REALS – RESILIENT AND ECOLOGICAL APPROACHES FOR LIVING SUSTAINABLY
PROJECT PARTNERSHIP STATEMENT AND POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

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The views expressed in this publication reflect opinions of the REALS project participants as interpreted by the authors and does not represent official position of the Swedish Institute.

Photo credit: REALS project participants.
INTRODUCTION

Depletion of ecosystem services and the land’s inherent capacity to sustain human life and the ecosystem as we know it has gone too far. And the awareness about this is growing fast. Our knowledge about the accelerating release of CO2 and other Green House Gases into the atmosphere due to human impact is also well known. The alarming speed of biodiversity loss on lands and sea is less known and often underestimated by public and media, however it further complexifies and increases challenges which we face as a global community.

The world speaks about the need of sustainability. But what is it to “sustain”? A wooden board can be sustainable, but there’s not much life, flexibility, responsiveness in it. So – how can we keep, preserve and increase the resilience and re-generative capacity of the ecosystems themselves in meeting the challenges of today and the future?

Several approaches, tools and methods to support resilience are readily available and put into practice. Examples include local community-led initiatives for sustainability such as permaculture, ecovillages, and Transition Towns. Each of these movements combines a myriad of local practices related to regenerative rural and urban land management and stewardship. Except being places which host an interesting fusion of low- and high tech solutions, community-led initiatives are platforms for public/local participation and engagement necessary for holistic environmental care and stewardship.

The “REALS - Resilient and Ecological Approaches for Living Sustainably” project supported by the Swedish Institute (2013-2016) supported a bottom-up vision of community-led sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region (BSR) and beyond by collecting experience of community initiatives in the BSR including EU and neighbouring countries. REALS aimed to create networks and intercultural learning primarily between Sweden, Russia and Belarus, with a focus on socio-ecological resilience and sustainable lifestyle. The project goals are to increase learning, awareness and access to information in relation to sustainable lifestyles, waste reduction and sustainable resource management. Detailed information about the project, its partners and activities can be found on the project website (http://realsproject.org) and in social media (links on website).

This document summarises the theoretical and practical insights discussed and formulated by the international project participants during the REALS activities – workshops, trainings, practical actions, informal exchange of experience. Important source of information was the interviews with the project participants made in 2016. As the result, several suggestions for policy, management and funding programs in the BSR have been formulated.

The document does not pretend to be a comprehensive academic analysis of the best practices and scientifically-based policy proposal. Rather, we see it as an important “message from the ground” to policy-makers in the BSR reflecting the range of themes, barriers and opportunities faces by practitioners and experts creating and enabling resilient communities in the EU BSR and neighbouring countries.

The document consists of three parts. Section 1 provides general reflections on sustainability in the BSR and call for the need to reconsider “traditional” views on sustainable development in the region in favour of approaches more adaptive to complexity, local needs and socio-ecological diversity. Section 2 considers the sustainability in the BSR in the context of achieving the new Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined in the UN’s “Agenda 2030”. Section 3 gives more focused overviews of specific regenerative land-stewardship practices and policies that should be supported and promoted in the region. All three sections contain the Questions and Recommendations by the REALS partners as a feedback and contribution to the common goal - to build wholesome sustainability in the Baltic Sea Region.
SECTION 1
GOVERNANCE AND POLICY SUITABLE FOR RESILIENT AND COMPLEX ADAPTIVE SYSTEMS

The key questions of sustainability governance increasingly risen by the academic literature as well as coming from practical experiences of local communities are:

“What do we need to be capable to skilfully navigate through increasing complexity and uncertainty, with the aim of supporting resilience and the regenerative capacity of our systems?”

“How can we further explore approaches, formats and strategies for policy which suit the complexity and diversity which reality holds?”

At the core in REALS and associated networks, there is an insight that the world isn’t working as a machine, where you can find a magical button which repeatedly can be clicked followed by the same repeated outcome. The earth’s life-supporting systems and their related challenges are highly complex, living and uncertain. The outcomes will look different in different contexts and through time.

Examples of such complex systems are interconnected ecological, social and economical systems living and developing within a certain territory – big and small settlements and communes. Each such territory and system is unique. Although significant “pool” of expert knowledge and successful patterns are readily available, complex systems ask for more than experts and best practices for finding solutions which work through time and in each given context.

Inflexible and highly centralized policies can often be hindrances for increased local development, low-tech innovative thinking and resilience. Examples of this are to be found within building permissions, sewage system regulations, CO2 tax regulations, procurement-rules within the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), and within the European regulation of seeds. At the same time, decentralized governance can also bring challenges. Water, soil, biodiversity, food-distribution and consumption are highly interconnected. Nature doesn’t adapt to human-made boundaries. A river flows through many communities. Decentralized communities can lack resources, expertise and knowledge needed to support diverse large-scale initiatives. Skilful coordination between regions as well as between stakeholders supported by lifelong learning, training and dialogue between actors are critically important for sustainability and resilience. Multi-level governance based on effective distribution of the resources (financial, human, informational, cultural and others) are key solution for balancing complex systems.

However, changing the management paradigm from an experts- and market-led approach towards a multi level governance model where markets and experts only play one role of many, require “cultivating” ways of common work which are people-centered, inclusive, appreciative, diverse and oriented towards flexible, need-oriented and strategic solutions.

Sustainability researchers state that “successful policies for complex, adaptive systems will typically need to be adaptive themselves” (Bankes, 2002) Academic literature argues that the central feature of the classical planning and decision-making is identification of a single “best” model describing the system of interest, followed by designing a policy that is “best” in the context of that model.
Nevertheless, the practice shows that this approach often fails when applied to strategic long-term decisions in the conditions of uncertainty. Researchers frequently warn about the tendency to apply single, technological solutions to complex problems.

The need for adaptive policies is already well known, yet there is still much to explore in terms of how to implement this need on practice and how to create structures which truly care for people, local communities and the planet.

One example of such “caring” approach is permaculture design based on three ethics of: Social care, Earth care and Fair shares. REALS partners actively work on designing and supporting permacultural practices in different parts of the Baltic Sea region. Our experience shows what the most beneficial and “caring” solution for people and planet are different according to context and one of the most important – and still open – question is: how can we design for an increased sense of care?

Community based approaches and innovative solution-focus for resilience are context-dependent and diverse. Participating in the REALS project has increased our common insight that there is a need for adaptive policy and structures which embrace and enable existing local mosaics of creative approaches and initiatives for sustainable life.

We see a general need for the Baltic Sea Region and beyond to continue and increase academic reflections and practical actions in the fields of non-anthropocentric adaptive policy, community resilience, sustainability and caring relationships. We call for increased enquiry on how regulations and jurisdictional structures can be, on the one hand flexible enough to adapt to the local needs while, on the other hand, being, robust enough to give support and care for the health of local culture, people, communities, economy, animals and ecosystems?

We believe that responsive, context-dependent and adaptive policy can:

- Empower and enable local community-based initiatives for sustainability.
- Create access to expertise, good examples, practical experience and engagement embedded in grass-root initiatives ready to be scaled up.

Based on these reflections, more specific questions to the policy process appear:

How could policy be structured in a way that its design is flexible enough to respond to the varying context, but does not lose general oversight necessary to provide holistic benefits for people, communities and larger bioregions?

How do the most beneficial and “caring” solution for people and planet differ according to context? Can the Permaculture ethics (Social care, Earth care and Fair shares) guide practical policy work?

Which kind of policy can respond to the increased uncertainty, unique local needs and bio-cultural diversity in exploring adaptive and resilient policy in favour of socio-ecological “care”?

Using practical experience, reflections and discussion during the project the REALS partners formulated several suggestions and recommendations.
RECOMMENDATIONS

We suggest that policies and regulations in BSR can be more context-responsive and enabled by:

• In their design being responsive and sensitive towards emergence, changing needs and opportunities of diverse local initiatives. This is crucial for the enablement of diverse, holistic approaches to local sustainability initiatives. “Emergence requires constant attention, support and resources, and the ‘success’ of emergence – like successful leadership – depends on the quality of resources and attention that individuals and managers bring to the processes”.

• Finding forms of regulations and offering funding schemes which encourage experimentation and development of small scale and appropriate solutions for sustainability within social, economical and ecological spheres. In today’s society, technology is often adapted to big scale industrial systems. There is a need for increased legal, affordable and “people-owned” appropriate technology adapted to each place and need. Funding programs and policies encouraging bottom up technological solutions, can motivate a diversity of creative processes, socio-ecological solutions, new jobs and an increased satisfaction in lifestyle.

• Enabling financial, educational and consultative support for and with local initiatives for sustainability such as ecovillages, permaculture initiatives, urban gardens and more. The support should be built on an awareness of the holistic basis of sustainability. This would strengthen peoples’ capacity to take local initiatives for sustainability further.

• Using the precautionary principle for designing and implementing plans, policies and practices at all levels. Discussions on adaptive policies enabling local initiatives for sustainability, made special emphasis on applying “precautionary principle” which calls for refraining from actions if the environmental effect of it is uncertain and can be potentially harmful. This principle is usually seeing in the context of today’s high-tech innovation and technologies, however it can also be applied by local communities using low-tech solutions. Based on the practical experience of the REALS partners we highlight the need of an increased use of the precautionary principle for preventing harmful decisions, policies and interpretations of policies.

• Encourage the use of truly participatory process facilitation, decision making and leadership with the aim to build on multiple perspectives. Establish participatory leadership trainings and process facilitation within BSR, and beyond for all levels of society. Participatory methods such as Open Space Technology, Appreciative Inquiry, World Café and Pro Action Café as well as online collective drafting of texts, have been continuously and successfully used within the REALS partnership. These are methods tailored to facilitate group processes within complex, uncertain systems in a need for co-management, dialogue, and co-governance. By acknowledging the benefits of this and also by seeing the increase of participatory leadership methods in our partner- and associated partner organizations (examples: Permaculture networks, Transition network, ECOLISE.eu, Global Ecovillage Network), we
highlight the value of participatory group-processes and a skills to organise and facilitate such processes. In such initiatives and events equity, consent and participation becomes central goals themselves. Increased access to trainings with focus on participatory facilitation would open up for increased cross-silo and a multi-level governed interaction and co-creation.

- As a partnership we would encourage establishment of Baltic Sea Region based projects with primarily focus on science-policy-practice-community/grassroot interaction, participatory involvement and facilitation and new ways of leadership. Examples of actions to be supported by such project or series of projects include:

  - Analysing and developing funding mechanisms which support community-led initiatives for sustainability
  - Analysing and developing mechanisms and practices of Multi Level Governance (MLG) suitable for different part of the BSR and the region at whole to enable community-led-, bottom-up interaction with the sense of care at its centre.
  - Establishing and supporting free local consultancies built on an awareness of complexity, non-silo and holistic thinking. (Permaculture design, Transition, Ecovillage Design Education (EDE) living systems design, and socio-ecological innovation are examples).
  - Establishing and supporting educational and networking forums for community-led initiatives on diversity of livelihoods, awareness rising, experimentation, entrepreneurship and innovation. The Nordic model for popular education is an example.
  - Increase cross-sectoral research which bridges academia and grass-root initiatives with practical experience.

Further in this document we elaborate on these general ideas in the context of international sustainability goals and applying the UN Agenda-2030 document (Section 2) and more detailed reflection and recommendations particularly relevant to the REALS partners, discussed and tested by them (Section 3).
SECTION 2
MAKING THE GLOBAL GOALS OF THE AGENDA 2030 REAL AND INTEGRATING THEM INTO THE EU STRATEGY FOR BALTIC SEA REGION AND POLICY STRUCTURES

“The new agenda must become part of the contract between people, including civil society and responsible business, and their governments – national and local”

Ban Ki-moon, UN Secretary-General

“We all should start to think on how to translate these global goals into nation-scale implementing plans. Here is a unique opportunity for the BSR countries to take a lead in making SDGs truly transformative, empowering the regions and local communities to drive the process”

Council of the Baltic Sea States, 2015

Brief background of Agenda2030/ the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

At the United Nations Sustainable Development Summit on 25 September 2015, world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes a set of 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to achieve by 2030 (further – Agenda 2030).

The new Agenda is a global and universal document, requiring a collective response from all countries and regions in the world. The implementation of the 17 SDGs will take different forms in diverse regions and realities due to capacities, needs for development and environmental status. The 17 SDGs include 169 targets and could be divided into 3 groups – Biosphere, Society and Economy. Nevertheless, following the principles of sustainable development, SDGs and targets are closely interrelated and could be achieved only in connections with each other.

All UN member states (including all BSR and neighbouring countries) have declared their support of the Agenda 2030. This means the SDGs should be embedded into plans and national and regional policies. This also applies to the Baltic Sea Region (BSR). For example, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) has, under the Polish presidency, decided to develop a new sustainable development agenda for the BSR after 2015

These goals are the following (see Figure):

1) End poverty in all its forms everywhere;
2) End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture;
3) Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages;
4) Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all;
5) Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls;
6) Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all;
7) Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all;
8) Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment, and decent work for all;
9) Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation;
10) Reduce inequality within and among countries;
11) Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable;
12) Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns;
13) Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts;
14) Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development;

1 “Cooperation on sustainable development in the Baltic Sea Region – climate change adaptation case study” CBSS Pl Precidency 16.10.2015
15) Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification and halt and reverse land degradation, and halt biodiversity loss;

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

17) Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalise the global partnership for sustainable development.

About half of the SDGs are either directly environmentally related or address the sustainability of natural resources: health, food and agriculture, water and sanitation, human settlements, energy, climate change, sustainable consumption, oceans and terrestrial ecosystems.

Implementation of the SDGs: national ambitions and assessment

The Table represents the capacity of the Baltic states and the bordering countries in achieving the Agenda 2030 based on the assessment of SD Index (UN, 2016. https://issuu.com/unsdsn/docs/sdg_index_and_dashboards_country_pr). The table shows that the BSR countries form one of the most advanced regions in the world, with Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Germany as SDG leaders and all other countries taking places in the top 30% of the world list. Parts of the experience of developed countries of the BSR could be used by others as “good practices” if successfully transferred to other states, where differences of contexts, power structures, cultural norms are taken into account. Having said that, it is important to note, that if the assessment of the “lead” countries would have taken into account the whole ecological footprint, the picture would have more complex character, as big parts of consumables in these countries supports unsustainable structures in other parts of the world.
Further, the Baltic region, and neighbouring countries/regions such as NW Russia and Belarus seem to lack information and advocacy for the Agenda2030 on local levels, to a high extent. Simultaneously, the Council of the Baltic Sea States (CBSS) calls the goals “a unique opportunity for the BSR countries to take a lead in making SDGs truly transformative, empowering the regions and local communities to drive the process”. The council plan to draft a new SD agenda for the region during the spring 2016, adapted to the Agenda 2030.

The setup of assessment- and monitoring structures, and the level of “radicality” embedded in it, is of essential importance for the level of healthy change which the Agenda 2030 will be able to support and activate.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>World’s SDG Index</th>
<th>Strengths</th>
<th>Weaknesses</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>EU member states</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Sweden</strong></td>
<td>2 (of 149)</td>
<td>Goal 1 “No poverty”&lt;br&gt;Goal 3 “Good health and well-being”&lt;br&gt;Goal 4 “Quality education”&lt;br&gt;Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”&lt;br&gt;Goal 7 “Affordable and clean energy”&lt;br&gt;Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”&lt;br&gt;Goal 10 “Reduced inequality”&lt;br&gt;Goal 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”&lt;br&gt;Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals”</td>
<td>Goal 8 “Decent work and economic growth”&lt;br&gt;Goal 12 “Responsible consumption and production”&lt;br&gt;Goal 13 “Climate action”&lt;br&gt;Goal 14 “Life below water”&lt;br&gt;Goal 15 “Life on land”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Denmark</strong></td>
<td>2 (of 149)</td>
<td>Goal 1 “No poverty”&lt;br&gt;Goal 3 “Good health and well-being”&lt;br&gt;Goal 4 “Quality education”&lt;br&gt;Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”&lt;br&gt;Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”&lt;br&gt;Goal 10 “Reduced inequality”&lt;br&gt;Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals”</td>
<td>Goal 8 “Decent work and economic growth”&lt;br&gt;Goal 12 “Responsible consumption and production”&lt;br&gt;Goal 13 “Climate action”&lt;br&gt;Goal 14 “Life below water”&lt;br&gt;Goal 15 “Life on land”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Estonia</strong></td>
<td>21 (of 149)</td>
<td>Goal 1 “No poverty”&lt;br&gt;Goal 4 “Quality education”&lt;br&gt;Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”&lt;br&gt;Goal 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”</td>
<td>Goal 3 “Good health and well-being”&lt;br&gt;Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”&lt;br&gt;Goal 13 “Climate action”&lt;br&gt;Goal 15 “Life on land”&lt;br&gt;Goal 16 “Peace and justice. Strong institutions”&lt;br&gt;Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Finland</strong></td>
<td>4 (of 149)</td>
<td>Goal 1 “No poverty”&lt;br&gt;Goal 3 “Good health and well-being”&lt;br&gt;Goal 4 “Quality education”&lt;br&gt;Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”&lt;br&gt;Goal 10 “Reduced inequality”&lt;br&gt;Goal 11 “Sustainable cities and communities”</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country</td>
<td>Number (of 149)</td>
<td>Goals</td>
<td>Other Goals</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Germany     | 6               | Goal 1 “No poverty”  
Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”  
Goal 7 “Affordable and clean energy” | Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”  
Goal 13 “Climate action”  
Goal 14 “Life below water”  
Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals” |
| Latvia      | 28 (of 149)     | Goal 1 “No poverty”  
Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”  
Goal 7 “Affordable and clean energy”  
Goal 14 “Life below water” | Goal 2 “Zero hunger”  
Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”  
Goal 15 “Life on land”  
Goal 16 “Peace and justice. Strong institutions”  
Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals” |
| Lithuania   | 31 (of 149)     | Goal 1 “No poverty”  
Goal 4 “Quality education”  
Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”  
Goal 14 “Life below water” | Goal 7 “Affordable and clean energy”  
Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”  
Goal 13 “Climate action”  
Goal 15 “Life on land”  
Goal 16 “Peace and justice. Strong institutions”  
Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals” |
| Poland      | 38 (of 149)     | Goal 1 “No poverty”  
Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”  
Goal 12 “Responsible consumption and production”  
Goal 14 “Life below water” | Goal 2 “Zero hunger”  
Goal 7 “Affordable and clean energy”  
Goal 8 “Recent work and economic growth”  
Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”  
Goal 13 “Climate action”  
Goal 14 “Life below water”  
Goal 15 “Life on land”  
Goal 16 “Peace and justice. Strong institutions”  
Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals” |

**EU neighboring countries**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Number (of 149)</th>
<th>Goals</th>
<th>Other Goals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Belarus     | 23 (of 149)     | Goal 1 “No poverty”  
Goal 4 “Quality education”  
Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”  
Goal 10 “Reduced inequality”  
Goal 12 “Responsible consumption and production” | Goal 2 “Zero hunger”  
Goal 7 “Affordable and clean energy”  
Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”  
Goal 13 “Climate action”  
Goal 16 “Peace and justice. Strong institutions”  
Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals” |
| Russia      | 47 (of 149)     | Goal 1 “No poverty”  
Goal 6 “Clean water and sanitation”  
Goal 12 “Responsible consumption and production”  
Goal 14 “Life below water” | Goal 3 “Good health and well-being”  
Goal 9 “Industry, innovation and infrastructure”  
Goal 10 “Reduced inequality”  
Goal 13 “Climate action”  
Goal 14 “Life below water”  
Goal 15 “Life on land”  
Goal 16 “Peace and justice. Strong institutions”  
Goal 17 “Partnerships for the goals” |

A series of interviews made with REALS partners confirm the results of the UN assessment. Strengths and weaknesses in achieving SDGs at the national level mentioned by the community leaders and experts generally correspond with the Table 2.1. Nevertheless, the REALS partners emphasize the ultimate importance to understand clear and strategically: what is the real purpose and benefit of the SDGs, how can they be made an effective working instrument for achieving better and more sustainable world rather than being another formal framework for repackaging “business as usual models into a more sound and “contemporary” statistics?
In the following section we identify the main “areas of concern” by the REALS partners expressed during the interviews, formal and informal discussions at the meetings, training and seminars during the project. We hope these reflections, followed by suggested directions for action will be considered by decision-makers and taken into account when designing and implementing SDGs in the region.

**SDGs in Baltic Sea Region – more than new statistics. REALS questions and recommendations**

This section mirrors a “collective intelligence” of REALS, which has been evolving through conversations, communication and activities. Below we identify the main areas of concern, question marks and recommendations regarding the SDG’s.

**Cross-sectoral and cross-level approach for community enabling**

A general vision within the UN is that efficient governance mechanisms for the SDG’s have to be put in place at global, regional, national, local- and community-centered levels, encouraging all to take an active role. This will be based on participatory approaches, building upon the principles of transparency, accountability and empowering citizens, local communities, businesses, NGOs and other civil society players. How this is going to be realised in practice is still to be seen and worked out.

Lots of organizations and governmental institutions advocate for the implementation and integration of the Agenda national and regional policies. In parallel, several global campaigns are launched to increase popular awareness of the #Global goals. These campaigns (e.g. launched by the UN) often address the importance of local and community-led action and engagement.

But, although effective communication via Internet, media, and social-media is seen as critically important part of the process, the first and the most crucial step is to foster and enable community-led action on the ground. This experience has to be made highly visible through media and communicative tools widely spreading information on what actually happen within the existing mosaics of local fields, initiatives and communities, as well as inquire how that can be even more enabled, by seeing how common people are encouraged to act and learn.

**We ask:**

*How can the SDGs be used to support and facilitate changes on the ground? How can Agenda-2030 support local initiatives working at the cross-section of the SDG targets (e.g. social, economic and environmental community resilience)?*

*How can local initiatives support and contribute to implementation of the national and international SDG targets?*

*How the BSR and neighbouring area can support and facilitate effective common actions under Agenda-2030 including coordination between national SDG plans, promoting integration, supporting information dissemination and setting up standards (e.g. for public involvement and monitoring)?***
The private sector and money driven corporate power – can it support the SDGs?

The private sector is rapidly gaining increased interest for the implementation of the SDGs, and corporations have been important stakeholders in the establishment of the Agenda2030. Many corporations do have a quickly growing sense of responsibility related to questions and challenges targeted by the goals. And the private/corporate sector is given high importance within the mainstream discussion on the Agenda2030 and its chances for achievement, often with green-tech highlighted as the main pathway to success.

Corporations are also seen as important collaborators within a wider need of a multi-stakeholder and cross-sectoral collaboration where responsibilities towards local needs and environmental regions are fully addressed.

We ask:

Can primarily money driven corporate interests truly support a world which perhaps needs to cultivate other forms of “capital” and value?²

Which changes (philosophical, economic, social, educational) have to be made to balance the interests of financial prosperity with other forms of human development and well-being (personal development, healthy environment, rights of all living beings, happiness)?

We will come back to these concerns further down.

A complex, “holistic” and integrated approach

The Agenda-2030 has been developed with an awareness of the highly complex and interconnected nature of today’s challenges. Therefore it takes steps beyond the three connected pillars of sustainable development: social, economic and ecological and embodies an approach where social, environmental, cultural, economic and “glocal” dimensions are integrated and interdependent.

The Stockholm Environment Institute (SEI) points out the need for an integrated approach: “This is where the MDGs (Millennium Development Goals) fell short: they identified sectoral goals – and targets under them – with little consideration of how efforts to attain a goal in one sector would affect (or be affected by) efforts in another sector, or whether the total demand for key resources could be met by existing supplies without degrading the resource base and underlying ecosystems.”³ Many SDG proposals to date have followed a similar pattern.

Yet a different “holistic” approach is gaining support as well – one that aims to integrate goals across sectors to make the SDGs more cost-effective and efficient, reduce the risk that SDG actions will undermine one another, and ensure sustainable resource use. As a project-partnership based on the view that challenges and solutions related to healthy, sustainable and resilient life are always characterized by complexity and interdependency, the REALS warmly welcomes the holistic perspective which the Agenda2030 opens up for. Working with the interconnected benefits of our

² Read more on 8 forms of capital: http://www.recenterprise.com/
³ http://www.sei-international.org/publications?pid=2474
systems is crucial for re-generation of damaged ecosystems, health and social relations. This is a central insight from our partners as well as other communities within the permaculture-, ecovillage- and Transition Towns networks.

We ask:

How can an inter-sectoral and systemic approach actually empower bottom-up interaction and real justice for all - beyond “business as usual”?

Path to a fair and peaceful world?

Agenda2030/SDGs could be a new pathway to a more fair and sustainable world. It could support local communities and regions to act “glocally” – ie acting locally for both local and global sustainability, resilience and health. The achievement of basic levels of goods and services for all, where it goes hand in hand with re-generated ecosystem health and services, may be a future possibility for all everywhere. Improved and fair redistribution of wealth and resources (locally, regionally, globally); as well as equitable access to opportunities, information and rule of law – could be realised through the build up of resilience on all levels – environmentally, socially and individually.

But how can this tremendous capacity for change emerge in a world marked by the paradigms of neo-colonialism, patriarchy, racism and competition?

Criticism from many levels is pointing towards the double sidedness of, for example, development work - for each dollar given o economically poorer countries, 18 is taken out⁴.

We ask:

How can the SDG’s contribute to a new paradigm shift where they support the transition beyond a injustice and a “business as usual” approach?

How can the SDG’s bring true justice to all, including non human beings, within highly complex challenges?

New vision, innovative ideas

Within the 2030 Agenda, innovation is seen as a key to development and progress. And new “fresh” ideas are needed based on science, traditional knowledge and citizen common sense. But how will these new ideas effect the highly complex and interconnected ecosystems, socio-cultural communities and unique places where they are to be implemented? And which values can community-led action/engagement add to truly resilient implementation of solutions?

The implementation of Agenda 2030 depends on the participation and engagement of a multitude and diversity of stakeholders, and there are already great awareness and agreement embedded in the SDG-articulation pointing towards the need for powerful solutions to be continuously based on cross-sectoral and multi-level interaction, participation and governance. How this can be done and how it will look like seem to be very diffuse and ambiguous.

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As a project-partnership based on the view that challenges and solutions related to healthy, sustainable and resilient life always are characterized by complexity and interdependency, we warmly welcome the holistic perspective which the Agenda2030 opens up for. Nevertheless we ask:

How can the holistic approach embedded in the goals be kept? How can the silo-way of approach be prevented, where stakeholders only choose the goals and targets which suits them best?

How can the holistic vision embedded in the goals be a motor in rediscovering the essential interconnectedness of ecological, cultural, social and individual life?

RECOMMENDATIONS

- **We call for increased support and action related to local initiatives which has an inherent integrated approach and therefore targets many of the SDGs simultaneously.** There is a need to unleash the creativity we know exists, deepen participation of citizens and redirect funding streams to support community-led innovation projects. This call also highlights the need for policymakers to look over the horizon, and seeing beyond social innovation towards socio-ecological innovation, from cultural analysis to biocultural analysis, from anthropocentric to biocentric perspectives. This does not mean that specialism isn’t needed. It means that experts need leaders and companions who carry a bigger array of approaches and networks. Forms which allow integrated approaches can be cooperatives with a socio-ecological basis, community supported production, with CSA as an important example, ecovillages and other social initiatives as best practices for sustainable living. Permaculture- Transition and ecovillage projects as well as local governments for sustainability (example ICLEI) are examples which readily support an integrated implementation of the SDG’s.

- **We call for a radicalization concerning the SDG’s, its implementation, monitoring and financing.** Root causes should be addressed such a the wealth of the 1%, the externalization of ecological and social costs, and the non-recognition of ecological debt. Implementing the Agenda 2030 in a responsible, fair and just way will not be possible without taking these essential aspects into account. One of several necessary ways to do this is to include ecocide (eradicatingecocide.com) as an international crime within the Rome statues. Reducing ecologically perverse subsidies need to be an urgent and prominent measure to help get us to achieve a true cost economy.

- **We call for an alternative to GDP in measuring the SDG’s in terms of development, prosperity and health.** This call especially targets SDG 8. Goal 8 is the one goal which has received lots of doubt within the REALS partnership group. Alternative models include e.g. Gross National Happiness in Bhutan and a model developed within the Permaculture framework which include 8 forms of capital – cultural, social, living, material, financial, experiential, learning and spiritual².

- **We call for increased empowerment towards approaches within socio-ecological innovation, entrepreneurship and action.** Approaches which often have been situated “at the margins” can then begin to be placed closer towards the mainstream. Examples are illustrated by
these “multifaceted” and open ended questions: How can socio-ecological livelihoods create platforms for leadership trainings focused on sustainability and resilience? How can improved social wellbeing of people be integrated with land-stewardship and food production practices? How can increased personal resilience be interlinked with increased climate change adaptation?

• **We call for finance which is increasingly circular** in a regional and localised way, applying the principle of subsidiarity.

• **We call for cross-silo research and collaboration, pro-active awareness raising campaigns and advocacy:**
  - Development of the multi-purpose indicators to make assessment of the SDGs at all levels to monitor, evaluate and learn from the experience how to progress.
  - Building the capacities of countries to collect and analyze data, availability of information for different stakeholder group.
  - Raise the political will and preparedness, in the rich countries
  - Support innovative grass-root initiatives and decisions with holistic focus.

• **We call for increased trans-boundary cooperation and good governance:**
  - Support programs to work in border regions (similar to Interreg) on common issues
  - Promote inter-sectoral partnerships;
  - Share case studies and good practices
  - Support flagship programmes and projects focusing on community based action for sustainability.

• **We call for multi-stakeholder and public-private partnerships:**
  - Significant efforts should be further put for cooperation between citizens, civil society, various levels of government, private sector;
  - Establishment of issue-based coalitions and platforms that integrate multiple stakeholders (governments, civil society and the private sector) to improve decision-making, strategic planning, service delivery, knowledge sharing, and collective monitoring and accountability at all levels;
  - Change of the institutions for articulation and aggregation of diverse interests into policies.

**We call for more efficient and distribution of public finance (subsidies and taxation) prioritizing needs for sustainable community development. For example by:**
  - Stopping public finance flows to unsustainable practices;
  - Replacing the subsidisation of other unsustainable practices in favour of sustainable alternatives.
  - Supporting systems aiming to develop Basic Income

• **We call for more fair and “green” trade:**
  - Ensure that “external costs” are defined and internalized within all trade regulations, and within instruments such as taxation.
  - Ensure that in the process of trading that there is a full respect for the environment, and that trade should not violate any of the principles or rights expressed in the Universal Declaration on Human Rights;
  - Ensure that all trade practices are based on principles of good governance, such as transparency, accountability and the rule of law.
  - Encourage circular economies within local regions and communities, e. g. through procurement regulations which encourage local participation, inclusion and production.
  - Research and test forms of local currencies, with LETS (Local Exchange Trading System) as one example.
  - Advocate for the law of End Ecocide. (See Section 3).

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5 Ellenmacarthurfoundation.org
SECTION 3
CREATING PATHWAYS FOR URBAN AND RURAL LAND STEWARDSHIP, REGENERATIVE ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND CARE. REALS VISIONS.

“If we look at history we can see that every civilisation that debased its soil resources is now extinct. Incredibly, humans move more soil around each year than was created during the last ice age. Even organic agriculture deems it acceptable to maintain a certain amount of soil loss annually. Think about it. It is not good enough. That is not sustainable”

Richard Perkins, “Making Small Farms Work”

Building on the reflections and insights of the previous sections, in Section 3 we present recommendations and tools inspired by hands-on experience and practices by the REALS partners and networks on their pathways to resilient and sustainable communities. It would be an impossible mission to address all related practices that are important to highlight, and we do not have an ambition to make a comprehensive “best practice” analysis. Instead, we chose a number of topics which we see as relevant to our partnership, and important for establishment and empowerment of local, community-led initiatives for sustainability and resilience in the Baltic Sea Region and its neighbouring catchment area.

These insights include practical and technical advises as well as social, behavioural and philosophical ones. We hope that these reflections will be useful for those who want to go beyond “simply sustainable” and not only refrain from destroying our life-sustaining systems but want to manage human activities in a way which re-generates, builds and stewards soil, sequesters CO2, increases biodiversity and – in long and short term-strengthens the overall resilience of ecosystems and the services they provide to people and planet. The insights we want to share and reflect on are:

1) Bridging together practitioners and academia by introducing the concept of agroecology in the Baltic Sea region and neighbouring countries
2) Applying UN “4/1000 Initiative: Soils for Food Security and Climate” and other initiatives which ensure that agriculture- and land management practices plays its role in combating climate change
3) Promoting means of production, livelihoods and land management which supports polycultures, agrobiodiversity and regeneration of soil
4) Introducing the concept of regenerative agriculture and land stewardship in the Baltic Sea region and neighbouring countries
5) Enabling platforms for action-based learning and research in the Baltic Sea region and neighbouring countries for regenerative care- and use of land-related resources
6) Supporting social resilience and sustainability as crucial factors for wholesome land stewardship
7) Stressing the need of circular localism and diversity - localised and circular economies, communities, farms, enterprises and activities
8) Promoting socio-ecological entrepreneurship, innovation and land “care”
9) Implementing the law of EndEcocide
A whole-systems approach to agriculture and food systems development based on traditional knowledge, alternative agriculture, and local food system experiences. While being a framework for multiple approaches to farming, gardening and community structures, agroecology is always tailored along the specifics in a given context in terms of local needs and possibilities (e.g. shelter, food, water, goods, market access etc.), traditions, ecological conditions (e.g. topography, climatic zones, soil and more).

Agroecology is linking ecology, culture, economics, and society to sustain agricultural production, healthy environments, and viable food and farming communities, while using essential principles of ecology in its design. Agroecological farming systems are "knowledge intensive" holding increasingly integrated relations between the diversity of biotic/abiotic factors in ecosystems, as well as increasingly interrelated relations between different actors in society – farmers, consumers, academia and movements (to mention some).

The former UN reporter for human rights to food Olivier de Schutter advocates for agroecological systems as a way to reach local prosperity, food sovereignty and resilience of local communities and ecosystems. Simultaneously, agroecology gives a way to tackle climate change, loss of biodiversity and soils, contamination of waters, and the violation of peoples’ and communities’ rights and needs.

RECOMMENDATIONS

• A broader introduction of the concept of agroecology in all related activities in the BSR (in farming, policy, academics, private and civil sector) will open up a new field of discussion and dialogue for bridging practitioners (such as permaculturalists) and academia. It would also give stakeholders a creative opportunity to rethink mainstream approaches to agriculture and the overall structure of local communities and governments.

• The Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) has an ongoing MSc programme in Agroecology, and Aarhus University (Denmark) has an established department working in agroecology. These are examples on how the holistic land-use concept has been introduced in the academic institutions in the Nordic countries. This experience should be studied, spread, promoted and supported in a similar way in NW Russia, Belarus and other parts of the BSR.

• An EUSBSR flagship project under the theme "Agroecology in the Baltic Sea Region and neighbouring countries" would further facilitate the introduction of the concept.

2. Applying UN “4/1000 Initiative: Soils for Food Security and Climate” and other initiatives which ensure that agriculture- and land management practices plays its role in combating climate change

Soil degradation poses a threat to more than 40% of the Earth’s land surface. Climate change is accelerating the rate of degradation, with major impacts on food security and small farmers. Our capacity to feed 9.5 billion people...
in 2050 in the face of a changing climate will depend greatly on our ability to keep our soils fertile. Restoring degraded agricultural lands and increasing the soil carbon rate play an important role in addressing the three-fold challenge of food security, adaptation of food systems and people to climate change, and mitigation of human-induced emissions.

The UN “4/1000 Initiative” engages stakeholders in shifting towards resilient agriculture through sustainable soil management that generates jobs and incomes, thereby ensuring sustainable development. The initiative consists of a voluntary action plan under the Lima-Paris Action Agenda (LPAA), backed up by an ambitious research programme. The official launch of the initiative took place at COP 21 in Paris, 1st of December 2015.7

3. Promoting means of production, livelihoods and land management which supports polycultures, agrobiodiversity and regeneration of soil

Biodiversity is a key ingredient in a resilient and healthy world. Biodiversity services provide and support life sustaining systems. Agricultural biodiversity (agrobiodiversity) is an essential part of agroecology and a factor which has been rapidly decreasing during the modernization of agriculture. Loss of agrobiodiversity also applies to organic agriculture, where areas are increasingly put into large scale and monocultural, organic production. The re-biodiversification of our agro-ecosystems is urgent and would unleash great potential for ecological and social resilience.

As mentioned in Section 1 of this paper, we see a need to go beyond management within specialized and isolated “silos”, sectors and levels of society. Collaborative concepts such as agroecology have a tendency to open up for holistic approaches to both land stewardship, as well as inter-culturality and community resilience – all crucial for bio-diverse livelihoods and practices.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Bio-diverse socio-ecosystems should be supported and applied such as: in rural

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areas – agroforestry systems, forest gardens, riparian buffer zones, pasture rotations based on holistic management, in urban areas - green wedges, parks, intensive market gardens, green roofs and walls. These examples of good practices should be spread and promoted for a wider application. Life-long education, community based education and experience exchange should be supported and promoted within the region.

4. Introducing the concept of regenerative agriculture and land stewardship in the Baltic Sea region and neighbouring countries

Research, knowledge and experience within the field of regenerative agriculture is rapidly increasing around the world. Going “beyond organic” supports forms of land stewardship which also emphasises “companionship” between people, community and land, where applied methods support regeneration of soils and the overall ecosystems self-generating capacity. (See resources and links in the end of the document) The HELCOM Baltic Sea Action Plan highlights two areas where multifunctional systems have much to give i.e.: “nutrient losses from urban as well as scattered settlements shall be reduced to an acceptable level with full implementation” and “the agricultural sector is the land-based source where major reductions are needed”.

Several examples of multifunctional systems and related recommendations are presented below.

Agroforestry

We see agroforestry as an important example for further exploration of benefits and synergies within agroecological and multifunctional systems. It demonstrates that caring and sustaining communities and people on land -with food, energy and materials- can be done in ways which recycle, build soil, biodiversity and climate change mitigation.

The European Agroforestry Federation (EURAF) has successfully advocated for incentives for the promotion of agroforestry within EU Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). According to EURAF, agroforestry practices are listed as Ecological Focus Areas and farmers can receive greening payments for establishment of such plots in pillar I (Reg.(EU) 1307/2013), Article 23. It now depends on Members States and regions to use this article to adopt agroforestry measures in their Rural Development

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Agriculture and the Environment IX, Valuing Ecosystems: Policy, Economic and Management Interactions (2012), Developing modern, multifunctional agroforestry systems for sustainable intensification:

http://orgprints.org/21905/1/2012.Smith%20SACSEPA.pdf
Programmes. The European Commission has written guidelines for implementation, a measure fiche, where further valuable links are given. Methods found within the research and practice of agroforestry can also be beneficial for neighbouring countries (e.g. Russia) in meeting the challenge of unintended afforestation of old agricultural land, taking place in abandoned rural areas.

Use of perennial plants in agriculture and gardens (trees, bushes, perennial grasses, herbs, vegetables and climbers)

Among many other advantages, perennials builds soil biodiversity, sequesters carbon (big root zones), prolongs growing seasons and decreases labour input. Preventing soils over-tilling decrease use of fossil fuels, maintains nutrients, soil structure and moisture and prevents erosion. Sequestering CO2 into soil and biomass is a crucial aspect of combating climate change. By reintroducing carbon into the ground, the regenerative living capacity of the soil is increasing its ability to meet demands of food supply, control of erosion, nutrient run-off and much more. Methods of measuring the rate of carbon sequestration and make respective payment to farmers for these actions is already accepted in the US and Australia.

Promotion of Regenerative forestry - Close to Nature Forestry / The Lübeck model.

The Lübeck model is proven workable model which has given significant results both for economical income as for social, cultural and ecological capital. REALS has a continuous contact with forests experts in Sweden and Germany who work as consultants within the Lübeck model framework. The Lübeck model is used by the city of Gothenburg in Sweden and has proven to give multiple benefits, e.g. related to biodiversity, quality wood and opportunities for citizen recreation.

An interesting fact is that in 1920s, the Soviet State had a large perennial wheat breeding program. Although this initiative resulted in sporadic efforts only, research organizations such as The Land Institute have introduced the notion that perennial polycultures could be developed into “an agricultural system with the ecological stability of the prairie and a grain yield comparable to that from annual crops”.10


Promoting regenerative agriculture and lands stewardship

Educational and cross-sectoral participatory trainings (e.g. with permaculture, agroecology and agroforestry teachers/designers) are necessary for practitioners in the EU BSR and neighbouring countries. This could be done in a Flagship project within the EUSBSR Horizontal Action “Climate”.

Increased enablement of regenerative, multifunctional design and land management of urban areas.

The urban context provides many opportunities for socio-ecological entrepreneurship, learning, direct producer-consumer contacts and much more. Applying principles of ecosystem management and supporting community development and decision-making is essential for sustainable use of urban areas. EU BSR countries have capacities to support and promote flagship initiatives in community- and ecosystem-oriented urban development. Emerging public initiatives in neighbouring counties (Russia, Belarus) need to be supported and promoted for replication e.g. through EU projects.
**RECOMMENDATIONS**

Means of production, livelihoods and land management which support multifunction and multiple benefits should be promoted including increased biodiversity and agrobiodiversity, regeneration of soils and prevention of nutrient runoff, as well as social aspects such as farmers resilience and rights, capital resilience, “closeness” to nature etc.

**Awareness should be increased on designing and implementing agroforestry systems in the EUSBSR and in EUBSR neighbouring countries such as NW Russia and Belarus.** This can be facilitated by the guidelines of the European Commission.

**Increased research and breeding programs on perennial varieties suitable for the EUBSR and neighbouring countries is needed** for a resilient region in terms of climate, biodiversity, healthy soil, and the prevention of runoff of nutrients into the Baltic Sea, as well as nutritional analysis of already existing perennial food crops.

**Ecosystem based solutions to forestry** (such as the Lübeck model) taking advantages of working with natural ways of forest successions, re-afforestation and diversity should be encouraged

**Carbon sequestration in land-use should be promoted and supported** through e.g.: (a) growing perennial plants in polycultural systems using advantage of rotation of pasture-fed livestock\(^\text{12}\); (b) though biochar and terra preta practices\(^\text{13}\).

**Cross-sectoral trainings on new methods (e.g. with permaculture, agroecology and agroforestry) should be developed and supported** in EU BSR and neighbouring countries based on successful life-learning education practices and local experiences.

**EU BSR countries should take a lead on developing and supporting initiatives promoting social-ecological entrepreneurship, ecosystem approach and community involvement in urban areas** (e.g. urban agriculture, multi-functional use of urban space, etc.) Urban initiatives in EU BSR and neighbouring countries should be supported by cooperation and funding programmes in the BSR.

**5. Enabling platforms for action-based learning and research in the Baltic Sea region and neighbouring countries for regenerative care- and use of land-related resources**

During the interviews with the REALS partners, we asked our colleagues “How can good practices/ and leaders from local communities be enabled / encouraged to take a lead in development for resiliency and sustainability?”

In Sweden, answers repeatedly pointed towards the value of the adult oriented popular education, which includes Folk High Schools, study circles and more. In contrast with formal education, popular education orients towards practical implementation, “hands on” learning by doing as well as personal growth and empowerment. It is also easily related to life-centered and life-long learning, a quality which easily relates to people being active “on the land”, such as farmers, gardeners, community builders and permaculture designers. Around 150 Folk High Schools are spread all over Sweden and offer a big diversity of courses, among which many focuses on sustainability. The wish to enable similar platforms for learning in NW Russia and Belarus as well as in Poland and Estonia has repeatedly been expressed from REALS partners and associated partners.

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\(^{12}\) Savory Institute, [http://savory.global/](http://savory.global/)

\(^{13}\) [biochar.info](http://biochar.info)
RECOMMENDATIONS

International and national funding mechanisms should be established to cover infrastructure- and personnel costs to create “Regenerative learning centres” as existing funding mechanisms often simply fund networking costs (travels and meetings).

The value of Popular Education with focus on socio-ecological, “life-centered” and lifelong learning should be recognized as an important alternative and compliment to formal education.

6. Supporting social resilience and sustainability as crucial factors for wholesome land stewardship

In the interviews, REALS partners repeatedly highlighted the need for social sustainability and “care” in reaching regenerative forms of land stewardship. The majority of our colleagues stressed the need to increase opportunities for learning and access to tools, methods and institutions for social inclusion, dialogue, community governance and self awareness. These and other related themes are seen as an important aspect which can enable and empower local initiatives for sustainability.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Same as for point 5 above.

7. Stressing the need of circular localism and diversity - localised and circular economies, communities, farms, enterprises and activities

The concept of circular economy is getting increasing popularity. The European Commission has adopted an ambitious “Circular Economy Package”, which includes revised legislative proposals which shall lead to a Europe where there’s no such thing as waste. With this as an important step, it seems that overall discussion still remains within the “business as usual” frame where the envisioned world is based on global flows of goods, increased competition and growth.

There are numbers of important questions still remain in shadow, with a need to be further investigated and discussed by all stakeholders in the region: How can opportunities for circular, social and sustainable settlements such as ecovillages, traditional villages, farms and urban neighbourhoods be created at the local level in all BSR countries? How could a public dialogue on opportunities for local circular economies be integrated in and support development of the international agenda for circular economy? How would things look like if local and national governments began to shift its focus towards enabling the rapid build-up of resilience on the local level enabling and supporting community initiatives and their local economies?

In particular we want to highlight the policy recommendations developed within the EU project “Ecovillages for sustainable rural development”14 addressing multiple factors which hinder establishment of ecovillages. Among other things, the recommendations highlighted the need to “promote decentralized power plants as well as off-grid energy generation”.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The principle of subsidiarity should be promoted and widely used i.e. decision-making should not be fully controlled and

14 http://www.balticecovillages.eu/
centralised, but rather “work with everyone so that it is practiced at the most appropriate, practical and empowering level”\textsuperscript{15}.

Learning forums/platforms should be established for local regenerative economies, where local actors from different sectors met in participatory ways.

8. Promoting socio-ecological entrepreneurship, innovation and land “care”

Research from the Stockholm Resilience Centre – a prominent academic institution and think tank of the Baltic Sea Region stress: “Humanity is now influencing every aspect of the Earth on a scale akin to the great forces of nature. If we are to stay within the planetary boundaries, major transformations are needed in the human-environment interactions. This includes innovations that can increase human well-being and at the same time enhance the capacity of ecosystems to produce services”\textsuperscript{16}.

Criteria suggested by Olsson and Galaz\textsuperscript{16} represent “gold standard” for social-ecological innovations including:
- Integration of both social and ecological (and economical) aspects.
- Improvement of human life without degrading the life-supporting ecosystems (preferably even strengthening ecosystems) on which we ultimately depend.
- Dealing with multiple social and environmental challenges simultaneously (be sensitive to the fact that solving one problem often creates new ones, there are no ultimate solutions).
- Work more directly for social justice, poverty alleviation, environmental sustain-ability and democracy than profits for individuals.
- Breaking and/or helping to avoid lock-ins and create social-ecological feedbacks that help us stay within the safe operating space for humanity as defined by the planetary boundaries.
- Including the creativity and ingenuity of users, workers, consumers, citizens, activists, farmers and businesses etc.
- Utilising the power of social networks and organizations nested across scales (from local to national to regional to global) to enable systemic change at larger scales.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Create and support a holistic approach to social innovation and entrepreneurship by integrating ecological awareness. This can be facilitated by launching a cross-sectoral flagship project on socio-ecological and resilient entrepreneurship and innovation with focus on small community based actors.

9. Implementing the law of EndEcocide

In 2010, the proposal to amend the Rome Statute to include an international crime of Ecocide was submitted by Polly Higgins into the International Law Commission (ILC). The ILC is the UN body ‘mandated to promote the progressive development of international law and its codification’.

The REALS partnership fully stand in support of the proposal which would make Ecocide an international crime.

The purpose for recognising Ecocide as the 5th international Crime Against Peace is to put it at the top level of the international law. 122 nations (as for 2015) are State Parties to the Rome Statute. International Crimes defined in the Rome Statute apply not only to the signatory States. Whenever a person or State commits a Crime Against Peace, the International Criminal Court has a power to intervene, even if the person or State involved is a non-signatory. The Rome Statute is one of the most powerful documents in the world, assigning ‘the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole’ over and above all other laws. Crimes that already exist within the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court under Article 5 of the Rome Statute are known collectively as Crime Against Peace. They are: The Crime of Genocide, Crimes Against Humanity, War Crimes, The Crime of Aggression. Article 5 and the jurisdiction of the Court shall be limited to the most serious crimes of concern to the international community as a whole.

\textsuperscript{15} https://transitionnetwork.org/about/principles
The inclusion of Ecocide as a crime defined by international law prohibits mass damage and destruction of the Earth and, as defined above, creates a legal duty of care for all inhabitants that have been or are at risk of being significantly harmed due to Ecocide. The duty of care applies to prevent, prohibit and pre-empt both human-caused Ecocide and natural catastrophes. Wherever Ecocide occurs as a crime, the case can be dealt through national courts and the International Criminal Court (ICC) or a similar body.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The EUSBSR, BSR and neighbouring states and everyone else will take a stand for the inclusion of EndEcocide law as an international law.

AND WE CONCLUDE

Finalising the journey of the REALS project we realise that our work brought us more questions than answers. Nevertheless, we are glad and happy to do this journey together. In this document we present perhaps subjective but undoubtedly collective views which we consider as our main capital on our collective and personal way to – perhaps not easier but better, healthier and happier future. We hope this journey only starts.

REFERENCES AND USEFUL RESOURCES

8 forms of Capital (http://realsproject.org/8-forms-of-capital)
Appreciative Inquiry – a method for powerful participation (appreciativeinquiry.case.edu)

17 http://eradicatingecocide.com/the-law/what-is-ecocide