needs and motivations of those who inflict every sort of abuse and violence towards children such as poor upbringing, personal history of abuse and disrespect, inexperience of and disconnection from Nature

and the sense of interconnectedness and awe of all life, as well as economic need. Create programs that redirect these individuals, providing the social and economic support they need to make the necessary changes in themselves.

4. Put energy and resources towards trauma healing for both children who have been victims, as well as the adults who have become perpetrators. Programs that educate in care and appreciation for animals and Nature are healing for the greater good, and in turn they are healing and deeply nurturing for those in the program. Making a difference for others gives children and adults the opportunity to experience joy and fulfilment.
5. Acknowledge children's rights to speak out and identify abusers yet realize that vilifying persons will not shift the cultural norm.
6. Focus clear vision and efforts on creating a cultural norm of mutual respect.
7. Provide training in parenting, communication and conflict resolution for all individuals.
8. Provide readily available access to counselling and coaching to support each person for living their best life.
9. Acknowledge and reward communities, corporations, and individuals who are consciously living examples of kindness, mutual respect, empathy and caring for all life.
10. Put measures in place to redirect the disregard for young (and all) life and acknowledge the valuable perspective and wisdom that children can offer. Encourage and foster leadership amongst our youth by providing opportunities for children to share their perspectives as to laws and governance.
11. Create and enforce laws which prohibit the sale of children and teenagers on websites. Any websites which are found to be benefitting from the sale of children and teenagers should be immediately shut down.
12. Ensure that there is accountability under law for actions of abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children and particularly hold those accountable that allow such things to persist through abuse of their institutional roles and authority.

### **16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all**

It is very important to look deeper at this target, not just at surface level. International means all nations and their relationships without boundaries-it is about a Global consciousness. All nations have the responsibility to ensure the health and well-being of Nature's ecosystems and encode this within our rules of law.

Justice for all does not mean just for all of humankind, but we suggest should mean for ALL – which is ALL of life that inhabits the Earth. This is inclusive of, and perhaps due to the perilous position of survival that humans have gotten themselves into – primarily for Nature. If humans do not put Nature first, do not provide justice for Nature in the general sense first - and do so quickly - then it is the human race that will suffer most of all, since all that we eat, drink, breathe, and use derives originally from Nature.

According to the World Justice Project, there are four universal principles that define the rule of law:

1. Accountability whereby everyone, including governments are held accountable under the law.
2. Just Laws whereby the laws are clear, publicized, stable, and just; are applied evenly; and protect fundamental rights, including the security of persons and property and certain core human (and Nature) rights.
3. Open Government whereby the processes by which the laws are enacted, administered, and enforced are accessible, fair, and efficient.
4. Accessible & Impartial Dispute Resolution whereby justice is delivered timely by competent, ethical, and independent representatives and neutrals who are accessible, have adequate resources, and reflect the makeup of the communities they serve.

When it comes down to justice and creating and upholding law within human societies, it is important that we look less at ways to pronounce judgment and punishment and look to create policies and social structures that promote the restoration of health and harmony to individuals and communities in ways that are reflective of Natural Law. This all-encompassing legal structure should be built on deep recognition that what Nature provides, and the laws of Nature are the foundation from which all else operates.

Furthermore, the rule of law is not just what has been written down in law books to govern humans. The ultimate rule of law is that of the laws of Nature. All of Nature, in fact all of the Universe, runs by Natural Law, which supersedes all human based laws. Nature holds all life and all creatures as equals. Every living creature has its rightful place in the natural right order. Humans may perceive a lion as more powerful than a mouse. Yet, even though a lion may at some point need to eat a mouse, he does not necessarily consider himself more powerful or more important than the mouse. He instinctively understands the importance of the mouse in terms of the Natural Law and the value of all life. In terms of the mouse and the lion, it is the lion who is dependent upon the mouse for its survival.

The most fundamental of all of Natural Law is that of Love for all life. The second would be that of Respect for all life. The third is that of Harmony. Harmony means having the respect for the ways of being of each member of Life and that of the Natural Law that governs the balance of thriving within all species. Natural Law provides for all the needs of all its species, and each member of each species has the coding for the Law of Harmony for its survival as well as thriving.

When we, as humans, understand and master our place of co-habiting on this planet and maintaining Natural Law as a guide, we will not only continue to thrive and survive, but will continue to evolve into the physical, mental, and spiritual true greatness we are meant to become.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Create a High World Council made up of individuals from all walks of life, all regions and countries who are well versed in the Laws of Nature, who have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgment or alliance. Their position is to uphold Natural Law as the gold standard, and to evaluate all other created laws for the governance of people and their communities within Natural Law, and especially to be the voice of Nature where these laws affect Nature.

2. Form Regional and National Councils. This structure allows a forum to which lawmakers and decision makers can bring their proposed laws for evaluation and consideration as they pertain to Natural Law. Proposed changes with a potential of greater impact would be brought to the High World Council for final evaluation. The purpose is to maintain the voice and consideration of Nature and the Laws of Nature that govern all of us, so that the planet and all its inhabitants can move forward in the healthiest way possible.

#### **16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime**

Human Civilization and history have been fraught with war, crimes, terrorism, thievery, etc. since the dawn of time. This does not make it right or acceptable.

We need to acquire a bird's eye view so powerful as to change the course of human thinking and sentiment, in a similar way as when the first astronauts were able to see the whole of the earth from space. We suggest a thorough examination and assessment of the motivations behind illicit financial and arms flows, stealing of assets and organized crime is performed in order to understand the thread that connects these acts irrespective of nationalities. This may help us to understand and shed light on ways to meet needs in a way that benefits all beings on earth. As was stated above in 16.2, such activities arise partially from the disconnection of an individual from his sense of interconnectedness to, and awe and reverence of all life. It is hoped that obtaining a birds-eye view will help to put these crimes into perspective.

It is also necessary to see these heinous acts and events not just as crimes against peoples, but to understand the impact on Nature, and the deleterious effects on Nature these events have had. All of humanity needs to acknowledge the crimes that have been done to others and the natural environment over time, make any necessary reparation and restitution and move forward making different choices to benefit all. Reparation and restitution refer just as much to natural resources that are used for the survival of certain peoples, as well as what has been stolen from Nature herself, disrupting, if not destroying, her own wholeness integrity, peace, and well-being as well as the stolen assets and crimes against humanity. An atmosphere of peace prosperity, warmth and caring collaboration make it difficult for such actions to hold sway.

It is essential that government at all levels adopt legislation ensuring that the right of all peoples to information about how we manage and treat the natural environment, including impacts on the natural environment from or by the private sector, is fully carried out and fulfilled. Legislation supporting this should be adopted at the national level as a part of implementing each country's SDG strategy and plan.

It is generally understood that military operations tend to have one of the worst impacts on the natural environment and similarly a large number of wars are due to conflicts over natural resources. There are similar such connections with organized crime though perhaps not quite so directly.

Under Article 26 of the UN Charter, almost all arms flows are in fact illicit, which is defined as being forbidden by law, rules, or custom. Indeed Article 26 states, "In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with

the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments.”

In addition, Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights insists that “all peoples have the right to life, liberty, and security of person” - which we have repeatedly seen does not exist where any government has access to inordinate military personnel, equipment and expenditures; and where the international community continues to allow countries to attack one another without either full sanction nor the holding accountable of the national political leaders that are responsible. And Article 28 of the Declaration states that, “Everyone is entitled to a social and international order in which the rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration can be fully realized.”

It is thus the collective responsibility of all of our governments to ensure that the Security Council creates, and the UN General Assembly adopts, a plan and system for regulating armaments and ensuring that the least amount of money is spent to establish and maintain international peace and security as possible.

Indeed, the only money that should be spent on armaments would be those that are absolutely required to maintain international peace and security - in other words those that are purely defensive in Nature and where there is in fact a direct and demonstrated threat to either international peace or security. And in fact, it is the responsibility of the UN General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council to take action both to prevent and then to sanction and hold responsible any country, along with its political leadership, that attacks another country or poses a direct threat to international peace and security.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Examine and assess the motivations behind illicit financial and arms flows, stealing of assets, and organized crime in order to understand the thread that connects these acts irrespective of nationalities, and to more effectively deal with the root causes of these problems.
2. Acknowledge the crimes that have been done to others and the natural environment over time, make any necessary reparation and restitution and move forward making different choices. This would be similar to the process of “truth and reconciliation” practiced in South Africa and Rwanda.
3. Adopt legislation ensuring that all people have the right to information about how we manage and treat the natural environment, including impacts on the natural environment from or by the private sector. Legislation supporting this should be adopted and enforced at the national level as a part of implementing each country’s SDG strategy and plan and combatting the illegal traffic in rare and endangered animal and plant species.
4. Establish a system for the regulation of armaments as stated in Article 26 of the UN Charter: “In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be

submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments.”

5. Hold the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee accountable for upholding the system of regulation of armaments called for in Articles 26 and 47 of the UN Charter.
6. Focus on and establish effective means for upholding human rights for all people and for protecting the rights and needs of Nature.
7. Create a system to assure that Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “all peoples have the right to life, liberty, and security of person” will be upheld.
8. Establish universally known sanctions to be imposed on any country who threatens or attacks the security of another country, including threats to the natural environment and species.
9. Uphold the responsibility of the UN General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council to take action both to prevent and then to sanction and hold responsible any country, along with its political leadership, that attacks another country or poses a direct threat to international peace and security.

### **16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

When a human feels disempowered, disconnected, and in fear of not having enough, you can be sure it stems from an illness of misperception not of not having enough, but of not being enough. Actions of corruption and bribery stem from this illness of misperception and must be treated as such.

Any act of bribery and corruption that has any bearing no matter how small, on the peace, safety, health, respect, consideration, or thriving of any aspect of Nature or a fellow human being should be met with the gravest of consequences. These consequences are not meant just to be punitive, but to be healing of this illness of misperception and disconnection. Just being a human being existing in this universe makes each individual - each living being - by definition, enough.

Corruption and bribery thrive when they are kept secret and there is fear and confusion. When children are asked, "Did you do that?" and are punished if they admit, the truth teaches them to lie and hide mistakes or missteps. It is important to make it safe for people to take personal responsibility, bring mistakes out into the open, review natural consequences with compassion and to find resolutions that are in the best interest of all. In Nature there are consistent natural consequences that provide learning and evolution of consciousness.

Corruption and bribery also thrive where there is concentration of wealth based upon the ownership and profits deriving from the control and abuse of land and natural resources rather than the benefits accruing equitably to all peoples through the collective ownership and management of common or scarce resources. Indeed, much corruption and bribery exist where illegal mining, logging, capture and killing of endangered species, and other such practices are allowed to flourish.

Service to Nature as well as financial remuneration in such a way as to bring individuals (and individuals of any organizations that have created an even greater illusion of disconnection from responsibility) is the best way to cure. The consequences must be

enough to deter further bribery and corruption by giving understanding of the negative impact these actions have on themselves, others, and the natural environment, promoting healing and instilling a healthy sense of self that motivates people to naturally act in the interest of the greater good of all.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Educate on the harmful impact on our natural resources resulting from corruption and bribery and the detrimental effects of these activities on all peoples on the planet.
2. Impose serious sanctions, including public exposure, where corruption and bribery leads to depletion of natural resources - illegal logging, mining, externalities and impacts, poaching. Public exposure will both discourage such actions and raise awareness that corruption and bribery are not being tolerated.
3. Develop personal responsibility/accountability through education and encouragement to make choices that have a positive impact for individuals, communities and the natural environment, including by illustrating clearly how this has direct benefit for all people, including those who are responsible and accountable themselves.
4. Mitigate consequences for individuals who are willing to come forward, be honest, accountable and be engaged in reparation and restitution for engaging in acts of bribery and corruption.

#### **16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**

Institutions are systems of established and prevalent social rules that structure social interactions - they are a standard structure for organizing common ideas as well as goals and can usefully create stable expectations of the social behaviour, both locally and globally, as pertains to Human society as well as for upholding the interests of Nature. Generally, institutions enable ordered thought, expectation, and action by imposing form and consistency of consequences for human activities. In order for true societal order to occur and be effective on a global level, such institutions must be readily known, transparent on all levels and be consistently held accountable.

Corruption by officials, especially those in positions of leadership, is the worst betrayal as they are in office to serve the highest good for all. A good example is the genetically modified foods being imposed on society because of deals between large corporations and governmental officials. Corrupt officials' selfish actions have devastating consequences on the whole culture economically, spiritually, physically, mentally and emotionally and the health of all. They are polluting the whole planet with their mindset, beliefs and actions such as use of the toxic chemicals (pharmaceuticals, herbicides, pesticides), fracking and irresponsible use of natural resources, endangerment of many species.

Their criminal actions diminish trust, a sense of safety, self-respect and the goodness of people and humanity itself. These injustices foster feelings of oppression, frustration, fear and desperation for many creating strong motivation in good hearted people to become criminals.

Accountability is perhaps most effective in a multi-tier approach starting from a local level with representatives joining together in councils on an international level. These

council members can come from all walks of life, all regions and countries who are well versed in the rule of law as well as the Laws of Nature, and who have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgment or alliance. Violations will be addressed for correction, and where necessary, will be taken to international court to try crimes against humanity and Nature at the national as well as international level.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Create concrete ways to acknowledge and reward individuals and institutions that are moving toward or are already providing an example of being effective, accountable and transparent.
2. Provide International recognition and tangible rewards for those providing inspiration for living in a way that respects all life in order to help foster the growth of such institutions.
3. Create a network of councils whose members come from a diversity of backgrounds and regions, from the local level to the International level, for the purpose of monitoring established institutions that may already be engaged in bribery and corruption and holding them accountable to practices that are effective, transparent, accountable, and follow the rule of law and the Laws of Nature.
4. Address any violations with clear, consistent consequences. Be sure those consequences fit the crime with limited consequences for crimes of limited impact and more serious sanctions on those with widespread negative impact on humanity and Nature.
5. Establish clear guidelines for what constitutes a serious crime against humanity and Nature at all levels and needs to be addressed by an international court.
6. Impose serious sanctions on powerful individuals and institutions who through deceit, corruption and self-serving actions negatively impact all of humanity, communities and the natural environment which we all depend on for our survival.
7. Re-evaluate the protection from accountability that currently exists for established institutions and people in positions of influence and power.

### **16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

All will prosper in ways of peace, justice, finances, health, etc., when all Beings of the Earth are represented and given voice. This means that the interests of all peoples', as well as those of Nature, need to be acknowledged and considered. As has been stated many times in these SDG documents, the bottom line is what is good for Nature is good for all people, and not the other way around. Councils are most effective when they are inclusive, cooperative, and participating together by putting consideration of the ways and needs of their people in the context of what is good for Nature and in ensuring proper stewardship, particularly of shared or common resources. People working together provide creativity and inspiration as resources for solving issues and

resolving conflict in ways that promote the greater good for each individual as well as communities and the world community.

Since over the centuries humans have learned from Nature, there are many forms in human society built on the ecosystem structure that permeates all of Nature. There are many forms of commons where groups of people manage goods, resources or processes together so that all share decision making and the outcomes/profits/benefits. These are effective, inclusive institutions that are accountable to their participants. Such a commons approach is moreover Nature-inspired and thus based on processes that have proved sustainable for 15 billion years.

### **Social examples**

These include

- Societies, including many indigenous tribes, that are governed by councils in which all voices are heard; townhouse meetings or city hall meetings where citizens and council members meet together to look for solutions to a problem in the community.
- Townhouse meetings such as those held regularly in Vermont, USA, where local communities get together to make communal decisions.
- In Switzerland citizens have the right (and make use of the right) to hold a national referendum on the policies of the national government.

### **Economic and private sector examples**

- Participatory People's Budget Processes enable the local people to share in making the decisions on how allocations will be made and how the community's money will be spent and are now used in a myriad of municipalities around the world.
- The LETS System is a local economy based on a barter approach, run on a basis of joint decision making that is used in many communities worldwide to regenerate a local economy where there is a lack of a viable or stable national currency available.
- Cooperatives are for-profit businesses run by owner/operators in virtually all sectors. All involved share in the decision making equally as well as in the profits. Since all are motivated to see their business succeed, they do well even in times of economic downturn. See ICA@ICA@COOP. There are some 3 million throughout the whole world with one billion members.
- The Danish Agricultural Sector consists largely of cooperatives and is a good example of how successful cooperatives can be. Denmark produces enough food to feed 17 million people (three times its population) and has one of the world's most advanced food processing sectors. More than two-thirds of agricultural production is exported to 150 countries worldwide.

There are a number of approaches to managing global resources, sustainably, especially those that are non-renewable or depletable. Such plans often involve:

- placing a strict cap on the use of depletable (natural) resources; and
- the shared management, use of and benefit from that part of the resources that remains to be used over and above what has been capped.

Although none have as yet been put in place at the global level, the Norwegian Government Pension Plan uses such principles at the national level. This Pension Plan is considered to be based on a good financial return over time, while being sustainable with regard to the environment, the economy and society.

Examples of the large number 'cap and share' plans for the global level that have yet to be put into practice, include the self-financing World Marshall Plan described in two books by Pieter Kooistra and endorsed by Nobel Prize Winner Jan Tinbergen. This provides a basic income for each woman, man and child and a Marshall Plan for the Planet. Both books were sponsored by the Dutch Government: ***Voor*** (written only in Dutch); and ***The Ideal Self-Interest—An extra world basic income for all people*** (published both in Dutch and English).

Alanna Hartzok outlines many of the general principles relating to other 'cap and share' plans in her book: ***The Earth Belongs to Everyone—Articles and Essays***.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Encourage and promote the widespread participation with cooperative approaches that are already successfully utilized such as: Nature permaculture, the Slow Food Movement (<https://www.slowfood.com>) community-supported agriculture, farmer's markets, cooperative ways of managing fisheries, forests, and irrigation, community managed city and school gardens, and healthcare cooperatives.
2. Provide universal access to the Internet so that all can make good use of and expand upon the contributions to shared resources available through the Internet such as Wikipedia, professors from leading universities such as Harvard who give free lessons to thousands of people via the Internet, Open Education Resources, the many millions of online texts, videos and musical works.
3. Encourage businesses to adopt a Cooperative Identity where decision making, labour, and profits are shared both with the workers and managers of the business, with the local communities where they are based, and with people worldwide through global initiatives.
4. At governmental levels, provide open forums to encourage inclusive and community represented participation in decision making processes that are otherwise the responsibility of community-voted representatives.
5. Provide fail-safe, equal opportunity methods of community voting of representatives at all levels of national and international levels.
6. Guarantee that there are those who specifically represent the rights and well-being of Nature at all levels of decision making in every area.
7. Include open public hearings in all legislative and decision making processes at all levels of government. Ensure that all legislative or parliament committees report on their processes and proceedings in an ongoing manner and make these reports widely available to the general public.

#### **16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance**

Developing, least developed, small island developing states, and land-locked developing countries have a unique and important positioning in the contributions they can provide in global governance. Even though the impoverished have the largest per

capita impact on the natural environment, they also are in a position of great potential to avoid the polluting and resource-depleting stages of industrialization, and to adopt new, clean and more resource-efficient technologies. These countries are very much feeling the effects of environmental change and the degradation of their natural resources. Relevant policies from the direct input of these developing countries who have positions of value in the institutions of global governance, can create added value to their natural assets, develop new markets, and create and sustain more and better jobs that will better address a more "green" and sustainable future. Through investment and policy reform designed to enhance livelihoods for the poor, create employment opportunities and reduce poverty, these essential assets can be translated into economic growth and sustainable development.

The participation of the developing countries in global governance provides mutual benefit. Whereas the wealthiest, most developed countries have the largest impact on resource use and consumption and depletion of the natural resource base, developing countries provide much of those resources. Giving the developing countries broader and strengthened participation in the institutions of global governance, along with investments in the skills development for the building of greener economies, is a way to achieve sustainable development, poverty eradication, and a more sustainable future for the natural resources that the rest of the world depends upon.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Recognize the valuable natural and also other resources that developing countries provide, and that helping to uplift these into better economic, social, educational and technological status and all-round functioning in ways that support them in a more "green" and sustainable manner will benefit all worldwide.
2. Provide broader and more direct participation in institutions of global governance.
3. Have fair and equitable trade regimes across the board for all nations and particularly adopt policies and agreements that will right the wrongs that have in the past been done to indigenous cultures and peoples and to those living in the developing world. Boycotts of companies and nations that seek to perpetuate these wrongs will both strongly motivate the perpetrators to change their ways and raise public awareness of these inequities.
4. Allow each nation to act internally and internationally in accordance with universal environmental rights and responsibilities.
5. Develop and include a system for and protection of environmental rights and responsibilities in all processes, agreements and institutions of global governance, in part through their inclusion in the development and adoption of a Global Pact for the Environment.

### **16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration**

Each individual has equal and inalienable rights as a member of the Human community. With this comes the need and the right to be provided legal registration of their birth and documentation of their identity. As part of this right, all people have the right to protected land and property rights, especially for those who have historically been denied such as women, the impoverished, and indigenous peoples.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Register all births worldwide and place these in a global data bank

2. Give women, the impoverished, and indigenous peoples the right to land ownership and ensure this is protected through government regulations, policies, enforcement and courts of law.
3. Register land ownership.
4. Make known the rights of property owners as well as the responsibility of stewardship for Nature.
5. Have accountability of property rights and environmental rights.
6. Teach about responsibility to steward Nature as well as the sanctity of all beings of life, including that of women and children.

#### **16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements**

The right to access information held by public bodies is an integral part of the fundamental right of freedom of expression, as recognized by Resolution 59 of the UN General Assembly adopted in 1946, as well as by Article 19 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), which states that the fundamental right of freedom of expression encompasses the freedom “to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers”.

All people have the fundamental right to full access to information regarding that which has some kind of impact on others. For example, individuals have a fundamental right to protect their personal information, whereas a manufacturing business should disclose statements and reports as regards the health and environmental impact of their facilities and manufacturing processes. It is essential that government at all levels adopt legislation ensuring that such documentation is fulfilled and provided with public access. It is particularly important that reports are regularly filed as pertains to the management of and effects on the natural environment. Legislation supporting this should be adopted at the national level as a part of implementing each country’s SDG strategy and plan.

#### **ACTIONS**

1. Teach children and adults how to find information of interest to them and what will be of benefit to them.
2. Have information accessible to all peoples including information with regard to their fundamental freedoms and protection of their fundamental freedoms.
3. Adopt legislation at the national level as part of the implementation of each country’s SDG strategy and plan, requiring all governmental agencies and private sector organizations at all levels - both national and International - to publicly file annual reports as pertain to policies, products, development, that in any way affect the health and well-being of people, animals, or any aspect of Nature.
4. Create and implement fines and penalties for any failure to provide such documentation with public access. Include measures of reparations so that no entity can "pay out" their penalties and avoid providing the documentation and reparations.

**16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime**

Violence, destruction, terrorism; Causing harm, to any person, group, country, and especially to the Natural environment on which we all depend is a crime with unacceptable negative impact on humans, animals and Nature itself. There is need for international and local institutions and governance to provide relevant institutions, protections, and governance, for a safe, just, peaceful, and inclusive society. These must be in place for the safety, protection, nurturance and inclusion of all peoples as well as Nature.

Just as each human has the right for a crime and violent free life, Nature has the same needs and rights to be free of violence, terrorism, and crimes against Nature. As has been stated before, crimes against Nature are crimes against ourselves, as we are entirely dependent upon the gifts and nurturance of Nature. Nature deserves and requires the same level of protection that we wish for all of humanity to experience. It is imperative that we protect Nature in every way, at every level possible. Likewise, it is essential that we protect and prosecute crimes against those that are environmental protectors.

We need to create new types and systems of penal institutions that focus on healing and regeneration instead of punishment, along with instituting truth and reconciliation systems and commissions. International tribunals need to be established to provide findings and make recommendations for how the international community can respond to and deal with repressive and/or controlling/authoritarian governments - particularly those not established through democratic processes. Here we are finding increasingly that people are taking corrupt officials to court. Korea is an example. Other International examples exist that have had a measure of success in Rwanda, South Africa, Columbia where forgiveness, truth and reconciliation and restoration of human rights and full participation in society have taken place.

Acts of violence, terrorism, and crimes can very often be understood as a displacement of passion and a deep discontent due to want of emotional, physical, or spiritual need (or misperception that a lack exists). As institutions strive to prevent such crimes whether by and against humanity, or by humans against Nature, take Nature's lead such as looking at cause and effect in the Natural world as a model for prevention and penalization. Penalization is a harsh word but what we mean by this is to provide opportunities for those prone to terrorism or crimes to essentially serve time in the caretaking of Nature. There is nothing as nurturing and healing as being in the presence of Nature. Help them to experience the abundance and beauty of the earth. Humans are deeply affected and lifted up in the presence of great Natural beauty and the vibration of unconditional love that is exuded. Surround them with the healing pulse of Nature in pure Natural environments.

**ACTIONS**

1. Treat crimes against Nature at the same level as crimes against humanity.
2. Create international and local institutions and governance for a safe, just, peaceful, and inclusive society. Put in place relevant institutions, protections, and governance for the safety, protection, nurturance and inclusion of all peoples as well as Nature.

3. Create new types and systems of penal institutions that focus on healing and regeneration instead of punishment, along with instituting truth and reconciliation systems and commissions, that includes the healing and nurturing presence of Nature.

### **16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development**

Every human has a place and purpose for being in their life on Earth, and no individual's place or purpose is more important or worthy than any other individual's. It is the birthright and in the best interest of all if each individual is provided with equal opportunity to express and manifest their personal purpose in light of the good of all.

The deeply rooted perspective that humans are superior to Nature does not serve humanity or the planet well. Moreover, the status of Nature is at the center of importance for all individuals, for without affording Nature to flourish and be all that it is meant to be, gravely affects the survival and thriving and fulfilment of each human in a very real and deep way. For this reason, equal rights, if not superior rights for Nature will provide better opportunity for the continued survival and thriving of humans.

In light of this, the personal fulfilment of each individual comes to fruition when in the context of all life and the cosmic expression of life which includes both Nature and humanity, being that humanity fundamentally is a part of Nature. In other words, the Earth is her own being with the sole purpose to express herself as life, and all Beings, including humans, are a part of that expression. Therefore, all Beings are encouraged to fulfil their purpose and live without discrimination, and all laws created, promoted, and enforced should have at their core the development and furthering of the human and Nature Soul. All laws and policies must be equally supportive to all People's needs in the support of their communal and personal development, as well as that of Nature's, and supportive in such a way that is sustainable for the long term and all generations to come.

It is important to keep our eyes on the goal. What we attend to is key. What we attend to will take root and grow strong and healthy. If we focus on the things that we do not want, fear, anger and distress will continue to build, and problems will gain intensity. It is essential that we cease to give energy to those elements that are out of balance.

It is vital that we develop communities committed to remaining grounded and focused on the vision of a just, cooperative, peaceful and flourishing world. Giving energy toward creative solutions and fostering mutual respect, will allow our collective vision to establish communities of people living with respect for Nature and all beings on the Earth. It will be key for institutions to develop policies and laws that support the new vision of equality and sustainable development.

Forming groups and alliances locally, nationally, and internationally will create greater energy toward clarifying and fulfilling the goal of a healthier, more peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Visibility of these alliances will make it more apparent to others and increase the collective mind in finding ways to achieve it. Gatherings of those with the vision, determination, and love will stoke the fire in each other and infuse enthusiasm for what can be achieved in a sustainable and thriving

world. The process of brainstorming and cooperatively exploring possibilities for creating harmonious communities aligned with Nature is fundamental to manifesting the vision. We need to be tenacious, fearless in moving forward, adventurous, inclusive, and constant in navigating the shifts and changes toward expanding respect for all life. The key is to be fully present to issues, think in new ways, and focus on resolution. Exploring creative living in which each individual's needs as well as the needs of society as a whole are met, is the kind of fresh, productive, and exciting modus operandi that will greatly help us accomplish the fulfilment of a sustainable future, and all the SDG's.

### **ACTIONS**

1. Establish equal rights for Nature for the continued survival and thriving of humans.
2. Develop education and systems to provide all people equal opportunity to express and manifest their personal purpose in light of the good of all.
3. Create opportunities for all people and children in schools to experience the gift of giving to others.
4. Give women, the impoverished and marginalized the right to land ownership and ensure this is protected through government regulations, policies, enforcement and courts of law, and that the territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected and strictly enforced and those who attempt to infringe on these rights are exposed and their business interests boycotted.
5. Review policies and laws to be sure they effectively foster development of sustainable, harmonious communities, cities and regions.
6. Form visible, accessible groups and alliances with common goals and collective vision to create and support harmonious communities aligned with Nature.
7. Create a global information network for sharing information, questions, answers and experience.

# TRANSFORMING OUR WORLD IN HARMONY WITH NATURE

## Part II: Recommended Actions for Implementing the 2019 SDGs with a Nature's Perspective



### IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOAL 17:

Strengthening the Means of Implementation and Revitalizing the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development



Environment  
and Nature



Culture



Technology



Education  
and Research



Economy and  
Financing Mechanisms



Policy  
and Law



Society  
and Infrastructure



Development



Agriculture

# Introduction



The above 5 reports have suggested many actions that diverse ministries of governments (national and local), educational establishments and civil society can take. These actions can be seen as *Means of Implementation*. They cover all the points mentioned in SDG 17, delving deeply into systemic issues, capacity building and partnerships, as well as looking at an array of innovative financing mechanisms.

The actions that appear in each of the reports arranged under each separate fall neatly into one or more of these areas which are used in Part Two as chapter headings:

- Environment and Nature
- Education (Formal and Informal, including through the Media); and Research
- Society and Infrastructure
- Culture
- Economy and Financing Mechanisms
- Development
- Technology
- Policy and Law
- Agriculture

The actions themselves appear within one or more of the above chapters under the subheading of the SDG and relevant target under which they appeared in Part One. This, we hope, will make them more easily accessible to those active in these areas, and make it easier for them to implement them in their work, while also encouraging all to read the relevant sections in Part One of this report which clarify the need for such actions further and place them into context. Part Two is in this way one way of forging both Part One and Part Two into a useful tool.

We should be most grateful if you would forward this report to those who can put it to use. This would include Ministries dealing with the Environment, Education, Social Affairs, Culture, the Economy, Development, Agriculture and Legal Affairs, those involved with city and national infrastructure, socially concerned organizations and businesses and also the full range of educational institutions, formal and informal as well as the media. There are a wide range of curriculum suggestions, scattered throughout the whole report. We hope these will be useful for schools at all levels. Many of these are just now looking for ways to integrate the Sustainable Development Goals. Here is a wealth of ideas to inspire young and old.

Each Section in Part Two is preceded by a separate Introduction which explores how that area is rooted in Nature. Where this connection is missed, we are doomed to struggle with an endless variety of symptoms instead of coming to grips with problems once and for all at their source.

The order in which each Section follows the other provides a deepening understanding of how our connection with Nature pervades each aspect of our existence. We begin by recognizing how we, as individuals, are inseparable from Nature, how we can use this connection consciously to come into our own and become more caring and socially responsible human beings.

We then look at how crucial this understanding is to the viability and cohesiveness of groups as we relate this to human societies, cultures and the means these uses to survive and grow, as separate entities. For each (including financing, development, technology, law and agriculture) is rooted in Nature in its own way.

Each introduction is followed by a summary from Part One of the many different actions we can take to reach Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17—the focus of the UN's 2019 High Level Political Forum and Summit.

The objective of Part Two is to demystify our relationship to Nature and to fashion it into a tool that will allow us, as human beings, to gradually take our place in a thriving, mutually nurturing planetary community of fellow beings, living in harmony with Nature.

# Environment and Nature



## Introduction

Each of us is a composition of aspects of Nature, in a constant process of change, as we absorb organic and inorganic matter through what we eat and drink and the air we breathe. We are also each inspired by life. This provides us with the capacity to perceive, to experience and respond to emotions and to act in ways that increase our life's energy.

We can also each be seen as a meeting point for all of the Earth System's subsystems: the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, the geosphere and the noosphere. So, no matter how we look at ourselves, we are, each one of us, intrinsic to Nature.

We cannot stand outside of Nature, since Nature and each of us is one and the same. Yet we can become aware of our relationship to Nature and we do so, whenever anything goes wrong. For instance, when our air is cut off, our food does not agree with us, or we find ourselves in a situation where, instead of enhancing our energy, our energy is ebbing away. In each of these instances, we become aware of a part of our body or mind of which until that situation arose, we might not have been conscious at all.

When such emergencies happen, we are actually directly perceiving our relationship with Nature. In the same way, we can learn to become aware of an inner organ, or how we breathe, or we can learn to strengthen and build a muscle, we never knew existed. So, too, we can learn to directly perceive our relationship with Nature all the time. Direct perception is that aspect of the mind that is also referred to as intuition.

Once we are aware of the discomfort and experience it consciously, in the examples mentioned above. We (or a doctor or psychologist or other professional) can name it. Once named, our analytical aspects of the mind come into action and we can search for a cure. This same series of mental steps can be applied to problems that occur in our relationship with Nature. In other words, our connection to Nature is in the first instance via our intuition and after that we can begin to bring our other parts of the mind into the problem-solving process. But unless first our intuition has told us what is going wrong, any cure we come up with is likely to be wrong.

We now find ourselves, as a human species, in a situation where a disturbing amount of aspects of our relationship to Nature are going wrong and threatening our capacity to survive.

We cannot mend these until we know what they are and that requires that we use the whole of our minds: intuition, capacity to name, analyse and then find the right cure. Here intuition has to be our first mental tool to find out exactly what has gone wrong. If we start by analysing without knowing the exact cause, we are unlikely to be able to take care of the problem.

The whole of our relationship with Nature is askew and so the challenges are overwhelming. We are confronted with an escalation of problems on all fronts. Many have reached such proportions before we acknowledge they are there, that we despair at finding a solution. For instance, when it comes to Climate Change, we are looking at coping with the consequences, rather than preventing resulting disasters.

Most of the laws of physics and biology are rooted in scientist's direct perception. Now *ongoing conscious awareness* is needed, if we are to set right our perception of how we are connecting to Nature. Many people quite naturally communicate with Nature all of the time. Others are learning to do so. It is a matter of *becoming conscious* of a natural process that is ongoing all of the time unconsciously.

In the chapters that follow, we shall see how each of the topics focused on in Part Two is deeply rooted in our relationship with Nature, both in similar ways and each in its own way, too. As a result, once our relationship with Nature becomes based, from moment to moment, on what is actually going on, solutions to the complex problems we face will rapidly emerge. These will each, in turn, help us both to make headway on reaching a specific goal, and, because of the similarities, on all the other goals, too. This will help us to meet the 2030 deadline.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Nature and the Environment**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 4**

#### **Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All**

- Things to consider when building a national curriculum integrating Nature.
  - Life can be seen as involving perception, emotions and action that allows each individual life form to locate and act upon that which increases its life's energy. When we, as human beings connect with our surroundings in that way, there is a feeling of “rightness” and satisfaction that adds to our fulfilment.
  - Deep inside of all human beings there is therefore, the yearning to develop our full potential. When we discover what “makes our heart sing”, we discover vast resources of creativity and staying power to follow this inner “spark” or “bliss” as it is sometimes called. The sense of well-being and fulfilment that develops as this type of learning persists leads to a sense of psychological self-sufficiency in that we are less dependent on reassurances from outside that our life is worthwhile, since that sense of meaning comes from within. The inner fulfilment goes hand in hand with a sense of benevolence, as we wish others to experience their own sense of deep fulfilment.
  - By being in touch with our deepest nature in this way, education becomes fundamental to peaceful and collaborative social and other relationships and full support for human rights.
  - The UN Specialized Agencies, especially with the help of UNEP, UNESCO in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples and other Nature and Animal Communicators can help to jump-start types of education specifically directed at developing people's inborn capacity to communicate and to collaborate harmoniously both with their own innermost connection with Nature and Nature as it is experienced outside; while informing students opportunities for study and how to approach these in ways that help to implement the SDGs..
  - Besides learning direct forms of communication with Nature, living in harmony with Nature requires people to become sensitive to their own needs and that of their environments and to work together in a spirit of benevolence.
  - Governments can take actions to promote formal and life-long forms of education among their peoples which enables them individually to become more closely attuned to and to communicate with Nature.
- What does Education to Live in Harmony with Nature involve?

- Education that promotes “Learning in Harmony with Nature” is student-centred and involves encouraging students to learn to consciously bring their intuition to bear on how to develop their own individual talents, while being sensitive to and working together with both the natural and the human world outside of themselves. This can be done in almost all subjects. In so doing, education will be implementing article 26 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is directed at empowering students to develop their unique potential throughout their lives and strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- Some teaching approaches that can help actualize a student's inner capacities and potential include the following:
  - Assignments that encourage students to internally reflect on their personal feelings related to topics of interest to them.
  - Lessons that present ways in which other individuals are participating in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in their own lives, with assigned projects that require students to take action on one or more Sustainable Development Goals of their choosing. This will enable students to integrate their actions as part of the worldwide effort.
  - Language classes in which students are asked to write a few sentences about their own interests in the language they are studying. This will help to reflect on what truly interests them and develop the vocabulary to discuss it.
  - Geography and Sociology classes that include consideration of natural environments where students themselves live, places they visit, and environments in the world they would like to explore. This will encourage personal involvement in their own natural communities and others that fascinate them.
  - Biology classes that create a forum that invites students to practice their capacity to communicate intuitively with animals and plants.
  - All courses, including Art, where students are asked to write essays, create works of art, or develop projects that deal with the implementation of relevant SDGs and the role they can individually play in their implementation.
- Here are ways of creating a collaborative learning environment
  - Collaboration in which all participants share the responsibility for decision-making and benefit equitably from the results is important in the full development of people's personalities and unique potential. This is often referred to as a commons approach, which, in this context, addresses how people can work together for the good of all, (including Nature) while at the same time maintaining the respect of their personal integrity and privacy.
  - Project learning is one form that collaborative learning can take. It provides a useful vehicle for implementing the SDGs in students' individual lives. If executed in a spirit of mutual support and appreciation, it can contribute to individuals' potential development, as they receive praise from both faculty and peers. What is learned through this process can then be brought to bear on an individual student's inner development in sessions with their advisors.

Project learning can also be used to solve problems in the communities where students reside or their own natural environment.

- For such learning to be internalized and if a shift is to take place in how people relate to one another and Nature, a shift must also take place at all levels of education that will affect how students and faculties relate to one another. For true student-centred learning requires a relationship of trust between students and teachers. Many student-centred learning establishments encourage teachers to support students in their growth by allowing students to choose teachers of their own free will and without pressure.
- Abuse of power by counsellors must be discouraged using very strong measures. For personal abuse at an early age often leads those abused to become abusers later on in life. Students could anonymously evaluate their teachers/advisors, with a reasoned explanation, to be followed up by more widespread inquiries if abuse is cited. Confidential investigation could be held to determine malpractice.
- Financing such education
  - The UN and its Specialized Agencies can help to make the above forms of education easier to finance and implement by ensuring that potential teachers in each of the above fields, including that of direct Nature communication, can attend courses being offered by UN Special Agencies in collaboration with those other institutions offering classes at the global level. Nature communication is often taught via the Internet and so are many other subjects. Some of the most prestigious universities are teaching classes to 10s of thousands of students in this way.
  - National Governments can then employ those who have attended the courses offered internationally to develop courses for schools nationally and to train teachers in teacher training colleges. By making all this education available through the Internet both globally and nationally, the costs of training large numbers of teachers can be substantially reduced, since it would eliminate costs for travel, board, lodging, seminar space and much more. Teachers who have benefited from such education can then be asked to translate what they have learned into their national language(s), while adapting it to national situations.

#### **4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes**

- Provide examples to the whole population of women in schools and their subsequent contributions to the home, family and communities so that the enormous advantage of giving women equal rights becomes apparent. Here it is important to show how women with equal rights and opportunities actually help those in power (at present mainly men) to achieve their own goals without in any way demeaning them.
- Develop effective learning outcomes by tailoring outcomes to what is needed for the individual child's learning and growth, as well as their entry into society as a well-rounded person who gladly contributes to the common well-being. Here are some actions that can be taken:

- Create curriculum that allows latitude for boys and girls to discover and follow their interests. (See under 4.0.)
- Include Indigenous Peoples' vision quests in education to help young people to find their vocations.
- Establish learning skills appropriate to each child's age and level of development.
- Encourage boys and girls to develop skills appropriate to their environment. As this will change over time as they learn to relate at the family, local, national, and global levels, universal access to the Internet is extremely important.
- Build into the curriculum direct contact with Nature in the child's formal and informal education, beginning with a pet or plant in the home, or plants around the settlement. Contact with Nature has been shown to allow both hemispheres of the brain to develop and with this creativity and health to increase.
- Create curriculum that includes applied use of the students' intuitive faculties. (See under 4.0)
- Focus on the importance of natural phenomena both to human beings and other species. Using a process of appreciative inquiry, children can learn to value all aspects of the natural world and their relationship to humanity and other aspects of Nature. This will enable education to overcome our abuse of Nature that comes about when Nature is seen to be an object without feelings. Here it is important to accompany first-hand experience of Nature with education in the Life Sciences where they will see that a definition of life is that "life has consciousness, emotions and capacity to act." It has proved possible to move even well-educated, cultured and otherwise kind individuals, to perpetrate horrific crimes on whole sections of their own population where they could be persuaded that a social group has no feelings or are "subhuman," Thus recognizing that all of life is sentient is an important step to preventing the abuse of Nature.
- Develop report cards that focus on student strengths and acknowledge children's relationship to Nature.
- Encourage elders (parents, teachers, and those in government) to see the importance of this type of education for all concerned. This can be achieved by international and national sharing of best practices via the UN, governments at all levels, and schools.

#### **4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education**

- Mimic Nature where-in young mammals stay with the "family" to learn initial skills from siblings and adults. In today's fast changing world, allowing pre-schoolers to benefit from being allowed to find their own paths by allowing them supervised time to explore and learn from their peers, in the home, village or community, and in Nature. This supervised time could include activities organized in the community that encourage the development of skills

appropriate to their age group, as determined by the culture of the settlement or family. While requiring time and caring adult supervision, it will foster self-directed and impassioned human beings who are capable of being at home in a fast-changing, global world. Once pre-schoolers have experienced this form of education, they will find it easier to include supervised preschool exploration in their family and community life when they are adults.

#### **4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including University**

- To facilitate access to technical, vocational and tertiary education, it is important, beside to assure access, also to ensure that the education will promote living in harmony with Nature, since many sustainable solutions especially when it comes to technology, are inspired by Nature:
  - Ensure universal access to the Internet with the help of local experts to help local communities to use it to the full, including to access technical, vocational and tertiary coursework. Although technical and vocational education tends to require hands-on experience, a large part of educational courses can be done from a distance, allowing students to work and take care of their homes and families and possibly do internships close to where they live. This can involve establishing internet cafes or centres within walking distance of one another, each staffed with an expert who can help people access the information they need, including downloading course materials. Here it is essential that the experts are selected so that they neither discriminate against women, young people or any other group, nor abuse their position to harm those that turn to them for help in any way.
  - Ensure that teacher training courses at all levels include learning about Nature and applying what has been learned to develop Nature-inspired insights.
  - Include study of the life sciences in the educational curriculum, combined with individual periods spent in personal experience and observation of Nature, as a means to gain new insights.
- Encourage the media, world leaders, grass-roots leaders and journalists to publicize best practices with regard to learning from Nature and also provide inspiring examples of people who have been inspired by Nature:
- Use social and other media to jumpstart "learning from Nature movements" and the effectiveness of Nature-inspired education. These leaders could include key people, such as experts from UNDP, UNESCO and other UN Specialized Agencies, Ministers of Education, Indigenous peoples well-versed in their age-old cultural practices, nature-communicators and other teachers, and Nature Centres. These can make the understanding of our interdependence with Nature relevant to their diverse contexts, including those in vocational and higher education.

#### **4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations**

(Almost all actions mentioned so far under Goal 4 promote the achievement of this target.)

#### **4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy**

Invite Indigenous Peoples and those who have experienced Nature survival courses as well as Nature communicators to be guest teachers in each school. Young people could regularly be encouraged to be with Nature to relax and also as a way of gaining **“Nature literacy and numeracy.”** They could spend alone time in Nature alternated with times in consultation with peers and teachers. Indigenous Peoples living in natural environments like those in Ecuador can provide international internships. Some Universities are already teaching about vision quests and other Indigenous Practices.

- UNEP with the help of the Internet can help with the necessary training.

#### **4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles**

If interested in the actions mentioned below, please go to the Section on Education in Part One and read the descriptions under target 4.7. For what is described here should be read in conjunction with the fuller descriptions of the wealth of materials available for people of all ages and from all backgrounds to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles. Part One, SDG 4.7 also includes a section on how to build sustainable villages where inhabitants practice both sustainable lifestyles and nature-inspired (commons-based) community relationships.

- In 2017, schools in 118 countries took part in the World’s Largest Lesson, reaching over 4 million students and teachers registered over 130,000 students on our map. While this is a good start, every student in the world ought to know about the Sustainable Development Goals, what they contain, and what people around the world are doing to help achieve them. It is thus imperative that all governments take the actions needed to ensure that the World’s Largest Lesson, or some other appropriate means, is used to educate their students and to engage them in taking action to help achieve the SDGs and their targets. Every school district should provide opportunities for their teachers to become familiar with and training in using the World’s Largest Lesson; and where this is not possible, incentives should be provided to encourage the teachers to make use of the on-line materials and/or take the on-line course. Schools should be encouraged to make use of one or more of the Whole School Approaches to using the World’s Largest Lesson.
- Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future ought to be used by teachers in all countries around the world. Education Departments at all levels of government should encourage schools and school districts to use the materials and could provide guidelines and training programs instructing teachers on how they can best do so. UNESCO is ready to work with government ministries, regional organisations, teacher education institutions, and curriculum developers etc to translate and adapt the programme for different cultures and

languages. Teacher education institutions are invited and encouraged to work collaboratively and with relevant Ministries of Education to help facilitate such changes. Teaching and Learning has developed guidance to assist in doing so at: [http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt\\_adpt\\_01.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt_adpt_01.html)

- Every Education Department, School, School District and government should provide incentives to encourage their teachers and educators to become Advocates and Ambassadors through Teach SDGs and provide awards and publicize the efforts of those who do so. All teachers should be encouraged to make use of the tools and materials that are on the Teach SDGs website.
- All of the efforts to promote and include Education for Sustainable Development and education about the SDGs in school curriculums should be included in the National and Local Strategies and Planning Processes in all countries and in a fully integrated manner. Through such processes all students should be invited to participate in both the development and implementation of the strategies and action plans.
- Given the multitude of development challenges that are typically faced in small and rural communities and impoverished neighbourhoods around the world, would greatly benefit from supporting the development and holding of Ecovillage Design Education Training Programmes at the local and national levels. These courses could or should be included as a part of the Ecovillage Development Programme that will hopefully be established, supported and funded in each country as well. Both the Global Ecovillage Network and GAIA Education offer Training for Trainers Courses. The international community ought to provide incentives to train as many trainers as possible in each country around the world, who will then be able to lead training programmes and train others. It is particularly important for governments to encourage their staff and employees to participate in such programmes as this.
- Given the fact that there are more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands that need to be restored around the planet, efforts must be made to train as many people as possible in how to do the regenerative restoration and management work. The Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation is rolling out a global program to establish Camps, staffed by volunteers, to do such restoration work in countries around the world. They will also offer and provide both Permaculture Training Courses along with EDE programmes. The international community should thus do everything possible to support the development of these camps and training programmes.  
See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org)
- Over the past thirty years, a new systemic conception of life has emerged at the forefront of science. New emphasis has been given to complexity, networks, and patterns of organisation, leading to a novel kind of 'systemic' thinking. Fritjof Capra and Pier Luigi Luisi in their book,
- ***The Systems View of Life. A Unifying Vision*** weave the ideas, models, and theories underlying the systems view of life into a single coherent framework. Their book discusses the implications of the systems view of life for health care, management, and our global ecological and economic crises and thus provides a crucial insight into the complexly interrelated subsystems of our planet which are the focus of the Sustainable Development Goals. This work is of particular

importance to all those who recognize that it is possible by making a fundamental positive change in how we deal with one of the goals, we will be affecting all other goals positively. This book is a tool that could be crucial to us all, if we are to reach the SDGs by the 2030 deadline.

**4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teachers training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states**

- Teachers from a variety of countries who are able to facilitate learning from Nature can submit their classes and teaching approaches to a combined panel of UNESCO and UNEP. These courses can be arranged in curricula that are made available to people worldwide via the Internet.
- Teachers and students from around the world can apply to take courses and to teach them.
- Each country sends a few teachers to take these courses in one of the 6 official languages of the UN and then to return to their own countries where they train teachers from all regions and from schools throughout the country. These can then translate the coursework into their own languages and dialects and make them available to students nationwide.

## GOAL 8

### Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All

Two types of economic growth can be distinguished. The first leads to a well-rounded system where individual needs are met, and people can fully develop. Here, as mentioned under Part Two, 4.0 above, a sense of individual fulfilment and benevolence can develop that leads to strong and rewarding social relationships; and to the awe and wonder that takes place when we resonate deeply with Nature.

This is sustainable, because:

- Although natural resources are needed, their use can be limited once basic infrastructure has been developed. After that the focus is mainly, beside on minor expansions, on adjustments and refinements in quality. Examples are basic infrastructure for the delivery of food, water, sanitation, and a variety of services. Once these have been created in ways that meet societies' needs, then the emphasis is placed on growth only as needed and qualitative refinements.
- At the immaterial level, endless growth is possible in the areas of education, culture, the arts, etc. These can expand economies ad infinitum and not use scarce or depletable resources, pollute the environment or destroy human health.

The second type of economic growth is unsustainable and dominates societies today. It is rooted in an unquenchable thirst for natural and other resources, directed at filling an inner void, that can only be filled through activity that (as described above) has deep personal meaning, as described above under Education (See under Part Two

4.0). Insatiable growth usually focuses on gathering ever increasing amounts of material “things” that are seen as symbols of both wealth and power.

As our relationship with Nature at all levels has ruptured, inner fulfilment has made way for unsustainable growth in the form of actions and institutions that harm the environment while impoverishing and marginalizing ever larger amounts of people. The unsustainable form of growth has infiltrated almost all of our financial, political and even educational institutions.

Fortunately, people in all sectors of societies are feeling the inner void and realizing the surrogates are stop-gap measures that do not work in the long-run. Such people are reaching out to one another across borders and building their own institutions. This report, as you have seen, mentions a great variety of examples.

There is still a good possibility that the unsustainable global economic system will disintegrate, once sufficient of us are working closely together in close cooperation with Nature.

### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community already has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people-to-people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all in the long run; and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can

fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.

- Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.
- Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
- Create a real increase in productivity, wealth, and well-being by investing in ecosystem restoration, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices, repairing natural water cycles, sustainably managing scarce resources such as water, land, and forests etc., and transitioning to full sustainability

Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature. (The Rights of Nature has been included by Ecuador and Bolivia in their constitutions and is also included in numerous cases at local or sub-national levels worldwide.

See: [www.harmonywithNatureun.org](http://www.harmonywithNatureun.org)

- Provide financial support for voluntary contributions that benefit community members, their communities and the natural environment as a whole.
- Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

- Establish localized food-based programs utilizing agro-ecology and other regenerative agricultural practices which create local jobs, promote more responsible stewardship, and eliminate toxic food production practices.
- Create new technologies that do not overuse finite resources such as water, ensure that the carbon footprint is as neutral as possible, and eliminate waste by using by-products from one production process to feed another.

## **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

- Develop regional and country programs to determine which renewable energy, appropriate technologies, and sustainable agricultural and/or building practices might work best in various regions and locales. Provide subsidies and assistance to those that are providing access to and/or are engaged in such sustainable business practices and processes, etc.
- Use group projects as an educational approach where groups of students are encouraged to solve an environmental, social or economic problem together.

**8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead**

- Require environmental agencies to investigate and stand for what is in the best interest of all and not make policies and laws based primarily on the interests of wealthy, powerful organizations.

**8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

- Create a development plan that takes into consideration the natural resources along international borders, the peoples of the region, and what is best suited to their geopolitical situation.
- Convert existing industrial parks into Eco-Industrial Parks in which businesses cooperate with each other and with the local community in an attempt to reduce waste and pollution, efficiently share resources (such as information, materials, water, energy, infrastructure, and natural resources), and help achieve sustainable development, with the intention of increasing economic gains and improving environmental quality.

**8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

- Replicate, scale up, fund and support many of the best programs for educating young adults and youth while training them to do ecosystem restoration and conservation work, etc.

**8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products**

- Ban any practices that bring harm to any form of life in the region or to the environment.
- Provide strict regulations regarding the treatment of animals within the tourist trades, and provide diligent monitoring to ensure quality of life, health, safety, and welfare of all animals. Terminate any activities which cause harm to the animals, and any businesses failing to honour and respect their needs. Tourist enterprises using animals must provide sanctuary for animals retiring from work.

- Provide strict regulations within the tourism trades that provide protections for the people and the natural environment within a region.

#### **8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all**

- Develop policies and practices that support entrepreneurs with sustainable business plans, which respect and benefit all life and the environment.

#### **8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization**

- Include Nature-centric principles and respect for the environment in schools at an early age. As students progress and begin finding that which they have a proclivity for, help them understand that their interests are useful and transferable into skills for employment and entrepreneurial endeavours relevant in the development of a more sustainable world.

## **GOAL 10**

### **Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries**

- Initial considerations
  - While we might think that this applies to economic equality, it is important to realize that wealth, once our basic needs are met, means something different to each human being and each geographic area.
  - As we shall see below in the introduction to Part Two, Culture, a country's culture and development is intimately linked to its natural environment. Wealth has to do with what is needed for individual well-being or that of a whole people; and that, in turn, has to do with the natural, cultural and social norms that are considered most valuable. So, equality is rooted in diversity. Having access to water for one country or person might be important while having less problems with floods is an issue for another.
  - Like people, countries have activities they do and are considered good at in service of their own inhabitants and within the international community. So, Netherlands whose territory is for a large part below sea-level specializes on water related issues. Both the national infrastructure is divided among others into water districts and internationally the Netherland performs a number of water-related services.

#### **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Support and adopt El Salvador's proposal to establish and carry out a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration thus restoring more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands around the world and in the process fund and provide jobs for low income people by engaging them in helping to regenerate and restore the Earth. Invest in water retention landscaping employing local people in efforts to revitalize the natural environment, restore agricultural productivity, and dramatically increase the level of ecosystem services. This will both create

a wide array of jobs and opportunities for people to apply their creativity. These activities will eventually finance themselves as the restored environment will contribute to a vibrant economy. These activities can be financed in part through local currencies. Local populations will be likely to contribute, seeing the potential benefits to their communities.

## **10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status**

Create a High World Council made up of individuals from all walks of life regardless of age, gender, disabilities, economic status, religion, or race, from all regions and countries. These individuals would have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgement or alliance. They serve on a rotating basis and are educated before their term so that they are well versed in their role to empower and promote social, economic, and political inclusion for All, including, and from the perspective of Nature. Their position is to uphold Natural Law as the gold standard, and to evaluate all other created laws, policies, and standards for the governance of people and their communities within the Natural Law of equality. They hold the great responsibility of being the voice of Nature where these laws affect Nature and therefore all life.

## **GOAL 13**

### **Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts**

#### **13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries**

- **Disaster Relief**
  - Heads of State and UN staff can facilitate a global exchange of best practices to mitigate the effects of various types of climate-related disasters.
  - Governments can organize and train disaster relief teams at the local, regional, state, and national levels, in advance of major crises.
  - Disaster relief teams can be trained in the use of emergency medical modalities that go beyond typical equipment and medicines, emphasizing common items likely to be available when normal medical supplies cannot be obtained, making use of naturally available resources, such as the heat from the sun, underground water resources, etc.
  - Other groups can be trained in innovative techniques for dealing with climate-related disasters, using emerging technologies and creative scenario planning.
- **Ecosystem Restoration**
  - All stakeholder groups should support and take action to help restore degraded ecosystems, increase resiliency, and create buffer zones that will protect people and human settlements from, as well as prevent, the increasing severity of “natural” disasters.

- School courses and programs should provide information about “natural” disasters as well as about what can be done to prevent and respond to them, particularly through the usage of ecosystem services and restorative practices.
- The international community should support the development of a *Call and Campaign to Restore the Earth* and do everything possible to support the UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration including through the establishment of restorative programs as a part of their national sustainable development strategies and plans.
- Full support should be also provided to establish Ecosystem Restoration Camps in all countries in an effort to re-green the earth.

See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org)

### **Water Retention Landscaping and Restoration of both Watersheds and Natural Water Cycles**

- A full-scale plan should be developed to restore the health and viability of large and small scale water cycles all around the earth, including by investing in water retention landscaping and by providing incentives to land owners who wish to do so.
- Such a plan should be modelled or based on the Global Action Plan for the Restoration of Natural Water Cycles and Climate, put forward by the Global Ecology Institute. See:  
[www.tamera.org/article-the-secret-of-water-as-a-basis-for-the-new-earth](http://www.tamera.org/article-the-secret-of-water-as-a-basis-for-the-new-earth)  
and [https://bio4climate.org/downloads/Kravcik\\_Global\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](https://bio4climate.org/downloads/Kravcik_Global_Action_Plan.pdf)
- Efforts should be undertaken as a part of national strategy plans and attempts to achieve the SDGs that focus on preventing salt water intrusion, replenishing water tables and depleted ground water, and ensuring that enough water flows into and is left in water courses to sustain ecosystem health and make sure they still run out to the sea.

### **13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning**

- Governments are pledging to achieve carbon neutrality which means sequestering as much carbon as is emitted into the natural environment - thus preventing any more from flowing into the atmosphere. It is essential that we develop plans to achieve this as well in all jurisdictions.
- El Salvador has introduced, and the UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution to enact a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. It is imperative that all countries take action as a part of this Decade to Restore the Earth - thus re-greening the more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands around the earth.

### **13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island**

## **developing states, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities**

In the past, humankind has been capable of initiating huge global changes that although still on-going attest to the fact that global change is possible. Dealing with climate change effectively so that we do not further aggravate the situation will take nothing less than learning to live in harmony with Nature and one another. In many cases, we shall have to allow ourselves to be led by those of us who have been discriminated against, deeply wronged and abused (including women and Indigenous Peoples.) By building on the movements to mobilize all those who have been discriminated against or marginalized, we are creating potential partnerships with the very people who can help us build a more harmonious relationship with Nature. This is vital because when it comes to climate change, Nature can both teach us and support us to be maximally effective.

Here are some ways in which people, using their diverse capacities in relating to Nature can help others re-establish their connection with Nature and perhaps even have a leadership effect on the rest of the world in doing this. People can:

- Learn how the interconnectedness of all within the Earth System makes it essential to pay attention to the effect of all our actions on the Earth System as a whole; understanding how all animals, plants and humans as well as the subsystems of the Earth are integrally interconnected and must be cared for and treated with sensitivity.
- Understand the personal implications of the implementation of paragraph 26 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on the right for all to develop the full human personality. This includes intuition, which is an essential component when seeking to live in harmony with Nature.
- Be encouraged to share with those in more technical dominant cultures both in developed and developing countries how to communicate with and live more closely to Nature.

## **GOAL 16**

### **Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels**

In this document and also in this chapter of Part Two on Nature, we are concerned with justice with regard to our natural environment, since that is fundamental to the survival of all. Without a wholesome relationship to our environment and having overstepped the four of the 9 Planetary Boundaries necessary if the Earth System is to support human life, the well-being and indeed the lives of all people are endangered.

Already Bolivia and Ecuador have included “The Rights of Nature” in their constitutions and so have a large number of bioregions worldwide and local areas within countries. See [www.harmonywithnatureun.org](http://www.harmonywithnatureun.org)

When restoring justice is more than a mental action and an experiential shift takes place, the fear that goes with being an outsider in the natural world makes way for

feeling that we and Nature are one and the same. Then doing justice to Nature becomes a natural next step.

In this section, dedicated to justice, our focus will be on doing justice within our primary relationship: that to Mother Nature.

#### **16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime**

- Acknowledge the crimes that have been done to others and the natural environment over time, make any necessary reparation and restitution and move forward making different choices. This would be similar to the process of “truth and reconciliation” practiced in South Africa and Rwanda.
- Adopt legislation ensuring that all people have the right to information about how we manage and treat the natural environment, including impacts on the natural environment from or by the private sector. Legislation supporting this should be adopted and enforced at the national level as a part of implementing each country’s SDG strategy and plan and combatting the illegal traffic in rare and endangered animal and plant species.
- Establish effective means for upholding human rights for all people and for protecting the rights and needs of Nature.
- Impose and widely publicize sanctions on any country which threatens or attacks the security of another country, including posing threats to the natural environment and species.

#### **16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

- Establish effective means for upholding human rights for all people and for protecting the rights and needs of Nature to decrease the perceived need for corrupt practices.
- Establish and widely publicize sanctions to be imposed on any country which threatens or attacks the security of another country, including those posing threats to the natural environment and species.
- Impose serious sanctions where corruption and bribery lead to depletion of natural resources - illegal logging, mining, externalities and impacts, poaching.

#### **16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**

- Create a network of councils whose members come from a diversity of backgrounds and regions, from the local level to the International level, for the purpose of monitoring established institutions that may already be engaged in bribery and corruption and holding them accountable to practices that are effective, transparent, accountable, and follow the rule of law and the Laws of Nature.
- Impose serious sanctions on powerful individuals and institutions who through deceit, corruption and self-serving actions negatively impact all of humanity, communities and the natural environment which we all depend on for our survival.

#### **16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

- Promote widespread participation with cooperative approaches that are already successfully utilized such as: Nature permaculture, the Slow Food Movement (<https://www.slowfood.com>), community-supported agriculture, cooperative ways of managing fisheries, forests, and irrigation, farmer's markets, community managed city and school gardens, and healthcare cooperatives.
- Guarantee that there are those who specifically represent the rights and well-being of Nature at all levels of decision making in every area.

#### **16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance**

- Include a system for and protection of environmental rights and responsibilities in all processes, agreements and institutions of global governance, in part through their inclusion in the development and adoption of a Global Pact for the Environment and fully empower developing countries to participate and help enforce these.
- Ensure each nation acts internally and internationally in accordance with universal environmental rights and responsibilities.

#### **16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements**

- Adopt legislation at the national level as part of the implementation of each country's SDG strategy and plan, requiring all governmental agencies and private sector organizations at all levels - both national and International - to publicly file annual reports as pertains to policies, products, development, that in any way affect the health and well-being of people, animals, or any aspect of Nature.

#### **16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime**

- Treat crimes against Nature at the same level as crimes against humanity.

#### **16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development**

- Establish equal rights for Nature for the continued survival and thriving of humans.
- Form visible, accessible groups and alliances with common goals and collective vision to create and support harmonious communities aligned with Nature.

# Education and Research

(Formal and Informal Education,  
including through the Media)



## Introduction

Education is a powerful tool to help root each one of us individually in our personal relationship to Nature. As we saw above, with life comes the capacity to perceive, feel and respond to emotions and act, wherever possible, to increase our life's energy. (See the Introduction to Nature and the Environment).

Connecting with something that increases our energy is experienced in a multitude of ways: a feeling of rightness, a “spark”, a momentary sense of “coming home”. The late Professor Joseph John Campbell describes in his famous book “The Hero with a Thousand Faces”, what he sees as the archetypal hero. He calls the process of seeking to increase one’s life's energy, “following one's bliss.” Fritz Perls, when speaking about being in touch with health-giving, energizing psychological insights called this the “Aha!” experience.

Education is linked to the Latin word “educere” which means “leading forth”, implying that the root meaning of education is not “putting into” but allowing the student to be guided from within by his or her inner life force. In so doing, education is implementing article 26b of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states: “Education shall be directed to the full development of the **human personality** *and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.*”

This is significant because not only does “following our bliss” connect us individually to Nature, increase our life's force, provide feelings of satisfaction, fulfilment and well-being, it tends to produce a sense of benevolence with regard to our surroundings that indeed makes us individually susceptible to doing right by other people.

Student-centred education that re-establishes our individual connection to Nature also leads to constructive and benevolent relationships within societies.

In the sections that follow, we shall read about a multitude of ways in which the educational process can be used to help solve social problems and implement the SDGs.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Education**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 4**

#### **Ensure Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education and Promote Lifelong Learning Opportunities for All**

- The UN Specialized Agencies, especially with the help of UNEP, UNESCO in collaboration with Indigenous Peoples, and other Nature and Animal Communicators can help to jump-start types of education specifically directed at developing people's inborn capacity to communicate and to collaborate harmoniously with Nature.
- Besides this direct form of communication living in harmony with Nature requires people to become sensitive to their own needs and that of their environments and to work together in a spirit of benevolence.
- Governments can take actions to promote formal and life-long forms of education among their peoples which enables them individually to become more closely attuned to and to communicate with Nature.
- What does Education to Live in Harmony with Nature involve?
  - Education that promotes "Learning in Harmony with Nature" is student-centred and involves encouraging students to learn to consciously bring their intuition to bear on how to develop their own individual talents, while being sensitive to and working together with the world outside of themselves. This can be done in almost all subjects. In so doing, education will be implementing article 26 (2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which is directed at empowering students to develop their unique potential throughout their lives and strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.
- Some teaching approaches that can help actualize a student's inner capacities and potential include the following:
  - Assignments that encourage students to internally reflect on their personal feelings related to topics of interest to them.
  - Lessons that present ways in which other individuals are participating in implementing the Sustainable Development Goals in their own lives, with assigned projects that require students to take action on one or more Sustainable Development Goals of their choosing. This will enable students to integrate their actions as part of the worldwide effort.
  - Language classes in which students are asked to write a few sentences about their own interests in the language they are studying. This will help to reflect on what truly interests them and develop the vocabulary to discuss it.
  - Geography and Sociology classes that include consideration of natural environments where students themselves live, places they visit, and

environments in the world they would like to explore. This will encourage personal involvement in their own natural communities and others that fascinate them.

- Biology classes that create a forum that invites students to practice their capacity to communicate intuitively with animals and plants.
- All courses, including Art, where students are asked to write essays, create works of art, or develop projects that deal with the implementation of relevant SDGs and the role they can individually play in their implementation.
- Here are ways of creating a collaborative learning environment:
  - Collaboration in which all participants share the responsibility for decision-making and benefit equitably from the results is important in the full development of people's personalities and unique potential. This is often referred to as a commons approach, which, in this context, addresses how people can work together for the good of all, (including Nature) while at the same time maintaining the respect of their personal integrity and privacy.
  - Project learning is one form that collaborative learning can take. It provides a useful vehicle for implementing the SDGs in students' individual lives. If executed in a spirit of mutual support and appreciation, it can contribute to individuals' potential development, as they receive praise from both faculty and peers. What is learned through this process can then be brought to bear on an individual student's inner development in sessions with their advisors. Project learning can also be used to solve problems in the communities where students reside or their own natural environment.
  - For such learning to be internalized and if a shift is to take place in how people relate to one another and Nature, a shift must also take place at all levels of education that will affect how students and faculties relate to one another. For true student-centred learning requires a relationship of trust between students and teachers. Many student-centred learning establishments encourage teachers to support students in their growth by allowing students to choose teachers of their own free will and without pressure.
  - Abuse of power by counsellors must be discouraged using very strong measures. For personal abuse at an early age often leads those abused to become abusers later on in life. Students could anonymously evaluate their teachers/advisors, with a reasoned explanation, to be followed up by more widespread inquiries if abuse is cited. Confidential investigation could be held to determine malpractice.
- Financing such education
  - The UN and its Specialized Agencies can help to make the above forms of education easier to finance and implement by ensuring that potential teachers in each of the above fields, including that of direct Nature communication, can attend courses being offered by UN Special Agencies in collaboration with those other institutions offering classes at the global level. Nature communication is often taught via the Internet and so are many

other subjects. Some of the most prestigious universities are teaching classes to 10s of thousands of students in this way.

- National Governments can then employ those who have attended the courses offered internationally to develop courses for schools nationally and to train teachers in teacher training colleges. By making all this education available through the Internet both globally and nationally, the costs of training large numbers of teachers can be substantially reduced, since it would eliminate costs for travel, board, lodging, seminar space and much more. Teachers who have benefited from such education can then be asked to translate what they have learned into their national language(s), while adapting it to national situations.

#### **4.1 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes**

- Provide examples to the whole population of women in schools and their subsequent contributions to the home, family and communities so that the enormous advantage of giving women equal rights becomes apparent. Here it is important to show how women with equal rights and opportunities actually help those in power (at present mainly men) to achieve their own goals without in any way demeaning them.
- Develop effective learning outcomes by tailoring outcomes to what is needed for the individual child's learning and growth, as well as their entry into society as a well-rounded person who gladly contributes to the common well-being. Here are some actions that can be taken:
  - Create curriculum that allows latitude for boys and girls to discover and follow their interests. (See under 4.0.)
  - Include Indigenous Peoples' vision quests in education to help young people to find their vocations.
  - Establish learning skills appropriate to each child's age and level of development.
  - Encourage boys and girls to develop skills appropriate to their environment. As this will change over time as they learn to relate at the family, local, national, and global levels, universal access to the Internet is extremely important.
  - Build into the curriculum direct contact with Nature in the child's formal and informal education, beginning with a pet or plant in the home, or plants around the settlement. Contact with Nature has been shown to allow both hemispheres of the brain to develop and with this creativity and health to increase.
  - Create curriculum that includes applied use of the students' intuitive faculties. (See under 4.0)
  - Focus on the importance of natural phenomena both to human beings and other species. Using a process of appreciative inquiry, children can learn to value all aspects of the natural world and their relationship to humanity and other aspects of Nature. This will enable education to overcome our abuse of Nature that comes about when Nature is seen to be an object without

feelings. Here it is important to accompany first-hand experience of Nature with education in the Life Sciences where they will see that a definition of life is that “life has consciousness, emotions and capacity to act.” It has proved possible to move even well-educated, cultured and otherwise kind individuals, to perpetrate horrific crimes on whole sections of their own population where they could be persuaded that a social group has no feelings or are "subhuman," Thus recognizing that all of life is sentient is an important step to preventing the abuse of Nature.

- Develop report cards that focus on student strengths and acknowledge children's relationship to Nature.
- Encourage elders (parents, teachers, and those in government) to see the importance of this type of education for all concerned. This can be achieved by international and national sharing of best practices via the UN, governments at all levels, and schools.

#### **4.2 By 2030, ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education**

- Mimic Nature where-in young mammals stay with the "family" to learn initial skills from siblings and adults. In today's fast changing world, allowing pre-schoolers to benefit from being allowed to find their own paths by allowing them supervised time to explore and learn from their peers, in the home, village or community, and in Nature. This supervised time could include activities organized in the community that encourage the development of skills appropriate to their age group, as determined by the culture of the settlement or family. While requiring time and caring adult supervision, it will foster self-directed and impassioned human beings who are capable of being at home in a fast- changing, global world. Once pre-schoolers have experienced this form of education, they will find it easier to include supervised preschool exploration in their family and community life when they are adults.

#### **4.3 By 2030, ensure equal access for all women and men to affordable and quality technical, vocational and tertiary education, including University**

- To facilitate access to technical, vocational and tertiary education, it is important, beside to assure access, also to ensure that the education will promote living in harmony with Nature, since many sustainable solutions especially when it comes to technology, are inspired by Nature:
  - Ensure universal access to the Internet with the help of local experts to help local communities to use it to the full, including to access technical, vocational and tertiary coursework. Although technical and vocational education tends to require hands-on experience, a large part of educational courses can be done from a distance, allowing students to work and take care of their homes and families and possibly do internships close to where they live. This can involve establishing internet cafes or centres within walking distance of one another, each staffed with an expert who can help people access the information they need, including downloading course materials. Here it is essential that the experts are selected so that they

neither discriminate against women, young people or any other group, nor abuse their position to harm those that turn to them for help in any way.

- Ensure that teacher training courses at all levels include learning about Nature and applying what has been learned to develop Nature-inspired insights.
- Include study of the life sciences in the educational curriculum, combined with individual periods spent in personal experience and observation of Nature, as a means to gain new insights.
- Encourage the media, world leaders, grass-roots leaders and journalists to publicize best practices with regard to learning from Nature and also provide inspiring examples of people who have been inspired by Nature:
- Use social and other media to jumpstart "learning from Nature movements" and the effectiveness of Nature-inspired education. These leaders could include key people, such as experts from UNDP, UNESCO and other UN Specialized Agencies, Ministers of Education, Indigenous peoples well-versed in their age-old cultural practices, nature-communicators and other teachers, and Nature Centres. These can make the understanding of our interdependence with Nature relevant to their diverse contexts, including those in vocational and higher education.

#### **4.5 By 2030, eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations**

Almost all actions mentioned so far under Goal 4 promote the achievement of this target.

#### **4.6 By 2030, ensure that all youth and a substantial proportion of adults, both men and women, achieve literacy and numeracy**

Invite Indigenous Peoples and those who have experienced Nature survival courses as well as Nature communicators to be guest teachers in each school. Young people could regularly be encouraged to be with Nature to relax and also as a way of gaining "**Nature literacy and numeracy.**" They could spend alone time in Nature alternated with times in consultation with peers and teachers. Indigenous Peoples living in natural environments like those in Ecuador can provide international internships. Some Universities are already teaching about vision quests and other Indigenous Practices.

- UNEP with the help of the Internet can help with the necessary training.

#### **4.7 By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles**

This section should be read in conjunction with the descriptions of the wealth of materials available for people of all ages and from all backgrounds to acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles. It also includes a section on how to build sustainable villages with both sustainable life styles and nature-inspired (commons-based) community relationships. If interested in

the actions mentioned below, please go to the Section on Education in Part One and read the descriptions under target 4.7.

- In 2017, schools in 118 countries took part in the World's Largest Lesson, reaching over 4 million students and teachers registered over 130,000 students on our map. While this is a good start, every student in the world ought to know about the Sustainable Development Goals, what they contain, and what people around the world are doing to help achieve them. It is thus imperative that all governments take the actions needed to ensure that the World's Largest Lesson, or some other appropriate means, is used to educate their students and to engage them in taking action to help achieve the SDGs and their targets. Every school district should provide opportunities for their teachers to become familiar with and training in using the World's Largest Lesson; and where this is not possible, incentives should be provided to encourage the teachers to make use of the on-line materials and/or take the on-line course. Schools should be encouraged to make use of one or more of the Whole School Approaches to using the World's Largest Lesson.
- Teaching and Learning for a Sustainable Future ought to be used by teachers in all countries around the world. Education Departments at all levels of government should encourage schools and school districts to use the materials and could provide guidelines and training programs instructing teachers on how they can best do so. UNESCO is ready to work with government ministries, regional organisations, teacher education institutions, and curriculum developers etc. to translate and adapt the programme for different cultures and languages. Teacher education institutions are invited and encouraged to work collaboratively and with relevant Ministries of Education to help facilitate such changes. Teaching and Learning has developed guidance to assist in doing so at: [http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt\\_adpt\\_01.html](http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/dtt/dtt_adpt_01.html)
- Every Education Department, School, School District and government should provide incentives to encourage their teachers and educators to become Advocates and Ambassadors through Teach SDGs and provide awards and publicize the efforts of those who do so. All teachers should be encouraged to make use of the tools and materials that are on the Teach SDGs website.
- All of the efforts to promote and include Education for Sustainable Development and education about the SDGs in school curriculums should be included in the National and Local Strategies and Planning Processes in all countries and in a fully integrated manner. Through such processes all students should be invited to participate in both the development and implementation of the strategies and action plans.
- Given the multitude of development challenges that are typically faced in small and rural communities and impoverished neighbourhoods around the world, would greatly benefit from supporting the development and holding of Ecovillage Design Education Training Programmes at the local and national levels. These courses could or should be included as a part of the Ecovillage Development Programme that will hopefully be established, supported and funded in each country as well. Both the Global Ecovillage Network and GAIA Education offer Training for Trainers Courses. The international community ought to provide incentives to train as many trainers as possible in each country

around the world, who will then be able to lead training programmes and train others. It is particularly important for governments to encourage their staff and employees to participate in such programmes as this.

- Given the fact that there are more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands that need to be restored around the planet, efforts must be made to train as many people as possible in how to do the regenerative restoration and management work. The Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation is rolling out a global program to establish Camps, staffed by volunteers, to do such restoration work in countries around the world. They will also offer and provide both Permaculture Training Courses along with EDE programmes. The international community should thus do everything possible to support the development of these camps and training programmes.

See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org).

- Over the past thirty years, a new systemic conception of life has emerged at the forefront of science. New emphasis has been given to complexity, networks, and patterns of organisation, leading to a novel kind of 'systemic' thinking. Fritjof Capra and Pier Luigi Luisi in their book, ***The Systems View of Life. A Unifying Vision*** weave the ideas, models, and theories underlying the systems view of life into a single coherent framework. Their book discusses the implications of the systems view of life for health care, management, and our global ecological and economic crises and thus provides a crucial insight into the complexly interrelated subsystems of our planet which are the focus of the Sustainable Development Goals. This work is of particular importance to all those who recognize that it is possible by making a fundamental positive change in how we deal with one of the goals, we will be affecting all other goals positively. This book is a tool that could be crucial to us all, if we are to reach the SDGs by the 2030 deadline.

**4.c By 2030, substantially increase the supply of qualified teachers, including through international cooperation for teachers training in developing countries, especially least developed countries and small island developing states**

- Teachers from a variety of countries who are able to facilitate learning from Nature can submit their classes and teaching approaches to a combined panel of UNESCO and UNEP. These courses can be arranged in curricula that are made available to people worldwide via the Internet.
- Teachers and students from around the world can apply to take courses and to teach them.
- Each country sends a few teachers to take these courses in one of the 6 official languages of the UN and then to return to their own countries where they train teachers from all regions and from schools throughout the country. These can then translate the coursework into their own languages and dialects and make them available to students nationwide.

## GOAL 8

### Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All

## 8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all and in the long run and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.
  - Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.
  - Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.

- Transition all countries to a circular regenerative economy which eliminates waste and develop plans to adopt fully sustainable consumption and production practices.
- Create a real increase in productivity, wealth, and well-being by investing in ecosystem restoration, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices, repairing natural water cycles, sustainably managing scarce resources such as water, land, and forests etc., and transitioning to full sustainability.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

- Energize the building economy by training in and utilizing natural, sustainable green building practices.
- Require our governments to publicly acknowledge and clearly express the types of problems we face and put out a call to action for and support the increased development of new technologies and innovations. Terminate any spin which confuses the issue (for instance on Climate Change) of the reality we all currently face seeing our future survival in jeopardy. It is essential that governments clearly state the situation and what has led us to this reality.

## **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

- Develop and encourage others to develop training programmes and bio-regional resource and service centres that support local communities in carrying out sustainable development planning and design processes and are adopting best practices in this area.
- Develop and institute curriculum activities that focus on transitioning to more sustainable practices in the area of popular education and a solidarity economy.
- Use group projects as an educational approach where groups of students are encouraged to solve an environmental, social or economic problem together.
- Support the development of Demonstration Eco-Houses or Centres.
- Provide and support the development of circular, solidarity economy and agro-ecology student training programs and internships.

## **8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

- Ensure that actions are sustainable, and people are aware of their dependence on a resilient and healthy natural environment.

- As reorganization of governments and communities take place, the population should be educated regarding the steps they can participate in, such as the referendum process.
- Develop and support the establishment of programs and initiatives that educate and train students and youth in vocational and technical education and other job skills while focusing on the need to transition to sustainable and regenerative development.
- Provide facilities where people can connect with educational and informational resources both in person and via the internet. Provide support systems to offer direction, guidance, and instruction.
- Encourage companies to bring in student interns to help them transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in sustainable processes and practices. Governments would profit by developing programs and policies to support this.
- Create communities in the manner of Sekem Farm in Egypt along with ecovillages all over the world, which tend to be leaders in the conscious design of communities that support the regeneration of social and natural environments.

#### **8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

- Educate and train youth encouraging them to actively participate in achieving all 17 SDGs.
- Replicate, scale up, fund and support many of the best programs for educating young adults and youth while training them to do ecosystem restoration and conservation work, etc.
- Encourage meetings of the community, including women and young people of all ages, to look at problems that exist within the community and build on the ingenuity of all the people to find and implement solutions. It is important to ensure that young people's ingenuity is taken into account and that they are given an opportunity to participate in implementing solutions in ways that allow them to learn as they help in improving their community.
- Support and fund experience-sharing and capacity building that enable scaling out and dissemination of existing good practices.

#### **8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms**

- Structure education so that students are encouraged to follow their passions and master the basic skills necessary to function well in society, so that as adults they will not be attempted to abuse children themselves.
- Encourage empathy, inclusiveness, and respect among students in the educational environment.

- Ensure that there is an easy transition from education to work opportunities, and that innovative ideas are put into practice to diversify and strengthen the economy.
- Assist offenders in making restitution by placing them in conditions where they can identify and empathize with those they have wronged. This can be by showing films where the young tell their stories and show the consequences of the abuse, they have suffered both physically and psychologically; and then enlisting their help in trying to reverse the damage they have helped to create.

#### **8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment**

- Enable documentation and social security nets as well as access to affordable education and healthcare for those in countries of immigration.
- Make widely known the contributions being made by migrant labour and the value to society provided by those willing to perform essential employment others loathe to do.
- Use all forms of education to overcome fear, prejudice and lack of empathy, including the media to ensure that ALL groups of people are seen in the important role they play for a country as a whole.
- Create platforms to engage individuals in activities such as storytelling, drama, art and music to foster understanding and community building between people of different cultures.

#### **8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products**

- Use tourism as a means of building bridges between people, bringing cultures together in mutual appreciation, building meaningful relationships between people, helping to transform non-caring superficial relationships into life-changing experiences, fostering peace, understanding and people to people development, while contributing to a global community based on mutual caring and constructive collaboration.

#### **8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization**

- Ensure universal access to the Internet. Here the United Nations can play a pivotal role. It can provide training for a small group of people in each nation, who can then train facilitators in each region of their own country. As local communities are empowered, through access to the Internet and the partnership economy that they then have access to, they will become more prosperous and costs can be recaptured directly from users of such Internet centres or via taxes.
- Implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially art. 26 (2) to ensure students can develop their individual potential and are motivated to do so. This could include having Internet Centres within easy reach from all parts of the nation, especially outlying areas. These should ideally be staffed by

someone who is both able to help people to clarify what information they are looking for and help them to locate the necessary support via the Internet.

- Use the motivational force in students to inspire learning, personal development and creativity in making connections worldwide that can lead to employment opportunities.
- In schools, use project learning, so that students learn the required subjects (for instance reading writing, arithmetic) in the context of realizing the projects that are closest to their own heart, for instance, arithmetic as a way of pricing their projects, reading, writing and geography as a way of marketing them, etc.
- Include Nature-centric principles and respect for the environment in schools at an early age. As students progress and begin finding that which they have a proclivity for, help them understand that their interests are useful and transferable into skills for employment and entrepreneurial endeavours relevant in the development of a more sustainable world.
- Educate young people to use the Internet skilfully to locate what they need, including connections that are relevant to their personal and professional development, so that they can grow in a global context, and thereby maximize opportunities for gainful and fulfilling employment.

## GOAL 10

### Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries

- Education to overcome the inner dynamics of disconnection and fear of what is considered "the other" by fostering connection.
- In formal education focus on developing the conscious use of that part of the brain (the right hemisphere) that fosters connection by, for instance, beginning the school day with activities that afford a feeling of connection. This can be through prayer, singing together, group meditation, class meetings whereby a welcome one another and express appreciation of each other at the start of and during the day, playing background music - music that has survived the test of time, such as Mozart, whose music is often quoted as being particularly powerful to enhance a positive connection with one's own learning capacity and thus a sense of unity within.
- Give students tasks to use their ingenuity to deal with environmental problems and restore Nature. This will help them connect with the natural world and other species. Examples include developing school gardens to enhance nutrition in schools while learning about the marvels of Nature.
- Implement article 26(2) of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: enabling students to develop their full potential, by allowing them a certain amount of choice in what they learn, and when. (E.g. The Montessori method).
- Use collaborative forms of learning. For instance, give groups of students a social or community problem to resolve as a team. This encourages each student individually to develop their own specific talents, be recognized for their accomplishments and learn the joys and benefits of collaboration, thus

nurturing the sense of unity with their own creativity and with other members of the team. This is also an educational approach that can strengthen their personal understanding of how each person can contribute or detract from the well-being of the community as a whole--thereby strengthening ties among community members.

- Teach about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and post it in every classroom - as is called for in the Preamble of the Declaration.
- Make standards of equality and equity such as those outlined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Earth Charter both a part of the curriculum and implement them within the schools.
- Teach international standards of human, civil and political rights.
- Encourage all schools and districts to join the tens of millions of students that are already participating in the activities of the **World's Children's Prize for the Rights of the Child**, thus introducing and teaching children about the abuses that many other children face around the world.

See: [www.childrensworld.org](http://www.childrensworld.org)

- Make students aware of the national and international agreements made by their governments and how such legislation relates to the challenges they themselves face.
- Introduce role-playing in schools and other methods to bridge the gap between social groups, and build understanding between people, including those who are abusing their power. It is important that people understand one another's weaknesses--why they have a need to cling to power, to harm other people, etc. both as a means of preventing others following in the footsteps of those who use power to harm others and also to find solutions that deal with crooked human development at its roots.

#### **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Provide funding, infrastructure, and services to support training and jobs for low income wage earners in municipal areas to integrate small scale sustainable agriculture using parks, empty lots and rooftops to grow food, integrate water catchments and filtration systems, and renew and create natural areas into and around new and existing housing.
- Provide initial investments and training for people to produce green and environmentally friendly products, particularly those that are food based, that support a sustainable community and economy by enlisting the interests and input of large segments of their populations. These products can be competitive in global markets and thus broadly increase the standard of the whole population at the same time, while supporting a green and environmentally sustainable future.
- Provide relevant educational facilities either directly or by allowing people to connect with Intergovernmental Agencies and educational resources available via the Internet. It is important to use these since many are free of charge and come with "no strings attached."

- Develop, fund, and implement a growing network of resource, service and learning centres at a national and global level to assist all peoples living in impoverished and/or rural areas to learn about more sustainable development and agricultural practices and to acquire the skills, materials, and expertise needed to uplift their lives. This can be coupled with the teaching of Ecovillage Design Education training programmes in local communities and bioregions around the world such as have already been organized and held in hundreds of locales and in more than 42 countries by GAIA Education and the Global Ecovillage Network.  
See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/> and <http://gaiaeducation.org>.
- Invest in transitioning to regenerative agriculture practices and training programs, especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood.  
Again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions).
- Capitalize on the inherent strengths of a people and region to internally build up their own economy. Take inventory of cultural, environmental, technological, artistic, and agricultural strengths and resources of underserved communities that would be of interest to the rest of the world. This can include sites of interest to research, internships for people who wish to learn topics specially characteristic of that region, opportunities to study native ways of approaching sustainable problem solving - whether high tech or low tech - or internships to help set up new structures, communications' systems, Agroforestry, artistic techniques unique to the region, etc.
- Have companies bring in student interns to help them to transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in such sustainable processes and practices; and governments to develop programs and policies to support this. Create eco-industrial parks.

**10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status**

- Include people's input into all aspects of governance using Town Hall meetings and referenda, starting with meetings in small circles where all are able to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Develop People's Participatory Budget Processes at the local level to ensure that the desires and needs of all peoples are fully included in deciding how government monies will be allocated and spent.
- Organize inclusive workshops and planning processes at all levels of governance to collect ideas and develop policies to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all peoples in government decision making, planning and implementation processes. Establish or designate offices in each government that will be responsible for ensuring that such policies are adopted, enforced and carried out.

- Create opportunities within the schools to tap into the visions of the children, bring their ideas together, and disseminate to the higher organizations for inclusion.

**10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard**

- Provide education that increases appreciation for diversity and the importance of equality.

**10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions**

Here are some steps that can be taken via education to bring about social and institutional Change.

- Draw on and strengthen the sometimes unconscious knowing of our interdependence and the joys associated with working harmoniously together as equals, using stories and experiences that speak vividly to the heart and minds and illustrate:
  - that developed and developing countries are interdependent for their capacity to create rewarding lives for their peoples.
  - that their ultimate self-interest lies in working together on the basis of equality, whereby each can fully develop its individual strength as a nation and a people;
  - that this expresses itself among many other things in an increase of wealth through trade between equals, mutual appreciation, safety and diversity of life experience because all are contributing to all others;
  - that the present inequality in decision making in international institutions carries over into an inequality of opportunities and wealth within developing countries and
  - that this, in turn, breeds enmity, resentment, violence and conflict both between nations and within nations which is resulting in political and economic refugees and migrants, which in turn breeds fear and resentment among the rich in developed countries.

This message might have to be spelled out as a whole and in such a way that it speaks vividly to the hearts of those who are (often through fear) creating and perpetuating inequalities within and between countries. Here governments, groups and people can work together through formal education and the media, including the social media.

As this insight takes place, it will be easier to take the next steps:

- Provide incentives for institutions to be fair and representational of the best interests of all.
- Build institutions founded on integrity, transparency and equality for all.

## GOAL 13

# Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts

## Education to promote a paradigm change:

- Make it a habit to look at Nature without prejudice: simply observe and be aware of all that is.
- Consider that Earth's resources are finite, contributed to humanity by other living beings. Take only what you need.
- Be mindful that change is possible when we realize that people and planet are one and the same.
- Remember that we are all part of the Earth and have a responsibility to follow the rhythms of Nature, to keep its harmony and balance.
- Learn to listen—to ourselves, to our own hearts, to each other, as well as to Nature, animals, trees, and plants.
- Think and act in ways that are inclusive of the well-being of all species.
- Consider that Nature just naturally does what is required to be sustainable and life supporting. As stewards, it is our responsibility to support and enable these natural capacities.

## 13.1 Strengthen resilience and adaptive capacity to climate-related hazards and natural disasters in all countries

- Reawaken and kindle the inherent conscious connection that each person now has unconsciously with Nature with the help of scientists who have finely tuned instrumentation; Indigenous Peoples; small-scale farmers and others whose livelihoods depends on accurately interpreting the signs Nature is constant giving us; and the increasing number who are consciously aware of their ongoing connection with Nature as well as those learning conscious Nature communication.
- Implement student-centered education to increase people's creativity—the gift that has helped humanity overcome seeming unsurmountable challenges in the past.

## 13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning

- Create programmes for sustainable development at all levels.
  - UNESCO has a vast array of resources:
    - <https://en.unesco.org/esd-repo/> is UNESCO's resource bank and lists many resources for sustainable development and public awareness raising.
    - <https://en.unesco.org/gap/resources> is UNESCO'S Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development.
- Introduce into school curriculums environmental education for sustainable development programs that include measures to mitigate and deal with the effects of climate change.

- Incorporate climate mitigation training into young children's play at school and as extracurricular activities (such as survival training, making fires using natural materials, creating places where children take care of other children, and games where they learn confidence and independence to lessen fear and anxiety).
- Encourage students at all levels to work with these skills, building on what is often already taught in environmental education programs, such as using the sun to warm, making fires, using leaves and snow to insulate from the cold, using energy healing to heal when medications are unavailable, observing Nature for early warning signs of storms, changing weather patterns, approaching tsunamis, earth quakes, and communicating with Nature using time honoured methods still in use by some Indigenous Peoples, small-scale farmers and others living in close contact with Nature, Nature communicators, etc..
- Teach teamwork in all subjects to ensure that people collaborate well when disasters hit.

### **13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning**

- Education in general: Here once more, are links to UNESCO's educational resources for sustainable development both for formal education and also for all parts of civil society:
  - <https://en.unesco.org/esd-repo/> is UNESCO's resource bank and lists many resources for sustainable development and public awareness raising.
  - <https://en.unesco.org/gap/resources> is UNESCO'S Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development.
- Education inspired by Nature: Students and workers within organizations/corporations/educational institutions and governments at all levels can be educated in the following ways:
  - Participating in classes to increase understanding of how the effects of climate change express themselves and the precise causes that bring these about; this process should take place in both developed and developing countries and neighbourhoods of all socio-economic backgrounds.
  - Sensitizing people to their integral position within the Earth System, to the interconnection of all life and how it contributes to their individual wellbeing and capacity to survive.
  - Restoring the inborn capacity of human beings to communicate with Nature, building on the contributions of many Indigenous Peoples and other Nature communicators.
  - Sharing best practices and ways of combatting climate changes and mitigating its effects in the diverse situations faced both by rich, poor and in diverse geographical and social situations.
  - Building the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their own independent, decolonized institutions of higher learning where they can

share their wisdom and knowledge or where their knowledge will be respectfully received.

- Creating competitions in schools, organizations, corporations and human settlements to raise contributions in currency and in kind, as well as ideas for combatting the effects of climate change.
- Education for Regenerative Agriculture, Restoring Natural Ecosystems, Replenishing Watersheds and Ground Water, and Restoring Natural Water Cycles.
  - Permaculture Training Programmes are offered all around the world that provide essential training in regenerative and restorative practices. All governments should take advantage of such courses and provide incentives for civil servants to participate in them.
  - Invest in transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices and training programs, especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture, that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood.

See: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions)

- Develop regional rural extension programmes that offer hands-on education and training courses to community members focusing on ecosystem restoration, water retention management, and restoration of watersheds and natural water cycles, etc.
- GAIA Education offers a range of educational programs that are available to people of all ages that is recognized as an exemplary program under UNESCO's Global Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development. These programs include both an introductory and a yearlong Design for Sustainability on-line course; hands-on project based month-long or 20-hour immersion Ecovillage Design Education training programs; and the Training of Trainers program. These programs cover all aspects and elements of regenerative development and cover pretty much the same material as the SDGs. See: <https://gaiaeducation.org>
- The Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation has established a program with goal of creating and developing camps staffed by volunteer workers to restore degraded ecosystems all around the earth. It is essential that these camps be set up all around the world, in order to train people in how to help restore degraded lands in all bio-regions. The Camps will also offer permaculture classes, workshops and training programs. Those that participate in such programs will gain valuable skills that can then be used as humanity undertakes this enormous challenge of Restoring the Earth.

See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation) for more information.

**13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation**

**actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible**

### **Use education and the media**

- To show both how rich and poor depend on one another to deal with climate change and that financial flows from developed to developing countries are in the survival interest of all;
- To help citizens understand the need to support their governments in choosing to honour their international financing obligations rather than insisting that they choose to use it all on narrower national objectives.

### **Here are some actions that can help achieve this:**

- Encouraging all to participate in classes (including those that are available via the Internet) to increase understanding of how the effects of climate change express themselves and the precise causes that bring these about while stressing the importance of the financing and other agreements that have been made by governments to deal with these challenges. This process should take place in both developed and developing countries and in neighbourhoods of all socio-economic backgrounds to enable the necessary bottom-up understanding and bottom-up pressure required in order to deal more responsibly with this to build.
- Sensitizing people to their integral position within the Earth System, to the inter-connection of all life and how it contributes to their individual well-being and capacity to survive, while stressing how the financing agreements that have already been made, to which their nation is a party, are needed to achieve this end.
- Showing how monies to help developing nations deal with climate change-related issues (including those that go to activating the Green Climate Fund) are in the end for the benefit of all and showing that there are a number of effective ways in which these can be used by, for instance, sharing best practices and ways of combatting climate changes and mitigating its effects in the diverse situations faced both by rich, poor and in diverse geographical and social situations.
- Showing the contributions made by all people to dealing with climate change, including the central role that can be played by indigenous peoples - including in developing countries, in order to encourage that some monies be used for building the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their own independent, decolonized institutions of higher learning where they can share their wisdom and knowledge or where their knowledge will be respectfully received.
- Global Sharing of Expertise via a Web Site on the Internet:
  - The more people have access to the Internet and are encouraged to place their individual strategies for the implementation of the SDGs, the more people will be able to help and inspire one another and the less likely that anyone will be left behind.

- Such a giant website can provide all people, agencies, organizations, corporations, educational and governmental establishments including the UN with individual pages on which to describe all are doing individually for the implementation of all goals. This site must include a search engine that allows people in similar circumstances to support and help one another. Facilitators in each area would facilitate access to the web site for all, even those who are not Internet literate.

## GOAL 16

### Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels

#### 16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere

*What is done to children they will do to society*

Dr Karl Menninger 1893 – 1990

- Implement the following in order to prepare the next generation for the world we want to promote:
  - Education that follows the child's natural curiosity, draws out the innate wisdom of each individual and nurtures the expression of each child's unique passions and gifts.
  - Teach children to trust their own inner wisdom, to respect and cooperate with all life.
  - Sponsor Nature Outdoor Education programs in which people interact with Nature to facilitate the resolution of emotional conflict.
  - Teach healthy ways to manage emotions.
  - Expand foreign exchange programs to connect students in differing locations and situations.
  - Teach nonviolent communication, conflict resolution, mediation skills and teach that at the core we are all one in our humanity.
  - Create opportunities for all people to express their feelings, be heard without judgment and have their value to the whole community acknowledged.
  - Teach parenting in schools to prepare young adults to be parents.
  - Promote respectful and appreciative parenting and classroom management.
  - Training in effective, respectful interpersonal communication and building healthy relationships.
- Employ the following tenets in schools, communities, and societies:
  - Each individual is responsible for SDGs, how things are on the planet and for transforming and changing anything that we want to see change.
  - Encourage residents of neighbourhoods and communities to come together in the creation of the type of neighbourhoods, communities, towns, and cities they wish to live in. Allow each member of the community to contribute as a valuable voice to be heard to foster confidence and wellbeing.

- Design communities to promote positive social interaction, a sense of community, connection and mutual support.
- Implement natural design elements in cities, towns, and public spaces that instil a sense of peace, calm, and beauty. Preserve and incorporate Nature in and around streets and buildings.
- Provide quiet spaces and times.
- Embrace the understanding that; “All children are our children”, meaning all adults share in the responsibility for supporting the well-being and healthy development of all children on earth.
- Safeguard childhood as a time of stress-free unstructured play and opportunities to learn naturally and according to inner guidance.
- Encourage curiosity, creativity and acceptance of mistakes. Create environments, neighbourhoods, and communities in which each individual feels heard, and each ones contributions are accepted and celebrated, building confidence and well-being.
- Each person has a responsibility to listen with compassion and honesty to fellow human beings and a right to have their perspective heard and emotions accepted without judgment.
- Deliberately choose not to focus on struggle and fear, and instead practice looking for the things to be grateful for and for noticing the innate goodness of people and the everyday miracles which are all around us.
- Provide opportunities to all citizens for Nature sabbaticals, when they can connect with the peace, calm, and healing time with Self and which Nature can foster.

## **16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children**

- Immediately start providing support for the physical and spiritual birth right of each society member to foster the next generation of good and well-intentioned adults.
- Take into account the misguided needs and motivations of those who inflict every sort of abuse and violence towards children such as poor upbringing, personal history of abuse and disrespect, inexperience of and disconnection from Nature and the sense of interconnectedness and awe of all life, as well as economic need. Create programs that redirect these individuals, providing the social and economic support they need to make the necessary changes in themselves.
- Put energy and resources towards trauma healing for both children who have been victims, as well as the adults who have become perpetrators. Programs that educate in care and appreciation for animals and Nature are healing for the greater good, and in turn they are healing and deeply nurturing for those in the program. Making a difference for others gives children and adults the opportunity to experience joy and fulfilment.
- Acknowledge children's rights to speak out and identify abusers, yet realize that vilifying persons will not shift the cultural norm. Focus clear vision and efforts on creating a cultural norm of mutual respect.
- Provide training in parenting, communication and conflict resolution for all individuals.
- Provide readily available access to counselling and coaching to support each person for living their best life.

- Acknowledge and reward communities, corporations, and individuals who are consciously living examples of kindness, mutual respect, empathy and caring for all life.
- Put measures in place to redirect the disregard for young (and all) life and acknowledge the valuable perspective and wisdom that children can offer. Encourage and foster leadership among our youth by providing opportunities for children to share their perspectives as to laws and governance.

#### **16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime**

- Examine and assess the motivations behind illicit financial and arms flows, stealing of assets and organized crime in order to understand the thread that connects these acts irrespective of nationalities and deal with the root causes of these problems.

#### **16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

- Educate on the harmful impact on our natural resources resulting from corruption and bribery and the detrimental effects of these activities on all peoples on the planet.
- Develop personal responsibility/accountability through education and encouragement to make choices that have a positive impact for individuals, communities and the natural environment, including by illustrating clearly how this has direct benefit for all people, including those who are responsible and accountable themselves.

#### **16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**

- Establish clear guidelines for what constitutes a serious crime against humanity and Nature at all levels and needs to be addressed by an international court.
- Impose serious sanctions on powerful individuals and institutions who through deceit, corruption and self-serving actions negatively impact all of humanity, communities and the natural environment which we all depend on for our survival.

#### **16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

- Make good use of and expand upon the contributions to shared resources available through the Internet such as Wikipedia, professors from leading universities such as Harvard who give free lessons to thousands of people via the Internet, Open Education Resources, the many millions of online texts, videos and musical works.
- Include open public hearings in all legislative and decision-making processes at all levels of government. Ensure that all legislative or parliament committees report on their processes and proceedings in an ongoing manner and make these reports widely available to the general public.

#### **16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance**

- Recognize the valuable natural and also other resources that developing countries provide, and that helping to uplift these into better economic, social, educational and technological status and all-round functioning in ways that support them in a more "green" and sustainable manner will benefit all worldwide.

**16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration**

- Teach about responsibility to steward Nature as well as the sanctity of all beings of life, including that of women and children.

**16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements**

- Teach children and adults how to find information of interest to them and what will be of benefit to them.
- Have information accessible to all peoples including information with regard to their fundamental freedoms and protection of their fundamental freedoms.

**16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development**

- Develop education and systems to provide all people equal opportunity to express and manifest their personal purpose in light of the good of all.
- Give women, the impoverished and marginalized the right to land ownership and ensure this is protected through government regulations, policies, enforcement and courts of law, and that the territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected and strictly enforced and those who attempt to infringe on these rights are shamed and their business interests boycotted.
- Create opportunities for all people and children in schools to experience the gift of giving to others.
- Create a global information network for sharing information, questions, answers and experience.

# Society and Infrastructure



## Introduction

We are constantly interacting with Nature. Nature speaks to each one of us through interactions between our bodies/minds in interactions and the “outside” world, through the rhythm in which we take each breath, our impetus to eat or drink and our choice of food where available, through our urges to act and the specific actions we choose to take, and through the thoughts we think, our dreams, hunches and intuitions. Through consciously or unconsciously heeding our ongoing dialogue with Nature, we develop our individual potential.

Communities that live close to Nature use the full potential of their members to survive. In Native American communities, young people are sent on vision quests to see what their role in their communities will be. Decisions are made collectively.

Where communities live close to Nature there is a balance between allowing the very best of each member to develop and the contributions each makes to the group. Such communities in their balance between give and take both within their communities and with Nature have much in common with natural ecosystems that as a form have existed for billions of years. In this way, they are built on a firm foundation.

In cultures farther removed from Nature similar eco-system forms of community are also found. These are referred to as “commons”. Here all concerned in a project share in decision making, in the work that needs to be done, as well as in the benefits and outcomes resulting from their working together. Townhouse meetings where inhabitants of a community decide together the directions that community will take; the Internet contains myriad communities that function as commons. In fact the Internet itself is a commons. Wikipedia is commons and so is Open Source technology. Universities around the world are increasing using such a collaborative approach for research and development. The advantage of such commons is that participants are deeply motivated to succeed, since they have an opportunity to follow what interests them most and share in all positive outcomes. Commons, as a social form, are also mimicking a form of being together that has survived in Nature for billions of years.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Society and Infrastructure**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 8**

#### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All**

##### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all and in the long run and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.

- Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.
- Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.

### **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

- Develop regional and country programs to determine which renewable energy, appropriate technologies, and sustainable agricultural and/or building practices might work best in various regions and locales. Provide subsidies and assistance to those that are providing access to and/or are engaged in such sustainable business practices, etc.
- Support the development of training programmes and bio-regional resource and service centres that support local communities in carrying out sustainable development planning and design processes.
- Encourage international programs and funding initiatives, such as the Green Climate Fund, 10 YFPs on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and the 4/1000 Regenerative Agriculture initiative to fully support and fund such community design processes and the types of best practices and initiatives that are carried out at a local or community level in relevant area.
- Develop and institute curriculum activities that focus on transitioning to more sustainable practices in the area of popular education and a solidarity economy.
- Use group projects as an educational approach where groups of students are encouraged to solve an environmental, social or economic problem together.

### **8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead**

- Establish sustainability within communities by growing food, developing technology and cooperative efforts to lift the entire population through practices which are life giving and allow citizens to share their unique contributions.

#### **8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

- Create development plans that take into consideration the natural resources along international borders, the peoples of the region, and what is best suited to their geopolitical situation.
- Provide government support for the people that will allow them and the nation as a whole to develop sustainably while remaining independent of corporations or individual entities that are creating unsustainable environmental, social, and political relations.
- Create communities in the manner of Sekem Farm in Egypt along with ecovillages all over the world, which tend to be leaders in the conscious design of communities that support the regeneration of social and natural environments.
- Convert existing industrial parks into Eco-Industrial Parks in which businesses cooperate with each other and with the local community in an attempt to reduce waste and pollution, efficiently share resources (such as information, materials, water, energy, infrastructure, and natural resources), and help achieve sustainable development, with the intention of increasing economic gains and improving environmental quality.

#### **8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

- Support the development, use, and implementation of community planning and design processes that involve and support youth.
- Encourage meetings of the community, including women and young people of all ages, to look at problems that exist within the community and build on the ingenuity of all the people to find and implement solutions. It is important to ensure that young people's ingenuity is taken into account and that they are given an opportunity to participate in implementing solutions in ways that allow them to learn as they help in improving their community.
- Provide support for local currencies, community finance, community energy schemes and water management to increase productive employment for youth at the local level. Ensure access to land and water, guarantee social security and minimum living wage as social-economic rights.
- Request help from outside by involving multilateral agencies, particularly of the UN; and provide instruction on how to access the Internet using mobile phones and if possible, ensuring that each area has Internet access.

#### **8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all**

- Create local financial solutions that emphasize and meet the needs of the local economy for any particular community.

## **8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization**

- Ensure universal access to the Internet. Here the United Nations can play a pivotal role. It can provide training for a small group of people in each nation, who can then train facilitators in each region of their own country. As local communities are empowered, through access to the Internet and the partnership economy that they then have access to, they will become more prosperous and costs can be recaptured directly from users of such Internet centres or via taxes.
- Implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially art. 26 (2) to ensure students can develop their individual potential and are motivated to do so. This could include having Internet Centres within easy reach from all parts of the nation, especially outlying areas. These should ideally be staffed by someone who is both able to help people to clarify what information they are looking for and help them to locate the necessary support via the Internet.

## **GOAL 10**

### **Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries**

When injustice has been done by an official, who abuses his/her position, organize as many people as possible to inform that person's family, friends and colleagues with descriptions of the impact of this corrupt act (videos of the effects on the victim's family and community, etc.) to arouse a sense of compassion and if possible without any threat of violence or vengeance. This can lead to at least a few of his or her peer group exerting peer pressure to prevent reoccurrence of such acts; and, themselves, refraining from similar acts.

## **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Unleashing people's creativity and capacity to develop their own skills can enable the development process to take off and escalate. Here are some ways to help bring about development from the grass roots up with relatively little investment.
- Reduce taxes levied on the bottom 40% of the populace. In part this can be achieved through Land Value Capture and Taxation as taxes and fees are gradually taken off of sales and income and collected instead based on the value of land ownership which is typically held by those with much higher incomes. This tax will typically result in under-utilized properties or lands that are being held for speculative purposes being fixed up or built upon thus increasing available housing and reducing land and property costs and rents while also making more available housing available.
- Adoption of Land Value Capture and Taxation will also enable communities to collect and provide additional funding for such things as infrastructure and services as well as to support training and jobs for low income wage earners to build low cost housing in the communities where they live.
- Encourage the use of low cost natural and sustainable building technologies - including the beautiful compressed earth block construction which has been

demonstrated in ecovillage communities around the world and that is taught through the Auroville Earth Institute in India which holds the UNESCO Chair in Earth Architecture and has trained tens of thousands of people in Earth Block Construction - see: <http://www.earth-auroville.com>. For additional examples of Natural and Green Building again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions) which was put together by Rob Wheeler, the Global Ecovillage Network's main UN Representative and a principal author/editor of these SDG reports.

- Provide funding, infrastructure, and services to support training and jobs for low income wage earners in municipal areas to integrate small scale sustainable agriculture using parks, empty lots and rooftops to grow food, integrate water catchments and filtration systems, and renew and create natural areas into and around new and existing housing.
- Provide relevant educational facilities either directly or by allowing people to connect with Intergovernmental Agencies and educational resources available via the Internet. It is important to use these since many are free of charge and come with "no strings attached."
- Develop, fund, and implement a growing network of resource, service and learning centres at a national and global level to assist all peoples living in impoverished and/or rural areas to learn about more sustainable development and agricultural practices and to acquire the skills, materials, and expertise needed to uplift their lives. This can be coupled with the teaching of Ecovillage Design Education training programmes in local communities and bioregions around the world such as have already been organized and held in hundreds of locales and in more than 42 countries by GAIA Education and the Global Ecovillage Network.

See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/> and <http://gaiaeducation.org>.

Create organizations that provide cooperative opportunity for nations to work together with others in the same region that are facing similar geographic and developmental challenges.

- Capitalize on the inherent strengths of a people and region to internally build up their own economy. Take inventory of cultural, environmental, technological, artistic, and agricultural strengths and resources of underserved communities that would be of interest to the rest of the world. This can include sites of interest to research, internships for people who wish to learn topics specially characteristic of that region, opportunities to study native ways of approaching sustainable problem solving - whether high tech or low tech - or internships to help set up new structures, communications' systems, Agroforestry, artistic techniques unique to the region, etc.
- Have companies bring in student interns to help them to transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in such sustainable processes and practices; and governments to develop programs and policies to support this. Create eco-industrial parks.

## **10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status**

- Organize inclusive workshops and planning processes at all levels of governance to collect ideas and develop policies to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all peoples in government decision making, planning and implementation processes. Establish or designate offices in each government that will be responsible for ensuring that such policies are adopted, enforced and carried out.
- Include people's input into all aspects of governance using Town hall meetings and referenda, starting with meetings in small circles where all are able to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Develop People's Participatory Budget Processes at the local level to ensure that the desires and needs of all peoples are fully included in deciding how government monies will be allocated and spent.
- Support the development and implement collaborative management of commons resources such as community forests, community gardens, ecosystem restoration processes, cooperative utility districts and waste management facilities, and establishing participatory processes for managing parks and wildlife sanctuaries, etc.
- Create opportunities within the schools to tap into the visions of the children, bring their ideas together, and disseminate to the higher organizations for inclusion.
- Create a High World Council made up of individuals from all walks of life regardless of age, gender, disabilities, economic status, religion, or race, from all regions and countries. These individuals would have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgement or alliance. They serve on a rotating basis and are educated before their term so that they are well versed in their role to empower and promote social, economic, and political inclusion for All, including, and from the perspective of Nature. Their position is to uphold Natural Law as the gold standard, and to evaluate all other created laws, policies, and standards for the governance of people and their communities within the Natural Law of equality. They hold the great responsibility of being the voice of Nature where these laws affect Nature and therefore all life.
- Form Regional and National Councils. This structure allows a forum to which lawmakers and decision makers can bring their proposed laws, strategies, and plans for evaluation and consideration as they pertain to Natural Law and the Equality of All. Proposed changes with a potential of greater impact would be brought to the High World Council for final evaluation. The purpose is to maintain the voice and consideration of Nature and the Laws of Nature that govern all of us, and to maintain equality, so that the planet and all its inhabitants can move forward in the healthiest way possible.
- Fully integrate National Poverty Reduction Strategies (NPRS) with the SDGs and all other sustainable development processes, goals and agreements etc. both vertically and horizontally.
- Develop government policies and inclusive planning processes at all levels of government in order to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all people. These policies and plans should then be implemented through each government's SDG plans, National Strategies for Sustainable

Development, and National Poverty Reduction Strategies and in a fully integrated manner, both across these planning processes and vertically and horizontally - thus across all sectors of society and levels of government.

### **10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard**

- Ensure that all public spaces both indoors and out are accessible to all peoples and regardless of the type of disability experienced.
- Reduce inequalities of government officials' wages in comparison to the average worker.

### **10.4 Adopt policies especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality**

- This target is an integral part of a number of other targets that when implemented together will bring about rapid change but when worked on alone will not be easily reached.
- Provide equal protections of income and well-being for all people. Invest much more heavily in all efforts to achieve the SDGs, provide jobs, lift people up, and transition to a fully sustainable economy and society thus substantially reducing the amount of resources that need to be provided for wage and social protection policies and programs.

### **10.5 Improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen implementation of such regulations**

- Adopt regulations and policies to ensure that no austerity programs are put in place that harm people or make it impossible to ensure that all people's basic human needs can be met.
- Put in place policies, regulations and practices to ensure the protection, health, and safety of all Peoples and Nature.

### **10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions**

Here are some steps that can be taken via education to bring about social and institutional Change:

- Draw on and strengthen the sometimes unconscious knowing of our interdependence and the joys associated with working harmoniously together as equals, using stories and experiences that speak vividly to the heart and minds and illustrate:
  - that developed and developing countries are interdependent for their capacity to create rewarding lives for their peoples;
  - that their ultimate self-interest lies in working together on the basis of equality, whereby each can fully develop its individual strength as a nation and a people;

- that this expresses itself among many other things in an increase of wealth through trade between equals, mutual appreciation, safety and diversity of life experience because all are contributing to all others;
- that the present inequality in decision making in international institutions carries over into an inequality of opportunities and wealth within developing countries.
- that this, in turn, breeds enmity, resentment, violence and conflict both between nations and within nations which is resulting in political and economic refugees and migrants, which in turn breeds fear and resentment among the rich in developed countries.

This message might have to be spelled out as a whole and in such a way that it speaks vividly to the hearts of those who are (often through fear) creating and perpetuating inequalities within and between countries. Here governments, groups, and people can work together through formal education and the media, including the social media.

As this insight takes place, it will be easier to take the next steps:

- Provide incentives for institutions to be fair and representational of the best interests of all.
- Build institutions founded on integrity, transparency and equality for all.

**10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%**

- Request the UN to make a study of how remittances can be dispatched and paid for in equitable and transparent ways.
- Determine how to distinguish ones that are fair and safe and of maximum benefit to migrants themselves.
- Train expert advisors and position them at border crossings both of countries that provide migrant labour and recipient countries to inform migrant labour of ways of getting sound advice when that is needed. These advisors should be clearly distinguishable from false advisors wishing to abuse the situation.

## GOAL 13

### Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts

**13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible**

- Share best practices on the Internet, including listing all awards given to citizens and groups for their efforts by their own governments. A web site can be created for this purpose. (See below.)

- Create awards for innovative ideas to combat and mitigate the effects of climate change. Those who have won prizes can become tax exempt for their contributions in other ways. Possibly people can be given an option as to how their tax money will be spent in the context of plans in developed and developing countries. (See below.)

### **Infrastructure Education**

- Global Sharing of Expertise via a Web Site on the Internet:
  - The more people have access to the Internet and are encouraged to place their individual strategies for the implementation of the SDGs, the more people will be able to help and inspire one another and the less likely that anyone will be left behind.
  - Such a giant website can provide all people, agencies, organizations, corporations, educational and governmental establishments including the UN with individual pages on which to describe all are doing individually for the implementation of all goals. This site must include a search engine that allows people in similar circumstances to support and help one another. Facilitators in each area would facilitate access to the web site for all, even those who are not Internet literate.

### **13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing states, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities**

Climate change can provide the opportunity to instil leadership, and a sense of community, and pride in being a part of a powerful movement to transform lives. This can be aided by promoting leadership in women, a sense of community and pride in being a part of a powerful movement to transform lives, and training youth in leadership and awareness programs implemented in all the schools, communities, and governments from the local to the national level.

## **GOAL 16**

**Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels**

### **16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children**

- Immediately start providing support for the physical and spiritual birth right of each society member to foster the next generation of good and well-intentioned adults.
- Provide support and resources for parents to care and love their new-borns, so that the new-borns know at birth and going forward in life they are valued members of the community.

- Take into account the misguided needs and motivations of those who inflict every sort of abuse and violence towards children such as poor upbringing, personal history of abuse and disrespect, inexperience of and disconnection from Nature and the sense of interconnectedness and awe of all life, as well as economic need. Create programs that redirect these individuals, providing the social and economic support they need to make the necessary changes in themselves.
- Put energy and resources towards trauma healing for both children who have been victims, as well as the adults who have become perpetrators. Programs that educate in care and appreciation for animals and Nature are healing for the greater good, and in turn they are healing and deeply nurturing for those in the program. Making a difference for others gives children and adults the opportunity to experience joy and fulfilment.
- Acknowledge children's rights to speak out and identify abusers yet realize that vilifying persons will not shift the cultural norm.
- Focus clear vision and efforts on creating a cultural norm of mutual respect.
- Acknowledge and reward communities, corporations, and individuals who are consciously living examples of kindness, mutual respect, empathy and caring for all life.
- Put measures in place to redirect the disregard for young (and all) life and acknowledge the valuable perspective and wisdom that children can offer. Encourage and foster leadership amongst our youth by providing opportunities for children to share their perspectives as to laws and governance.

### **16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

- Educate, including via the media on the harmful impact on our natural resources resulting from corruption and bribery and the detrimental effects of these activities on all people(s) on the planet.
- Shame those who are corrupt by mentioning their names in the media of the area affected together with the specific affects their corrupt actions have on both institutions and the people.

### **16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**

- Create concrete ways to acknowledge and reward individuals and institutions that are moving toward or are already providing an example of being effective, accountable and transparent.
- Provide International recognition and tangible rewards for those providing inspiration for living in a way that respects all life in order to help foster the growth of such institutions.
- Create a network of councils whose members come from a diversity of backgrounds and regions, from the local level to the International level, for the purpose of monitoring established institutions that may already be engaged in bribery and corruption and holding them accountable to practices that are effective, transparent, accountable, and follow the rule of law and the Laws of Nature.

- Impose serious sanctions on powerful individuals and institutions who through deceit, corruption and self-serving actions negatively impact all of humanity, communities and the natural environment which we all depend on for our survival.
- Re-evaluate the protection from accountability that currently exists for established institutions and people in positions of influence and power.

### **16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

- Apply and further develop the many examples that already exist in societies worldwide of responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels. Here are some examples:
  - Societies, including many indigenous tribes, that are governed by councils in which all voices are heard; townhouse meetings or city hall meetings where citizens and council members meet together to look for solutions to a community's problems.
  - Townhouse meetings such as those held regularly in Vermont, USA, where local communities get together to make communal decisions.
  - In Switzerland citizens have the right (and make use of the right) to hold a national referendum on the policies of the national government.
  - At the UN over the years decision making on substantive issues by a 2/3 majority did not work well, since countries would feel compelled to vote "yes" while they were not in a position to carry out a decision decided by the majority; and so over the decades increasingly until now about 80 % of decisions are taken by consensus. Achieving consensus often requires a Nation to explain problems they would have in carrying out a particular decision. This has resulted in a significant growth in international understanding since, for instance the Cold War.
  - Participatory People's Budget Processes enable the local people to share in making the decisions on how allocations will be made and how the community's money will be spent and are now used in a myriad of municipalities around the world.
  - The LETSystem is a local economy based on a barter approach, run on a basis of joint decision making that is used in many communities worldwide to regenerate a local economy where there is a lack of a viable or stable national currency available.
  - Cooperatives are for-profit businesses run by owner/operators in virtually all sectors. All involved share in the decision making equally as well as in the profits. Since all are motivated to see their business succeed, they do well even in times of economic downturn. See <https://www.ica.coop/en>. There are some 3 million throughout the whole world with one billion members.
  - The Danish Agricultural Sector consists largely of cooperatives and is a good example of how successful cooperatives can be. Denmark produces enough food to feed 17 million people (three times its population) and has one of the world's most advanced food processing sectors. More than two-thirds of agricultural production is exported to 150 countries worldwide.
- Encourage and promote the widespread participation with cooperative approaches that are already successfully utilized such as: Nature permaculture, the Slow Food Movement (<https://www.slowfood.com/>),

community-supported agriculture, cooperative ways of managing fisheries, forests, and irrigation, farmer's markets, community managed city and school gardens, and healthcare cooperatives.

- Make good use of and expand upon the contributions to shared resources available through the Internet such as Wikipedia, professors from leading universities such as Harvard who give free lessons to thousands of people via the Internet, Open Education Resources, the many millions of online texts, videos and musical works.
- Encourage businesses to adopt a Cooperative Identity where decision making, labour, and profits are shared both with the workers and managers of the business, with the local communities where they are based, and with people worldwide through global initiatives.
- At governmental levels, provide open forums to encourage inclusive and community represented participation in decision making processes that are otherwise the responsibility of community-voted representatives.
- Provide fail-safe, equal opportunity methods of community voting of representatives at all levels of national and international levels.
- Guarantee that there are those who specifically represent the rights and well-being of Nature at all levels of decision making in every area.
- Include open public hearings in all legislative and decision-making processes at all levels of government. Ensure that all legislative or parliament committees report on their processes and proceedings in an ongoing manner and make these reports widely available to the general public.

#### **16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance**

- Register all births worldwide and place these in a global data bank.
- Request a number of officials in various administrative areas who also have good skills as educators to attend courses made available in this area at the international level either in person or via webinars and then to train the necessary officials in their countries.
- Adopt legislation at the national level as part of the implementation of each country's SDG strategy and plan, requiring all governmental agencies and private sector organizations at all levels - both national and International - to publicly file annual reports as pertain to policies, products, development, that in any way affect the health and well-being of people, animals, or any aspect of Nature.

#### **16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development**

- Review policies and laws to be sure they effectively foster development of sustainable, harmonious communities, cities and regions.
- Give women, the impoverished and marginalized the right to land ownership and ensure this is protected through government regulations, policies, enforcement, including through courts of law.
- Ensure that the territorial rights of Indigenous Peoples are respected and strictly enforced and those who attempt to infringe on these rights are shamed, including through the media and the consequences for both those directly involved as well as the effects on the population as a whole are well

understood; and that the business interests of the culprits are boycotted until they have made up for the harm they have done.

- Form visible, accessible groups and alliances with common goals and collective vision to create and support harmonious communities aligned with Nature.

# Culture



## Introduction

The word culture, used in a scientific sense, can be defined as “to maintain tissue, cells, bacteria, etc. in conditions suitable for growth.” In terms of our everyday life, culture has come to mean the mainly immaterial forms — ideas, customs, and diverse forms of artistic and intellectual manifestations that allow a people to prosper together. These grow directly out of the environment they share in which people live and where they seek to thrive and survive as a unit.

Cultures are thus rooted in our own inner nature and both our natural and social environments. That makes culture a powerful force in each human life that can be used for the betterment of all people and Nature. But where culture is thwarted, endangered or destroyed, it inevitably becomes a source of conflict whereby many will lay their lives on the line. For destruction of a peoples' culture leads to social disintegration and at the same time the destruction of many individuals.

Cultures develop through the insights and inspirations that come to people and that are welcomed and perpetuated by those around them.

Our individual cultures usually begin with those we are born into. Later the cultures we adopt become rooted in our own talents and capacities as they meld with those around us with whom we are constantly shaping both our natural and social environments into a firm unit. This cultural unit becomes a foundation upon which we feel our well-being depends. It is at the same time a means to safeguard our most precious values and all else that we hold dear.

In this way, culture grows out of our individual capacities in interaction with the natural and social environments, most often where we reside, although this is changing with the arrival of the Internet. It constitutes the value-base and foundation for communication that fosters those relationships on which a community is convinced its well-being and security depends. When someone denigrates the specific culture that we identify with we feel as if our survival is at stake.

People will fight to the death to defend their culture and so specific cultures are given a bad name when these are under siege.

To deeply understand the importance their culture has to other people and why they will defend it to the death, we can observe, with due humility, our personal response when our own culture is under attack. This can express itself in our lashing out to hurt whomever we feel has denigrated what we hold dear, or through the indignant inner

dialogue and the complex of negative emotions that are aroused within us. This tumultuous inner dialogue in many cases may keep raising its head every time we are reminded of previous aspersions cast on our culture and associated value system. For we identify these as our life-line to well-being and security. Often this inner turmoil is not fully assuaged until reparations are made or we feel our culture is fully safeguarded from further attack.

So, respecting one another's' cultures is extremely important, since they are related to the roots of who we are. At the same time, cultures are constantly in flux as we adopt social and cultural norms of other groups with whom we can identify.

This growing and intermingling of cultures has been happening since the very dawn of civilizations. It is happening ever faster as we implement the SDGs, as in the process we are learning to move from our individual cultures into a global culture in which the diverse cultures are each accepted and valued.

This process has been very much in evidence within the UN as NGOs from north and south began organizing civil society actions together, especially since the second preparatory meeting in 1989 for the first Earth Summit (UNCED) which took place in 1992. It has taken a huge leap forward in the years since.

As a nation, Canada has built its multicultural society on the importance of respecting people's diverse cultures. All are encouraged to both celebrate and develop their own individual cultures and share them with people from other cultures. New Zealand is also working positively with cultural diversity.

And still, cultural diversity lies at the heart of many conflicts today.

The challenge we face is to allow cultures to flourish without being under siege and without negatively affecting other cultures. Here the art we are learning as a species is to learn about, be delighted by, and appreciate other cultures and interact with them in such a way that we do not threaten or denigrate them in any way at all.

Culture can become a tool to implement the goals and to grow into our identity as unique beings living in unique constellations that strengthen and inspire one another and allow each one of us to develop in our own individual ways.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Culture**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 8**

#### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All**

##### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all and in the long run and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.

- Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.
- Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
- Transition all countries to a circular regenerative economy which eliminates waste and develop plans to adopt fully sustainable consumption and production practices.
- Create a real increase in productivity, wealth, and well-being by investing in ecosystem restoration, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices, repairing natural water cycles, sustainably managing scarce resources such as water, land, and forests etc., and transitioning to full sustainability.

#### **8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment**

- Create platforms to engage individuals in activities such as storytelling, drama, art and music to foster understanding and community building between people of different cultures.

#### **8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products**

- Safeguard the sanctity of cultures visited and the products they produce.
- Use tourism as a means of building bridges between people, bringing cultures together in mutual appreciation, building meaningful relationships between people, helping to transform non-caring superficial relationships into life-changing experiences, fostering peace, understanding, and people to people development, while contributing to a global community based on mutual caring and constructive collaboration.

#### **8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all**

- Provide culturally appropriate financial services.

## **GOAL 10**

### **Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries**

**10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status**

- Create festivals whereby celebration fosters the atmosphere of inclusion and optimism. Utilize these gatherings as a forum of diversity that whereby all fit together in the manner of mapping or puzzle. The pieces can appear at first as islands or unrelated factions, but in the environment of festivity one is reminded of the fundamental needs and values of inclusion, community, happiness and joy. It is from this feeling place of inclusion from the basics of life that the best policies, actions, and organizations can be established.

# Economy and Financing Mechanisms



## Introduction

Nature's economy is, despite ups and downs, inherently sustainable in how it operates. In ecosystems for instance, there is a natural give and take between the Earth System's subsystems—the atmosphere, the hydrosphere, the geosphere and the biosphere, which includes both species of plants and animals. Each species grows, develops and dies off in part, so that it nurtures other species. At the same time, it encourages new ones to appear. While species do become extinct, there is generally the capacity of each individual species to nurture and to be nurtured by the whole.

In Nature, despite Ice Ages and cataclysm, there has been an escalation of diversification—mineral types and life-forms—over the past 15 billion years. Beside the increase, there has been a balance in give and take that has, despite regular extinctions, allowed the growth process to continue. In this way, the economy of Mother Nature retains a perfect balance, while growing consistently, when seen from a long-term perspective.

Human economies were once based on barter, much like the give and take in Nature. But now our global economy has become inherently unsustainable. This started with industrialization. At present, there is neither a balanced give and take between human beings and Nature, nor between us human beings among ourselves and we are fast depleting both our social and our Earth's natural resources.

There are many explanations of why this has happened. One thing is certain, though, that the more we lose touch with the life-giving energy and nurturing, provided by the natural world, the more we seek, in vain, solace in surrogates. And this has gone hand in hand with the growth of economies that are no longer even remotely connected to the provision of goods and services.

At present, goods and services have become identified with money and money, originally a point system to facilitate the exchange of goods and services, expressed in shells, coins, gold etc. has now become a commodity itself, symbolized by stocks and bonds and paper bank notes that can be printed at random. Out of touch with the life and fulfilment-giving aspects of Nature, many of us, vainly attempt to find personal satisfaction in owning money and objects that are symbols of power, status and prestige. The fast-growing array of material symbols of power and prestige are

causing mountains of waste, while destroying the natural environment that is so essential to our survival.

And still a powerful part of humanity is fighting on all possible fronts to make as much money as possible from this predatory form of economy.

Our challenge is to restore economic balance, rooted in the balanced give and take in Nature as well as Nature's recycling so that nothing goes to waste.

Fortunately, new more sustainable economic forms are beginning to emerge, that are fast gaining popularity. A form of business that is inspired by Nature's ecosystems are cooperatives with one billion people worldwide. Many goods and service being offered are rooted in our desire to share those things we create and give us personal fulfilment. This is evident on the Internet with the emergence of the fast-growing sharing/partnership economy. This, for instance, already provides 10% of France's GNP.

The very powerful and wealthy that are benefiting from the present dominant system, are understandably the ones who are most attached to it. A possible scenario is that as more and more people see the benefits of these more sustainable economic approaches that the more predatory forms will eventually simply wither away.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Economy and Financing Mechanisms**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 8**

#### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All**

It is essential as we contemplate this goal that realize that growth can only be sustainable once we create economies that where there is a balanced give and take. And this requires the predatory economy has made way for an equitable sharing economy.

#### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- To increase sharing and inclusivity, Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all and in the long run and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The

route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.

- Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.
  - Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
- Transition all countries to a circular regenerative economy which eliminates waste and develop plans to adopt fully sustainable consumption and production practices.
  - Create a real increase in productivity, wealth, and well-being by investing in ecosystem restoration, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices, repairing natural water cycles, sustainably managing scarce resources such as water, land, and forests etc., and transitioning to full sustainability.
  - Build upon the economic output and contribution of each individual within a community by providing decent work opportunities that contribute to healthy, sustainable development, and provide equitable access to goods and services.
  - Provide financial support for voluntary contributions that benefit community members, their community and the natural environment as a whole.
  - Implement Land Tax Value in all communities as a method for more equitably distributing wealth, collecting revenue based on an increase in value that was created by the community as a whole, and providing further economic funding.
  - Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

- Establish localized food based programs utilizing agro-ecology and other regenerative agricultural practices which create local jobs, promote more responsible stewardship, and eliminate toxic food production practices.
- Create new technologies that do not overuse finite resources such as water, ensure that the carbon footprint is as neutral as possible, and eliminate waste by using by-products from one production process to feed another.

**8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

- Develop regional and country programs to determine which renewable energy, appropriate technologies, and sustainable agricultural and/or building practices might work best in various regions and locales. Provide subsidies and assistance to those that are providing access to and/or are engaged in such activities.
- Develop, support and/or provide micro-credit programs and loans that are targeted toward developing sustainable business opportunities, relating to renewable energy, appropriate technologies, sustainable agriculture and/or business practices.
- Encourage international programs and funding initiatives, such as the Green Climate Fund, 10 YFPs on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and the 4/1000 Regenerative Agriculture initiative to fully support and fund such community design processes and the types of best practices and initiatives that are carried out at a local or community level.

**8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

- Encourage companies to bring in student interns to help them transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in sustainable processes and practices. Governments would profit by developing programs and policies to support this.
- Convert existing industrial parks into Eco-Industrial Parks in which businesses cooperate with each other and with the local community in an attempt to reduce waste and pollution, efficiently share resources (such as information, materials, water, energy, infrastructure, and natural resources), and help achieve sustainable development, with the intention of increasing economic gains and improving environmental quality.

**8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

- Fund programs that provide youth employment opportunities coupled with training programs which focus on developing the skills needed to transition to full sustainability.
- Use barter or LocalEconomicTrading (LETSsystem) to finance this process. These are used to finance economic activity in areas where money is not readily available.
- Provide support for local currencies, community finance, community energy schemes and water management to increase the number of paying jobs for young people. Ensure access to land and water, guarantee social security and minimum living wage as social-economic rights.

**8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms**

- Create economic incentives for employers to offer employees decent opportunities that are beneficial to all.

**8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all**

- Create policies and monitor financial institutions so that they provide service to and assist communities in growing and developing and are not just focused on self-interest.
- Provide culturally appropriate financial services.
- Develop policies and practices that support entrepreneurs with sustainable business plans, which respect and benefit all life and the environment.
- Create local financial solutions that emphasize and meet the needs of the local economy for any particular community.

**8.a Increase Aid for Trade Support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries**

- Build mutually supportive relations with local and global partners in which life for all is enhanced.
- Support development of sustainable (re)localised economies through recognition of informal economies and solidarity economy in LCDs.

**8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization**

- Ensure universal access to the Internet. Here the United Nations can play a pivotal role. It can provide training for a small group of people in each nation, who can then train facilitators in each region of their own country. As local communities are empowered, through access to the Internet and the partnership economy that they then have access to, they will become more prosperous and costs can be recaptured directly from users of such Internet centres or via taxes.
- Follow up on the need to raise sufficient funding in order to be able to fully carry out the commitments made in the Global Jobs Pact at and through the ILO conferences and proceedings, as well as through the Financing for Development process. Continue to hold such discussions and meetings until sufficient funding is put in place to fully achieve the goals and commitments that have been agreed to.

## GOAL 10

### Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries

We do well to remember that a natural ecosystem is viable the more diverse it is. The same goes for human economies. For when disaster hits and parts fall away, then the

more elements that are left from which to grow the economy the faster economic healing and growth can take place.

### **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Unleashing people's creativity and capacity to develop their own skills can enable the development process to take off and escalate. Here are some ways to help bring about development from the grass roots up with relatively little investment.
- Reduce taxes levied on the bottom 40% of the populace. In part this can be achieved through Land Value Capture and Taxation as taxes and fees are gradually taken off of sales and income and collected instead based on the value of land ownership which is typically held by those with much higher incomes. This tax will typically result in under-utilized properties or lands that are being held for speculative purposes being fixed up or built upon thus increasing available housing and reducing land and property costs and rents while also making more available housing available.
- Adoption of Land Value Capture and Taxation will also enable communities to collect and provide additional funding for such things as infrastructure and services as well as to support training and jobs for low income wage earners to build low cost housing in the communities where they live.
- Encourage the use of low cost natural and sustainable building technologies - including the beautiful compressed earth block construction which has been demonstrated in ecovillage communities around the world and that is taught through the Auroville Earth Institute in India which holds the UNESCO Chair in Earth Architecture and has trained tens of thousands of people in Earth Block Construction - see: <http://www.earth-auroville.com>. For additional examples of Natural and Green Building again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions) which was put together by Rob Wheeler, the Global Ecovillage Network's main UN Representative and a principal author/editor of these SDG reports.
- Provide funding, infrastructure, and services to support training and jobs for low income wage earners in municipal areas to integrate small scale sustainable agriculture using parks, empty lots and rooftops to grow food, integrate water catchments and filtration systems, and renew and create natural areas into and around new and existing housing.
- Provide relevant educational facilities either directly or by allowing people to connect with Intergovernmental Agencies and educational resources available via the Internet. It is important to use these since many are free of charge and come with "no strings attached."
- Develop, fund, and implement a growing network of resource, service and learning centres at a national and global level to assist all peoples living in impoverished and/or rural areas to learn about more sustainable development and agricultural practices and to acquire the skills, materials, and expertise needed to uplift their lives. This can be coupled with the teaching of Ecovillage Design Education training programmes in local communities and bioregions around the world such as have already been organized and held in hundreds

of locales and in more than 42 countries by GAIA Education and the Global Ecovillage Network.

See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/> and <http://gaiaeducation.org>.

Create organizations that provide cooperative opportunity for nations to work together with others in the same region that are facing similar geographic and developmental challenges.

- Capitalize on the inherent strengths of a people and region to internally build up their own economy. Take inventory of cultural, environmental, technological, artistic, and agricultural strengths and resources of underserved communities that would be of interest to the rest of the world. This can include sites of interest to research, internships for people who wish to learn topics specially characteristic of that region, opportunities to study native ways of approaching sustainable problem solving - whether high tech or low tech - or internships to help set up new structures, communications' systems, Agroforestry, artistic techniques unique to the region, etc.
- Have companies bring in student interns to help them to transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in such sustainable processes and practices; and governments to develop programs and policies to support this. Create eco-industrial parks.

## **10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status**

- Include people's input into all aspects of governance using Town hall meetings and referenda, starting with meetings in small circles where all are able to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Develop People's Participatory Budget Processes at the local level to ensure that the desires and needs of all peoples are fully included in deciding how government monies will be allocated and spent.
- Support the development and implement collaborative management of commons resources such as community forests, community gardens, ecosystem restoration processes, cooperative utility districts and waste management facilities, and establishing participatory processes for managing parks and wildlife sanctuaries, etc.
- Create a High World Council made up of individuals from all walks of life regardless of age, gender, disabilities, economic status, religion, or race, from all regions and countries. These individuals would have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgement or alliance. They serve on a rotating basis and are educated before their term so that they are well versed in their role to empower and promote social, economic, and political inclusion for All, including, and from the perspective of Nature. Their position is to uphold Natural Law as the gold standard, and to evaluate all other created laws, policies, and standards for the governance of people and their communities within the Natural Law of equality. They hold the great responsibility of being the voice of Nature where these laws affect Nature and therefore all life.

- Develop government policies and inclusive planning processes at all levels of government in order to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all peoples. These policies and plans should then be implemented through each government's SDG plans, National Strategies for Sustainable Development, and National Poverty Reduction Strategies and in a fully integrated manner, both across these planning processes and vertically and horizontally - thus across all sectors of society and levels of government.
- Include people's input into all aspects of governance using Town hall meetings and referenda, starting with meetings in small circles where all are able to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Develop People's Participatory Budget Processes at the local level to ensure that the desires and needs of all peoples are fully included in deciding how government monies will be allocated and spent.

### **10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard**

- Reduce inequalities of government officials' wages in comparison to those of the average worker.

### **10.5 Improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen implementation of such regulations**

Global financial markets are debt-based, which means that they can lend monies with often as little as 10% collateral, and therefore must keep lending by encouraging lenders to go into debt. This process is unsustainable since it leads to overproduction and ravaging of the Earth's resources through overuse and waste. An about turn is required whereby a balance is struck between what we can responsibly use and what we take from the environment.

- Take steps to ensure that global financial markets and institutions are based first and primarily on protecting the well-being of all people and Nature over individual profit motive.
- Restore the health of ecosystems and regenerate natural capital and ecosystem services to ensure the well-being of society and the economy and ensure that there are stable financial markets along with adequate financial as other resources in order to provide for all peoples' basic human needs, since all economic well-being rests on the capacity for Nature to thrive.
- Put in place policies to end the practice of forced buy-outs and leveraged hedge funds.
- Adopt regulations and policies to ensure that no austerity programs are put in place that harm people or make it impossible to ensure that all peoples' basic human needs can be met.
- Put in place policies and practices to ensure financial stability and prevent financial collapse, runs on banks, concentration of wealth and corporate consolidation.

**10.b Encourage ODA and financial flows, including foreign direct investment, to states where the need is greatest, in particular LDCs, African countries, SIDS, and LLDCs, in accordance with their national plans and programmes**

Actions that governments in developing countries can take to deal with the fact that ODA has not been forthcoming, include:

- Recognize that developed countries need the developing countries for among other things their raw materials, their markets, their migrant labour, etc.
- Partner with like-minded developing countries, Specialized UN Agencies (excluding those that tend to act in the interest of developed countries); and donor developed countries that have honoured their ODA agreements and are willing and able to abide by the development needs as perceived by the recipient countries.
- Create development plans that strengthen the national natural and human resources that form the basis of a strong economy. This might involve creating first an agricultural base and from there developing aspects of the economy that can bring in wealth through trade with like-minded countries.
- At the same time, build up people to people connections worldwide by providing universal access to the internet. This can be done initially by having internet centres within walking distance of one another. Such internet cafes can go hand in hand with a multilateral training in Internet use for selected people of each participating country who can then go back to their countries and train local experts to help women and men in in each community to use the internet for their own personal and community development.
- Allow subsequent economic development to be inspired by the talents that emerge among the people.
- Trade exclusively with like-minded nations and those that have upheld their ODA agreements.

**10.c By 2030, reduce to less than 3% the transaction costs of migrant remittances and eliminate remittance corridors with costs higher than 5%**

- Request the UN to make a study of how remittances can be dispatched and paid for in equitable and transparent ways;
- Determine how to distinguish ones that are fair and safe and of maximum benefit to migrants themselves.
- Train expert advisors and position them at border crossings both of countries that provide migrant labour and recipient countries to inform migrant labour of ways of getting sound advice when that is needed. These advisors should be clearly distinguishable from false advisors wishing to abuse the situation.

## GOAL 13

### Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts

**13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of**

**mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible**

- Creating competitions in schools, organizations, corporations and human settlements to raise contributions in currency and in kind, as well as ideas for combatting the effects of climate change.
- Encouraging all governments to decide on a quota that their people can pay in taxes toward the mitigation of the effects of climate change. This is important both as a consciousness-raising tool and also as a means to mitigate its effects.
- Providing funding to support civil society initiatives, capacity building, and ecosystem restoration.
- Making funding available for such initiatives as are described in Project Drawdown and in Albert Bates' book on biochar as a first priority.

**13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing states, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities**

Although the poor and marginalized, especially in low lying areas are most at risk from climate change, no one however rich or powerful can escape its ravages whether it be on us directly or on those around us. It is in the interest of all-rich and poor equally-to ensure that together we come to grips with the associated problems, by empowering as many people as possible to join in a common global effort. Here are a few much needed actions:

- Provide funding at the global and national level to ensure that all LDCs and SIDS have the resources needed to both carry out and implement local and national action plans and strategies to achieve full sustainable development and to carry out effective climate change-related planning and development processes; and include a specific focus on women, youth, indigenous peoples, and other marginalized communities
- Provide funding and support for establishing Ecovillage Development Programs and conducting Ecovillage Design Education Training Programs in as many countries as possible.

## GOAL 16

Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels

**16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children**

- Take into account the misguided needs and motivations of those who inflict every sort of abuse and violence towards children such as poor upbringing,

personal history of abuse and disrespect, inexperience of and disconnection from Nature and the sense of interconnectedness and awe of all life, as well as economic need. Create programs that redirect these individuals, providing the social and economic support they need to make the necessary changes in themselves.

#### **16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime**

- Examine and assess the motivations behind illicit financial and arms flows, stealing of assets and organized crime in order to understand the thread that connects these acts irrespective of nationalities and deal with the root causes of these problems.

#### **16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

- Impose serious sanctions, including shaming, where corruption and bribery leads to depletion of natural resources - illegal logging, mining, externalities and impacts, poaching. Shaming will both discourage such actions and raise awareness that corruption and bribery are not being tolerated.

#### **16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**

- Impose serious sanctions on powerful individuals and institutions who through deceit, corruption and self-serving actions negatively impact all of humanity, communities and the natural environment which we all depend on for our survival.
- Create a network of councils whose members come from a diversity of backgrounds and regions, from the local level to the International level, for the purpose of monitoring established institutions that may already be engaged in bribery and corruption and holding them accountable to practices that are effective, transparent, accountable, and follow the rule of law and the Laws of Nature.

#### **16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

- Apply and further develop the many examples of responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels in economies and the private sector worldwide.
  - Participatory People's Budget Processes enable the local people to share in making the decisions on how allocations will be made and how the community's money will be spent and are now used in a myriad of municipalities around the world.
  - The LETSystem is a local economy based on a barter approach, run on a basis of joint decision making that is used in many communities worldwide to regenerate a local economy where there is a lack of a viable or stable national currency available.
  - Cooperatives are for-profit businesses run by owner/operators in virtually all sectors. All involved share in the decision making equally as well as in the

profits. Since all are motivated to see their business succeed, they do well even in times of economic downturn. See <https://ica@ica.coop/en>. There are some 3 million throughout the whole world with one billion members.

- The Danish Agricultural Sector consists largely of cooperatives and is a good example of how successful cooperatives can be. Denmark produces enough food to feed 17 million people (three times its population) and has one of the world's most advanced food processing sectors. More than two-thirds of agricultural production is exported to 150 countries worldwide.
- The Norwegian Pension Fund.
- Encourage and promote the widespread participation with cooperative approaches that are already successfully utilized such as: Nature permaculture, the Slow Food Movement (<https://www.slowfood.com>), community-supported agriculture, cooperative ways of managing fisheries, forests, and irrigation, farmer's markets, community managed city and school gardens, and healthcare cooperatives.
- Make good use of and expand upon the contributions to shared resources available through the Internet such as Wikipedia, professors from leading universities such as Harvard who give free lessons to thousands of people via the Internet, Open Education Resources, the many millions of online texts, videos and musical works.
- Encourage businesses to adopt a Cooperative Identity where decision making, labour, and profits are shared both with the workers and managers of the business, with the local communities where they are based, and with people worldwide through global initiatives.

#### **16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance**

- Recognize the valuable natural and also other resources that developing countries provide, and that helping to uplift these into better economic, social, educational and technological status and all-round functioning in ways that support them in a more "green" and sustainable manner will benefit all worldwide.
- Have fair and equitable trade regimes across the board for all nations and particularly adopt policies and agreements that will right the wrongs that have in the past been done to indigenous cultures and peoples and to those living in the developing world. Boycotts of companies and nations that seek to perpetuate these wrongs will both strongly motivate the perpetrators to change their ways and raise public awareness of these inequities.
- Develop and include a system for and protection of environmental rights and responsibilities in all processes, agreements and institutions of global governance, in part through their inclusion in the development and adoption of a Global Pact for the Environment.

# Development



## Introduction

There is a parallel between what education is to the individual and what development is to nations. While true education is rooted in our direct individual connection to Nature, development of a society or a nation is rooted in their culture, which in turn is also rooted in Nature.

Development is rooted in Nature in more than just this one way. But first let us look at the process as it is often experienced today.

Development is often experienced as a process whereby the haves give to those who have less. This way of seeing the process generates an association of “giving” with “giving away”.

As a result, there is the temptation either not to honour aid-giving agreements, or else to provide aid while making the most for oneself. A representative of one extremely poor, least developed country that had received a sizeable sum of money in the wake of a devastating calamity, pointed out that the organizations (both for profit and not for profit) had been paid all the money and left leaving his country still in ruins. Now years later, it is still suffering from the devastation.

While nations are hesitant to criticize “development” aid in the fear that no aid will be forthcoming at all, development is associated in many cases with bitterness and broken promises. Development aid and “Common but Differentiated Responsibilities” (CBDR) and the resentment that surrounds these are too often a sticking point in international negotiations.

Material poverty of those poor in both developed and developing countries is in some cases created in others aggravated by the greed and insatiable desire for possession that too often accompanies spiritual poverty. Spiritual poverty drives even the very rich to seek to own more and more. Both material and spiritual poverty is found in both developed and developing countries among both rich and poor.

Taking this dynamic into account, development aid if it is to succeed, must be accompanied by two additional processes:

1. We, as individuals, must be encouraged to find balanced personal fulfilment by reconnecting with Nature, as outlined in the Introduction to the Chapter on Education; and
2. As both individuals and Nations, we must without delay adopt financing mechanisms and economic approaches that are rooted in Nature's examples.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Development**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 8**

#### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All**

##### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all and in the long run and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.
  - Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human

settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.

- Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
- Create a real increase in productivity, wealth, and well-being by investing in ecosystem restoration, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices, repairing natural water cycles, sustainably managing scarce resources such as water, land, and forests etc., and transitioning to full sustainability.
- Build upon the economic output and contribution of each individual within a community by providing decent work opportunities that contribute to healthy, sustainable development, and provide equitable access to goods and services.
- Provide financial support for voluntary contributions that benefit community members, their community and the natural environment as a whole.
- Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

- Establish localized food-based programs utilizing agro-ecology and other regenerative agricultural practices which create local jobs, promote more responsible stewardship, and eliminate toxic food production practices.
- Create new technologies that do not overuse finite resources such as water, ensure that the carbon footprint is as neutral as possible, and eliminate waste by using by-products from one production process to feed another.
- Require our governments to publicly acknowledge and clearly express the types of problems we face and put out a call to action for and support the increased development of new technologies and innovations.
- Terminate any spin which confuses the issue (for instance on Climate Change) of the reality we all currently face seeing our future survival in jeopardy. It is essential that governments clearly state the situation and what has led us to this reality.

## **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

- Develop regional and country programs to determine which renewable energy, appropriate technologies, and sustainable agricultural and/or building practices

might work best in various regions and locales. Provide subsidies and assistance to those that are providing access to and/or are engaged in such activities.

- Encourage the development of training programmes and bio-regional resource and service centres that support local communities in carrying out sustainable development planning and design processes and are adopting best practices in this area.

#### **8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

- Create a development plan that takes into consideration the natural resources along international borders, the peoples of the region, and what is best suited to their geopolitical situation.
- Provide government support for the people that will allow them and the nation as a whole to develop sustainably while remaining independent of corporations or individual entities that are creating unsustainable environmental, social, and political relations.
- Convert existing industrial parks into Eco-Industrial Parks in which businesses cooperate with each other and with the local community in an attempt to reduce waste and pollution, efficiently share resources (such as information, materials, water, energy, infrastructure, and natural resources), and help achieve sustainable development, with the intention of increasing economic gains and improving environmental quality.
- Develop small scale sustainable agriculture using parks, empty lots and rooftops to grow food.
- Create communities in the manner of Sekem Farm in Egypt along with ecovillages all over the world, which tend to be leaders in the conscious design of communities that support the regeneration of social and natural environments.

#### **8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

- Educate and train youth encouraging them to actively participate in achieving all 17 SDGs.
- Replicate, scale up, fund and support many of the best programs for educating young adults and youth while training them to do ecosystem restoration and conservation work, etc.
- Support the development, use, and implementation of community planning and design processes that involve and support youth.
- Encourage meetings of the community, including women and young people of all ages, to look at problems that exist within the community and build on the

ingenuity of all the people to find and implement solutions. It is important to ensure that young people's ingenuity is taken into account and that they are given an opportunity to participate in implementing solutions in ways that allow them to learn as they help in improving their community.

- Provide support for local currencies, community finance, community energy schemes, and water management to increase the number of paying jobs for young people. Ensure access to land and water, guarantee social security and minimum living wage as social-economic rights.
- Request help from outside by involving multilateral agencies, particularly of the UN; and provide instruction on how to access the Internet using mobile phones and if possible, ensuring that each area has Internet access.
- Support and fund experience-sharing and capacity building that enable scaling out and dissemination of existing good practices.

**8.a Increase aid for trade support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries**

- Wealthier nations provide aid without strings to nations in need, whereby needs and aid have been defined by the nation in need rather than assumed by the nation providing aid.
- Support development of sustainable (re)localised economies through recognition of informal economies and solidarity economy in LCDs.

**8.b By 2020, develop and operationalize a global strategy for youth employment and implement the Global Jobs Pact of the International Labour Organization**

- Ensure universal access to the Internet. Here the United Nations can play a pivotal role. It can provide training for a small group of people in each nation, who can then train facilitators in each region of their own country. As local communities are empowered, through access to the Internet and the partnership economy that they then have access to, they will become more prosperous and costs can be recaptured directly from users of such Internet centres or via taxes.
- Implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, especially art. 26 (2) to ensure students can develop their individual potential and are motivated to do so. This could include having Internet Centres within easy reach from all parts of the nation, especially outlying areas. These should ideally be staffed by someone who is both able to help people to clarify what information they are looking for and help them to locate the necessary support via the Internet.
- Use the motivational force in students to inspire learning, personal development and creativity in making connections worldwide that can lead to employment opportunities.
- In schools, use project learning, so that students learn the required subjects (for instance reading writing, arithmetic) in the context of realizing the projects

that are closest to their own heart, for instance, arithmetic as a way of pricing their projects, reading, writing and geography as a way of marketing them, etc.

- Include Nature-centric principles and respect for the environment in schools at an early age. As students progress and begin finding that which they have a proclivity for, help them understand that their interests are useful and transferable into skills for employment and entrepreneurial endeavours relevant in the development of a more sustainable world.
- Educate young people to use the Internet skilfully to locate what they need, including connections that are relevant to their personal and professional development, so that they can grow in a global context, and thereby maximize opportunities for gainful and fulfilling employment.

## GOAL 10

### Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries

#### **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Put policies in place within which a people—individually and collectively—can develop while maximizing the relationship between the individual characteristics of their people and the context within which that nation is developing. And from this starting point to gradually allow their nation to develop in constructive interaction with the needs of the rest of the world.
- Create a step by step development plan that will allow a government's specific population to develop skills that will allow them to operate profitably socially and economically in a global context as a nation.
- Develop, fund, and implement a growing network of resource, service and learning centres at a national and global level to assist all peoples living in impoverished and/or rural areas to learn about more sustainable development and agricultural practices and to acquire the skills, materials, and expertise needed to uplift their lives. This can be coupled with the teaching of Ecovillage Design Education training programmes in local communities and bioregions around the world such as have already been organized and held in hundreds of locales and in more than 42 countries by GAIA Education and the Global Ecovillage Network.

See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/> and <http://gaiaeducation.org/>

- Support and adopt El Salvador's proposal to establish and carry out a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration thus restoring more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands around the world and in the process fund and provide jobs for low income people by engaging them in helping to regenerate and restore the Earth. Invest in water retention landscaping employing local people in efforts to revitalize the natural environment, restore agricultural productivity, and dramatically increase the level of ecosystem services.
- Invest in transitioning to regenerative agriculture practices and training programs, especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood.

Again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions).

- Create organizations that provide cooperative opportunity for nations to work together with others in the same region that are facing similar geographic and developmental challenges.
- Have companies bring in student interns to help them to transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in such sustainable processes and practices; and governments to develop programs and policies to support this. Create eco-industrial parks.

#### **10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies**

- Increase economic opportunities and invest in both impoverished urban as well as rural development, decreasing the need for people to migrate to other cities or countries.

# Technology



## Introduction

Truly sustainable technology is frequently inspired by Nature's myriad forms and processes which speak to us through our observations, intuitive insights, hunches and dreams, etc.

Nature has developed within our Universe over some 15 billion years. Despite rhythms of evolution and destruction, she has gradually built more and more diversity, whereby one expression of form and/or process grew out of others that have, over and over again, stood the test of time. Our ability to categorize Nature rests on this regular progression.

In this way, we humans, too, as expressions of Nature, have developed ever larger and more complex forms of interaction. Here technology is playing a pivotal role in our development as a species. For instance, the discovery that we can gather and plant seeds led to agricultural communities as people farmed a diversity of plants and then exchanged them among themselves.

Gradually with each new technological invention, human communications and communities diversify and expand through the use of horses, trains, automobiles, planes, the printing press, the Internet, etc. Where we have remained inspired by Nature a sustainable form of unity in diversity develops that is sustainable over many years.

Technology can rightfully be seen as both a gift from Nature and a tool whereby Nature prepares us for our next evolutionary leap from separate entities (people, countries, etc.) into one integrated whole. A potential scenario would be that each one of us would form a part of a global community whereby we all can develop our potential and contribute to the whole.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Technology**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 8**

#### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All**

##### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community already has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people-to-people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all in the long run; and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.
  - Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human

settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.

- Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
- Create a real increase in productivity, wealth, and well-being by investing in ecosystem restoration, transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices, repairing natural water cycles, sustainably managing scarce resources such as water, land, and forests etc., and transitioning to full sustainability

Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature. (The Rights of Nature has been included by Ecuador and Bolivia in their constitutions and is also included in numerous cases at local or sub-national levels worldwide.

See [www.harmonywithNatureun.org](http://www.harmonywithNatureun.org)

- Provide financial support for voluntary contributions that benefit community members, their communities and the natural environment as a whole.
- Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

- Energize the building economy by training in and utilizing natural, sustainable green building practices.
- Create new technologies that do not overuse finite resources such as water, ensure that the carbon footprint is as neutral as possible, and eliminate waste by using by-products from one production process to feed another.
- Require our governments to publicly acknowledge and clearly express the types of problems we face and put out a call to action for and support the increased development of new technologies and innovations. Terminate any spin which confuses the issue (for instance on Climate Change) of the reality we all currently face seeing our future survival in jeopardy. It is essential that governments clearly state the situation and what has led us to this reality.

## **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

- Develop regional and country programs to determine which renewable energy, appropriate technologies, and sustainable agricultural and/or building practices might work best in various regions and locales. Provide subsidies and

assistance to those that are providing access to and/or are engaged in such activities.

**8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead**

- Develop sustainable technology and innovations which fully internalize costs, involve renewable energies, zero emissions, continual recycling of natural resources, and restoration of the Earth's ecosystems. Ensure that these innovations and technologies respect traditional biodiversity and nature.
- Establish sustainability within communities by growing food, developing technology and cooperative efforts to lift the entire population through practices which are life giving and allow citizens to share their unique contributions.

## GOAL 10

### Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries

**10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Provide relevant educational facilities either directly or by allowing people to connect with Intergovernmental Agencies and educational resources available via the Internet. It is important to use these since many are free of charge and come with "no strings attached."

## GOAL 16

### Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access To Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions At All Levels

**16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

- Provide universal access to the Internet so that all can make good use of and expand upon the contributions to shared resources available through the Internet such as Wikipedia, professors from leading universities such as Harvard who give free lessons to thousands of people via the Internet, Open Education Resources, the many millions of online texts, videos and musical works.

**16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development**

- Create a global information network for sharing information, questions, answers and experience.

# Policy and Law



## Introduction

Science is firmly rooted in Nature's laws that have been discovered through direct observation. These have grown more and more diverse as we developed the tools to observe both micro and macro levels, and our own mental emotional, social and spiritual dynamics.

While science in some ways brings us ever closer to Nature, it has become tainted by both the material and spiritual poverty that are driving our activities be they educational, developmental, social, economic or political. And this has resulted in laws that are strongly biased toward the rich and powerful, while increasingly disregarding the well-being of the vast majority of people and Nature. In fact, they fail to safeguard those aspects of Nature that are necessary for human survival. As a result no one is safe from the resulting natural calamities, or social and economic turmoil.

This insecurity is compounded by a pivotal role that Nature is having in human development. Nature's laws are constantly becoming apparent as humanity grows and develops.

Since humans first appeared on the planet, Nature has been active within first human families, then tribes, settlements, nations and now international groupings, including the United Nations. She has been urging us to form ever larger units and make this work.

As Nature “grows” humanity, we are challenged over and over again to find forms that are sustainable. In the preceding chapters of Part Two, we have looked at the challenges we face.

We have now arrived at a point where physically we are a global community, with laws and infrastructure that encourage us to interact as one harmonious whole. At the same time, we still feel most comfortable relating in smaller units. Mentally, emotionally and spiritually we have not caught up with our physical reality. We are like a butterfly that is in a cocoon created by threads of communication.

Even though old structures are becoming less and less relevant, we are not yet quite able to think and act as members of one global community. On the one hand, we see the need for laws and legal institutions that will support us all to live together as good neighbours. On the other hand, we are still rooted in our old ways of thinking and

acting that keep us stuck. This in between situation riddles us with fears and yet we hesitate to move ahead.

This is evident in negotiations on environmental laws; we see the urgent need to care for the environment, but we are afraid to commit ourselves to act as global citizens. And that is understandable, because at the community and national levels we feel more comfortable with infrastructure that, however sorely lacking, is still more familiar than new laws and infrastructure that we do not yet know. And so we adopt the laws but do not make them enforceable. Ecuador and Bolivia are however leading the way by including the rights of Nature in their national Constitutions. Communities at sub regional and bioregional levels worldwide are following suit.

The next step, creating enforceable laws at the global level and ensuring that these are fairly enforced will take a huge weight off humanity's shoulders. This process was taken more than two centuries ago with in the USA when States that had fought several wars in the past are now united under one Federal Government. The same has taken place in Europe where the existence of the European Union has ruled out wars between former arch-enemies Germany and France.

This step to ever greater unity has been taken by humans since we first appeared. It has been taking place in our universe and on Planet Earth for billions of years, as atoms grew into molecules and one-cell animals and plants have evolved from previous simpler life-forms.

In this process we have Nature as an experienced guide. In the previous chapters of Part Two, we have seen diverse ways in which we can make her our ally. In fact, just one step is required: open ourselves to her prompting.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Policy and Law**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 8**

#### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All**

##### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all and in the long run and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.
  - Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human

settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.

- Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
- Transition all countries to a circular regenerative economy which eliminates waste and develop plans to adopt fully sustainable consumption and production practices.
- Build upon the economic output and contribution of each individual within a community by providing decent work opportunities that contribute to healthy, sustainable development, and provide equitable access to goods and services.
- Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

- Require our governments to publicly acknowledge and clearly express the types of problems we face and put out a call to action for and support the increased development of new technologies and innovations. Terminate any spin which confuses the issue (for instance on Climate Change) of the reality we all currently face seeing our future survival in jeopardy. It is essential that governments clearly state the situation and what has led us to this reality.
- Dismiss and prosecute individuals, government officials and organizations that are putting obstacles in the path of new sustainable and regenerative technologies and innovation.

## **8.3 Promote development-oriented policies that support productive activities, decent job creation, entrepreneurship, creativity and innovation, and encourage the formalization and growth of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises, including through access to financial services**

- Develop regional and country programs to determine which renewable energy, appropriate technologies, and sustainable agricultural and/or building practices might work best in various regions and locales. Provide subsidies and assistance to those that are providing access to and/or are engaged in such activities.
- Encourage international programs and funding initiatives, such as the Green Climate Fund, 10 YFPs on Sustainable Consumption and Production, and the 4/1000 Regenerative Agriculture initiative to fully support and fund such community design processes and the types of best practices and initiatives that are carried out at a local or community level in these areas.

**8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead**

- All products, including food and pesticides, be legally required to clearly/transparently disclose all ingredients including supposedly inert ingredients and their original sources fully informing consumers.
- Identify which production methods need to be eliminated immediately based on practices which are harmful to the environment, therefore harmful to all life. For Example: Genetically Modified Organisms.
- Immediately prohibit the use of ALL products with toxic ingredients.
- Develop sustainable technology and innovations which fully internalize costs, involve renewable energies, zero emissions, continual recycling of natural resources, and restoration of the Earth's ecosystems. Ensure that these innovations and technologies respect traditional biodiversity and Nature.
- Require environmental agencies to investigate and stand for what is in the best interest of all and not make policies and laws based primarily on the interests of wealthy, powerful organizations.

**8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

- Provide incentives for people to focus on their primary needs.
- Ensure the presence of a social protection net and minimum living wage.
- Create a step by step development plan that will allow individuals to develop skills that will allow them to operate profitably socially and economically in a global context.
- As reorganization of governments and communities take place, the population should be educated regarding the steps they can participate in, such as the referendum process.
- Provide facilities where people can connect with educational and informational resources both in person and via the internet. Provide support systems to offer direction, guidance, and instruction.
- Create a development plan that takes into consideration the natural resources along international borders, the peoples of the region, and what is best suited to their geopolitical situation.
- Provide government support for the people that will allow them and the nation as a whole to develop sustainably while remaining independent of corporations

or individual entities that are creating unsustainable environmental, social, and political relations.

- Create communities in the manner of Sekem Farm in Egypt along with ecovillages all over the world, which tend to be leaders in the conscious design of communities that support the regeneration of social and natural environments.
- Encourage companies to bring in student interns to help them transition to sustainable practices. Encourage colleges and universities to partner with businesses to train students in sustainable processes and practices. Governments would profit by developing programs and policies to support this.

#### **8.6 By 2020, substantially reduce the proportion of youth not in employment, education or training**

- Support and fund experience-sharing and capacity building that enable scaling out and dissemination of existing good practices.

#### **8.7 Take immediate and effective measures to eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025, end child labour in all its forms**

- Build a national economy where all can find decent and fulfilling employment.
- Ensure that there is an easy transition from education to work opportunities, and that innovative ideas are put into practice to diversify and strengthen the economy.
- Provide alternative forms of employment for slave traders who feel forced by their societies to take dangerous work because no other means of earning a living is available.
- Strictly enforce human rights instruments, including the Rights of the Child. Here it is important to pay attention to the capacity for all to develop their unique potential in their individual ways.
- Enforce the rule of law to create right relationship between people and the desire to live in harmony with other species and Nature as a whole.
- Assist offenders in making restitution by placing them in conditions where they can identify and empathize with those they have wronged. This can be by showing films where the young tell their stories and show the consequences of the abuse they have suffered both physically and psychologically, and then enlisting their help in trying to reverse the damage they have helped to create.
- Stop allowing the rich and powerful to keep economically profiting from forced labour, modern slavery and human trafficking. Enforce the laws against these activities for ALL citizens. It is time for responsible governments and the international community to bring cases against such people and activities

before international courts and tribunals as well as to prosecute them where possible within their own countries.

- Create economic incentives for employers to offer employees decent opportunities that are beneficial to all.
- Create universal laws and standards establishing age requirements for employment, working conditions, hours of employment, environmental protection policies, and limiting the outsourcing of employment to other countries. Universally enforce Fair Labour Standards Act.

#### **8.8 Protect labour rights and promote safe and secure working environments of all workers, including migrant workers, in particular women migrants, and those in precarious employment**

- Create a level playing field for all workers within each nation. As a foundation, encompass all fundamental human rights and other relevant agreements, including those made under auspices of ILO, UNIDO, UNCTAD, etc., all other norms and standards that have been created to enhance the well-being and performance of workers such as the Declaration of Peasants rights and rights of those living in rural areas, and that standards be created as needed. This will empower workers to perform optimally.
- Enable documentation and social security nets as well as access to affordable education and healthcare for those in countries of immigration.

#### **8.9 By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products**

- Provide strict regulations regarding the treatment of animals within the tourist trades, and provide diligent monitoring to ensure quality of life, health, safety, and welfare of all animals. Terminate any activities which cause harm to the animals, and any businesses failing to honour and respect their needs. Tourist enterprises using animals must provide sanctuary for animals retiring from work.
- Ban any practices that bring harm to any form of life in the region or to the environment.
- Provide strict regulations within the tourism trades that provide protections for the people and the natural environment within a region.
- Safeguard the sanctity of cultures visited and the products they produce.
- Implement all fundamental human rights, agreements, standards and norms to ensure optimal working conditions for all regardless of gender or nation of origin or form of employment.
- Develop a comprehensive set of programs and policies that support and promote both sustainable tourism and ecotourism. Include such policies and initiatives in local and national action plans and strategies on Sustainable Consumption and Production in a fully integrated manner to ensure that

effective action is taken towards achieving all of the Sustainable Development Goals.

#### **8.10 Strengthen the capacity of domestic financial institutions to encourage and expand access to banking, insurance and financial services for all**

- Create policies and monitor financial institutions so that they provide service to and assist communities in growing and developing and are not just focused on self-interest.
- Develop policies and practices that support entrepreneurs with sustainable business plans which respect and benefit all life and the environment.

#### **8.a Increase Aid for Trade Support for developing countries, in particular least developed countries, including through the Enhanced Integrated Framework for Trade-Related Technical Assistance to Least Developed Countries**

- Create fair trade agreements that benefit all.

### **GOAL 10**

#### **Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries**

Work together with countries and their peoples with similar challenges to find innovative ways of implementing the Economic and Social and Political Covenants and other international laws to foster equality among people within and among individual nations.

#### **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Put policies in place within which a people—individually and collectively—can develop while maximizing the relationship between the individual characteristics of their people and the context within which that nation is developing. And from this starting point gradually allow their nation to develop in constructive interaction with the needs of the rest of the world.
- Create a step by step development plan that will allow a government's specific population to develop skills that will allow them to operate profitably socially and economically in a global context as a nation.
- Develop, fund, and implement a growing network of resource, service and learning centres at a national and global level to assist all peoples living in impoverished and/or rural areas to learn about more sustainable development and agricultural practices and to acquire the skills, materials, and expertise needed to uplift their lives. This can be coupled with the teaching of Ecovillage Design Education training programmes in local communities and bioregions around the world such as have already been organized and held in hundreds of locales and in more than 42 countries by GAIA Education and the Global Ecovillage Network.

See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/> and <http://gaiaeducation.org>

- Support and adopt El Salvador's proposal to establish and carry out a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration thus restoring more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands around the world and in the process fund and provide jobs for low income people by engaging them in helping to regenerate and restore

the Earth. Invest in water retention landscaping employing local people in efforts to revitalize the natural environment, restore agricultural productivity, and dramatically increase the level of ecosystem services.

- Invest in transitioning to regenerative agriculture practices and training programs, especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood.

Again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions).

- Create organizations that provide cooperative opportunity for nations to work together with others in the same region that are facing similar geographic and developmental challenges.

## **10.2 By 2030 empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all irrespective of age, sex, disability, race, ethnicity, origin, religion or economic or other status**

Democratic, inclusive decision making and governance, to be successful, will benefit from being accompanied by a peer or other learning process which can begin in schools, and is already common in many student-centred educational institutions. It involves learning to listen and discuss with an aim to build unity in diversity. Once this art is acquired the immeasurable advantages become clear. Mutual appreciation grows and so does the support for the decisions which have been jointly made. Eventually such forms of social interaction will become fully integrated into the culture, as it is indeed in that of many Indigenous Peoples.

- Include people's input into all aspects of governance using Town hall meetings and referenda, starting with meetings in small circles where all are able to be heard and branch out from there into larger gatherings. Develop People's Participatory Budget Processes at the local level to ensure that the desires and needs of all peoples are fully included in deciding how government monies will be allocated and spent.
- Organize inclusive workshops and planning processes at all levels of governance to collect ideas and develop policies to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all peoples in government decision making, planning and implementation processes. Establish or designate offices in each government that will be responsible for ensuring that such policies are adopted, enforced and carried out.
- Create a High World Council made up of individuals from all walks of life regardless of age, gender, disabilities, economic status, religion, or race, from all regions and countries. These individuals would have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgement or alliance. They serve on a rotating basis, and are educated before their term so that they are well versed in their role to empower and promote social, economic, and political inclusion for All, including, and from the perspective of Nature. Their position is to uphold Natural Law as the gold standard, and to evaluate all other created laws, policies, and standards for the governance of people and their communities within the Natural Law of equality. They hold the great responsibility of being the voice of Nature where these laws affect Nature and therefore all life.

- Form Regional and National Councils. This structure allows a forum to which lawmakers and decision makers can bring their proposed laws, strategies, and plans for evaluation and consideration as they pertain to Natural Law and the Equality of all. Proposed changes with a potential of greater impact would be brought to the High World Council for final evaluation. The purpose is to maintain the voice and consideration of Nature and the Laws of Nature that govern all of us, and to maintain equality, so that the planet and all its inhabitants can move forward in the healthiest way possible.
- Fully integrate NPRS (National Poverty Reduction Strategies) with the SDGs and all other sustainable development processes, goals and agreements etc. both vertically and horizontally.
- Develop government policies and inclusive planning processes at all levels of government in order to empower and promote the social, economic and political inclusion of all peoples. These policies and plans should then be implemented through each government's SDG plans, National Strategies for Sustainable Development, and National Poverty Reduction Strategies and in a fully integrated manner, both across these planning processes and vertically and horizontally - thus across all sectors of society and levels of government.

### **10.3 Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including through eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and actions in this regard**

Before this target can be implemented, it is important to identify such practices. Often those discriminated against have come to see this as “normal” and so there is little pressure to eliminate discriminatory laws, policies, and practices, or to promote fair and impartial practices, legislation, and actions. With exposure to diverse cultures and ways of life, pressure will grow to:

- Ensure that all public spaces both indoors and out are accessible to all people and regardless of the type of disability experienced.
- Provide equal opportunities for all to attend schools, be hired for employment opportunities, participate in recreational and cultural activities, and participate in governmental decision making processes as well as to serve in government or as a civil servant, etc.
- Reduce inequalities of government officials' wages in comparison to the average worker.
- Introduce policies and laws prohibiting kickbacks and benefits for those in positions of power. Establish strong consequences and precedents to deter these practices.

### **10.4 Adopt policies especially fiscal, wage, and social protection policies and progressively achieve greater equality**

When we consider equality, we often leave Nature out of the equation, thereby undermining the very foundation upon social and economic equality rests.

- Provide protections that ensure the well-being of the forests, soils, food, water, and air on which we are dependent upon for our fiscal, social and physical well-being and invest in restoration of the natural environment.

- Establish policies that provide for social protection and fiscal growth, while also decoupling the economy from harm to the natural environment and resource depletion - through such things as transitioning to a circular economy and investing in efforts to achieve all of the SDGs simultaneously.

#### **10.5 Improve regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions and strengthen implementation of such regulations**

- Put in place policies, regulations and practices to ensure the protection, health, and safety of all Peoples and Nature.
- Ensure adequate labour practices are implemented as adopted by the ILO.

#### **10.6 Ensure enhanced representation and voice of developing countries in decision making in global international economic and financial institutions in order to deliver more effective, credible, accountable and legitimate institutions**

- Recognize that in order to uphold the agreements and commitments that have been made by the international community, including those under the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and its associated Conventions along with the Rio Conventions and other Multi-lateral Environmental Agreements, it will be essential to ensure that developing countries are empowered to have just as strong of a voice and vote in global decision making processes as the developed world in order to ensure that these agreements can and will indeed be carried out by all concerned.

#### **10.7 Facilitate orderly, safe, regular and responsible migration and mobility of people, including through implementation of planned and well-managed migration policies**

- Establish reasonable and responsible immigration and migration policies.
- Implement The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration.  
See: <https://news.un.org/en/story/2018/12/1028941>

## **GOAL 13**

### **Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts**

#### **13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning**

- It is essential that climate change measures be included in national to local policies, strategies, and planning. The sooner governments acknowledge climate change as a serious concern the sooner measures can be included in strategies and planning locally and state-wide. Countries where climate mitigation actions and policies are already being introduced are leading the movement. They may proudly celebrate their role in bringing new awareness to advance human survival.
- Integrate policies from internationally and from national to local levels
  - National governments can effectively plan, develop and convey policies, strategies and actions to be implemented locally.

- Governments can develop and share solid information with their citizens about how climate change and its effects can be mitigated.
  - Governments can share with each other best practices on climate mitigation and ways to communicate measures to the grass roots.
  - Local governments can mobilize grass roots efforts to take effective, ongoing action.
  - Channels can usefully be created to allow input by “the people” to governmental decisions in the area of climate change to ensure that policy, strategies and planning are maximally informed by people throughout the population as well as governments at all levels.
- Many cities, states, and governments around the world have been announcing plans and targets to transition to 100% renewable energy. This is an essential step that ought to be taken in all countries to more adequately address climate change and reverse global warming.
  - Governments are pledging to achieve carbon neutrality which means sequestering as much carbon as is emitted into the natural environment - thus preventing any more from flowing into the atmosphere. It is essential that we develop plans to achieve this as well in all jurisdictions.
  - El Salvador has introduced and the UN General Assembly has adopted a resolution to enact a UN Decade on Ecosystem Restoration. It is imperative that all countries take action as a part of this Decade to Restore the Earth - thus re-greening the more than 2 billion hectares of degraded lands around the earth.
  - All governments should consider what they can do, at all levels, to best support and join the 4 per 1000 regenerative agricultural initiative and ensure that we can continue to feed all of the earth’s people while re-sequestering gig tons of carbon in plants and soils.
  - Considering that humanity does almost nothing in a fully sustainable manner and that our whole economy is still primarily based on the use of fossil fuels for energy, it is essential that we take steps to transition to a fully circular economy as rapidly as possible. All countries and governments must thus adopt policies for eliminating waste, transitioning to sustainable means of consumption and production, and ensure that everything that we produce is either recycled or reused in one manner or another.

**13.a Implement the commitment undertaken by developed-country parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to a goal of mobilizing jointly \$100 billion annually by 2020 from all sources to address the needs of developing countries in the context of meaningful mitigation actions and transparency on implementation and fully operationalize the Green Climate Fund through its capitalization as soon as possible**

**In developing countries**

- To maximize the satisfaction of donors and their confidence that donations will be used to full effect, people and governments in developing countries can

enumerate specific areas and situations where the effects of climate change must be mitigated in their own countries. This can include:

- Specific steps that must be taken for implementation of these steps (who will do what, when and timelines for each step).
- Specific amounts of money or help in kind that are needed for each step, so that all contributions are put to good use within the above-mentioned plans.

#### **In developed countries**

- To maximize the satisfaction of donors and their confidence that donations will be used to full effect, people and governments in developed countries can also enumerate specific areas and situations where the effects of climate change must be mitigated in their own countries. This may include:
  - Enumerating specific steps that must be taken for implementation of these steps (who will do what, when and timelines for each step).
  - Specifying specific amounts of money or help in kind that are needed for each step, so that all contributions are put to good use within the above mentioned plans.
  - Determining how much they will contribute to developing countries (This can also include helping the latter make well-constructed plans).
  - Allowing their citizens, a say in how their climate taxes and other contributions will be spent.
  - Issuing reports on successes and remaining unresolved challenges so that citizens can follow the effects of their donations in currency and in kind; and where failures occur, they can focus on how to remedy these.
  - Publishing outcomes of climate mitigation projects.

### **13.b Promote mechanisms for raising capacity for effective climate change-related planning and management in least developed countries and small island developing states, including focusing on women, youth and local and marginalized communities**

- Revisit and recommit to developing local and national sustainable development strategies and integrate all efforts to combat climate change as a part of them. Focus on how these local and national strategies can provide a foundation for achieving the SDGs and how the SDGs can be used to scale up the level of ambition.

## **GOAL 16**

### **Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels**

#### **16.1 Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere**

Implement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Social and Economic Covenants, the Rio Principles and the Earth Charter which help people acknowledge our interconnection and deeply understand the need for and ways to work in peaceful cooperation with each other and all of Nature.

### **16.2 End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children**

- Immediately start providing support for the physical and spiritual birth right of each society member to foster the next generation of good and well-intentioned adults.
- Take into account the misguided needs and motivations of those who inflict every sort of abuse and violence towards children such as poor upbringing, personal history of abuse and disrespect, inexperience of and disconnection from Nature and the sense of interconnectedness and awe of all life, as well as economic need. Create programs that redirect these individuals, providing the social and economic support they need to make the necessary changes in themselves.
- Acknowledge children's rights to speak out and identify abusers yet realize that vilifying persons will not shift the cultural norm.
- Put measures in place to redirect the disregard for young (and all) life and acknowledge the valuable perspective and wisdom that children can offer. Encourage and foster leadership among our youth by providing opportunities for children to share their perspectives as to laws and governance.
- Create and enforce laws which prohibit the sale of children and teenagers on websites. Any websites which are found to be benefitting from the sale of children and teenagers should be immediately shut down.
- Ensure that there is accountability under law for actions of abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children and particularly hold those accountable that allow such things to persist through abuse of their institutional roles and authority.

### **16.3 Promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all**

- Create a High World Council made up of individuals from all walks of life, all regions and countries who are well versed in the Laws of Nature, who have no financial or political affiliation or partnerships that could sway their judgement or alliance. Their position is to uphold Natural Law as the gold standard, and to evaluate all other created laws for the governance of people and their communities within Natural Law, and especially to be the voice of Nature where these laws affect Nature.
- Form Regional and National Councils. This structure allows a forum to which lawmakers and decision makers can bring their proposed laws for evaluation and consideration as they pertain to Natural Law. Proposed changes with a

potential of greater impact would be brought to the High World Council for final evaluation. The purpose is to maintain the voice and consideration of Nature and the Laws of Nature that govern all of us, so that the planet and all its inhabitants can move forward in the healthiest way possible.

#### **16.4 By 2030, significantly reduce illicit financial and arms flows, strengthen the recovery and return of stolen assets and combat all forms of organized crime**

- Acknowledge the crimes that have been done to others and the natural environment over time, make any necessary reparation and restitution and move forward making different choices. This would be similar to the process of “truth and reconciliation” practiced in South Africa and Rwanda.
- Adopt legislation ensuring that all people have the right to information about how we manage and treat the natural environment, including impacts on the natural environment from or by the private sector. Legislation supporting this should be adopted and enforced at the national level as a part of implementing each country’s SDG strategy and plan and combatting the illegal traffic in rare and endangered animal and plant species.
- Establish a system for the regulation of armaments as stated in Article 26 of the UN Charter: “In order to promote the establishment and maintenance of international peace and security with the least diversion for armaments of the world's human and economic resources, the Security Council shall be responsible for formulating, with the assistance of the Military Staff Committee referred to in Article 47, plans to be submitted to the Members of the United Nations for the establishment of a system for the regulation of armaments.”
- Hold the Security Council and the Military Staff Committee accountable for upholding the system of regulation of armaments called for in Articles 26 and 47 of the UN Charter.
- Focus on and establish effective means for upholding human rights for all people and for protecting the rights and needs of Nature.
- Create a system to assure that Article 3 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights which states that “all peoples have the right to life, liberty, and security of person” will be upheld.
- Establish universally known sanctions to be imposed on any country who threatens or attacks the security of another country, including threats to the natural environment and species.
- Uphold the responsibility of the UN General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council to take action both to prevent and then to sanction and hold responsible any country, along with its political leadership, that attacks another country or poses a direct threat to international peace and security.

#### **16.5 Substantially reduce corruption and bribery in all their forms**

- Create concrete ways to acknowledge and reward individuals and institutions that are moving toward or are already providing an example of being effective, accountable and transparent.
- Mitigate consequences for individuals who are willing to come forward, be honest, accountable and be engaged in reparation and restitution for engaging in acts of bribery and corruption.
- Impose serious sanctions, including shaming, where corruption and bribery leads to depletion of natural resources - illegal logging, mining, externalities and impacts, poaching. Shaming will both discourage such actions and raise awareness that corruption and bribery are not being tolerated.

#### **16.6 Develop effective, accountable and transparent institutions at all levels**

- Create a network of councils whose members come from a diversity of backgrounds and regions, from the local level to the International level, for the purpose of monitoring established institutions that may already be engaged in bribery and corruption and holding them accountable to practices that are effective, transparent, accountable, and follow the rule of law and the Laws of Nature.
- Address any violations with clear, consistent consequences. Be sure those consequences fit the crime with limited consequences for crimes of limited impact and more serious sanctions on those with widespread negative impact on humanity and Nature.
- Establish clear guidelines for what constitutes a serious crime against humanity and Nature at all levels and needs to be addressed by an international court.
- Impose serious sanctions on powerful individuals and institutions who through deceit, corruption and self-serving actions negatively impact all of humanity, communities and the natural environment which we all depend on for our survival.
- Re-evaluate the protection from accountability that currently exists for established institutions and people in positions of influence and power.

#### **16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

- Guarantee that there are those who specifically represent the rights and well-being of Nature at all levels of decision making in every area.
- Include open public hearings in all legislative and decision-making processes at all levels of government. Ensure that all legislative or parliament committees report on their processes and proceedings in an ongoing manner and make these reports widely available to the general public.

#### **16.8 Broaden and strengthen the participation of developing countries in the institutions of global governance**

- Recognize the valuable natural and also other resources that developing countries provide, and that helping to uplift these into better economic, social, educational and technological status and all-round functioning in ways that

support them in a more "green" and sustainable manner will benefit all worldwide.

- Have fair and equitable trade regimes across the board for all nations and particularly adopt policies and agreements that will right the wrongs that have in the past been done to indigenous cultures and peoples and to those living in the developing world. Boycotts of companies and nations that seek to perpetuate these wrongs will both strongly motivate the perpetrators to change their ways and raise public awareness of these inequities.
- Allow each nation to act internally and internationally in accordance with universal environmental rights and responsibilities.
- Adopt legislation at the national level as part of the implementation of each country's SDG strategy and plan, requiring all governmental agencies and private sector organizations at all levels - both national and International - to publicly file annual reports as pertain to policies, products, development, that in any way affect the health and well-being of people, animals, or any aspect of Nature.
- Develop and include a system for and protection of environmental rights and responsibilities in all processes, agreements and institutions of global governance, in part through their inclusion in the development and adoption of a Global Pact for the Environment.

#### **16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration**

- Give women, the impoverished, and indigenous peoples the right to land ownership and ensure this is protected through government regulations, policies, enforcement and courts of law.
- Register land ownership.
- Make known the rights of property owners as well as the responsibility of stewardship for Nature.
- Have accountability of property rights and environmental rights.

#### **16.10 Ensure public access to information and protect fundamental freedoms, in accordance with national legislation and international agreements**

- Adopt legislation at the National level as part of the implementation of each country's SDG strategy and plan, requiring all governmental agencies and private sector organizations at all levels - both National and International - to publicly file annual reports as pertain to policies, products, development, that in any way affect the health and well-being of people, animals, or any aspect of Nature.
- Create and implement fines and penalties for any failure to provide such documentation with public access. Include measures of reparations so that no entity can "pay out" their penalties and avoid providing the documentation and reparations.

**16.a Strengthen relevant national institutions, including through international cooperation, for building capacity at all levels, in particular in developing countries, to prevent violence and combat terrorism and crime**

- Treat crimes against Nature at the same level as crimes against humanity.
- Create international and local institutions and governance for a safe, just, peaceful, and inclusive society. Put in place relevant institutions, protections, and governance for the safety, protection, nurturance and inclusion of all peoples as well as Nature.
- Create new types and systems of penal institutions that focus on healing and regeneration instead of punishment, along with instituting truth and reconciliation systems and commissions that includes the healing and nurturing presence of Nature.

**16.b Promote and enforce non-discriminatory laws and policies for sustainable development**

- Establish equal rights for Nature for the continued survival and thriving of humans.
- Review policies and laws to be sure they effectively foster development of sustainable, harmonious communities, cities and regions.

# Agriculture



## Introduction

A great deal can be said about diverse forms of agriculture. But we will focus here on just one of these.

Large industrial monocultures are an example of how one aspect of human endeavour can endanger human and other forms of life. Just this one form of agriculture alone is frustrating progress on all SDGs.

Such monocultures are one of the largest contributors to climate change, being responsible for the pollution both of land and oceans. They weaken plant and animal species at their very core by taking away their natural capacities to survive and thrive. They distort their life cycles and their natural physical forms in ways that are unspeakably cruel, and totally enslave them to the power of just a few. All this is causing a back-lash from the natural world that is now spreading diseases that kill human beings.

Large industrial monocultures attain and maintain power over competitors by lobbying governments at the national level to make it illegal or difficult to farm using more nature-friendly practices. One of the ways in which they maintain power is by insisting that farmers use seeds they have developed and only they may sell. These seeds produce infertile plants that require large amounts of fertilizers, growth hormones and pesticides to survive and force smaller less powerful farmers to purchase their products, thereby further increasing the gap between rich and poor.

This chapter has been placed as last because to deal with this multitude of problems and any of the SDGs large agricultural monocultures will have to totally change in all of the ways described in the previous chapters. Below are just a few ways that relate not necessarily to the full scale of the problem. Yet, if this sector alone were to apply the insights from the previous chapters, it would make it much easier for us to reach every one of the SDGs.

## **Suggested Means to Implement a Nature-Centred Approach into Activities in the Area of Agriculture**

*With an emphasis on those goals focused on during the 2019 HLPF*

### **GOAL 8**

#### **Promote Sustained, Inclusive and Sustainable Economic Growth, Full and Productive Employment and Decent Work for All**

##### **8.1 Sustain per capita economic growth in accordance with national circumstances, and in particular at least 7% per annum GDP growth in the least-developed countries**

- Introduce the following guidelines for action to all Ministries and integrate them as relevant into topics taught in formal education.
  - Recognize that the well-being and even the survival of all, depends on the capacity of people to respond to economic, social and environmental challenges currently threatening us.
  - Ensure that all are empowered to use their full potential and are motivated to act for the well-being of all.
  - Rather than maximising economic output, optimising collective use of resources, natural and financial etc., use a human rights-based approach that includes the Rights of Nature.
  - Recognize that Nature's ecosystems provide an example of how this can be accomplished (Nature inspired solutions to innovation tend to be durable).
  - Acknowledge that the global community has a vast array of resources that can help bring this about, such as human rights agreements, the Earth Charter, the right to food, Peasants rights and rights of other people living in rural areas, help by UN and other multi-lateral agencies, a myriad of multi-stakeholder partnerships, participatory and collective democratic approaches to governance from local to global levels, and potentially mutually supportive people to people relationships via, for instance, the Internet or practitioners who are learning from one another.
  - Recognize and prevent those individuals and organizations who offer aid to poor communities with a primary objective being their own profit as this conflict of interest creates enmity and undermines economic progress for all and in the long run and build and respect empowered relationships of self-governance at all levels.
  - Recognize that where people's well-being is at stake, aggression and violence often develops. Only when people really are ensured that they can fulfil their full individual potential, will it be possible to build a foundation upon which enmity between people(s) has little chance of taking root. The route to a peaceful society is also highly dependent on the respect and realisation of all human rights. These rights are essentially interconnected and indivisible.
  - Strengthen communities and ties between members of each community and between communities in rural areas and also within large human

settlements and provide members of the community with the capacity to learn from those with similar challenges by enabling them to connect with others, nationally and internationally. Build and strengthen rural-urban relationships and linkages at all levels, respecting the specificities of both and their mutually complementary nature.

- Foster constructive connections between individuals within and between communities. Constructive connections are often already well understood in smaller communities where all depend on one another for their survival. Recognise that solidarity economy in all its manifestations rebuilds broken social connections.
- Transition all countries to a circular regenerative economy which eliminates waste and develop plans to adopt fully sustainable consumption and production practices.
- Build upon the economic output and contribution of each individual within a community by providing decent work opportunities that contribute to healthy, sustainable development, and provide equitable access to goods and services.
- Optimise collective use of resources, both natural and financial etc., using a human rights-based approach that also includes the Rights of Nature.

## **8.2 Achieve higher levels of economic productivity through diversification, technological upgrading and innovation, including through a focus on high value-added and labour-intensive sectors**

- Establish localized food based programs utilizing agro-ecology and other regenerative agricultural practices which create local jobs, promote more responsible stewardship, and eliminate toxic food production practices.

## **8.4 Improve progressively, through 2030, global resource efficiency in consumption and production and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation, in accordance with the 10-year framework of programmes on sustainable consumption and production, with developed countries taking the lead**

- Implement regenerative farming in all communities to provide food and restore soils.
- Establish sustainability within communities by growing food, developing technology and cooperative efforts to lift the entire population through practices which are life giving and allow citizens to share their unique contributions

## **8.5 By 2030, achieve full and productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including for young people and persons with disabilities, and equal pay for work of equal value**

- Develop small scale sustainable agriculture using parks, empty lots and rooftops to grow food.

## **GOAL 10**

### **Reduce Inequality Within and Among Countries**

#### **10.1 By 2030 progressively achieve and sustain income growth of the bottom 40% of the population at a rate higher than the national average**

- Develop, fund, and implement a growing network of resource, service and learning centres at a national and global level to assist all peoples living in impoverished and/or rural areas to learn about more sustainable development and agricultural practices and to acquire the skills, materials, and expertise needed to uplift their lives. This can be coupled with the teaching of Ecovillage Design Education training programmes in local communities and bioregions around the world such as have already been organized and held in hundreds of locales and in more than 42 countries by GAIA Education and the Global Ecovillage Network.

See: <https://ecovillage.org/our-work/education/> and <http://gaiaeducation.org>

- Invest in transitioning to regenerative agriculture practices and training programs, especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood.

Again see: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions).

## GOAL 13

### Take Urgent Action to Combat Climate Change and Its Impacts

#### **13.2 Integrate climate change measures into national policies, strategies and planning**

All governments should consider what they can do, at all levels, to best support and join the 4 per 1000 regenerative agricultural initiatives and ensure that we can continue to feed all of the earth's people while re-sequestering gig tons of carbon in plants and soils.

#### ***Education in general***

Please note that reference is made above to UNESCO's educational resources for sustainable development both for formal education and also for all parts of civil society. See 4.7 under education.

#### ***Education inspired by Nature***

Students and workers within organizations/corporations/educational institutions and governments at all levels can be educated in the following ways:

- Participating in classes to increase understanding of how the effects of climate change express themselves and the precise causes that bring these about; this process should take place in both developed and developing countries and neighbourhoods of all socio-economic backgrounds.
- Sensitizing people to their integral position within the Earth System, to the interconnection of all life and how it contributes to their individual wellbeing and capacity to survive.
- Restoring the inborn capacity of human beings to communicate with Nature, building on the contributions of many Indigenous Peoples and other Nature communicators.

- Sharing best practices and ways of combatting climate changes and mitigating its effects in the diverse situations faced both by rich, poor and in diverse geographical and social situations.
- Building the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their own independent, decolonized institutions of higher learning where they can share their wisdom and knowledge or where their knowledge will be respectfully received.
- Creating competitions in schools, organizations, corporations and human settlements to raise contributions in currency and in kind, as well as ideas for combatting the effects of climate change.

### **13.3 Improve education, awareness-raising and human and institutional capacity on climate change mitigation, adaptation, impact reduction and early warning**

- Education in general: Here once more, are links to UNESCO's educational resources for sustainable development both for formal education and also for all parts of civil society:
  - <https://en.unesco.org/esd-repo/> is UNESCO's resource bank and lists many resources for sustainable development and public awareness raising.
  - <https://en.unesco.org/gap/resources> is UNESCO'S Global Action Programme on Education for Sustainable Development.
- Education inspired by Nature: Students and workers within organizations/corporations/educational institutions and governments at all levels can be educated in the following ways:
  - Participating in classes to increase understanding of how the effects of climate change express themselves and the precise causes that bring these about; this process should take place in both developed and developing countries and neighbourhoods of all socio-economic backgrounds.
  - Sensitizing people to their integral position within the Earth System, to the interconnection of all life and how it contributes to their individual wellbeing and capacity to survive.
  - Restoring the inborn capacity of human beings to communicate with Nature, building on the contributions of many Indigenous Peoples and other Nature communicators.
  - Sharing best practices and ways of combatting climate changes and mitigating its effects in the diverse situations faced both by rich, poor and in diverse geographical and social situations.
  - Building the capacity of Indigenous Peoples to maintain their own independent, decolonized institutions of higher learning where they can share their wisdom and knowledge or where their knowledge will be respectfully received.
  - Creating competitions in schools, organizations, corporations and human settlements to raise contributions in currency and in kind, as well as ideas for combatting the effects of climate change.

- Education for Regenerative Agriculture, Restoring Natural Ecosystems, Replenishing Watersheds and Ground Water, and Restoring Natural Water Cycles.
  - Permaculture Training Programmes are offered all around the world that provide essential training in regenerative and restorative practices. All governments should take advantage of such courses and provide incentives for civil servants to participate in them.
  - Invest in transitioning to regenerative agricultural practices and training programs, especially for those engaged in subsistence agriculture that depend on rain fed agriculture, and/or have to rely on degraded lands in order to eke out their basic sustenance and livelihood.

See: [www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions](http://www.ecovillage.org/climatesolutions)

- Develop regional rural extension programmes that offer hands-on education and training courses to community members focusing on ecosystem restoration, water retention management, and restoration of watersheds and natural water cycles, etc.
- GAIA Education offers a range of educational programs that are available to people of all ages that is recognized as an exemplary program under UNESCO's Global Action Plan on Education for Sustainable Development. These programs include both an introductory and a yearlong Design for Sustainability on-line course; hands-on project based month-long or 20 hour immersion Ecovillage Design Education training programs; and the Training of Trainers program. These programs cover all aspects and elements of regenerative development and cover pretty much the same material as the SDGs. See: <https://gaiaeducation.org>
- The Ecosystem Restoration Camps Foundation has established a program with goal of creating and developing camps staffed by volunteer workers to restore degraded ecosystems all around the earth. It is essential that these camps be set up all around the world In order to train people in how to help restore degraded lands in all bio-regions. The Camps will also offer permaculture classes, workshops and training programs. Those that participate in such programs will gain valuable skills that can then be used as humanity undertakes this enormous challenge of Restoring the Earth.

See: [www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation](http://www.ecosystemrestorationcamps.org/foundation) for more information.

## GOAL 16

### Promote Peaceful and Inclusive Societies for Sustainable Development, Provide Access to Justice for All and Build Effective, Accountable and Inclusive Institutions at All Levels

#### **16.7 Ensure responsive, inclusive, participatory and representative decision-making at all levels**

- Encourage and promote the widespread participation with cooperative approaches that are already successfully utilized such as: Nature

permaculture, the Slow Food Movement (<https://www.slowfood.com>), community-supported agriculture, cooperative ways of managing fisheries, forests, and irrigation, farmer's markets, community managed city and school gardens, and healthcare cooperatives.

**16.9 By 2030, provide legal identity for all, including birth registration**

- Give women, the impoverished, and indigenous peoples the right to land ownership and ensure this is protected through government regulations, policies, enforcement and courts of law.

## **About the Partnership on the Rights of Nature:**

### *Integrating Nature into the Implementation of the SDGs, Our Endorsers and Our Chief Editors*

*The Partnership on the Rights of Nature: Integrating Nature into the Implementation of the SDGs*, consists of academic institutions, indigenous peoples, Nature communicators, NGOs accredited to the United Nations and other organizations and individuals. These, together with other colleagues from around the world, participated in giving input and producing the original reports that lie at the heart of Part One of this present book. Originally as each report was completed, diverse combinations of individual organizations would ask to be mentioned as endorsers of one or other of the Reports. The authors also sometimes varied.

This present book combines the original Reports on SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13 and 16. Each individual report lists the original authors as well as those asking to be mentioned as special endorsers.

The names of the team that created *Transforming our World in Harmony with Nature. Integrating Nature while Implementing the UN's 2019 Sustainable Development Goals* are mentioned on the cover page.

This same team was also responsible for creating our 2018 Book in this series on achieving SDGs 6, 7, 11, 12, and 15 with a Nature's perspective which thus focuses on Water and Sanitation, Sustainable Energy, Human Settlements, Sustainable Consumption and Production and the Terrestrial Environment. All share an affiliation with the Commons Cluster of the UN NGO Major Group, which played the lead role in the production of both works.