THRIVING COMMUNITIES
A Sustainable Road to Global Resilience

UNITED NATIONS TALANOA REPORT   **October 2018**

CONTEXT

The Talanoa Dialogue was introduced to the United Nations (UN) as an effective consensus practice by Fiji during the 2017 COP23 climate meetings. The Dialogue uses a simple yet powerful set of questions:

Where are we? Where do we want to go? How do we get there?

In 2018, non-UN organizations are invited to submit Talanoa Reports to UN Ambassadors & staff, Stakeholders & non-Stakeholders, Major Groups, and subsidiaries & agencies.   Reports compiled in April and October will be analyzed (see April overview HERE) and reported to all assembled at COP24 in Poland December 2018. Talanoa Reports and the UN Sustainable Development Goals are becoming widely used as climate action guides in various arenas such as college curriculums and city & county planning.

Thriving Resilient Communities Collaboratory (TRCC) is pleased to contribute this report based on our network members' work and on our collaborations such as strategy dialogues, mapping, and democratic funding. The report is written for a **broader local-global audience to support the whole systems approaches and collaborative partnerships needed at every scale** to keep climate warming below the 1.5℃/2.7℉ target set by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).

INSPIRATION

The alarming 2018 IPCC Special Report was released as we at TRCC were writing this Talanoa Report. We are sad and scared, as we imagine you are. We are even more committed to bold climate action, as we trust you are. As Rebecca Solnit says, the climate fight is only over if we think it is.   Our children are counting on us to wake up, connect up, and step up.

We offer our gratitude and commitment to step up with the **millions** of people and organizations building thriving resilient lives and communities on this beautiful blue-green earth we call home.

We share Joanna Macy's moving inspiration about our Great Turning to a life-sustaining society.

> *"To choose life in this planet-time is a mighty adventure . . . that elicits more courage and enlivening solidarity than any military campaign. From high school students restoring streams for salmon spawning, to inner city neighbors creating community gardens on vacant lots, from forest activists sitting in trees …. to delay logging until environmental impact studies are done, to windmill engineers bringing their technology to energy-hungry regions—countless groups are organizing, learning, taking action. This multi-faceted human activity on behalf of life may not make today's headlines or newscasts, but to our progeny it will matter more than anything else we do."* (1998, p. 16)

TALANOA REPORT SUMMARY

Thriving Resilient Communities Collaboratory (TRCC) is a U.S.-based network of regional and national leaders helping communities to become more thriving and resilient. This report synthesizes the systemic collaborative response to climate change practiced by TRCC member organizations.

Resilience is a one-word label for sustainability, thriving, justice, peace, wisdom, health, security, and other whole community visions. Resilient communities grow and recover from problems, like climate change and natural disasters, to be stronger than they were before. A *resilient humanity* lives in balance with the earth so that we, our great-great-grandchildren, and all species can thrive.

Climate change is a highly systemic issue that demands unprecedented collaboration at all scales: local, regional, national, and global. TRCC's commitment to solving the climate crisis is *building community resilience through partnerships sharing respect, wisdom, tools, and funds with compassion & collaboration.*

1. Where are we?   *Growing Thriving Grassroots*
Global resilience grows from healthy, equitable, and sustainable grassroots in local communities. TRCC network members strengthen community resilience in food, water, energy, climate, justice, economy, policy, and more. Click HERE to see our network directory and HERE to see our five-minute video.

2. Where are we going?   *Global Resilience*
Resilience is the ability of a healthy living system (like a community) to absorb disturbance and keep functioning. Common elements among TRCC members' resilience theories include whole systems approach, culture shift, social justice, local living economies, and collaboration. Click HERE to see our theory showcase. Grounded in integral systems theory, these are process rules for systemic climate action.
1. ***Think Globally, Act Locally, Collaborate Regionally.*** *Local IS global when it's connected.*
2. ***Whole Community Approach.*** *Whole approaches balance cultural change with technical solutions.*
3. ***Networks, Networks, Networks.*** *The heart of resilience is connecting compassionate people in action.*

3. How do we get there?   *Public-private-people partnerships*
Reaching resilience requires public-private-people partnerships (4P). The experience and talents of diverse stakeholders are needed to solve complex adaptive system issues. Social sector grassroots partners with community wisdom and power are the missing link.

These design rules are strategies of change that interconnect across geographic scales.
1. ***Multi-stakeholder Councils*** *peer leader circles*
2. ***Action Learning Communities*** *multi-stakeholder leader networks*
3. ***Action Networks*** *multi-stakeholder leader and public grassroots networks*

Key needs are:
➢ **Commitment & Funding** - leadership and support for partnership hubs, tools, & joint projects
➢ **Tools** - accessible tools to think and act together at scale as community residents and leaders
➢ **Inclusion with power** - grassroots representation in public & private decisions and resource allocation

Talanoa Question 1: WHERE ARE WE?

NEVER BEFORE. Never before in human history has **anyone** had to act on behalf of **everyone** on earth in this time-critical way. The 2018 IPCC Special Report warns that we must **peak greenhouse gas emissions by 2020.** This means we have to raise our awareness and change our behavior extraordinarily fast. We humans have to develop the thoughtful behavior of astronauts who have seen earth from space and indigenous peoples who have successfully cared for mother earth for many generations. These communities take care of precious natural resources knowing their lives depend on it. How do we all become *wise indigenous earth astronauts?*

NO MAGIC. There is no single magic solution for climate change. Billions of us and our institutions must change our eating, energy, travel, laws, production, spending, and more. **And yet, there are solutions NOW** that can work. Sustainability means keeping fossil fuels in the ground, regenerating agriculture and restoring soil vitality, a distributed renewable energy infrastructure, ending extreme poverty and hunger, legal rights of nature, re-localization to bioregional production and exchange, and more. These solutions need **massive culture and behavior shift** to succeed. All of us need to take action as *bold indigenous earth astronauts*.

RESILIENCE A sustainable road to global resilience is known by many names such as *Drawdown* (ed. Hawken), *Just Transition* (Movement Generation), and *Sustainable Development Goals* (United Nations). Movements within this broad social shift share similar visions but use different strategies and language such as Compassionate, Healthy, Just, Livable, Local, Peace, Resilient, Sustainable, Thriving, and Transition.

All these movements come to ground in a common set of local *eco-social* (social and environmental) systems: food, water, air, land, biodiversity, energy, emergency response, buildings, health, education, welfare, government, business, economy, communications, etc. These local systems are interdependent with larger-scale systems in agriculture, water and land management, industrial production, transit, etc.

WHOLE COMMUNITIES The complex interdependence of eco-social systems requires a whole-systems approach to challenges. A whole-systems approach is scientific language that simply means looking at life as systems, which are groups of related parts that move or work together as a whole. Scientists are discovering

how essential a systemic approach is as they learn more about how interconnected life really is. Here's TRCC's sophisticated complicated approach to how we build whole communities to tackle climate change today:

Love -> Community Connections   -> Compassion & Collaboration   -> Resilience

It sounds so simple. How can community connections be a winning strategy for climate action? What about carbon sequestration, holistic land management, solar farms, zero waste, and so on? Sadly, these solutions will fail unless there are enough of us with enough power to make them happen. So far, these solutions aren't winning the 1.5°C fight because **enough people aren't acting together for the common good**.

GLOBAL ETHICS OF INTERBEING The root of our eco-social dysfunction is the illusion of "the other:" the mistaken belief that we are independent creatures on a planet that is separate from us. Our human collective consciousness is still maturing into awareness of our interdependence: what Zen master Thich Nhat Hanh calls our **interbeing**. Nhat Hanh's work, Pope Francis' Laudato Si encyclical, Earth Charter, Charter for Compassion, and UN SDGs demonstrate global ethics of interbeing summarized here as compassion and collaboration.

Compassion is a one-word label for values of treating others as we want to be treated: love, respect, caring, fairness, justice, and so on. Enough of us have to recognize inside ourselves that "the other" is inextricably part of us and that hurting "them" hurts us. Then compassion leads to collaboration.

Collaboration is a one-word label for group connections in many forms. *Cooperation* is helping someone else do their work. *Partnering* is fitting your work together. *Co-creation* is creating new synergistic work that doesn't exist yet. Collaboration means connecting with people who seem different, getting to know them, and working together. It can look like people of all colors building neighborhood food and energy systems, scientists and citizens teaming up to design participatory decision-making tools, politicians of all parties partnering to pass renewable energy policy, women and men ending sexual violence, and funders making decisions with fundees at the table. ***Frontline*** low-income communities and communities of color where people often have more eco-social troubles are already further down the road to resilience. They have critical wisdom about how to thrive in healthy communities with less money and material stuff. Since we are all interconnected, there are no throw-away people or places, because there is no such thing as "away."

A time of many emotions...
Fear Hope Love
Pain Joy
Frustration
Anger Excitement
Rage Inspiration
Overwhelm Grief
Numbness Sadness
Despair

Eco-social diseases turn around and eventually bite us all whether we realize it yet or not. Harm just causes more harm in a vicious cycle. Power-over harm of "others" in the forms of violence, colonialism, or materialism come from the same eco-social heart disease of separation. When a social group that has been oppressed comes into power, often they unconsciously become oppressors harming those who harmed them. We humans can't afford more stolen, abused, traumatized, or oppressed generations that harm the next. We need a leap of heart and faith beyond the place of right and wrong to the place of healing and peace.

NOW OR NEVER Climate change is telling humanity that it's now or never. We need to keep compassion and respect at the heart of whatever we do so the cycle of human violence ends with us. The root of connection is our heart. Therefore, the solution to climate change lies in our own hearts. That's the good news. The bad news is that until more people wake up and act as parts of a global interbeing, we will continue to blindly cause harm to ourselves, each other, and the earth. In systems thinker Margaret Wheatley's words, "…to make a system healthier, we need to **connect it to more of itself."** Connected communities at all scales develop the compassionate collaborative relationships necessary to shift culture and behavior to resilience.

WHERE IS TRCC TODAY?

TRCC is a U.S.-based leader network of resilience hubs and experts working on culture and behavior shift from local to global scale. Complex issues like climate and poverty require *whole community* systemic approaches to resilience. Our members strengthen community resilience in the face of climate, economic, justice, conflict, and other challenges.

TRCC members practice working together across scale, across issues, and across organizations. Click HERE to see a current interactive version of our network map of members' missions, stories, and assets. Watch our five-minute video story HERE.
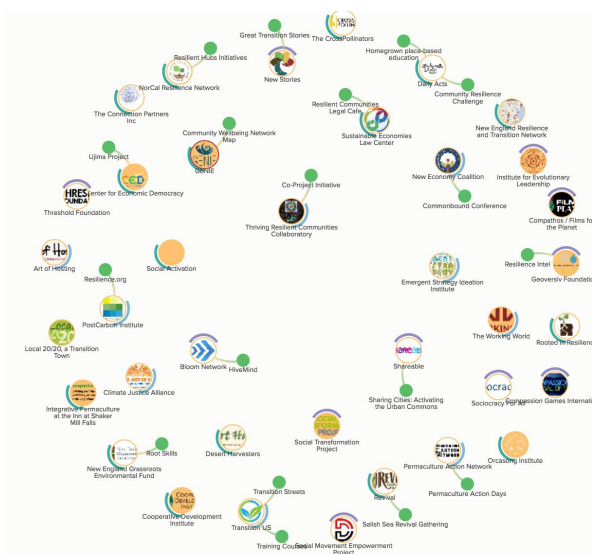
Multi-scale: Resilience grows from the grassroots in local communities. The grassroots is really the **community heart** of society. It is the **organized power of local community members** to determine their common values and address their common needs. TRCC members are *grasstops* leaders who have both grassroots influence in the streets and institutional access in local government, regional boards, state and national legislatures, and the UN. Our impact is anchored in the wisdom and power of people.

Multi-issue: TRCC enables multi-stakeholder allies to find common ground amongst their many different and necessary approaches to build local resilience systems. Our common ground is based in inclusion and justice. **Inclusion** takes us straight to root causes, bringing the diverse experience to allow us to recognize and address core issues which often lie in abuse of power: economic, sexual, race, etc. **Justice** is a key center of gravity in the climate movement, uniting all communities to move away from extractive systems of production, consumption and political oppression, and towards resilient, regenerative and equitable economies.

Multi-organization: TRCC practices working together as **peers** with sometimes conflicting voices. We have tensions between organizations leading more radical challenges to existing systems (often frontline or political activists), and organizations working within existing systems to meet people where they are and then move forward (often mainstream experts or service providers). We are carefully modelling at small scales how to collaborate like a salad with different flavors and textures living well in the same bowl, instead of like a melting pot that homogenizes to the consistency of those with political or financial clout. Although we disagree in some areas, we find common ground on projects, research, and funding.

TRCC CASE STUDIES AND INDICATORS

The following case studies showcase members' whole-community work across the U.S. Each case study lists key people and planet impact indicators (signified by "•") applicable at our public grassroots scale: _Ecosystems_, _Policy_, _Economy_, and _Engagement_. _Partner_ and _Communications_ indicators are aggregated across the TRCC network. We welcome partners to help us correlate grassroots indicators to the SDGs.

Regional Network Hubs run resilience public grassroots programs and work with many partners within their regions. They often serve as experts and develop networks, tools, and/or media beyond their region.

Daily Acts (San Francisco Bay Area) catalyzes culture transformation through action, education and alliances on food, water, soil, energy, waste, disaster recovery, local and state water policy, and community building.
- _Ecosystems: 30 Community Gardens, 500 landscape transformations, 25,000,000 gallons water saved_
- _Engagement: 57,542 people engaged & educated, 79,265 actions in Community Resilience Challenge_

New England Grassroots Environment Fund (New England) uses stories, tools and dollars to fuel local activism and social change. They host a national RootSkills Training Series and Conference.
- _Economy & Engagement: funded over 2,000 projects in over 60% of New England cities and towns_

Multi-Region Network Hubs are resilience grassroots networks across regions. They often act as experts.

Compassion Games fosters creativity to develop empathy into action around the globe.
- _Engagement: 15,000,000+ people served_

Movement Generation offers trainings and movement-building models while co-leading the Climate Justice Alliance of over fifty frontline organizations taking on the extreme energy economy.
- _Ecosystems: multiple land sites in 8 states & Puerto Rico eg. Black Mesa Water Coalition_

Permaculture Action Network connects educators, community organizers, grassroots projects, and performance artists through Permaculture Action Days and educational events.
- _Ecosystems: 85 projects - public food forests, urban farms, low-income housing, etc._
- _Engagement: 12,000 people in 62 cities in 25 states_

Shareable engages sharing activists in over 40 cities and hosts a website of 500,000 annual users.
- _Policy: Co-produced the first Sharing Economy Policy Guide and published 65 model policies that are already in use in multiple cities in their book Sharing Cities: Activating the Urban Commons_

Transition US provides social and technical support for 163 official local and regional initiatives plus 200+ in-progress. They organize Transition and collaboration trainings and offer toolkits like Transition Streets.
- _Engagement: 13,441 in their 418 trainings, 30% were 2 day-intensives, over 60,000 viewed recording_
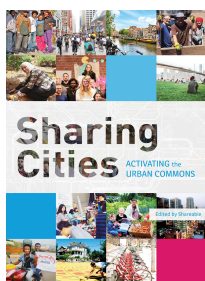
People & Planet Technology Experts provide technical support and expertise. *People* technology experts develop art and music, media and stories, participatory gathering methods and forums, people-skills trainings, etc. *Planet* technology experts develop physical systems for production, finance, transport, earth-skills trainings, etc. Experts often host or partner with grassroots hubs.

Center for Economic Democracy grows capacity in our communities to transform American capitalism into a more just, sustainable and democratic economy. CED incubates the Boston Ujima Project, a community controlled business & finance ecosystem and the Solidarity Economy Initiative with a funder partner network.
- *Economy: $200k of local grants made through participatory process*

Institute for Evolutionary Leadership develops leaders who effectively redesign worldviews, cultures, and institutions for a better world through programs such as Evolutionary Leadership Intensive, Gooddler Social Innovation Youth Incubator, Collaboration Incubator, and Evolutionary Future Challenge.

Sustainable Economies Law Center provides legal tools so communities can develop their own sustainable sources of food, housing, energy, jobs, and other vital aspects of a thriving community. Tools include Resilient Communities Legal Cafe, Food & Farm, Community Renewable Energy Cooperative, and Policy Advocacy.
- *Policy: Directly helped write and pass 12+ state and local laws; supported or influenced dozens more*
- *Engagement: Over 10,000 workshop participants, over 800 Legal Cafe Clients*

Shareable, PostCarbon Institute, New Stories, and Transition US are partnering multi-region hubs with experts to publish Disaster Collectivism stories of how communities have responded to environmental crises to take care of each other's needs regardless of government response.

The Working World anchors the Peer Network, a cooperatively managed set of loan funds investing in strategic frontline communities, like those led by Climate Justice Alliance.
- *Economy: 98% repayment rate on $5 million in cooperative investments, all from profits*

TRCC hosts an annual democratic funding Co-Project Initiative. TRCC leaders and funders nominate grants based on movement strategy dialogues. A Council of majority TRCC leaders and minority funders review proposals as peers. The top co-projects are funded by the Threshold Foundation and other aligned funders.
- *Economy: $1,000,000+ grasstops projects funded over seven years*

TRCC Network: Aggregated Partners and Communications

Active Partner Organizations
- about a third have 50+ partners, more than a third have 20-50, the rest have 10+
- Some member networks have 100+ member eg. New Economy Coalition 213, TransitionUS 163

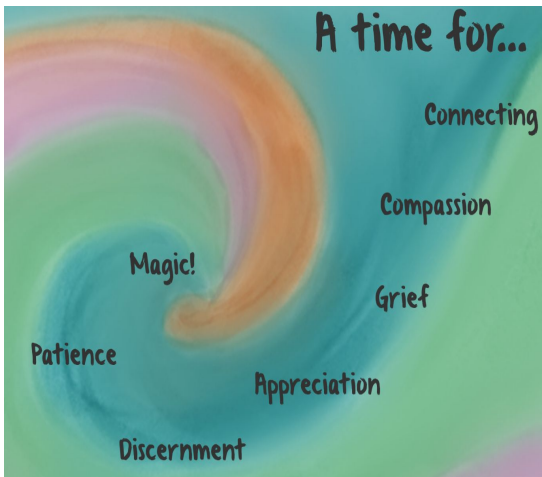**Communications**

Websites: over 175,000 unique visitors per month   *Enewsletters:* over 120,000 readers
Films: over 150,000 viewers   *Facebook*: over 150,000 *likes*

Talanoa Question 2: WHERE DO WE WANT TO GO?

Resilience is a word that's commonly-used across disciplines to describe a healthily interconnected world. Resilience is a fundamental characteristic of a healthy living system. In *Six Foundations for Building Community Resilience*, PostCarbon Institute defines resilience as **the ability of a system (like a community) to absorb disturbance and still retain basic function and structure.** Learning what makes a system resilient tells us how community systems can adapt and thrive in changing conditions instead of collapsing during a shock. In Resilience Thinking, Transition Movement founder Rob Hopkins says that community resilience depends on:

A time for...
Connecting
Compassion
Magic!
Grief
Patience
Appreciation
Discernment

➔ **DIVERSITY:** a broader base of livelihoods, land use, enterprise and energy systems than we have today
➔ **MODULARITY:** not advocating self-sufficiency, but rather an increased self-reliance; with 'surge protectors' for the local economy, such as local food production and decentralised energy systems
➔ **TIGHTNESS OF FEEDBACKS:** bring the results of our actions closer to home, so that we cannot ignore them

Pathways to Resilience Dialogues (P2R)'s view of resilience connects people, environment, and economy:
Resilience = Climate Change Mitigation + Adaptation + Deep Democracy

Mitigation means stopping the harm by lowering greenhouse gas emissions. **Adaptation** refers to adjustments in ecological, social, or economic systems to lower the risks of climatic changes. **Deep Democracy** means that those most affected by decisions make those decisions because they live with the consequences. From a climate perspective, that means that deep democracy is led by the *frontline* low-income communities and communities of color who end up with the oil refineries, coal mining, waste incinerators, etc. in their backyards. P2R's vision of climate resilience is not about "bouncing back." Instead, it is about "bouncing forward" to eradicate the inequities and unsustainable resource use at the heart of climate crisis.

THE UNKNOWN AHEAD Most of us don't have much of a clue what a resilient society would really look like. What will our towns or cities look like in 10 years as we cut emissions say 10% a year and shift food production to say 50% within 100 miles? Will we end up happier and healthier, or in a Mad Max world? How will we cope with extreme weather, sea level rise, and other disasters? As systems thinker Bob Stilger says, "*how do we step into a future we can no longer see?*" We need better visions of life in a resilient world that are so exciting that we can't wait to do what it takes to get there. Then we need to get moving and navigate through the twists and turns and roadblocks along the way.

A time when others who have long considered themselves "futurists" and strategic planners are now asking...

... how do we step into a future we can no longer see?

The past was obliterated, the present chaotic and the future cocooned. I stepped forward with different colleagues to organize spaces for dialogue, discovery, innovation and co-created action in the disaster area and all over Japan.

~ Bob Stilger

Theories of Change

Climate change is a highly complex systemic issue that we can influence but not control. We have to take steps, see how they work, and take the next steps. Complexity scientists (eg. brown, Meadows, Scharmer) tell us that resilience is an emergent journey, not a destination. We need systemic theories to guide our way.

TRCC members have published various theories of change. Common themes include whole systems approach, social justice, culture shift, local living economies, and collaboration. Click HERE to see our theory showcase.

Theory Case Study: Just Transition Framework

TRCC member Movement Generation developed the **Just Transition** theory of change in *From Banks and Tanks to Cooperation and Sharing--A Strategic Framework for a Just Transition*:

Just Transition is a framework for a fair shift to an economy that is ecologically sustainable, equitable and just for all its members. After centuries of global plunder, the profit-driven, growth-dependent, industrial economy is severely undermining the life support systems of the planet. An economy based on extracting from a finite system faster than the capacity of the system to regenerate will eventually come to an end—either through collapse or through our intentional re-organization. **Transition is inevitable. Justice is not...**

A Just Transition requires us to build a visionary economy for life in a way that is very different than the economy we are in now. Constructing a visionary economy for life calls for strategies that democratize, decentralize and diversify economic activity while we damper down consumption, and (re)distribute resources and power. Just Transition initiatives shift the economy from dirty energy to energy democracy, from funding highways to expanding public transit, from incinerators and landfills to zero waste, from industrial food systems to food sovereignty, from gentrification to community land rights, and from rampant destructive development to ecosystem restoration. **Core to a Just Transition is deep democracy in which workers & communities have control over the decisions that affect their daily lives.**
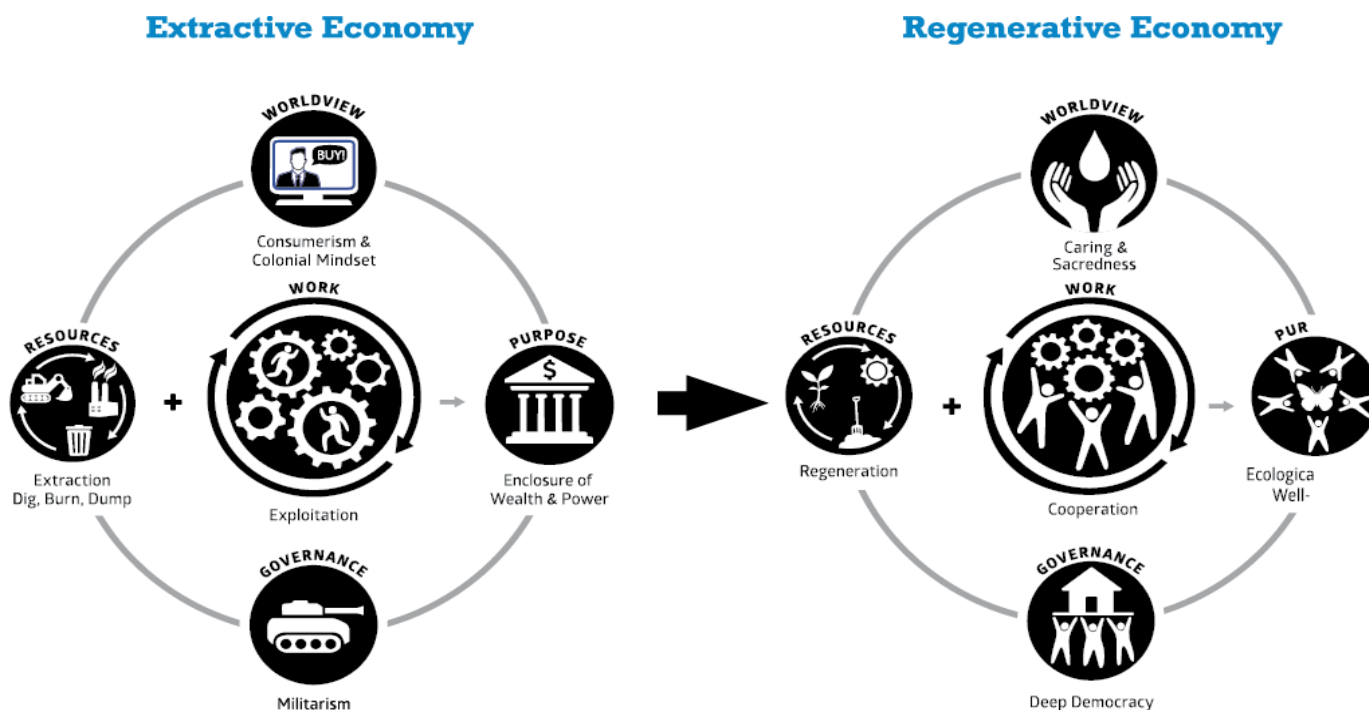
Making Sense of Climate Action: Three Patterns

We might set our sights on a certain goal, but what's most certain is that we'll have unexpected detours on the way. We need maps to adjust our course. Mapping is an important emerging social and analytical skill to recognize patterns and strengthen climate action. Three transformation patterns based on systems theories are illustrated in interactive TRCC network maps built on the kumu platform. Click HERE to see current maps.

#1 Think globally, act locally, collaborate regionally. Local IS Global when it's connected.

TRCC members' work is **multi-scale** spanning the local-global spectrum. Members either work directly at multiple scales, or the effects of their local/regional work ripple out through networks, media, and tools.

People can think of local as too small to matter. Not so! Transforming local systems gets to the root causes of issues right where people live: where they care the most about their homes, families, and land. Our local community is where we work with people who may be different from us but who go to the same schools and churches, maintain our water supply, and fix our broken bones and hearts. Our local community is where we have to deal with the violence in our homes and neighborhoods. The core of a healthy society starts at home, where we live, and inside ourselves. We each need to find our courage and compassion to build sustainability.

Regions may be a global resilience tipping point. The *near field* is our families, neighborhoods, and local communities. Large-scale *far field* systems control our lives at home in many ways, from legislation to trade to availability of what we need. **Regions** are the sweet spot in the middle between near field and far field. They are larger single-hub places typically with a population of about 150,000-2,000,000: counties, large cities, networks of multiple locales, or small states. According to systems-centered theory, middle systems may have the greatest influence. The theory uses the idea of a core system: a three-level variable window within hierarchical human systems that shifts depending on the goal of the change. The middle system within the three-level core is the most efficient point of change because it has to cross only one boundary to influence the levels above and below it (Gantt & Agazerian, 2004, p. 151).

This TRCC network map snapshot shows the range of scale of the direct impact of showcase members. Notice that the most dense connections are around the region node, but there are many connections between all scales. Several members operate at every scale from local to global.
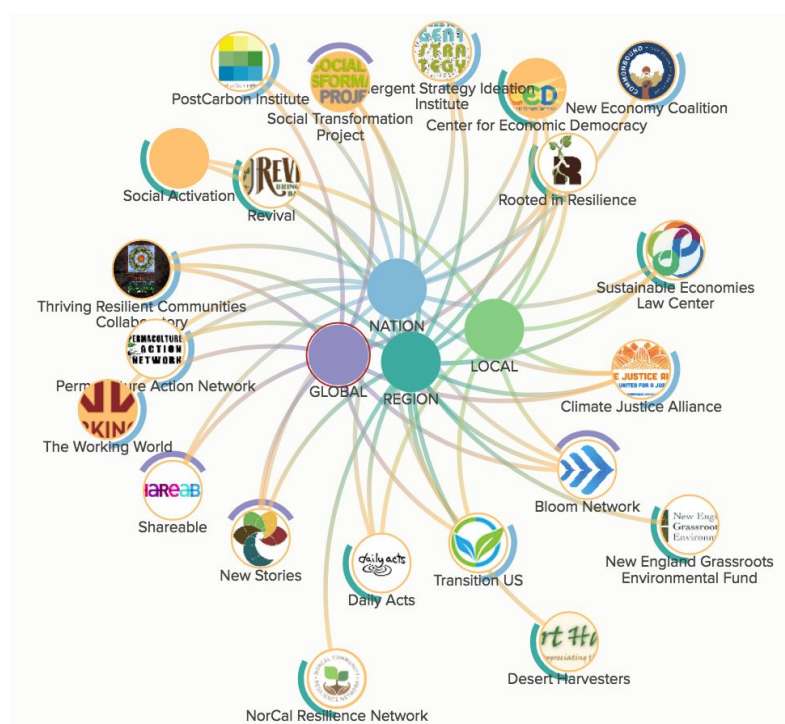
#2 Whole community approaches balance cultural change with technical solutions

Resilience is as much inner relational (emotional, spiritual, cultural, political) as it is outer transactional (rational, economic, environmental). This is why rational climate solutions exist but won't work without culture shift. We cannot think and design our way through without compassion and collaboration. Systems thinkers across civic, business, and social organizations argue that culture shift is our highest sustainable development priority.

Large-scale social interventions, including climate change response, tend to focus on outer knowledge technologies, but social-cultural influences have more impact. Researcher Chris Riedy reports findings that point to the transformative effectiveness of cultural networks. "*Jaeger et al. (1993) developed a socio-cultural model that took into account exposure to cultural rules favouring climate-relevant environmental action, involvement in social networks emphasizing problems like climate change and interest in political affairs. They found that this model was a "dramatically better" predictor of climate-relevant action than the knowledge-focused and socio-demographic models (Jaeger et al. 1993, p. 206).*" (Riedy, 2005, p. 162).

International Panel of Climate Change (IPCC) scientist and scholar Karen O'Brien states that climate change is an adaptive challenge more than a technical problem. Technical problems can be addressed by more research and knowledge, so that global innovations can often come from a small group. Adaptive challenges address beliefs, values, and worldviews: both individual and shared. They must engage all those impacted by the challenge so that the solutions will really work. O'Brien says that adaptive challenges call for a whole new approach to science itself, where **people are seen as the solutions, rather than technology**.

In this TRCC network map snapshot, the blue dots represent the primary purpose of showcase organizations, such as meeting basic Needs, building Economy, shifting Culture, and so on. The purposes are defined by an emerging HoloCompass collaboration framework. The top purposes are **Whole Communities** (dignity, peace, and justice, prosperity for all, and multi-stakeholder partnerships) and **Culture** (communications, education, relations, and heritage). TRCC members have a difficult time selecting one top purpose given their whole-systems approach. For example, only the Sustainable Economies Law Center says their main purpose is governance, but many groups influence policy.

#3 Networks, Networks, Networks

Successful communities connect to others through diverse networks, creating a long-term, sustainable ecosystem of relationships. Network is a one-word label for a distributed multi-hub organizing structure such as an alliance, coalition, collective, "collaboratory" (a new type of networked organization), and so on.

TRCC supports collaborative networks that already exist in the field. There are coherent, visible networks of people and organizations who belong to multiple coalitions, attend each other's events, and collaborate on projects. They unanimously call themselves movement-builders. While they may be employed by an organization, they say they really work for the movement of movements.

An interconnected web with distributed hubs is the optimal infrastructure to focus wisdom and governance closest to home near and far with built-in feedback loops and redundancy. Network theory has discovered that all networks (whether made out of molecules, nerve cells, electrical grids, web sites, or human beings) operate according to the same simple but powerful rules. For example, in all networks, a few nodes stand out as extraordinarily better connected than average nodes. These nodes are called *hubs*. A healthy network has multiple hubs, all well connected to each other. However, a network's health also depends greatly on those nodes located at the network's periphery, with a weaker affiliation or "tie" to those in the center. Network members with "weak ties" are important connection points to the world outside of the network.

Networks are the root of systems change because no one organization can see the whole big picture. A high level of connectedness means we're more effective because we can leverage our work.

TRCC organizations are highly networked. This map snapshot of member collaboration shows dense partnerships within the TRCC network. We've watched collaboration continue to grow among TRCC members over the last few years. Members have even more partnerships beyond the TRCC network. Most organizations have at least 20 active partner organizations, and several organizations are networks of hundreds of organizations. TRCC is a real meta-network of networks.
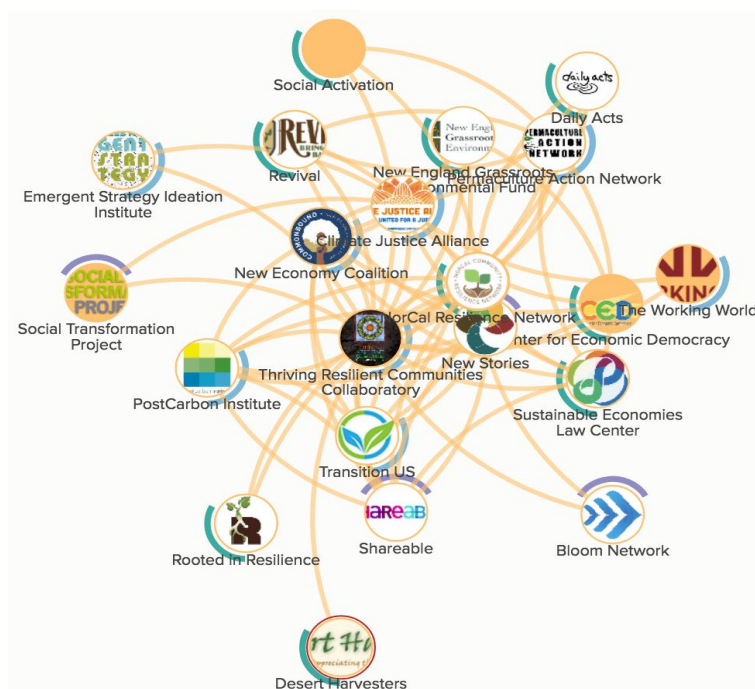
Talanoa Question 3. HOW DO WE GET THERE?

Public-Private-People Partnerships (4P)

Resilience needs public-private-people partnerships (4P) across the *megacommunity* (Gerencser et al.). *Megacommunity* refers to the intersection of public (civic), private (business), and people (social) stakeholders whose diverse experience and talents are required to address complex adaptive system challenges.
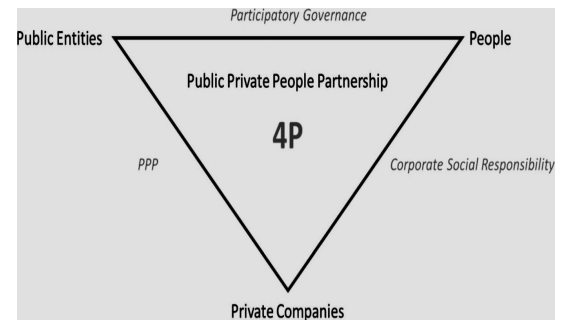
Instead of seeing climate action as a public responsibility that drives private and people cooperation, **each sector must step up**. For instance, the private sector has much of the financial and organizational capacity to mobilize quickly and effectively. The public sector is skilled at geographic stewardship and participatory decision-making. The people sector supports the needs and interests of specific populations and places. Religious and education organizations are specially positioned to influence people's behavior by virtue of their historical role in developing social ethics and family traditions.

There are useful models for effective 4P. The 4P framework pictured above (Marana et al.) defines sixteen characteristics of stakeholder relationship, information flow, and conflict resolution layered with partnership attributes. The Collective Impact Forum describes five key conditions for success: common agenda, shared measurement, mutually-reinforcing activities, continuous communication, and backbone support.

Top 4P Development Needs

Commitment and Funds Collaboration takes time and money. It doesn't happen on its own for free. Somebody needs to call people together to co-sponsor partnerships at any and every scale. Resilience grows one relationship at a time, in cycles of growth. One-off workshops or events will not take root. Long-term resilience grows through an ongoing annual rhythm of funded meetings, events, and projects.

Tools to Think and Act Together Megacommunity networks are still early in the learning curve of how to practically make decisions and take actions that address both people and planet needs at scale. Sophisticated data analysis or mapping tools are typically used in institutions and not easily accessible to citizens or local leaders. Participatory or action-oriented social media tools are typically not easily accessible by institutions.

People-planet megacommunity tools are crucial for global resilience. Climate Interactive simulations, Cool Block and Compassion Games large-scale action programs, Kumu network-systems mapping tools, Google Earth ethnogeographic mapping tools, and this Talanoa Dialogue process are excellent examples.

Inclusion with Power The people sector needs an equal voice and votes at the decision making table. Solutions driven by private or public sectors won't get us to 1.5°C because of the inherent conflict of interest between short-term business profits and political elections and long-term people and planet health.

Let's use the story of the 2018 Global Climate Action Summit to illustrate 4P needs.

The 2018 **Global Climate Action Summit** in San Francisco was a major milestone convening 4000 leaders from around the globe. Although the U.S. president pulled the federal government out of the Paris agreement, U.S. citizens, mayors, county supervisors, and governors are "still in" through subnational coalitions. Leaders shared moving stories, announced new partnership agreements, and made powerful commitments. It was an inspiring event with much "climate ambition" to celebrate.

- **Commitment & Funds** The Summit event was well-organized and funded by public, private, and people partners. They organized multi-issue challenges of *healthy energy systems, inclusive economic growth, sustainable communities, land & ocean stewardship, and transformative climate investments.*

- **Tools** The Summit created a stellar website with an innovative *Step Up World* brand. They engaged the public by livestreaming on social media, creating an online hub, and advertising affiliate events.

- **Inclusion** Summit organizers included many multi-stakeholder voices. And yet, the Summit drew protestors. The protesters, many speakers, and the It Takes Roots frontline coalition support the Summit goals but say proposed solutions serve corporations and governments, not communities.

Who benefits? Who profits? It Takes Roots calls for the deep democracy principle (where workers & communities have control over the decisions that affect their daily lives) to inform how climate solutions are designed, debated and implemented. Their critical strategies expand and strengthen the Summit goals: *Indigenous land rights, food sovereignty, zero waste, public transportation, ecosystem restoration, universal healthcare, worker rights, housing rights, racial and gender justice, and economic relocalization.*

We need partnerships to create solutions that serve people. We need all the climate ambition we can get, but ambition that doesn't serve communities will fail. How can we celebrate progress while challenging ourselves to go farther? How can the imbalance of public-private-people power be addressed head-on? What would it look like for Summits and UN COP Conferences to include grassroots wisdomkeepers *as peers*? What would it look like for grassroots wisdomkeepers to include institutional leaders *as peers*?

Design Rules: What could a 4P world look like?

Partnerships can look many different ways such as collaboration on events and projects, funding with shared learning and decisions, or voting representatives. One crucial element is that the connection is an ongoing relationship so partners have to work through challenges. Another key element is a balance of power so that those who have lived experience (wisdom) and who are affected by a decision (stakeholders) make the decisions. Here is a vision of what a 4P world could look like across local to global scales.

Multi-stakeholder Councils

Effective partnerships start with a compassionate collaborative peer group at the core. They operate at any scale. Even large-scale collectives have a core leadership group that is most resilient as a peer partnership. Geographic councils tend their whole community as stewards of the people and the place. They are the resilience engine of the community. In collective impact terms, they are often called the backbone, although a better analogy may be that they're the brain of a whole nervous system of brain, backbone, and nerves.

Councils practice presence and emergent strategy. They listen and learn to respect each other. They pay close attention to social inclusion and ecological terrain so that their work addresses the root causes of issues. Multi-stakeholder leadership is beyond the scope of any one person or organization, but someone has to step up to sponsor and convene the Council (as a peer!). **Local community foundations and service organizations, hospitals, learning institutions, cooperatives, municipal and business associations, and interfaith groups** are examples of *anchor institutions* with the whole-community perspective and resources to seed Councils.

Action Learning Communities

Action learning communities connect leaders. They are the backbone of the collective impact nervous system, guided by a Council brain. A geographic action learning community is a blend of institutional power and people power. It contains the megacommunity spectrum of businesses, governments, nonprofits, and ad-hoc folks. Institutions participate as peers, making decisions with and funding grassroots social networks who have the relationships and skills to discover what's needed and to mobilize residents. The optimal size of an action learning community is 40-150 people: big enough for collective impact but small enough to tend relationships.

Local action learning communities can find technical assistance from regional and national experts so that the local communities don't have to reinvent the wheel. Useful stories and media, programs, guides, and other resources are available at resource centers such as resilience.org, shareable.net, transitionus.org, and bioneers.org. See the Building Community Resilience Guide for an overview of TRCC-recommended resources.

Action Networks

Action networks engage the power of both leaders and large numbers of people across whole regions, virtual communities, etc. They are the nerves of the collective impact nervous system. As discussed earlier, near-field systems are where resilience is moving fastest. It's where we are most successfully stopping harm (eg. state fracking bans) and building the new (eg. community choice energy systems). It's where when we divest from fossil fuels, we have something to re-invest into. The far-field is where we really see the disparity between countries as well as the impact of humans on the earth. Both near and far-field leaders need to step up faster.

An optimal step-up strategy is to grow action learning communities into broader networks in both the near-field and far-field, and then connect them. Just as action learning communities at a specific scale harness the strengths across its megacommunity, connecting across scales harnesses the strengths of the different scales. Near-field strengths are the power of the people in large numbers and stronger connection to each other and the places they call home. Far-field strengths are the power of big institutions to effect large-scale change and closer connections to the whole-earth systems that impact us all wherever we call home.

TRCC 4P Case Studies

Many TRCC members have active partnerships across scales within the people sector and with public and private sectors. For example, Center for Economic Democracy partners with Tufts University and various government agencies. funders, and businesses. Transition US initiatives regularly work with government officials, and PostCarbon Institute fellows have government and academic expertise.

Daily Acts is a showcase public-private-people partnership. They partner with over 100 cross-sector, cross-issue groups and organizations every year at the local, regional, state and national level. The names of these groups illustrate that they network across sectors and issues: Another World is Possible Coalition, Sonoma County Food System Alliance and Health Action Council, North Bay Watershed Association and Climate Adaptation Initiative, and Sonoma Environmental Education Collaborative. Regional, state and national partners include NorCal Community Resilience Network, California Water Efficiency Partnership and Transition US. Locally, Daily Acts partners with public agencies, community groups, faith-based organizations, schools and businesses on programs, education, and policy. They contract with several cities to provide water conservation and stormwater education, outreach and skill-building programs. Since the 2017 Northern California wildfire disaster, Daily Acts has been deeply engaged in recovery efforts, helping launch initiatives, convening community leaders, and emphasizing a call to place equity at the center of the recovery.

Recommendations for the UN (and everyone)

The United Nations serves as our global wisdom body and our global public defense against climate collapse. It is time to harvest and act on the planetary wisdom from all corners of the earth. We call upon the UN to heed the wisdom of indigenous land stewards and everyday people taking action to shift human habits to save our home. We call upon the UN to immediately enact policy, partnerships, and funding to accomplish this.

Policy levers - Policies that keep fossil fuels in the ground are literally critical to our survival: indigenous land rights, rights of nature, renewable energy policy, and so on. Carbon reduction policies are temporary stopgaps that may even delay the shift to 100% renewable energy. Policies that support community re-localization are also critical to remove existing barriers to sustainable food, housing, finance, and more.

Partnership (collaboration/cooperation) opportunities
Grasstops organizations are effective 4P partners. As grassroots network hubs, they have trusted grassroots relationships and know how best to decentralize and distribute resources to filter through the grassroots ecosystem like rain being distributed and absorbed within a forest. Institutional partners can simply rain.
1. People - grasstop seats at the table eg. grassroots representatives in public-private decision-making
2. Public - grassroots advisory committees, community engagement, and participatory budgets
3. Private - grassroots participation in public and people initiatives eg. expertise, tools, and funding

Public and private funding models
1. Funding for public-private-people partnerships eg. collective impact backbone organizations
2. Funding for accessible partnership tools eg. network and systems mapping, participatory budgetting
3. Funding for partnership projects eg. 4P "community trust" funds, democratic cross-funding vehicles

Conclusion

According to Karen O'Brien of the IPCC,

"We're entering the decade that matters. **If climate change is still seen as a technical problem as the majority does today, we're likely to fail.** *We'll delude ourselves into thinking that the Teslas of the world will solve the problem and we can just continue flying around in business as usual instead of going for systemic change, recognizing that we are the system."*

The current technical approach may be underestimating our collective capacity for change. As O'Brien also says, the IPCC uses many assumptions in modelling the future. Its scenarios are based on technical changes alone, and don't factor in the power of people as change agents. Our systems theories and life experience tell us that when people make up their hearts and minds to get their hands to work, unpredictably rapid cultural shifts can happen. Motivated by climate tipping points, we can reach social tipping points that might seem like miracles from our perspective today.

Our great-great-children are counting on us to work miracles to survive this evolutionary birth passage. Birth is a dangerous transition into new life that walks hand-in-hand with death. Death now walks at the shoulder of countless species, including our own. We cannot dither along the road to extinction and condemn our descendants to untold suffering. We cannot afford to be stuck in fear, overwhelm, shame, or denial. Finding climate action groups with friends and neighbors and joining climate action learning communities are great ways to get moving. No one should have to face the climate crisis alone.

It is time to **wake up, connect up,** and **step up.** In *Who Do We Choose to Be*, Margaret Wheatley calls us to face reality, claim leadership, and restore sanity. In *Climate A New Story*, Charles Eisenstein calls us to free ourselves from a war mentality and see how the bigger picture of how everything from affordable housing to saving whales and seagrass is climate action. In *Active Hope*, Joanna Macy and Chris Johnstone share stories and tools to strengthen our capacity to face this crisis so that we can respond with unexpected resilience and creative power. Find action communities in this report or in your region to get more involved. Our efforts are a small price to pay for the treasure of peace, health, and harmony that we will find on the road to resilience.

As the African proverb says: ***"To go fast, go alone. To go far, go together."***

Let's go. Together!

Submitted by Rev. Dr. Leslie Meehan with the [Thriving Resilient Communities Collaboratory](#)

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share our story.
We look forward to learning from and working with Talanoa allies.

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