



Actions to Meet Challenges to Sustaining our Lives on Earth:

Contending with Cascading Catastrophes: pathways & solutions

October 1, 2024

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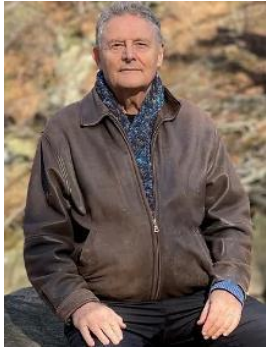
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Proceedings and Videos of past of Past Workshops are available at [Proceedings \(sustainable roundtable.org\)](https://sustainable roundtable.org)

Welcome and brief introduction to SRRR



David Berry SRRR Founder & Director. David Berry welcomed the presenters, respondents and participants to this workshop on **Contending with Cascading Catastrophes: pathways & solutions.**

The topic today addresses a question raised at the first workshop in the series by cosmologist and astronomer Sandra Faber, "Who is planning for a post collapse world?" Sandra is with us today as a respondent. Our discussions during the series considered that there is more than one impending system collapse. Rather, there is a cascade of collapses that has already begun, is growing more severe, and is increasingly taxing the resilience of the ecosystem and human economic, social, and other

systems.

David said we are fortunate to have three presenters with us today who have been thinking about these challenges for a long time, and are here to share their insights and information on pathways to resilience. To allow time for discussion, David said he would refrain from summarizing the history and activities of the Roundtable. The SRRR mission, history, and proceedings from past workshops are on the website: <https://sustainableroundtable.org>.

Understanding the Human Predicament and Finding Solutions



Molly Harriss-Olson. Molly recently facilitated the *Roundtable on the Human Future* convened online by the [Club of Rome](#) and the Council for the Human Future. As Fairtrade International Chair and then CEO of Fairtrade Australia & New Zealand, Olson guided work on standards, auditing, training and incentives for achieving radical poverty reduction.

Molly began by stressing the importance of collaborations such as this workshop and the need for brutal, honest conversations given the world's current challenges. The people doing this hard work need to be supported and this collaboration is a way to do that. She noted that we used to say - if we did not act quickly we would have major problems in ten years. We don't say that anymore. Every continent is having massive floods right now and many other crises.

By way of self-introduction, Molly said she started work as a conservation biologist and then got an economics degree. Her early work included becoming the founding Executive Director of the President's Council on Sustainable Development in 1993, and in 1996, the founding CEO of the Natural Step US. For 15 years she worked at Fairtrade where they thought they could fix commerce, end modern slavery, and align commerce with sustainable development goals. We thought that, she said, but we all know where we are today.

Molly introduced a short film presentation on the current polycrisis by Julian Cribb, prolific journalist, Co-founder of the Council for the Human Future, and Molly's co-convenor of the Roundtable on the Human Future.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=US57cV1gJZg>



Julian Cribb began the video presentation with a stark summary of the challenges we face, and over the course of 10 minutes discussed each of them and explored possible solutions.

Molly noted that all those at this meeting are familiar with the majority of what Julian discusses in the film. None of our organizations can do any of this alone, so knowing what is already happening, our real challenge is to identify ways to work together.

The 35 groups that Julian and Molly convened for the July on-line *Roundtable on the Human Future* looked at the threats and key areas of action on which the groups agreed. If we are going to implement solutions, it will be a coalition of the willing. We have no world government so actions will be voluntary in “islands of coherence”, as some people call them.

The Roundtable groups talked about governance. She supposed that we might be surprised to know that the United States is listed among the countries which have flawed governance and Australia is one of the top 3% in terms of the robustness of its governance structures. The groups talked about the value of a “People’s Assembly.” The African Union was recently added to the G20. Similarly, we need to add some voices to the United Nations besides just governments. The Earth Systems Treaty addresses such governance issues.

The United Nations is currently dealing with issues from Gaza to climate change. The UN has never had enough money to deal with the range of issues they need to address. Jeffrey Sachs famously said that his borough by New York City has a bigger budget than the U.N.

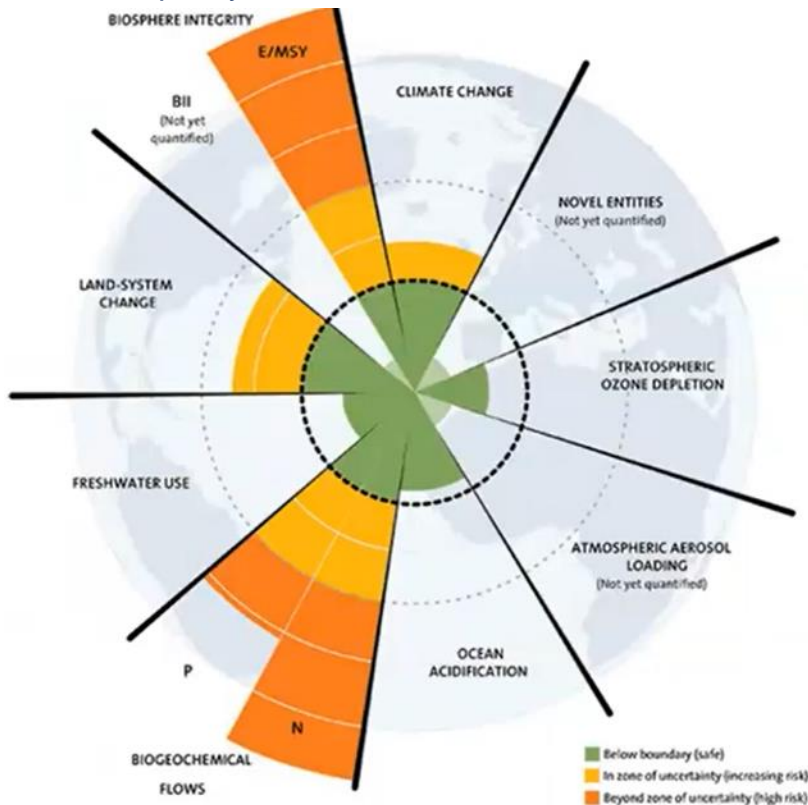
One of the areas discussed in the *Roundtable on the Human Future* was that the practical applications of the many ideas coming out of international initiatives need to be implemented locally. Molly related that our best chances are related to what we are doing in our own families and communities. We have examples of local communities that are building resilience, and she shared her excitement to hear the presentations today.

Since all solutions happen on the local level, we need to simultaneously “Think Global and Act Local” to find mechanisms to give a voice to those local communities in the global governance institutions. One idea is to expand the United

Nations to include an Earth Council of global indigenous citizens as well as the current nation states.

The Roundtable also talked about an Earth Standard currency to end the idea that we can go on infinitely creating cash to fund infinitely unsustainable burning of the Earth's resources; and ideally giving the United Nations a reasonable budget for the first time in its history.

The groups in the July Roundtable also talked about aligning economics with the planet's boundaries and sustainability limits as being examined by the Potsdam Institute. They emphasized that the most important enabler for success of the needed system changes is a shift in power and resources to address and reduce inequality.



- ▶ Safe Planetary Boundaries defined by Rockstrom, Steffen et al, 2009 and 2015.
- ▶ Measures human activity that damages key elements of the Earth's ability to sustain life
- ▶ Goal is to keep humanity within the **green zone**.
- ▶ Underpins the concept of an **Earth System Treaty**.

Molly finished by relaying that in spite of all the environmental action we have seen across the world, one of the important things for us to remember is that the indigenous population of the world is only 3 to 5 per cent. They are among the 15% of the people in the most acute poverty in the world, yet they are protecting about 80% of the biodiversity on the planet. Nobody is paying them to do this.

Ten thousand years ago there were six species of hominids on the planet and now there is only one. If we manage to survive and get through this phase of evolution and are still with the planet, it will be the hub of knowledge of indigenous peoples that gets us through and will help us continue - not the World Wildlife Fund and other large organizations.

With that Molly said we have a huge task ahead of us and that it is extremely important that we can work coherently together.

Respondent: Ron McCormick BLM

Molly, thank you, that was interesting. I had not heard of the Earth Systems Treaty. I am a complex systems ecologist and have been thinking about these things for most of my life. The presentation is very much point with regard to the issues.

The problem is that I have never seen a top-down approach that is actually going to work. So I very much like all of your statements after the film that we need to think locally and we need to think resilience, we have to have the time to rewild and to grow your own food and right now we don't have that economy.

We are going to have a temperature increase of 2 degrees C and probably an increase of 4 degrees C in the next 30 years. We are going to see our ability to do local affected by our population demand. Can you elaborate on that? I don't think it's a question you can answer but that is really what the problem is here, we don't have enough time to make those transitions and there will be a very steep collapse. So how do you hang on to your local resilience in that?

Molly Harriss-Olson: Well, I think there is a lot of wisdom in local communities. I have been working for last 5 years with local farmers in 75 countries around the world. They are amazing. A third of them are already organic. I worked to have the Bezos Foundation fund them with a little support for regenerative agriculture so they could understand those tools in addition to what they are already doing.

When I was on the President's Council on Sustainable Development we had no basic principles for sustainability, no Global Reporting Initiative or other tools. But the Natural Step developed a system to evaluate the trends. There is not one of these ten crises for which we do not know what can and should be done, and we know how to do it.

But we have a bizarre imbalance of power and resources concentrated in a small number of extremely wealthy individuals. One aspect of a potential financial collapse is that the mythical money that those people think they have might disappear.

There are some bright sparks on the horizon. The Inflation Reduction Act in the US has been duplicated in Australia. The IRA is flipping where the capital is and who is controlling the capital and it is enabling households to decide how we are generating our energy and what the outcomes will be. People will make different decisions than local governments or power companies and I think that, like FDR's New Deal, these programs are the greatest transfer of wealth I have ever seen,

Ron McCormick: Scaling is still the unknown in all that.

Molly Harriss-Olson: Scaling is still an unknown but those of us doing this are all connected and sharing information. That will support the grass roots movement.

Rhonda Kranz: We have a question from the chat: Shouldn't we be working with the Chinese and looking at how the government is successful in many ways there?

Molly Harriss-Olson: The Chinese are amazing. In this past year the Chinese have installed more solar and renewal energy in China than all solar and renewable energy capacity installed in the world in the previous year. It is phenomenal what they have done. If I buy an electric car, it will be a Chinese one.

The thing is that it's easier when you are in charge of everything. They have five year plans and they implement them. China's success is largely because they can just make people do it. We owe it to evolution and humanity to be a little more creative than that.

It is important to keep them in the tent and not beat on them to drive them out of the tent. We can work with them and learn what they are doing. Yet, I don't think we want authoritarian regimes. There is already a group including some of the seven very powerful people who control so much of the wealth of the world, who think that they should be running the world. There is a whole question about authoritarian solutions to these problems which would be quicker, but I don't think they're going to get us where we need to go. One of the biggest challenges with Global Governance is the fear of a world government. The United Nations has been stymied by this for a long time,

Regenerative Activism: Scaling Up Grassroots Efforts for the Great Transition.



Don Hall has served in a variety of capacities in the International Transition Towns Movement over the past 15 years. Most recently, Don founded Evolutionary Change. He is the author of *The Regeneration Handbook: Transform Yourself to Transform the World* (New Society Publishers, 2024)

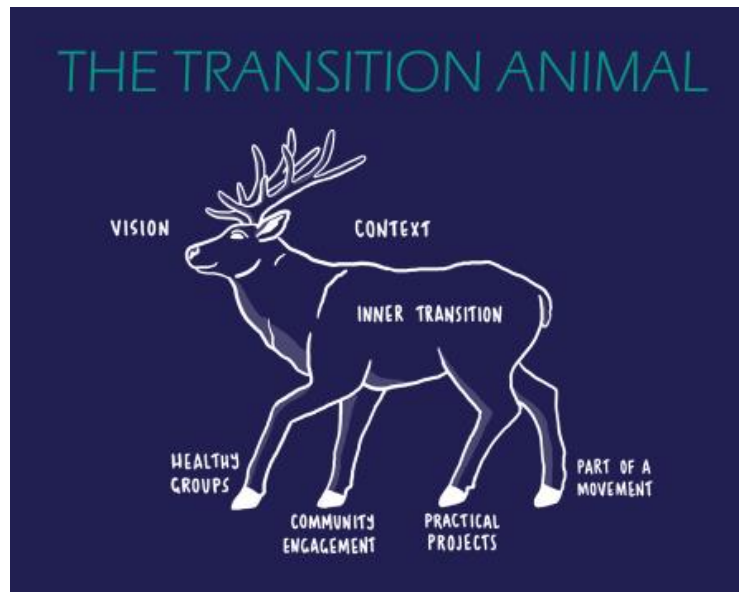
Don Hall said that he would share pieces of his bio throughout the presentation. He has been doing a lot of talking lately about big picture strategy for how do we actually win the future for sustainability, justice, and regeneration. He said he has come to the right place in participating in this workshop.

We have been speaking about cascading catastrophes. The main frame that Don uses to talk about the challenges we are up against is the exponential growth of our economies and human society crashing up against the limits to growth of our finite planet. As we know, there are many aspects to this – social, economic, environmental – and it is becoming more and more obvious to people over the last five years or so. As people wake up and see the need for a significant societal transition we have an opportunity to address complex crises like climate change. We need to take that opportunity if we are to survive.

We see a lot of climate despair. Don said he can relate to that. He has a history of activism around several issues. He worked on climate change, which is perhaps the most profound and impactful issue we face. But he became disenchanted with what he calls conventional activism: protest, direct action, seeking policy change – all things we obviously need, now more than ever. But this kind of activism by itself is not equal to the challenge we are facing.

CONVENTIONAL ACTIVISM	REGENERATIVE ACTIVISM
Single-issue	Holistic
Fights the bad	Builds the good
Seeks to reform current systems	Seeks to create systemic alternatives
Individualistic/oppositional	Collective/collaborative
Top-down	Bottom-up
Works within the dominant paradigm	Rooted in natural principles and patterns

He shared his journey while at Naropa University as he moved from conventional activism, to regenerative activism such as intentional communities, the permaculture movement, and the Transition Towns movement. These grassroots approaches focused on building resilient, localized communities. He sees the two types of activism as complementary.

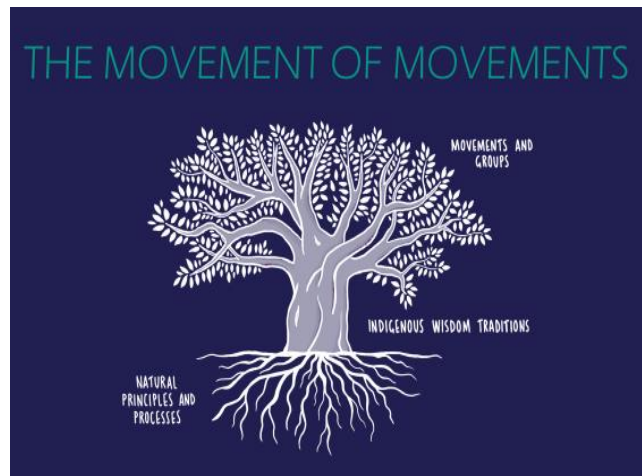
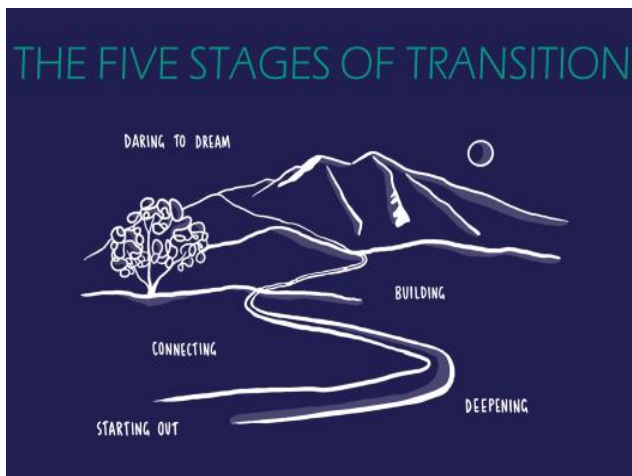


Don highlighted the movement's "Transition Animal" model with ingredients like understanding context, having a vision, focusing on inner transition, and undertaking practical projects. He described Rob Hopkins' book which outlines five stages for starting transition groups, beginning with a small founding group raising awareness and later deepening engagement through community projects.



Don discussed the success of the Suncoast Gleaning Project, which has donated over half a million pounds of local produce to food banks, and its impact on local food sourcing and distribution. He also highlighted the project's role in inspiring the creation of Eat Local Week, which brought together various partners to celebrate local food and farming. Don further mentioned the potential of transition initiatives to create community-owned renewable energy

companies, local complementary currencies, and community-led redevelopment projects. He emphasized the importance of scaling up these initiatives to create a significant impact and to demonstrate an alternative to the status quo.



Don emphasized the importance of transitioning towards a more regenerative path, emphasizing the need for a wider social and environmental justice movement. As an example of a transition



town, Don turned to Ungersheim, France where the Mayor watched an early documentary film about the transition movement. He got inspired, rallied his whole government around it and created a 21-point plan to become the first transition village in the world.

It became a Fair Trade town, banned pesticides and herbicides, and shut down a local nuclear plant. They now generate five times the amount of renewable energy that their town needs so they can export it to

other nearby communities, and they have used public lands for things like communal kitchens, ecovillages and regenerative farms. This demonstrates that when the bottom up power of the grassroots meets the top down power of the local government these kinds of things can happen.

Respondent: Sandy Wiggins, Future Tide Partners

Thank you, Don. That was beautiful and so deeply resonant. I've spent the last 30 years working for change, deeply immersed through the green building movement, and then in the local living economy movement. Much of what you're talking about feels connected to work on taking social change to scale. The idea of regenerative activism begins from the bottom and moves up. At the very bottom is the individual, and I noticed in your transition animal framework there was inner transition. That characteristic became what I am mainly working on now. I wonder how you work with inner transition.

Don Hall: As for inner transition, I think there are two main ways it shows up in the Transition Movement. One is through inner transition groups. Early on, things that got brought into the inner transition work included Joanna Macy's wonderful "Work that Reconnects" and also psychological change models from addiction recovery, for example, to understand the different stages that people go through. To make a change, positive visioning work can be done. It is also deeply embedded in the way we do things in the movement. We are keenly aware of a balance between action and reflection and we work deeply with collaborative structures.

It is also part of how we structure events. For example, if we're going to present a lot of deeply disturbing material, we don't just hand it to people and tell them to figure out what to do with it. We're always connecting the dots and giving people space to process that information and turn it into something that they use and bring forward into action.

Inner transition is an important aspect. It is not something that's necessarily spiritual or connected with any particular religious tradition. It is just acknowledging that we all have an "inner". We all have our thoughts and emotions, which turn into beliefs which shape our actions. So we have to work with that source of all our change-making in the world. There is much more that can be said about that, I think it is a very rich edge for people engaged in change-making work. There is a flow back and forth between the inner and outer. As we grow as people, our vision gets bigger and we have more capacity to help others. Our leadership becomes much more effective.

Sandy Wiggins: Thanks Don

David Berry: Very good question and very well answered. Thank you both for that contribution.

Rhonda Kranz: I live in Takoma Park Maryland and there is a wonderful group that is doing the kind of work you are talking about. They started with pollinators and food forests and have moved into education, even getting some of the council members involved. It has been lovely to watch this happen.

Don Hall: Yes, it is spreading far and wide, far beyond the transition movement with many different manifestations. Something I say to groups that I talk to is rather than try to figure out what is the best or most impactful thing to do (as if we could even calculate that) is to look within and say, "What inspires me the most and makes me come alive around this? There are a thousand things that need to be done and one of the great gifts of human diversity is that we are drawn to different things. I think that if we all do our part, driven by a deep sense of purpose, we become smarter, stronger, more creative and more motivated to go the extra mile. Find that thing that lights you up. One person can't do it all, we have to let a thousand flowers bloom.

David Berry: Thanks again, Don. I was also happy to see the inner work label on your Transition Animal framework. Session Seven of this series will be on that topic. Sandy Wiggins has agreed to be a presenter at that session. Everyone participating in this workshop is an individual and already seeing the news of flooding in Asheville, Europe and Africa, fires in forests around the world, and wars in the Middle East, Ukraine, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sudan, Syria, and many more, even if we are not directly involved. We need to ask ourselves, how will we be able to sustain our wellbeing and the capacities to contribute you spoke of so well, Don, if we witness food systems collapse overseas or at home, or the rise of authoritarian governments overseas or at home. It will not be easy to experience that, so we need to find the inner resources and ways and means to keep regenerating in the face of present and future challenges.

Archipelago Green -- Connected City Villages Model



Alexandra Sokol has focused her extensive range of expertise on creating a more sustainable urban future – specializing in X-Risk research and mitigation, sustainable resilient cities solutions & neighborhoods, climate impact adaptation, urban anthropology, CEA farming, food and water security. Her expertise is in Whole Systems Thinking, Urban Sustainability & Resilience, and Climate Impact Adaptation.

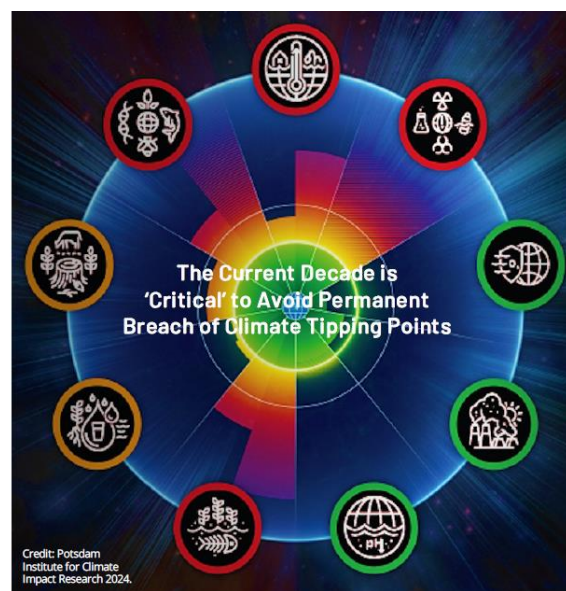
Alexandra related that she has been steeped in this field a very long time. Her father was an ecological, political, and human rights journalist and activist. Alexandra met ecological and social thought leaders growing up and studied with numerous others. She became an environmental anthropologist and has worked in water resilience, CEA farming, whole system solutions and most recently disaster resilience, mitigation and X Risk research,

Boundaries Crossed

HUMANITY IS IN THE EXISTENTIAL DANGER ZONE!

We have already crossed 6 of the 9 Planetary Boundaries:

- BIOGEOCHEMICAL FLOWS
- FRESHWATER CHANGE
- LAND-SYSTEM CHANGE
- BIOSPHERE INTEGRITY
- CLIMATE CHANGE
- NOVEL ENTITIES



Alexandra stressed that our societies have crossed several of the Global Planetary boundaries.

From Disaster to Resilience

01

X-Risk

What the future holds from Cascading Climate Effect

02

Concepts & Design of the Connected City Villages Model for Resilience

Sanctuary Cities

03

The Climate Migration Challenges Cities Will Face and Adaptation Needs

Tipping Positive

04

Leaning into Solutions and What Our World Could Look Like if We Recalibrate



Archipelago Green

Alexandra pointed to several past civilizations that disappeared or declined as a result of major climate changes and its cascading events. Some cultures survived those periods so in her research she looked for the commonality of those civilizations. The populations tended to be smaller and so migration was a way we were able to survive. Unfortunately, migration is not so easy anymore. Other factors were adaptation and innovation, strong leadership and good decisions, and cultural evolution. There is much more that can be said about the details of climate migration and the impacts that will have on how the future is shaped.



Migration

In the past people impacted by climate had the potential for migration. With fewer people on the planet the ability to flee from floods and fires, to migrate to greener environments with more stable food sources gave humans an advantage.



Adaptation & Innovation

Another skill that helped humans survive was our ability to adapt to our surroundings through innovations in toolmaking / technology, building advancement, intentional planning and communication.



Strong Leadership & Good Decisions

Those cultures that survives have also been shown to have had much stronger and wiser leadership that was focused on the people and community, rather than on self-centered rule.

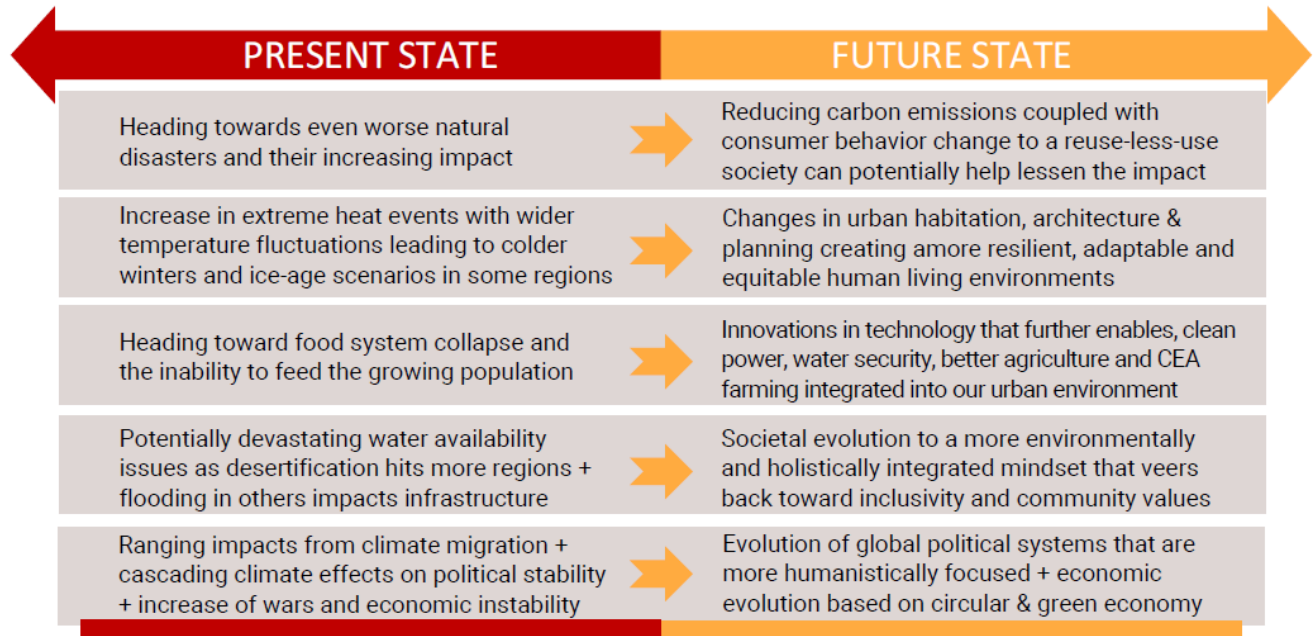


Community & Cultural Evolution

Another commonality among cultures that survived historically was a stronger sense of community and for the common good. And the ability to evolve a more inclusive environmentally integrated culture.

Alexandra asked, “What if we do get it right instead?” We need to change our mindset and the ways in which inhabit the Earth. Human action is critical to any climate action ahead. That includes recycling, reuse, alternative energy sources, and the concept of micro-gridding everything (including food, communications and other necessities...not just energy).

NOW VS FUTURE IF WE MAKE A POSITIVE PIVOT



Alexandra introduced her concept of 'Archipelago Green' and 'Connected City Villages', inspired by urban planning in Los Angeles and Barcelona's Superblocks Plan, and expressed optimism about these sustainable urban planning initiatives.

She showed images and spoke of several excellent examples of cities greening and transforming areas in the direction of resilience. These include Santana Row in San Jose CA, 5th & Broadway in Nashville TN, East Village in San Diego CA, and a Floating Eco-community in Amsterdam.



The Urban Archipelago

Envirodynamic City-Villages as a Model for a Resilient Future

There is already an interesting evolution in process in many of our cities through the architecture and planning profession in response to both a cry for more housing and the need for sustainability and resilience.

Alexandra also touched on climate migration and its potential impact on cities, hinting at ongoing work with colleagues on creating welcoming sanctuary cities. She emphasized the need for adaptation, innovation, a change in mindset towards more sustainable practices, and a critical need for localized resilience hubs as part of the sustainable design.

Turning to Micro-Gridding, she spoke about the possibilities for localized energy, localized food systems, and localized water. She closed with a summary of what needs to be done to create more positive outcomes for cities.

Infrastructure

- ▶ Creating a city-wide plan for creating and scaling the Archipelago design
- ▶ City's adopting a microgrid agenda for energy, food, water & energy systems
- ▶ Creation of a microgrid alternative energy system within the city that would roll out to the planned communities
- ▶ Taking existing city-villages and adding in the missing food-water-energy microgrid system
- ▶ Implementing CEA Farming, Community Green Spaces and water catchment systems
- ▶ Resilience Hubs created in each community and with emergency supplies as an integrated part of the community safety plan
- ▶ Both localized & centralized communications infrastructure with strong energy back-up systems



Socio-Economic

- ▶ Restructuring political agendas & policies that foster change
- ▶ New Leadership Models
- ▶ The creation of Community Development & Holistic Governing Groups
- ▶ The creation of new economic systems that are environmentally and socially focused
- ▶ New remote and localized work/ job models

****Please Note, this is a short version of the Presentation minus sections 3 and 4.
For more information, please contact alexandra@evdxglobal.com**

Respondent: Sandra Faber UC Santa Cruz, and Q & A

Hi Alexandra. All I can say is, I would like to live in one of your cities. There are several threads connecting us including that my husband was the local land use attorney for Santana Row. I have a million questions and I'm trying to wrap up a few thoughts in one question. I am an astronomer and that means I am quantitative. I think numbers. My question to you is "how many people are living on the planet Earth in cities that are constructed as you envision. Don't answer that yet because I suspect that you haven't been able to carry your investigations quite that far – maybe you will surprise me by saying something different – but, assuming that's true, my second question is, "As a member of a university faculty, what could universities be doing, how could they restructure research in their multiple environmental studies departments etc. and what

could they do to be helpful to you research-wise, to realize these wonderful visions you have presented?

Alexandra Sokol: With whole systems strategies, we have the frameworks. But the second question is easier to answer than the first one. Thinking about the first question sometimes makes me sad because in all honesty, with everything I have studied, we will lose lives. I don't think with the population as large as it is, if we were to tip into cascading effects, looking at the disasters we have already experienced, we know that lives will be lost. I am an optimist, however, and I like to think that we will evolve.

As far as what universities can do, I see good groundwork and sharing of research by the Cambridge and Stanford existential risk groups. Other x-risk groups are working with indigenous people and looking at old tribal ways of creating communities because I think we need to go back to that. I think we need to empower and excite the next generation, because I think all education is extremely important and we are not reaching little kids and high schools with solutions or action.

I think universities are at the leading edge and as educators, you hold the key to igniting action which is what we need more than anything else. We need to quit just talking and begin action. We have the frameworks, let's implement them. One of the things I have said to cities is "you guys paid half a million dollars for your 2030 plan or your 2050 plan but no one actually created an implementation plan". Human beings have a history of band-aiding things. We wait until the final moment and we either try a quick fix to the problem or we drown in the hurricane. I used to work in technology and when I moved into this work, I suggested that we need to transition out of ROI as the main thing we hang our hats on for investments,

I think the next generations are the ones who need to step up to the plate and help make it happen. And Universities can foster that in the environment.

Sandra Faber: Great. Thank you.

Molly Harriss-Olson: I have one thing I would like to add and that is that there are eight cities in the world that have already achieved their net zero targets, one of which is Canberra, Australia. Those eight cities are a great place to start because with what they have already achieved so far in advance, you can bet that Alexandra's wonderful inspiring ideas are all across their agendas.

Alexandra Sokol: We do have solutions for cities coming from China and other Asian countries, such as controlled environment agriculture (CEA) being implemented, and as Don said we are seeing community energy solutions. The thing we are not doing and need to change more than anything else, especially in the Western world, is our over-consumerism. Is bigger really better? It's not. We have to shift the mindset. We don't need 7000 square foot houses to live in for four people. I was working with the City of New Orleans on a project to use waste plastic and a 3D printer to make long lasting public furniture while also contributing to workforce development and education. There are a lot of solutions out there. Having the whole systems blueprint and the action plan to implement the solutions locally in a village style approach is the way to get from point A to point B.

Open Discussion: Presenters share comments, interact with each other, and take questions from the chat.

David Berry: We can move into open discussion now. Before we go to participant questions from the chat, do any speakers or respondents want to ask a question of any of the presenters.

Alexandra Sokol: I have a quick question for Molly. When I was about 19 years old, I asked my parents why the United Nations did not have more power and would a more collaborative world government be able to solve the problems faster and how do we get there?

Molly Harriss-Olson: You have seen the dysfunction of the UN and it is really depressing at the moment to see how despairing General Secretary Guterres is. It is a budgetary problem and also a trust problem. When you have big players like the US throwing their weight around and can do their own thing and withdraw funding it is very difficult.

In reflection I love the fact that your work Alexandra, and also Don's work connects in a beautiful and deep way. I think scaling is a really big challenge and somehow having the capacity to connect the pieces once they are scaled is like a chaotic organizational problem. Governance is a big problem here. I remember back in the 90's there was an international group of local governments, and I think it might have been the mayors. They were an amazing little hub of activities on climate change.

Alexandra Sokol: Don, I was wondering if you should connect with Bloomberg and the Conference of Mayors to engage them in the transition. That could be a way to exponentially move this to a larger scale.

Marianna Grossman: I hate being in a negative frame of mind, but I think that business and the strength of storms and disasters can overpower these beautiful visions. My daughter just evacuated from Asheville North Carolina. It would be great if they could build back more resilient and you need to have plans in place ahead of time before you can do that and the insurance companies and industrial groups need to understand how to do that. Some shareholder-owned companies where the thinking is only quarter to quarter are similar to selfish cancer cells. The conversation ended with a recognition of the need to navigate the tension between a more communitarian approach and the forces of capitalistic financialization.

Alexandra Sokol: I can only emphasize the need for a shift in building practices, particularly in areas prone to natural disasters, and the importance of understanding the mindset, motivation, and language of various power centers. We need to get much more aware of the local disaster scenarios. Climate is only going to get worse. I've got family living in Sarasota Florida and I tell them that there will be more and more Cat 4 and 5 hurricanes. Since we have the Infrastructure Bill and we are going to rebuild so much infrastructure, we should be building more resilient infrastructures. Builders say it costs more, but it can be demonstrated that it actually can cost less to build resilience, especially if you factor in the cost of disaster impacts over time. We can't afford to keep building in the same old ways and in many cases, in the same places now in harm's way.

David Berry: This kind of bridging is very important to understand the mindset, motivation, incentives, and the language of the various power centers. It may be that some situations are hopeless. Alexandra, I think you're right, we are going to witness damage happening. Let us intend that the experience of Asheville be a meaningful example and that it not be in vain. It can be seen as a lesson that can be learned by all the other valleys.

I'm curious, Don, do you have a comment or question for any other speaker?

Don Hall: I have been thinking about how this is all going to work. It is mind bogglingly complex but I don't think that the model of predict and control works in our current context. This is going to be an emergent process - which doesn't mean we shouldn't have lots of conversations like this and see as clearly as we possibly can and think about how this all might come together and where the leverage points are. I think it's going to be messy for quite a long while.

We have to think really big here. Life in this universe is incredibly precious. This Earth is incredibly precious. I think that no matter what happens, humanity is not going to go extinct anytime soon. We've been through major cataclysms and multiple ice ages before and we will survive. But what kind of seeds are we sowing now for a future sustainable regenerative culture. I don't think I will live to see that.

Still, I think we can all do something now that enables that to come to fruition, maybe in seven generations or even 500 years in the future. I am reminded of a quote by David Fleming, a renegade economist. "Localisation stands, at best, at the limits of practical possibility, but it has the decisive argument in its favour that there will be no alternative."

I've really enjoyed this conversation.

David Berry: Thank you for that comment and quote. I had a feeling that there was something there waiting to be said.

I am very grateful for what has happened here today. This conversation has been very fruitful with a lot of potential collaboration of cheering each other on, collaboration of information sharing and possibilities for collaboration on projects. I'm also thinking of people that have been on previous calls who would love to talk to other people here. I look forward to sharing the proceedings and the video with them.