

Meadows Memorandum

A new economic model for a finer future



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*"People need a
sacred
narrative...a
sense of larger
purpose"*

- E. O. Wilson

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"People need a sacred narrative...a sense of larger purpose" - E. O. Wilson

"Those who tell the stories rule society" - Plato

Our economic story today is broken. Neoliberalism, the mental model that drives global economic thinking, has created vast financial wealth, but also inequality and environmental destruction. Now so pervasive that it is hard to frame an alternative, it was created by a [small group of men](#) after World War II. Reacting to National Socialism that had trashed Europe, and the rise of Soviet collectivism, the men who framed neoliberalism believed that individual sovereignty, small government and free markets were necessary to ensure freedom and provide for the needs of a growing world. Now, 70 year later, all major ecosystems are in decline. People across the planet struggle to make ends meet and find purpose in their lives. Sixty-five million, the greatest number since World War II, are [refugees from climate change and war](#), while eight people have as much wealth as the bottom 3.5 billion poorest. This isn't working.

As populist movements demand the prosperity and quality of life they were promised, the need for a new narrative is clear. This is a sketch of a strategy to create that different future: an economy that works for 100% of humanity, and preserves the ecological systems necessary to sustain life. It is an answer to the [Powell Memorandum](#) that guided policy to ensure that the neoliberal narrative came to dominate global economic discourse.

Several hundred people from two-dozen nations wrote this document. Working together as [Leading for Well-being](#), we are ordinary people: workers, scholars, business leaders, mothers, bankers, activists, faith leaders, farmers and more. We offer this alternative:

True freedom and success depend on creating a world where individuals flourish and we all prosper. Governments serve humanity best when they recognize our individual dignity and enhance our interconnectedness. To thrive, businesses and society must pivot toward a new purpose: shared well-being on a healthy planet.

The world has become unstable economically, environmentally, and socially. The demand for a new economic model is growing louder around the world. Join us to craft a finer future.

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*This draft is based on ongoing conversations (live and online). The name "Meadows Memorandum" honors the groundbreaking work of Donella Meadows.

SECTION I: We Need A New Narrative

The dominant, neoliberal narrative tells us:

- The sole goal of the economy and business is to generate financial wealth;
- The freedom of the individual (person or corporation) is the primary societal value;
- Government should be small, protecting individuals and their private property.
- If we just let the free market sort things out, all will be well.
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But all is not well. The global economy rests on a knife-edge of unsustainable business practices. We suffer:

- Growing income inequity and persistent poverty;
- The prospect of biophysical collapse and loss of ecosystems and climate stability;
- Loss of jobs that pay a living wage and provide dignity;
- Rising levels of anger, fear, and intolerance;
- An economy that serves itself and the .01%, at the expense of life;
- Domination of cultural values by advertisers and marketers;
- A growing thirst for meaning and connection.

The mission of Leading For Well-Being is to...

Drive change in all the world's institutions, especially business, so they function to implement the new narrative of individual dignity and freedom achieved through shared well-being (prosperity and flourishing) on a healthy planet.

The old narrative was based on assumptions that scientists now reject. Psychologists, evolutionary biologists and anthropologists and others find that most people are not greedy, rugged individualists. We seek to meet our needs, but more, people seek goodness, connection, and caring. We desire to be rewarded for meaningful contributions with a decent living, but are not primarily motivated by acquiring wealth. Unlike neoliberalism, which is based on an incomplete view of what it means to be human, a new economic model must balance our innate entrepreneurialism and individualism with a holistic view of humanity that recognizes fairness and our desire to bond with others. There is a business case for this view: purpose-driven organizations that respect dignity and implement more sustainable practices better engage all stakeholders, and enjoy increasing productivity. More sustainable brands and ethical investments deliver higher profitability. But there is a quality of life reason, as well. Science now tells us that life itself is interconnected and mutualistic, not separate, competitive, or based on random chance. Implementing more regenerative practices drawn from natural systems principles is the only way to achieve true freedom and a world that works for everyone.

In 1971, at the request of the head of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, Lewis Powell, soon to become Supreme Court Justice, penned a strategy of how business could relegitimize itself. The Chamber was concerned that in the wake of the 1960's young people, radicalized on the college campuses, were rejecting the central role of business. He laid out a strategy, targeting almost 30 institutions for transformation. On the strength of that document, a variety of foundations and donors committed millions of dollars to the creation and endowment of the organizations that would take the neoliberal principles, previously found in academic

conversations, and make it the dominant global economic narrative. We propose to do the same, but on behalf of a world that works for everyone. This is neither a left wing or right wing exercise, but an effort to reach transpartisan consensus on approaches that will meet the grave challenges facing humanity and deliver superior outcomes for all. It rejects neither the value of market mechanisms nor cooperative action for shared prosperity, but distills the best of both approaches into a new narrative of an economy in service to life. [As David Brooks put it](#), the future of the U.S. (and many other countries) "...is not going to be found in protecting jobs that are long gone or in catering to the fears of aging whites. There is a raging need for a movement that embraces economic dynamism, global engagement and social support — that is part Milton Friedman on economic policy, Ronald Reagan on foreign policy and Franklin Roosevelt on welfare policy."

Join us in standing for...

- The possibility that institutions can evolve and transform; that revolution/tearing down the entire system and building new structures from scratch is a last resort. We honor those who resist degenerative practices, but we seek to build bridges where possible, and create opportunities for our movement to experiment and learn together;
- Amplifying, supporting, building upon, and bringing greater coherence to efforts already in motion: a "movement of movements" even if it lacks a single name;
- Being constructive; building a wide and strong foundation;
- Recognizing the value of individual entrepreneurship and human creativity;
- A strategy that understands complex adaptive systems, versus command and control;
- Working iteratively, guided by a long-term vision of what is possible/ necessary;
- Channeling resources towards what is working, or what we sense should be tested;

Objectives:

- Spread the new narrative to inspire people and empower institutions to pursue an economy in service to life;
- Combine the parts of our current economic system that reward commitment and individual contributions with the evolving science of who we are as humans—and the nature of life itself—to solve the challenges facing us;
- Replace incentives for exploitation for short-term profit with rewards for long-lasting, regenerative wealth creation.
- Set forth how businesses and all organizations can better manage people, shifting from exploitation for short-term profit to delivering holistic well-being as the basis for sustainable returns AND a healthier society;
- Use the new narrative to shape the policies needed at all levels of government, including corporate reporting, investor oversight, and rewards for behavior that serves us all;
- Shift flows of capital to organizations behaving in ways that enhance well-being;
- Make the new narrative the default in all institutions so that choices naturally promote well-being in people's lives, in business, and in government naturally;
- Change our consciousness (our deeper level understanding of who we are and the world we live in) through practices and positive routines that connect us to individual purpose, to each other, and to the natural environment;
- Enlist teachers, young people, business leaders, civil society leaders, communities of faith, regulators, policy makers, scientists, economists and economic thought leaders, professors, storytellers, marketers, the media, advertisers and cultural icons.

The Strategy:

- Reframe the economic narrative around wellbeing, dignity and a healthy planet;
- Identify and connect institutions and leaders for whom well-being is a core to mission:
 - Amplify their stories by showcasing successes and helping them pay it forward;
 - Build on their strengths and bring their work to scale;
- Invite diverse groups of people and organizations from all parts of society to co-create, adapt, and interpret the narrative;
- Map key stakeholders and gatekeepers who shape our current economic narrative;
- Convene stakeholders and collaboratively enable the movement's to find coherence;
- Crowd source strategies that change agents around the globe can use to frame locally appropriate strategies to take their work to scale;
- Agree on key qualitative/quantitative measures of well-being that institutions can leverage.

We will...

- Accelerate the decline of a dominant narrative, particularly in western economic thought;
- Serve the movement's ability to find coherence and bring change to scale, addressing the sectors outlined below;
- Let the millions of people pursuing and wanting connectivity know that they're not alone

The evidence

- [Citizens of equitable societies](#) live longer, have better mental health, and have better chances for a good education regardless of background. Community life is stronger where the income gap is narrower. When inequality is reduced people trust each other more, there is less violence, and rates of imprisonment are lower.
- Humans are happier when we know and value our local worlds (people, community, environment), in addition to our financial and business worlds. [Resilient, happy communities enhance bio-regional economies that satisfy our need to belong](#). Meaning is found through a combination of real purpose, community, and relationship to land, environments, and natural cycles that support us. Attending to regional and local needs of people and place, not businesses untethered except to stock markets, fuels individual empowerment and community responsibility necessary to nurture regenerative societies.
- The next generation [seeks purpose, authenticity, opportunity, transparency and creativity](#) that can only be found with local engagement in community. Community-based strategies focus on the well-being of the whole and protect intact ecosystems and resilient human communities. Citizens can then develop locally appropriate sustainability indicators to gauge progress and adjust policies to deliver greater well-being.
- Institutions - private, public, and civil - serve humanity best when they [recognize individual dignity and acknowledge and enhance our interconnectedness](#). They preserve and restore the integrity of regenerative natural systems within which they operate, to enable Earth to support human (and other) life now and for future generations. Organizations that respect dignity and implement more regenerative practices better engage workers, and all stakeholders, increasing productivity. [Dignity for all](#) is attained through equitable access to education, health services, decent work and adequate pay, social inclusion and cohesion, basic material resources, and other factors that enhance wellbeing, flourishing, and prosperity for all.
- Humans created [governments to protect common space and goods](#); ensure safety, fairness and integrity of markets and internalizes costs, while supporting thriving and

resilient communities. Governments should protect vulnerable people and the ecosystems upon which all life depends.

- A [regenerative economy](#) uses metrics and market structures that meet human needs through equitable access, distribution, fully-costed and priced services and goods, and delivers flourishing value for all within nature's bounds.

SECTION II Strategic Building Blocks

The following sections were identified and developed in a series of working groups convened from New York to Mexico to Germany, and in on-line sessions on Slack and using Google docs. More meetings are planned for Paris and Colorado. More than 150 people from 17 countries have contributed to this effort frame a strategy to implement an economy in service to life.

The categories represent building blocks for a Strategy and Theory of Change to disseminate the new narrative of an economy in service to life.

Many aspects of these strategies overlap. All need more work. We invite you to join us.

Meadows Memorandum 1: Transform Culture

The neo-liberal narrative has permeated public culture globally. Supplanting it will require telling a better story in film, theatre, dance, fashion and all forms of popular culture. Embedding the new narrative in the public consciousness is a key step to larger system change. We need to identify the cultural barriers to an economy that works for 100% of humanity, to track memes of the old narrative and those of the new narrative. We need a changed set of metrics to assess cultural success focused on shared well-being.

Desired Goals:

Make the new narrative visible and widely accepted in our culture

How will we know we succeeded?

Popular culture portrays the new narrative in films, theater, songs, etc

The old narrative is discredited in popular media

Potential pathways:

- Identify and engage with the main purveyors of culture, – e.g. Hollywood/ Bollywood, viral videos;
- Engage with taste-makers/ trendsetters/ cultural icons;
- Engage popular writers (as the framers of the old narrative did with Ayn Rand);
- Engage with social movements, and religious institutions;
- Weave “narrative resonance” across social movements so that these operate with the logic of shared deep frames and shared assumptions, inferences, and core beliefs at the worldview-level;
- Identify the set of cultural factors we want to influence (e.g. the neoliberal story elements and their replacements).

- Build a network/community of cultural designers to spread cultural practices and learning across a diversity of communities. (LGBT, the struggles for self-government in Africa, the land rights movement in Latin America);

Potential Actions

- Create strategies, tactics, and plausible timelines or scenarios for guided social change.
- Focus on identifying memes of new narratives
- Build a network of cultural allies
- Narrative hacking
- Monitor and track patterns of culture relevant to this change process. (Google search, twitter feeds, ethnographic studies, surveys, user data on social medial platforms and apps, government demographic data, market research)

Meadows Memorandum 2: Transform Business:

The dominant narrative guides business practice and management approaches beyond business. Transforming the narrative will support ongoing efforts of practitioners/managers to create shared well-being within the planetary boundaries. This initiative will create and broadly disseminate a consistent narrative that defines the role business plays in society, and defines the role of the business community as delivering value for all stakeholders, wellbeing, and dignity for all.

Desired Goals:

To root the narrative in business so that companies implement regenerative practices enhancing human and natural capital in all of their activities. Companies move from mere compliance to a grasp of the business case for sustainable practices to a values-based commitment to regenerative behavior and a conscious commitment to using business to promotes well-being for all.

How will we know we succeeded

- There is increasing consensus on the new narrative among business leaders;
- Business measures success as increased well-being among all of its stakeholders;
- Business advertising and marketing follows the new paradigm;
- Businesses make public statements about leaving the old economic paradigm, about the economy that we need and how this aligns with their overall framework;
- True cost accounting /integrated accounting;
- Supply chains are geared to increasing well-being;
- Products are designed in a circular economy, and serve needs not increased consumption;
- Businesses advocate for policies to increase well-being;
- Companies adopt public policy positions that support the new narrative;
- Growth of the percentage of new narrative businesses (ASCB/ B Corps/ EFCG/);
- Hard metrics: increase in the percentage of companies paying a living wage, percent use of renewable energy, percent of companies with integrated bottom lines, percent of

companies with sustainability goals in executive KPIs and reviews/personal metrics, percent of companies publishing CSR report, etc.

Potential Pathways

- Spread knowledge of the business case that regenerative business practices are more profitable;
- Connect existing initiatives that work in various ways on new narrative business practice;
- Ensure that customers know what businesses have embraced the new narrative;
- Consumer demand rises for products from companies that embrace new narrative;
- Enhance capabilities of people in companies to implement the new narrative;
- Stronger ethics codes for business (mirroring those for lawyers)/ Stiffer punishment for white-collar crime.

Potential Actions

- Create/ enhance networks of practitioners/ community of practice networks;
- Establish new success metrics for business;
- Conduct a series of events/conferences with the business community;
- Identify key influencers in major business sectors and get them engaged in creating, adopting and disseminating the new narrative;
- Identification of “champions” that serve as role models.

Meadows Memorandum 3: Transform Finance:

The dominant narrative puts the financial system at the center of human activity such that the real economy and society are servants of finance. The new narrative will position finance as the servant to the real economy and society.

- Change the narrative of finance so that it is a tool to bring liquidity to the real economy, not the end in itself;
- Ensure that money is managed for long term sustainability;
- Create incentives for long-term investing, not fractional trading;
- Create attractive options for the millennials to transfer the trillions they will inherit from harm to healing;
- Amalgamate statistics and metrics (measure small # of big things);
- Expand the concept of Fiduciary Responsibility to include all stakeholders;
- Replace the shareholder primacy myth.

Desired Goals:

- Reduce the speculative use of money;
- Increase investment into the real economy;
- Fair returns to investors.

How will we know we succeeded?

- When the measure of indirect (hedgefund manager) and direct return (CEO) is considered fair;
- The share of the financial sector to GDP is reduced (Question: what is right size?);

- Banks run as non-profit/low profit entities (Public?);
- Regulation promotes true investment over speculation;
- The sector is easy for consumers to comprehend and participate in.

Potential Pathways

- Reassessment of economic activities that are win/win and win/lose to remove false equivalence of financial transactions – note: the participants in Tübingen did not like “false equivalence” – wanted less judgmental language:
- Or: Quantify common good in a financial transaction – properly value the non-financial aspects of transactions, so financial incentives are aligned with shared wellbeing on healthy planet;
- Disseminate the story of finance as a service via media outlets;
- Quality media production/ George Lucas type story telling (Oliver Stone);
- Investing news/ not speculation news (win/lose);
- Convene “Transforming finance” gatherings;
- Story telling about investing versus speculation;
- Move civil society money from harm to healing; bring the new narrative to the divest/ invest movement; help institutional investors and large philanthropists to find alignment between their investments and their values.

Tübingen participants added: Our general proposition is that change has to come both from the financial sector as well as from informed and responsible customers. Yet, the financial sector has the duty to provide information and products that are easy to comprehend such that customers can responsibly engage. To be more specific, responsibility on the customer side increases by the volume and the complexity of the product concerned.

Meadows Memorandum 4: Transform the Education System:

The education system has been a way that the dominant narrative has been spread. The new narrative needs to become part of the educational agenda throughout primary, secondary, and higher education. To change the way students and educators at all levels think and educate, we need to influence the curricula, pedagogy and educational experience. The goal for education should become to produce healthy human beings that are empowered to be positive changemakers. Students and educators at all levels should operate based on the new narrative, learning to solve societal problems, protect dignity and lead institutions toward shared well-being on a healthy planet.

Desired Goals:

The goal is that all educational institutions contribute to the ideal of “everyone a changemaker.” Education should foster knowledge, but also skills, dispositions and actions, including empathy, integrity, trust, mindfulness, leadership, co-creation, systems thinking, etc. Students should be empowered as citizens, not simply trained to be consumers as their core identity

How will we know we succeeded?

- New OECD/UNESCO standards include wellbeing metrics in the capability metrics;
- # of educational institutions involved in dialogue about the new narrative;
- # of initiatives started or ongoing that support the “everyone a changemaker” approach;
- # of articles/ popular media mentions;
- Students are much more involved in shaping their own education;
- Being a teacher is seen as high-status occupation;
- STEM/ Common Core/ PISA metrics are augmented to include metrics of character, maturity, happiness, emotional intelligence.

Potential pathways

- Influence global educational agenda – PISA influenced global debate;
- Engage researchers more on pragmatic solutions for well-being, not publications for tenure;
- Urge educational business models to shift from the neoliberal model;
- Shift metrics on which student success is measured to ensure that students gain capacity to contribute to shared well-being on a healthy planet;
- **Transform K-12 and University-Level Non-Business Education:**
 - Content of textbooks,
 - Shaping pedagogical models that empower experiential learning, peer learning, on-line learning, open space technology, practical wisdom – the world becomes its own teacher.
 - Create new curricula and pedagogical approaches that expose students to new narrative thinking,
 - Create new metrics that assess the effectiveness of these strategies;
- Transform university-level business education to be based on humanistic management and regenerative economics;
- Create and promote aligned educational institutions (alternative Chicago School);
- Influence textbooks and pedagogical material, create new narrative textbooks;
- Shape pedagogical models that empower experiential learning (informed contemplation and action practices);
- Influence schools/ school boards/alumni;
- Educate educators – e.g. Economics for the Anthropocene/ Kate Raworth.

Potential Actions:

- Build alliances with aligned organizations that transform curriculum to increase reach and visibility at accreditation institutions (AACSB) EQUIS EFMD, and global educational policy bodies including UNESCO/OECD/UN GC, and K-12 education bodies across nations;
- Build alliances with student alliances working on these issues;
- Develop/disseminate measures of educational success that reflect new narrative;

Meadows Memorandum 5: Transform Political System/Seed the political future:

The governance systems now in operation poorly serve the people they claim to represent. The Washington Consensus created a world that served large corporations and the wealthy North, while impoverishing people and the planet. The global populist reaction now rising risks a return to authoritarian/ tribalist governance. Governments should serve shared well-being on a healthy planet, ensure true freedom, delivering a system that works for 100% of humanity not prosperity only for elites.

Desired Goals:

To develop a political system that includes multiple perspectives and serves the common good. Transcend the left/ right axis to develop a politics of regenerative economics and well-being. Civil and political leaders need to understand the new narrative and implement policies to achieve it. Leaders must act with understanding of planetary boundaries.

How will we know we succeeded?

- A majority of political leaders contribute to shared well-being on a healthy planet;
- Politics is trusted and citizens are engaged;
- National framing is complemented by effective local, bioregional and global forms of governance;
- North/ South equity delivers shared well-being;
- The crucial role of the commons has become a standard component of mainstream conversation about change, and institutions such as the IMF and World Bank dedicate a major portion of their work to regenerative practices.

Potential pathways

- Create learning, participatory democracies of empowered citizens;
- Ensure that the political system includes multiple perspectives and serves the common good;
- Train and position democracy developers. Make sure all people have the capabilities to be part of the democratic process;
- Create ongoing stakeholder dialogues instead of competition for legislators' attention;
- Open up public deliberation to the far away and future stakeholders (potentially a committee of advocates of future generations);
- Innovations in citizen-wide technology systems that enable broad participation.

Potential Actions:

- Create a farm team of engaged, trained politicians to implement these ideas; train young leaders and find opportunities for them;
- Provide resources and encouragement;
- Draft anti-ALEC Legislation e.g. State Innovation Exchange (SIX);
- Align with transpartisan politics (i.e. Bridge Alliance);
- Confront legal corruption.

Meadows Memorandum 6: Transform Civil Society to be more effective:

Civil society confers legitimacy on all other institutions. A vast segment ranging from religious institutions to citizens' movements, it is generally defined as separate from corporations and elected governments. Now often focused on resistance, protest and culture wars, it is frequently self destructive, competitive and disorganized. When coherent it changes the world, serves as a balance to arbitrary abuse of power and ensures shared well-being. It is the force that bends the arc of history toward justice.

Desired Goals:

An effective civil society fosters shared well-being on a healthy planet. It is fully co-creative and equal with government and business rather than secondary to them. It needs to return to its role as the primary source of values, enabling families, communities of faith, community groups and educational systems to produce people who are personally accountable, socially interdependent and capable of creating their own fulfillment. It functions as the protector of the commons, ensuring that government and the corporate sector serve the well-being of all.

How will we know we succeeded?

- The new narrative supports civil society institutions to work more in concert;
- Major NGOs and prominent social movement leaders are aligned on theories of change, and on strategies for acting on them;
- Prominent new alliances and collaborations have arisen across old divisions (political, religious, etc.), dedicated to bringing forth an economy in service to life;
- Philanthropic giving and endowment investments are focused on an economy in service to life, and a growing number of foundations decide to “sunset” or otherwise accelerate their giving in order to address the current moment of urgency/opportunity.

Potential Pathways

- Use dialogue based on the new narrative to overcome the mistrust between grassroots social movement activists and the leadership for transformation from within the existing NGO power structure;
- Identify and grow the number of people who see protecting and regenerating the commons as a core of the new economy, and as their duty as global citizens;
- Use the new narrative to draw distinctions between civil society initiatives that are based on neoliberal values and those with values that undergird an economy in service to life;
- Move from culture of consumerism to one of citizenship;
- Build on the political ferment in the US and Europe that includes popular rejection of neoliberal memes by both the Left and the Right;
- Bridge social and political divides, so that civil society can effectively pressure policy makers and businesses to support an economy in service to life;

- Help diverse elements of the movement see the value of both protest and resistance as well as bridge-building and collaborative practices. Seek approaches that enable opponents to become allies.

Potential Actions

- Explore potential collaboration with the Vatican and other religions and spiritual leaders to state their role as caring for creation and interconnectedness;
- Create an Ethical-20: twenty top religious and secular leaders (also in consciousness) to speak on issues, a global ethical council from both religious and secular tradition);
- Emphasize partnering with the private sector to move to business as not usual;
- Engage with mainstream and activist groups from across the political spectrum, to explore the power of the new narrative to generate a new political consensus. Use that consensus to coordinate bold and broad-based action to influence both policy and the actions of the business sector.

Meadows Memorandum 7: Transform Self/Cultivate Consciousness:

We each have a story about who we are and the world we live in. At its essence, it is what we call consciousness. Changing consciousness can change social norms. If people act in line with what they perceive to be their true nature as relational and purpose-driven individuals, the economic and social outcomes will be healthier. The dominant economic model is based on a view of humans that is both erroneous and dangerous. The weight of evidence from the sciences (evolutionary biology, social psychology, and neuroscience) suggests that human beings are fundamentally cooperative, motivated by feelings of fairness and reciprocity, and driven by strong instincts for altruism. True self-interest is mutual interest, oriented toward an ethic of shared well-being.

What is the desired goal?

Shared consciousness of interconnectedness and integration with one another and the living world. Recognition that our disconnectedness from ourselves, others and nature is a source of unhappiness and poor decisions. If, as the ecologist Gregory Bateson said, “The major problems in the world are the result of the difference between how nature works and the way people think,” then it is important that every human maintain a deep connection to nature.”

How will we know we succeeded?

We know we will have succeeded if we:

- Practices and expressions of deep connectedness are widespread;
- We collectively embrace generative, life-giving and life-preserving paths for all;
- We collectively deploy our resources for the common good;
- See evidence of greater happiness and wellbeing;
- Shift from mechanistic to living systems and humanistic worldview;
- Dignity is respected as a core value.

Potential Pathways

- Cultivate “true” human nature (true self-interest is mutual interest);
- Change mindsets about businesses and the roles of other institutions by building and sharing common values, norms, understandings, and narratives;
- Realize relation to self, to others, to nature, to world;
- Cultivate mindfulness;
- A speaker’s group on re-incorporating ethics and ancient wisdom into modern life. Disseminate the common core ethics and ancient wisdom. Global Ethic;
- Faith-based outreach/Convene religious leaders around shared well-being;
- Create an “E20” of global ethical leaders to match the “G20” (or another number - the point is to convene a global ethical council from both religious and secular tradition);
- Develop a Dignity Culture: Dignity is at the heart of wellbeing for many people, yet few in business or elsewhere think about dignity.

Meadows Memorandum 8: Transform Media

Media frames our awareness of the world, and propagates the narratives by which we live. We now have warring narratives reinforced by polarized bubbles. The media ranges from older print newspapers and broadcast journalism to unaffiliated voices and social media from Facebook and Twitter. If the narrative of shared well-being on a healthy planet is to spread, this sector will have to play a crucial role in ensuring that facts, science and an authentic search for truth can prevail over entertainment, propaganda, titillation and sensationalism. We need to regain trust and a common way of understanding what is happening in the world.

Desired goals

The default in media becomes to tell stories about policies, businesses, and individuals working toward a thriving world. It calls out and criticizes policies that work against the new narrative. The context for all news and entertainment becomes well-being. Journalism focuses primarily on solutions not just on problems.

There is no longer an assumption that there is trade-off between sustainability and business success, or between shared thriving and economic prosperity. Such false dichotomies are challenged at every turn.

How will we know we succeeded

Some measures of success would be...

- Use of wellbeing indicators when describing situations (Policy analyses at global, national, and local levels...news items on business, etc);
- An increase in positive stories **focused on solutions** of how companies, governments, individuals, and other organizations are building a thriving world;
- Significant elements of the media adopt the narrative.

Potential Pathways

- (a) Create content that propels the new well-being narrative throughout “the media” and tells stories of positive change toward a thriving world. The content will be part of a sound media and communications strategy that disseminates the narrative in powerful and comprehensive ways across all the L4WB initiatives (into business, education, finance, politics, etc);
- (b) Transform what the media assumes is the core purpose of business and the economy from creating only profit, wealth, GDP growth, and stock market appreciation to creating shared well-being, prosperity, and dignity for all;
- (c) Destroy the myth that financial metrics are at odds with broader well-being & represent a inevitable tradeoff.

Potential Actions

- Hold a meeting for those who ‘get it’ in media and entertainment;
- Quick-response/alternative narrative content organization/brand;
- Preparation of social-media friendly stories of success and perspectives that frame news items in the light of the well-being narrative;
- Highlight existing/other outlet stories that push the new narrative;
- Create pool/network of journalists who “get it” gather people in media and entertainment;
- Create dedicated outlets/platform and utilize existing platforms;
- Take Jo Confino up on his offer of a dedicated platform;
- Create speakers bureau for the new narrative speakers. Work together with the speakers network from other aligned organizations. Building on speaker training programs;
- Create media and communications strategy that disseminates the narrative in powerful and comprehensive ways across all the L4WB initiatives (into business, education, finance, politics, etc);
- Educate the media to add L4WB metrics to business and economics reporting;
- Create a shared well-being, prosperity, and dignity-for-all acronym similar to CSR;
- Quick-response/alternative narrative content organization/brand;
- Prepare social-media friendly stories of success and perspectives that frame the well-being narrative;
- Highlight existing/other outlet stories that push the new narrative;
- Report on tangible stories, cases studies of new metrics;
- “Smaller” tasks:
 - a. Draft compelling media version of zero draft narrative & concise media packet;
 - b. Build media list of receptive outlets, producers, personalities;
 - c. Invite media to the conferences - existing sustainability, thriving, well-being conferences including L4WB - so that they are exposed to these ideas;
 - d. Create specific events and invite media.

The two following areas are clearly critical, but no working groups have been formed yet to flesh them out:

MM9: Agriculture

The way we produce our food and fiber is unsustainable. It is energy intensive, chemical intensive, wasteful of water and wasteful of almost half the food produced globally. As a result, it is the second primary driver of climate change, and is itself at risk from climate change. The average molecule of food travels 2,500 miles before someone eats it, and the world is one bad harvest away from famine. The neoliberal assumption, and commonly held perception both in the food industry and policy circles, is that “modern” industrial agriculture is our only option for feeding a planet that may be filled with 9 or 10 billion people. In fact, 70 - 80% of the world’s food is produced by smallholder farmers, and both UN Food and Agriculture Organization and UNCTAD now recognize that only organic, small scale agriculture can meet people’s needs. Combining the best new science of organic production and regenerative agriculture and holistic range management is also the best way that we can return carbon back to the soil and begin to run climate change backwards. We need this alternative pathway to be taken seriously in policy circles, country agriculture departments, schools of animal husbandry and agriculture, and in the farming community.

Desired narrative goals (how we know we succeeded on the narrative)...

When the topic of feeding the world is raised in policy and business circles, the discussion of small, organic, and holistic approaches is raised as a key pathway.

Government agriculture departments study and incentivize exploration and expansion of regenerative models

Press coverage of food and farmer issues explores regenerative agriculture in a serious way, not a sideshow

A younger generation of farmers, excited by the possibilities of a new (or very old) style of farming and animal husbandry, stays engaged and actively shifts their family farms

...which produce these desired end goals

Ensure that all people have the ability to feed themselves with healthy locally produced food.

Transition agriculture to regenerative practices that promote health in people, communities and the soil.

How will we know we succeeded

- Soil carbon [increases four percent every year](#);
- Acreage under [holistic management](#) increases every year, reaching 1 billion hectares of land being holistically managed by 2025;
- [Cover-cropping](#) becomes the dominant way that cropland is managed

- Acreage managed organically increases 10% per year (consistent with [recent increases](#))

Potential Pathways

- Spread Savory Hubs so that every country has at least one
- Teach [regenerative agriculture](#) in agricultural universities
- Ensure the creation of training for local farmers in regenerative agriculture;
- Hold events with the USDA and other national agriculture departments on scaling up regenerative methods, including training on marketing of non-factory methods to farmers and consumers.
- Begin to shift subsidies away from conventional agriculture to regenerative methods;

Potential Actions

- Shift from industrial to regenerative agriculture;
- Facilitate farm to table, and producer to processor to consumer movements like the Savory Institute's "Eat It, Wear It, Regenerate It" campaign.

MM10: Energy

Desired goals

The global use of fossil fuels powered the industrial revolution, and lifted humanity into the modern era, but has also created the climate crisis, [kills millions](#) around the world from air pollution and [other health impacts](#) and [distorts geopolitical stability](#). It is, increasingly, [no longer the cheapest option](#), as [cleaner renewable forms of energy](#) like solar and wind are displacing coal, oil, gas and nuclear. This is good news for [climate protection and economic development](#). And yet, the common perception in business, the media, and all conservative think tanks is that "renewables can't power the grid or our society." [Vested interests](#) and massive subsidies ([\\$10 million a minute going to the fossil energy](#) sector) are slowing the transition and [putting at risk our prosperity](#). It is imperative that we join the [hundreds of companies and thousands of cities](#) globally who have committed to making the transition to 100% clean healthy renewable energy. We must make it known the renewables are here, alternative clean tech transportation options are available, and necessary technologies for true scale -- such as storage -- are worth the investment.

How will we know we succeeded

We know we will have succeeded if:

- Departments of energy, transportation, and infrastructure all make clean technologies the core mission of their organizations

- Corporate (and government/municipal) energy departments see their role as procuring carbon-free energy, not sourcing electricity and natural gas at the lowest possible price, moving energy from a procurement issue to a strategic one.
- Corporate (and government/municipal) transportation departments pursue alternative fuel, hybrid, and EV vehicles exclusively going forward
- Policymakers and politicians discuss the transition to clean energy as the only path forward, and work with affected communities instead of telling them their jobs are safe
- Each year more new energy is generated from solar, wind and other renewable forms of energy than from fossil energy;
- We are on track to meet all of our energy needs from renewables by 2030;
- A strategy shows how the fossil fuel dependent companies and communities can make the transition to clean healthy renewable energy;
- Transportation shifts from gasoline to electric vehicles; electric charging infrastructure is developed to serve this shift;
- Cities are designed to be walkable and served by transit options
- The ratio of funds divested from fossil investments continues to double every few years – and assets invested in fossil falls ([Assets in funds committing to divest now ~ \\$5.3 trillion](#). Estimated value of [unburnable carbon assets ~ \\$22 trillion](#).)

Potential Pathways

Campaigns to raise awareness in policy and business circles that clean technologies are economic and a growth engine for jobs and the economy. Expand and multiply the efforts of organizations such as AEE

- Campaigns to raise awareness in policy and business circles that clean technologies are economic and a prosperity engine for jobs and the economy
- Expand and multiply the efforts of such organizations as [Advanced Energy Economy](#)
- Divest/ invest
- [Feed-in-tariffs](#)
- Renewable Portfolio Standards
- [Corporate commitments](#)

Potential Actions

- Shift from use of fossil to [renewable energy](#);
- Implement [climate protection](#);
- [Divest/ invest](#);
- [Municipalization](#);
- Create a [climate economy](#)

“Those who tell the stories rule
society.” – Plato

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