See Appendix: Style notes & Out Takes   Use Contents as links, **Ctl-click** to go to item

Practice of Commons Sense

The living commons is a transition informing principle, a guiding vision for attracting and catalyzing emerging change. The commons is also the physical connector of mankind to the earth, serving mankind as a whole, vital for our sustenance, social cohesion and well-being.   It includes the natural environment that is our host on earth that people all use and change, inherit and create, a storehouse for the artifacts we transmit to future generations. It provides us life and resources, but also a place to use as a medium of exchange for all the networks of things people can do for each other, including cooperative institutions for serving competitive enterprise, free expression and our duty to preserve the grace and beauty as well as the generosity of the earth. It's an inheritance, one that all humans now need a living vision of and a feeling of common responsibility for. Our cultures may have evolved to make us cooperating members of conflict oriented societies, being domesticated to serve authoritarian rulers, but we can see that won't work anymore and have to find the pieces of another way to live.

Contents (right click to update t.o.c.)

INTRODUCTION AND PREAMBLE

(This section should be perhaps about a half a page in length and describe what we mean by a commons based approach to sustainable development, why it is needed, and the various benefits that it would provide in transitioning to a sustainable, just, prosperous and healthy world for all.) >> HF: This could include what we have described lines 32 to 83 (a bit more than a half page, though establishing why systemically the living commons is a good transition informing principle)

The commons approach to sustainable development is based on the understanding that those that live in and are impacted by the environment and community around them have the duty and responsibility to collectively manage and steward the resources entrusted in them in common and for all perpetuity.

VISION OF COMMONS SENSE AND A LIVING PLANET

The commons is vital for our sustenance, social cohesion and well-being

[An archetype?]

The commons is what serves mankind as a whole. We think of it as our shared environment and resources, and as a medium for interactions. It includes the natural environment that is our host on earth, and all what we inherit and create, use and change, and then transmit to future generations. It is vital for our sustenance and livelihood, our individual expression and purpose, our social cohesion and well-being. It connects us and nurtures much of what we produce and accomplish; the networks of things we can do with and for each other. This encompasses means of governance for serving competitive enterprise, free expression and our duty to preserve the integrity and beauty as well as the generosity of the earth.

It's an inheritance, one that all humans now need a living vision of and a feeling of common responsibility for. Our cultures may have evolved to make us cooperating members of conflict oriented societies, being stuck in unquestioned theories of how things work and must be governed and managed, but we can see that this is not enough. We now need to deal with our complex changing world while finding the keys towards a sustainable, just, prosperous and healthy world for all.

- ## The living commons helps materialize the need and possibilities for change
Gives the change meaning and direction to changes emerging locally. It has the power to attract possibilities, set contextual conditions for optimized interactions, and catalyze action toward the realization of a potential so that self-organized emerging change can lead to continuous radical change...

  - o We focus here on the conditions, amplifying actions, and ongoing dynamics needed to enable the process described above to occur.

  - o Commons preserved in a healthy manner for posterity and the full use by future generations

  - o Full citizen participation in all governmental and intergovernmental decision making processes

  - o Rio Principles

  - o Fully achieve all intergovernmental treaties and agreements made on Sustainable Development to date

  - o Inherent rights of nature to its own well-being

  - o Adopting a Human Rights and Commons Based Approach to Sustainable Development.

- ## The living commons as a guiding image/vision for a socio-cultural shift

A living commons approach brings sustainability and resilience to another level adding dimensions of mutuality, common interest and a vision of the whole where mankind is meant to thrive. It can speak to our logic and reason as much as to our intuitions and emotions.

As such it constitutes a relevant transition informing image for the socio-cultural shift that our world requires, and to accumulate and amplify the patterns and behaviors that are already emerging.

The Changing Image of man survey from the Stanford research institute lists the following characteristics for a transition informing principle:

  o   provide a holistic sense and perspective on life

  o   entail an ecological ethic

  o   entail a self-realization ethic

  o   be multileveled, multifaceted, and integrative

  o   lead to a balancing and coordinating of satisfactions along many dimensions

  o   be experiential, experimental and open-ended

- ## The commons take various shapes

[At the same time object - process - result]

  o   Object: The 'Assets' - The Common Wealth, inherited or created that are shared in common and serve a livelihood (natural, social & cultural resources, genetic and biologic diversity, knowledge, etc) that people can take care of, nurture, replenish

  o   Process: A culture - The Common Ethos, ways of being and doing in common that manifests in commoning (caring, sharing, in connection with others with empathy, equity, justice, mindfulness...)

  o   Result: A resultant - The Common Good (wellbeing, quality of life, prosperity, abundance)

They are at the same time an input to the dynamic interactions between people and their contexts, and an output thereof. A tangible condition that serves as a medium for economic and political cooperation, development of common social and cultural values, and the establishment of a shared stewardship of the earth that can be deployed in nested and/or fractal ways at multiple levels and scales. For progress to materialize, output must be greater than input. Commons must grow.

Extends The Rio Principles To The Whole Earth

How The Management Of The Commons Works

The commons is managed as all complex systems are, by the parts learning about how each other and the system as a whole is naturally working, allowing both the smallest and the various institutions and scales of natural organization to be responsive to each other. That's what it means to "work as a whole".

Action Plan

Proposal Development and Action Plan Items

- o   Short Term

- o   Long Term

Commitments

- o   Statements Of Support

- o   Signatories

SUSTAINABILITY FOR THE WHOLE

Principal Strategy

- The clear opportunity makes a new commons approach possible today?
  - o   Many of the pieces needed are already in place and we can grow our ability to see and communicate the need to put them together.

  - o   Increasingly we see how our competing for growing shares of the earth is impoverishing the earth for ourselves as well as everyone else.

  - o   The business community is full of people who have "done the math" and see the growing liabilities for their impacts as unprofitable.

  - o   The financial community is full of people who see the need for their money to be used to make the world work, not fail.

  - o   The social networks too, have made common purpose their organizing mantra all over the world, and only need solid material to make them effective.

- o The sciences are full of people learning to work more like investigative journalists than as theorists, to see research as for illuminating their subjects not replacing them with theory, and helping theory to evolve with experience so mankind can better understand the working parts of our world actively changing.

These complementary parts seem ineffective today mostly for being disconnected. So now is the time for a guiding vision, for learning how to search for the matching parts as the solution, and the system itself will start putting them all together.

- ● New institutions of cooperation for competing interests

It takes new methods and new metrics to make the real impacts of businesses transparent so, , business, investors, consumers and regulators can all make intelligent choices. New science has developed that makes true physical measures of the impacts of the complex supply and service chains of business that would permit standard measures of business economic impact on our future, for example, so that a financial future balance sheet could be compared with normal annual financial balance sheets of business. The ability to measure the impacts on the future of the business can also indicate the profitability to the whole of different kinds of investment, creating a new kind of financial commons guided by transparent policies for whole system profitability. [1]

This work is in the area of Comprehensive Sustainability Reporting (CSR). Much work remains, but accurate comprehensive physical measures will prove a better way to learn about what will make our responses profitable for the future of businesses, investors, consumers.

- ● The learning about system that makes the whole responsive
  - o Local and Regional Partnerships

The reason to organize commons partnerships is to connect people who share a common world often having very different talents and views, but who need to work together to achieve their own aims. Groups of stakeholders often "don't speak the same language". It takes art, patience and a sound method, getting well connected spokespeople to immerse themselves in the environment of the problem (or opportunity) which they all need to respond to.

Professional methods and the experience history of others is valuable[2]. They find there's more to the reality than they thought, and to each other. They often get stuck, but can't really succeed without finding how to continually rediscovering their world and its purposes, like nature does.

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[1] Henshaw J.L New Institutions for commons-based economic models (research & proposal notes)

[2] Henshaw, J.L. Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships (notes & references)

- Frameworks and platforms to support the transition [tightening connections - amplifying positive feedback]

- The nature of systems is a multiplicity of wholes in partnership

- Transformation is "an event"

<u>Change by "build-up" & "fit in" growth</u>   <u>For a cell of internal and external relationships</u>

  o Like any project too, system changes start with a build-up that end with refinements

As a process, transformative change in systems is first a "building up" of new local system of relationships that expands its resources, following a "self-amplifying cycle" of as an "event", followed by a self-resolving cycle of "fitting in" by resolving relationships with others, as it shifts from an internally focused growth and learning process to an externally focused one.

Transformations "start with diverging and end in converging" building a path of organizational development, first growing then maturing, and. Think of it as a task, starting up and climbing a steeper hill till it levels, changing from more and more energy to then less and less.

In ecologies what happens is the new systems first thrive by expanding faster and faster, till they run into each other, then the ones that are responsive and learn to fit in, defining a niche for themselves, are the ones that the ecology keeps.   It's why so much of what you see animals doing is learning about what to react to as they search for what they need.

- The responsive adaptation of complex living systems
  o Learning about complex systems learning about each other..

Whether people realize it or not, we get our most of our understanding of systems in nature, not by reasoning but from observing natural systems behave systematically. The meanings of language are all built around our experience of nature too, of course, and all the eventfulness of life exhibits natural systems at work.

Some of the biggest differences in what to respond to are displayed by systems in a "building up" stage of development and a "fitting in" one. Just watching for them lets you see when they switch from devoting growing resources to themselves to using their built-up resources to interacting with others, a kind of window on how they work.

- Patterns of behaviors emergent in each whole, and visible externally even when its 'operating system' is hidden from sight
    - Each whole self-organizing and self-realizing while being conscious of and responsive to each other's behaviors
    - Each whole locally responsive to our dramatically changeable knowledge and living world
    - Emergent patterns at the local level that can converge and accumulate into systemic change
    - Possibilities for convergence and amplification of positive feedback dependent on tightness of relationships
    - Change made continuous by successions of interactions and relationships

Understanding how things work allows the recognition of cultural and ecological organization with multilevel boundaries, object and behavior dependent, not arbitrary. It also allows responsiveness to be active and to anticipate potential conflict or collaboration.

- The commons as a whole

In the past, environmental efforts concentrated on protecting the earth's "special places", and most attention grabbing problems. These efforts protected only selected parts of the commons, as threats to the whole grew unabated. A different approach is needed to counter the forces that exerts ever increasing pressure on all parts of humanity and the earth at once. A thriving commons requires no parts to be excluded from attention, to assure local solutions don't create global conflict and global activities don't create local and regional conflict.

We need a whole system approach not a piecemeal approach, one that enables all parts to thrive while addressing the threat that itself is not piecemeal, but to the whole at once.

Awareness of the needs of the commons, as what all parts share a need for, starts with each part discovering how it uses and depends of the whole and how it can contribute to keep the whole viable and thriving.

To set this type of approach in motion, we need to work toward the systemic level with a transition informing process concentrating on a set of guiding principles, contextual conditions and a few leverage points susceptible of generating the insight and positive feedback loops that will seed the emergence of radical change.

Our recommendations seek to describe the dynamic interactions that help build the social and material resiliency necessary for the development of a thriving economic and social fabric, allowing at the same time for various unintended consequences of human action, and for recovery from natural disasters, pandemics, etc.. They also look into what enables an economic balance between member communities, ensuring rule of common law and accountability underpinned by monitoring and evaluation systems. A critical element is the establishment of a framework for enabling learning, conversation, evaluation in view of decisions and conflict resolution, in a way that can scale horizontally (P2P) and vertically (subsidiarity).

Sustainability for the parts

Local organization for local needs [P2P, many to many]

Principle: Communities must be encouraged to cultivate and produce their own livelihoods and co-govern their utilities, services and resources, in relational dynamics that foster self-realization and adaptation.

Emergence: A variety of innovative, creative small and local initiatives and projects are actively pursuing alternative and more sustainable forms of agriculture, industrial production, social and economic organization, currencies and credit systems, education, (self-)governance, and ways of life. At the edge we find the collaborative and P2P economy.

Amplificators: Communities, groups and individuals develop a sense of ownership of the process, a sense of immediacy and transparency, of shared destiny and emotional experience that foster trust and resilience, and a shared 'commons sense'. Local collaboration and peer to peer (P2P) dependencies are something graspable and immediate, and also expand awareness of what empowers one another and larger systems, creating channels by which they can discover opportunity and be brought into balance.

Positive feedback: Continual community learning about how those regional systems work should be encouraged and supported. This is key to sustaining the complexity of larger scales of integration, and the specialization of remote services that empowers them. Then trust, co-creation and co-governance practice and working skills develop at each scale, and so also spread to the whole in a distributed manner. This encourages conflict resolution and transparency approaches. It develops a sense of enduring responsibility for the commons and roles shared with future generations.

- ## Coordinated Regional Emergency Interventions

Application: An immediate application would be to promote the use and testing of these innovative methods and initiatives in 'innovation zones' established in areas damaged by disasters, or to reverse damage caused by past and current practice. Promote the study of how interventions affect each scale of the systems they take place in. Responding to the threats of disasters, cultural and technological dislocations, as a need to develop resiliency and adaptability, and so also anticipating, avoiding and allowing more effective response, should all be encouraged and funded, now aimed at making the commons work more smoothly as a whole too. Projects directly aimed at relieving the growth of crippling debt without continued growth of demands on the earth are inseparable from reducing emissions, reversing desertification, soil erosion, deforestation, overfishing, increased disparity between rich and poor, corruption, abuse of power.

Existing Elements of Global Learning and Sustainability

- Government Action Plans
  - UN Sustainability Programs, Proposed High Level Panel on the Commons, SDGs, Targets and Indicators
  - National Sustainability programs
  - National and local tax and education policies

- Natural functions of the economy
  - Financial & investor markets and searching for sustainable returns
  - Endowment fund community
  - Business communities searching for sustainable and products

- Social Networks and NGO's
  - Commons Abundance Network
  - Embedding the Commons Approach in Local and National Sustainability Strategies
  - Governments at all levels to adopt and support a commons approach to sustainable development
  - Tax policies
  - Participatory processes of decision making
  - Development of a new economic and financial systems

Proposed and Ongoing Action Efforts

UN and Government Actions

- A Charter of Universal Responsibilities

should thus be put forward by civil society and adopted by the international community making clear what our basic responsibilities are and establishing an effective system of global laws that is sufficient for achieving the agreements that have been made to date, that the natural environment is protected and restored, and all people's basic human rights and needs can be met. We must insist that this be done and that all human rights treaties are thus universal in nature, binding and enforced for and by all.

Likewise we need to clearly state that there is a role for everyone to play and a way for everyone to contribute to the organizing effort and to making the transition to a sustainable future.

Collaborative and collective management and ownership practices within business

Convention on Corporate Social Responsibility and Accountability

Commons Action for the UN is working with other organizations and networks to develop a Commons Abundance Network (CAN).

To encourage exsting commons to connect and empower one another by sharing information, networking and planning and acting in concert where a commons approach can be promoted. For this purpose we can distinguish between two types of commons: relatively small interpersonal commons and larger, often digital global commons networks, such as Wikipedia, General Public Software, You Tube and the Internet itself. The smaller communities can learn from one antoher's best practices and all can common with regard to the commons goods, such as knowledge, free software, educational courses to connect moreeasily and empower one another. [this is generally covered in above pp now, but lots of elaboration possible of course]

Policy Strategies

- ## Expanding cooperation at higher levels and wider scales
[deployment in nested/fractal ways - subsidiarity principle]

Subsidiarity is an organizing principle stating that a matter ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest, or least centralized authority capable of addressing that matter effectively, and that a central authority should have a subsidiary function, performing only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level.

Principle: Learning from grassroots community practices and early adopters, fostering growing awareness in each locality of the nature of local and global integration. This would draw from the people-context-interactions- assets-culture-resultant dynamic that defines and powers local relationships to the commons, and enable scaling vertically from there.

Emergence: Simple principles for a more realistic and purposeful science of economics and management for an animated world, drawing from "systems intervention", "action learning", "systems thinking" and "whole system assessment" practices, among others, to deal with the systemic complexity of the relationships and the shift required.

Amplificators: Promoting "connections" conversations to help build on interactions and facilitate integrated shifts in larger and smaller scale practices allowing stakeholders to discover new ways to solve their mutual problems. Adopt appreciative methods of enquiry and conflict resolution, being open to seeing things as they are, as they are as well as how you want them to be, to experiment, learn and adjust. Encourage questioning, learning, discovery and innovation, and our capacity to bootstrap, to invent seeds of change, plant and nurture them, and evolve. Find ways to work together and actively engage in learning processes that enable co-creation and co-governance and conflict resolution on all scales.

Positive feedback: Expanding from the above on the "whole system" approach to learn from example, to mimic the conflict-free self-organization observable in natural economic systems, and other "exemplars" recognized good design; to observe patterns of behaviors emerging and to

recognize change as it unfolds, so that theory is always checked against reality of what is observed and emerges, and new learning can be integrated and made applicable.

Application: This includes finding the boundaries and governance principles best suited to the needs of the commons at local levels (subsidiarity), acknowledging multiple logically or physically overlapping or intersecting commons, and devising more practical means of enforcement for laws, treaties, and agreements at all levels by making them confirmations of nested and/or fractal common needs.

• A Commons Sector, alongside the Private and public sectors

Principle: Reinforcing and developing a sector of the commons alongside the private and public sectors, conferring rights and responsibilities to communities over resources on which they depend. There is no question here of ending private property or the role of the state. Rather it is to establish a provision for 'sanctuarizing' within appropriately governed institutions a certain number of commons from public or private overexploitation and enclosure to ensure access when exploitation and enclosure for the pursuit of profit impinges on the rights or livelihoods of the users of the commons or the viability of the common. The most obvious examples are the air we breathe or the human or natural genome, the internet is another. Defining modalities would be in the political realm.

Emergence: New forms of cooperatively or mutually governed organizations to steward the commons at various levels, starting with the enforcement of existing common law.

Amplificators: The commons must be acknowledged as the foundation of the collaborative free markets needed for the health of competitive free markets, enabled by effective education systems, research and development programs, and universal telecommunications infrastructure that enable distributed networks to operate mutual sense making and exchanges of all kinds.

Positive feedback: This would prevent the double risk of 'Tragedy of the commons' either from overexploitation by individual parts detrimental to the whole or from private enclosure and appropriation for the benefit of the few. This would ensure that the people who have a long-term stake in the preservation of these resources (natural, physical, intellectual, social, cultural; from local to global) would protect them while enabling the development of a flourishing commons-based economy around them.

Application: This may include linking and embedding the commons in existing systems such as the international commons of Outer Space, Antarctica and the Law of the Sea.> See approaches here: Blueprint for P2P society by Michel Bauwens, 'Stewardship Corporations' by Jack Harich; Commons Trusts and Social Charters developed by James Quilligan and the Global Commons Trust.

• Transition to a circular economy

Our economy's current purpose is to maximize flows (of goods, capital). It is a machine for perpetual growth that uses its profits and its knowledge to continually escalate its demands on humanity and on the earth and to constantly multiply its capacity to inflate itself as private wealth and power. As such, it is brittle and prone to breakdown, undermining productive activity as well as leading to the abuse of the commons in a never ending spiral.

Principle: The challenge we are facing is to ensure the conditions under which profit and growth can be viable and sustainable, and improve at the same time the material and non-material (intellectual, emotional, spiritual...) wellbeing of the people, and the viability of the commons that enables it.

Emergence: The "circular economy" model focuses on optimizing the flow of goods and services over time in relation to the size of capital and resources (stocks). It is a replenishing and regenerative model based on closed loops and systems resilience, and the rebuilding of natural and social capital. Products are designed for more complex cycles of disassembly and reuse, the out-design of waste and toxic emissions.

Amplifications: Introducing clarity between consumables and durables, it puts the responsibility of the performance of the product and its becoming as a new resource at the end of its life on the producers, leading to a whole new approach of production, consumption and ownership as it encourages leasing, renting and sharing while giving way to new approaches of business co-evolution and integration of the commons.

Positive feedback: The circular economy can contribute to create a positive entrainment effect. In the economic sphere there is an acknowledgement that as externalized costs become internalized benefits prices will increasingly reveal full costs. This entails a natural shift towards renewables and internalization of externalities. In systems terms the system will be exhibiting increased interdependence and the use of different scales, niches and possibilities. See The circular Economy and the Compression Institute.

Application: In the spirit of circular economy closed loop urbanization and community utility & production systems and projects and initiatives that have multiple effects, and serve several different objectives, such as co-generation, closed water/energy/food production systems or solutions such as developed by the Blue Economy or systemic approaches around buildings/energy/transport should be encouraged.

More generally, sustainability as "circular economy", also involves that whatever available resource or asset businesses or other economic actors don't use, other parts of their environment can, with mutual benefits. This includes local policies to make use of idle resources to strengthen local economies.

- Use finance to grow the commons.

Principle: The transition to a circular economy for the investment and financial commons must start at **natural limits to profitable growth. For vitality and balance** sustaining investment for the profitability of the whole is both a matter of commons interest to guide investors to more lasting value investments, and to funding common purposes as endowments of the commons. The world economy doesn't yet have a "purpose" to live better as a whole, though, only to grow and grow even as it becomes unprofitable, brittle and toxic. That ignores the natural need for the economy to mature as it fits in with more profitable relations with the other systems on earth, and as we turn our attention from inward to outward.

Emergence: The practical transition is for investors of all kinds to find higher purposes for their profits, such as healing both their world and environment, avoiding direct liability for growing

hidden impacts, and in the spirit of the commons and well-being. Developing some responsiveness to the emerging and unexpected needs of their environment, and ready to explore errors and omissions in their own teachings and past conclusions, that

living in a changing world may make important. See articles A biomimicry for self-regulating commons and Self Organization as niche making. The Giving Pledge is a move in this direction, that needs to be adequately channeled...

Amplifications: More trivially, shifts from taxing income to taxing depletion of commons such as non renewable resources and waste will reinforce this, as will real world commodities and energy price rises. The removal of perverse subsidies which promote extraction over regeneration or stock over flow would add impetus.

Positive feedback: Since money and money as debt is an endogenous variable in the whole game an unaltered financial sector undermines efforts and money will work best as a medium of exchange (issued debt free). Other ideas include the use of negative interest rates to promote long term investment in productive activities (see Bernard Lietaer) as against the compound growth driver which is compound interest that systemically reduces future value to negligible.

- ## Stop growing toxic and harmful practices
 Application: This process can be accelerated by identifying and targeting investment practices that systemically undermine productive activity and future prospects, such as speculative manipulation of finance instruments and resource shortages, mechanisms causing systemic credit and asset bubbles, development of addictive appetites of various nature at the cost of public, environmental and financial health, the promotion of faster use of depleting resources serving to increase not decrease the economy's dependence on them, etc. These are both some of the most profitable investments and increase rapidly as people take the profits from them to inflate their investment in them. This include creating incentives, regulations and taxes and eliminating subsidies and loopholes that encourage these practices.

- ## Reinforce and enforce anti-corruption laws
Eliminate 'legal' corruption and political manipulation by banning or strongly limiting the use of private funds for political financing and political speach.   (Larry Lessig creator of creative commons is campaigning against this: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Republic,_Lost also of interest is Jack Harich's analysis of the political power place: http://www.thwink.org/sustain/articles/005/DuelingLoops_Paper.htm)

  o   Make it a crime to be unaware that "growth" becomes ecocide [?] Encourage the adoption of Ecocide as the Fifth Crime Against Peace.[Wouldn't that be more directly addressed by educating ourselves on how our daily choices are causing ever accelerating depletion of the commons, and other harms we're quite unaware of? Is the crime here really "bad people" or is it ignorant ones?]

  o   **Commons principles for human rights** as well as edication that serves the development of the whole person (Art. 26 b of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) to produce personal fulfillment and to reduce the vain attempts to fulfill false needs that cannot be met, and as a result , [a variety of popular concepts of human rights are really economic

desires, and so something people need to learn to make, rather than expect to be granted. I'd be good to draw that distinction if possible.]

- **Assessments and reporting to track emerging change and impacts**

Promote transparency and reporting for monitoring and evaluation systems. Create metrics to measure impacts and outcomes, that measure each part's demand on and contribution to the whole, and not just local visible effects. Provide open access to knowledge, data, and information to allow comparative studies and the correction of misconceptions. Promote a general knowledge commons, and creative commons, allowing all to see inside the silos of others so their different views of common subjects, their values and ideas, can be understood and connected. Share methods for recognizing irreversible processes and anticipating their tipping points of transformation as well as recognizing seeds of change and anticipation of limits of change. Set up processes to ensure that what follows is right and continues to be right, exploring means of confirmation, and a meta-process of reflection and evaluation of measures. Enable trial and error and the possibilities to readjust. Respond to the abuse of misleading and selective metrics and evaluation systems, defining subjects with only selective variables, and generally assure the fidelity of information to its subjects and their changes. Apply rules of fiduciary duty to the speach of corporations and lobbyists, to be liable for being misleading about the true interests of their   investors, customers, employees and other stakeholders, as having   natural concerns for their own and their society's wellbeing. See Jay Youngdahl's expansion of fiduciary law at Harvard.

- **Frameworks and platforms to support the transition**

[tightening connections - amplifying positive feedback]

These approaches would be well supported with frameworks and platforms to deal with the systemic complexity of the relationships and the shift required. A platform would help the various problematiques and existing initiatives to be made visible to each other and encouraged in the context of a global sustainability & resilience objective, and to connect the dots in order to help people pull and pool resources and collaborate to grow what works for them and for the common good. It would enable learning, exchange of knowledge and experience, engagement, coordination of cooperation and action, and evaluation, debate, deliberation, decisions of specific projects or outcomes. Ultimately this could facilitate the first steps and adjustments of the formation of commons governance systems that would where required enable the creation of new institutions. (see A Global Framework)

  o (Lis. I did not see this point. I made a similar point above. Perhaps the two points could be combined and place at the higher point in this ennumeration. Helene > Lisanska, these two § were initially placed at the beginning. As they are ambitious and difficult to grasp at the onset, we thought they came as a logical conclusion of the rest, which distills some of the known proposals and recommendations in some form of expanding sequence from the closest to the widest from a commons and systemic perspective. It could be done both ways)

Ultimately, such frameworks and platforms could be an instrument for the transition. It would provide the support for the embodied characteristics of the transition informing principle listed

above and the signs of emerging change to become visible as interconnected in a whole. It would enable the discovery of possibilities and the application of solutions at multiple levels throughout the cycles of the transition:

- o setting up sensors for detection and sense-making;

- o understanding issues and what is at stake across silos;

- o inspiring, empowering, enabling people to collaboration and action;

- o facilitating deliberation and implementation;

- o providing means for horizontal (P2P sharing) and vertical (subsidiarity principle) scaling of processes

- o diffusing, applying, improving, sustaining solutions

- o monitoring performance, accountability, early detection of new issues and feedback

All this in an emergent manner

- • Ten Guidelines for the Commons

In designing commons models of co-governance and co-production for sustainable management of various resources, stakeholders can consider these guidelines in 1.) developing their operational parameters (deliberative charter processes, http://globalcommonstrust.org/?page_id=20) and 2.) formal legal procedures for commons institutions such as commons trusts (http://globalcommonstrust.org/?page_id=15), commons cooperatives, or other formal democratic commons associations. (I suggest also to look into Jack Harich's Steward Corporation and Commons Property Rights solution - shared a while ago in our systems thinking group conversation http://www.thwink.org/sustain/solutions/SubproblemD.htm)

- o We are Co-creators with Nature and Society

- o By Creating our Shared Environment, we Participate in our own Culture

- o Thru Creative Cooperation, Resource Users become Producers of their own Resources

- o Cooperation between Users and Producers is the Practice of Stewardship

- o The Social and Political Expression of Stewardship is Trusteeship

- o Trusteeship of the Commons Transforms Traditional Ownership Structures

- o Co-produced and Co-governed Commons Generate New Sources of Value

- o Commons Value is the basis of a Debt-Free/ interest-free Monetary System

- o A Commons-Based Society results from Collective Intentions for Sustainability

- o The Economics of the Commons is Replenishment.

Commons management caps the stock and rents the flow -- ensuring that commons are not diminished -- and prices are set through true costs to commons resources. Commons management provides a basis of authentic value in sustainable resources, therefore enabling a non-debt monetary system based on measurable and consistent factors.

Commons-based money as credit would be tied to sustainability indices that measure health and well-being of human and natural communities, bioregionally. As sustainability increases in a bioregion, so then would the credit value increase, and vice-versa. A global sustainability average can thus be assessed. This will align government, business and community decision-making across scales with the best interests of society and natural systems.(Here we can connect with the Earth Condominium People who are using the global footprint a s a metric and Eric Rothenberg's URSULA Project.)

(1) Adapted from http://noetic.org/noetic/issue-six-january/staying-resilient-in-a-wild-card-world/

Local commons projects underway:

Community Bill of Rights (USA) - **The model Community Bill of Rights** template is derived from ongoing national and global work by the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF) such as Ecuador adding Rights for Nature to its Constitution, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania stripping drilling corporations of corporate constitutional "rights," such as corporate "personhood" and Spokane's Community Bill of Rights initiative

Designed Deliberative Democracy (USA, China) - A group of citizens are scientifically selected to reflect the general population. They are polled once on the major decisions they'll be facing. Then they are given a briefing on those issues, prepared by experts with conflicting views. Then they meet in small groups and come up with questions for the experts — issues they want further clarified. Then they meet together in plenary session to listen to the experts' response and have a more general discussion. The process of small meetings and plenary is repeated once more. A final poll is taken, and the budget priorities of the assembly are made known and adopted by the local government. It takes three days to do this. (Fishkin, Stanford Univ)

- Participatory Budgeting (Brasil) - **Participatory budgeting** is a process of democratic deliberation and decision-making, and a type of participatory democracy, in which citizens decide how to allocate part of a municipal or public budget. Participatory budgeting allows people to identify, discuss, and prioritize public spending projects, and gives them power to make decisions about how money is spent. Since its emergence in 1989 in Porto Alegre, participatory budgeting has spread to hundreds of Latin American cities, and dozens of cities in Europe, Asia, Africa, and North America. More than 1,200 municipalities are estimated to have initiated participatory budgeting to improve services such as water, sewer, health, energy, food security and eduation

- Food Commons/ Food Sovereingty (Brasil) - The third largest City in Brasil, Belo Horizonte, became the first city in the world to eliminate hunger. In 1993, with a metro population of over 5 million, BH started a series of innovations based on its citizens having the "right to food". These include, for example, creating farmers' markets in the town to enable direct sales, and regularly surveying current market prices and posting the results across the city, and providing large cafeterias in each district providing healthy local meals at low subsidized cost. The city's process

of participatory budgeting was linked with these innovations, as a result of which the infant mortality rate was reduced by 50% in a decade. There is also evidence that these programs have helped support a higher quality of life for the local farmers partnering with the city, and that this may also be having positive effects on biodiversity in the Atlantic Rainforest around the city. The city's development of these policies garnered the first "Future Policy Award" in 2009.

- <u>Community Managed Forests</u> (Mexico, Guatemala, Indonesia and India) - The destruction of forests is responsible for almost one-fifth of all greenhouse gas emissions; that's more than all global transportation combined. Part of the challenge in addressing this issue is that these spaces are often seen as pristine, empty places devoid of people and commerce. In reality, the world's forests are not only home to hundreds of millions of people, but they also are a key source of these people's livelihoods. For these individuals (many of whom are indigenous, tribal peoples), forests are a source of food, energy, medicine, housing and income. The Mexican model has shown that giving communities the ability to own and manage the forests where they live provides perhaps the greatest incentive imaginable to protect and preserve the forests. Mexico's experience in promoting environmental protection and economic development by expanding community rights to forests is a model that other countries can and must follow. Good examples of community managed forests also exist in Gutemala, Indonesia, India and other paces, but a danger is that unless they have full support from government, they are in danger of being wiped out by deals between government and business interests. Community forests groups are encouraged to network and cooperate, join forces with other civil society groups to make their plight known and attain recognition from government to secure their future (CIFOR)

- <u>Community Managed Water Systems</u> (Bolivia, Palestine, Italy, Spain) - Spain and Italy have had success for centuries with community managed water and irrigation systems. These traditional systems have proven to be remarkably variable and efficient in their functional design, and well supported by local and regional governance structures (need citation from Robin Temple). This level of stability and sustainability exemplifies the merits of commons design principles for subsidiarity in decison-making, local control, exclusion of unentitled parties, and legal recognition and support from higher level authorites when needed. Bolivia, Palestine and other developing countries are working to develop such systems after failed policies with strictly private and/or government run systems. Considering the July 2010 United Nations Resolution recognizing the access to clean water and sanitation as a human right, "The Charter of Solidarity for the Access to Water" is a good step towards seeing water as a common good, where all legitimate stakeholders can particpate in deliberative democratic processes for design, improvement and management of water and sanitation services.

- <u>Transition Towns</u> (UK) - Also known as Transition Network or Transition Movement, TT is a grassroots network of communities that are working to build resilience in response to peak oil, climate destruction, and economic instability. Transition Towns are founded in part upon the principles of Permaculture, based originally on Bill Mollison's seminal *Permaculture, a Designers Manual,*1988. An essential aspect of transition in many places, is that the outer work of transition needs to be matched by inner transition. That is, in order to move down the energy descent pathways effectively, we need to rebuild our relations with our selves, with each other and with the "natural" worlds. Small working groups and group collaborations with government, business and other communities and organizations is the halmark of Transition success.

- Regional commons projects underway:

- WANA Forum Charter (West Asia, North Africa) - Building on the Forum's objectives in advancing social cohesion, improving the region's ability to recover and reconstruct in the aftermath of conflict, advocating sustainable environmental and green economy solutions, as well as its desire to mitigate against a history of imported political and economic ideologies, the WANA Social Charter lays out the vision for regional cooperation. Their Social Charter describes directives to Achieve equal opportunity as a means to help people realise their basic human needs; Foster citizenship and good governance; Create opportunities for prosperity and sustainable development; Commit to the pursuit of knowledge and wisdom in the education of future generations and investment in the region's human capital; Promote processes of inclusion that harness our diversity more effectively; Respect our human and natural environments as stewards of the Earth. The WANA Social Charter aims for collaboratively co-managing common-pool resources to secure livelihoods, working for the development, implementation and management of himas* in the region, in accordance with national laws and international treaties. *Himas are protected area systems involving the sustainable use and sharing of natural resources by and for local communities.

- Great Lakes Commons Trust (Canada and USA) - "Our Great Lakes Commons: A People's Plan to Protect the Great Lakes Forever" is intended to serve as a call to understanding and a call to action on an exciting new proposal to designate the Great Lakes and its tributary waters as a lived Commons, to be shared, protected, carefully managed and enjoyed by all who live around them. The Great Lakes Basin Commons would be protected by a legal and political framework based on a further development of the Public Trust Doctrine. Participatory input on a Great Lakes Charter is underway in communities and tribal bodies surrounding the Lakes to work towrds new forms of co-governance and co-management for these shared commons and reverse the damage, depletion and misuse of these waters that is placing the great Lakes Basin and it's residents at risk. The goal is to create a Great Lakes Commons Trust that is accountable to local comunities. A GLCT will monitor and manage the lakes sustainably, placing the health and well-being of the ecosystem and human communities first, improving and restoring the lake's biological systems and guarding against abuses and enclosures of this shared resource.

- Alaska Permanent Fund (USA) - Everyone in Alaska earns non-labor income — dividends to equity owners of Alaska's shared oil common wealth. The Alaska Permanent Fund uses revenue from state oil leases to invest in stocks, bonds and similar assets, and from those investments pays equal dividends to every resident. Since 1980, these dividends have ranged from $1,000 to $2,000 per year per person, including children (meaning that they've reached up to $8,000 per year for households of four). It's therefore no accident that, compared to other states in the USA, Alaska has the third highest median income and the second highest income equality. Similar funds for the best management of natural gas, timber, broadcast spectrum and other social and natural resources, arguably the collective wealth of the people, are being proposed in other states. Some citizens in Alaska want a portion of the Alaska Permanent Fund, worth $38 Billion in 2011, to be invested locally for renewable energy projects to prepare for when the oil runs out or becomes too ecologically damaging to use. The point being that the citizens must debate how best to use their common wealth to serve current and future generations.

- ## Global commons projects underway:

- <u>Earth Climate Commons Trust</u> - A diverse group of citizens, acting on behalf of the whole human family and all life on Earth, are working to establish an independent Earth Climate Commons Trust (ECCT). Acting on independent climate science, this global trust would set an annually reducing cap on the total amount of fossil fuels that can be introduced into the global economy and issues permits up to the amount of the cap, available for purchase by fuel companies for full market value. The proceeds of sale are paid to or applied for the benefit of all adult citizens in the world in equal shares, via a network of national and local citizen's climate trusts. Nation-state governments collaborate with the Trust by banning the introduction of the fuels into their territory without an ECCT permit. So long as not all state governments have agreed to collaborate, the ECCT limits the total number of permits issued in the same proportion as the use of fossil fuels in the countries participating bears to total global use. Delivery mechanisms of the program: the cap will be directly effective to achieve the required reductions in emissions. A network of national and local citizen's climate trusts will manage the distribution of the proceeds of sale of permits. A global climate commons charter to guide the use of these moneys, including the investment for rapid transition to renewable energy sources, will be developed by an inclusive process with a view to its adoption by the United Nations (FEASTA).

<u>Reclaiming Money Creation as a Commons</u> - The debt-based monetary system that creates unsustainable growth patterns can be eliminated, and nationally, a systematic and verifiable credit value for money can be determined to allow the creation of viable local economies and stable international trade on an equitable playing field. This would require the development of an international sustainability index administered by a Global Monetary Trust, and partnered with National Monetary Trusts around the world, to verify national sustainability rates and track the resilience of our global biosphere.

The international sustainability index would be comprised of a basket of comparable natural and social resource viability and investment indicators (for example: air and water quality indicators, forest cover, desertification rates, greenhouse gas emissions, education and healthcare indicators and investment rates, sustainable infrastructure development and maintenance etc.). Equity between countries at various levels of development would be designed into the system as the sustainability index measurements would look at the current situation in each state as a neutral starting point. From there, both the investment rates of each nation's monetary trust into systems and practices that benefit the health and well-being of human and natural communities *and* actual measurements to assess whether resource indicators are stable, improving or degrading, would determine whether the value of the credit of a country would rise or fall. Business, government and citizen interests would then be aligned with improving quality of life for communities and the maintenance of the natural systems that are needed to support national and international stability. (Global Commons Trust)

- ## Opportunities for additional Global Commons Trusts -

A commons trust is a legal entity responsible for protecting a shared asset that is inherited from past generations, or is presently being created, on behalf of current and future generations. Because it is common property — held in trust and not owned by anyone — the commons are insulated from any claims by private individuals, business, government or other trusts. Commons exist on local, national, regional and global scales and can be operate by collaborating trusts on across scales. Here we consider some ideas for global scale trusts as the global commons can

generate use or rental fees to finance multilateral programs and institutions. Such fees may be assessed on many trans-border commons, including...

- o Regional, State, Local community

- o Financial and Investor market

- o Commodity market

- o Endowment Fund Community

- o Foreign exchange transaction

- o International trade

- o International airline tickets

- o Maritime freight transport

- o Ocean fishing

- o Sea-bed mining

- o Offshore oil and gas

- o International oil trading

- o Satellite parking spaces

- o Electromagnetic spectrum use

- o Internet

- o Information flows

- o Military spending and arms exports

- o Toxic wastes

- o Energy consumption

Such global trusts would monitor the use of each commons, collect the fees and place this money in Social Cohesion Funds for those locations in the world that have been challenged by disaster, resource exploitation, war etc. Resource Restorations Funds could also be created to bring to bear the best scientific practices, technologies and management techniques to reclaim and restore various local, regional and global commons, perhaps in-part thru providing employment for those whose ecosystems have been severely degraded. This can help to prepare local people to regain healthy commons, thus transitioning them into the sustainable co-management, co-production and protection via co-governance of such commons. To assure transparent management oversight of such trusts, an option might be to monitor and report on such trusts via the Trusteeship Council at the UN. (Global Commons Trust, School of Commoning, Commons Action for the United Nations)

Appendix

Origin of Commons Sense

These notes are inspired by a group discussion addressing the question in response to the UN Secretary General's call for revolutionary thinking to find an Economic Model for survival, begun in Feb 2011 on the LinkedIn "Systems Thinking World" forum. 7000+ posts: http://lnkd.in/z4pKmD

It builds upon the intents of "Commons based economic models" submitted to the 2012 RioDialogues.org process and the various articles on the commons I have posted here.

This is a work in a collaborative collection and response mainly by Helene Finidori with Jessie Henshaw, that seeks to look at the commons and our transitioning to a more sustainable and resilient model in a systemic way. I welcome your comments and suggestions.

Out Takes

- PRINCIPLES (values & ethics)
  - Some definitions: Sustainability, resilience, thriving, abundance,
  - How the above relates to Rio principles and HR

- PRINCIPLES (systemic)
  - The commons as a whole
  - Local organization for local needs [P2P, many to many]
  - Expanding cooperation at higher levels and wider scales [subsidiarity principle]
  - A Commons Sector, alongside the Private and public sectors
  - Transition to a circular regenerative economy
  - Use finance to grow the commons.
  - Stop growing toxic and harmful practices
  - << Add a section on measuring the 'derivative' of the commons?
  - Assessments and reporting to track emerging change and impacts
  - Frameworks and platforms to support the transition [tightening connections - amplifying positive feedback]

Style Notes

1. Concepts both clear and informative, so simple even a child can understand

2. Simple language **Bold Highlight concept/headings** with unmistakably clear paragraphs expanding on a topic/feature of "the commons" approach.

3. Being prepared for inserting in a more formal document.

4. Identify result/impacts, process/means and measures/assessment methods for each if possible.

5. Master copy on HackPad, Practice of Commons Sense, Indicate inline [comments] with brackets. Retain sense of original. Enter date and nature of edits on PCS Edits, your paragraphs will be marked with your color in margin.

Create linked pads for References. Copy/Paste removed text to "Out Takes" if needed. For extensive revisions make word doc. to show all changes and circulate the file.