

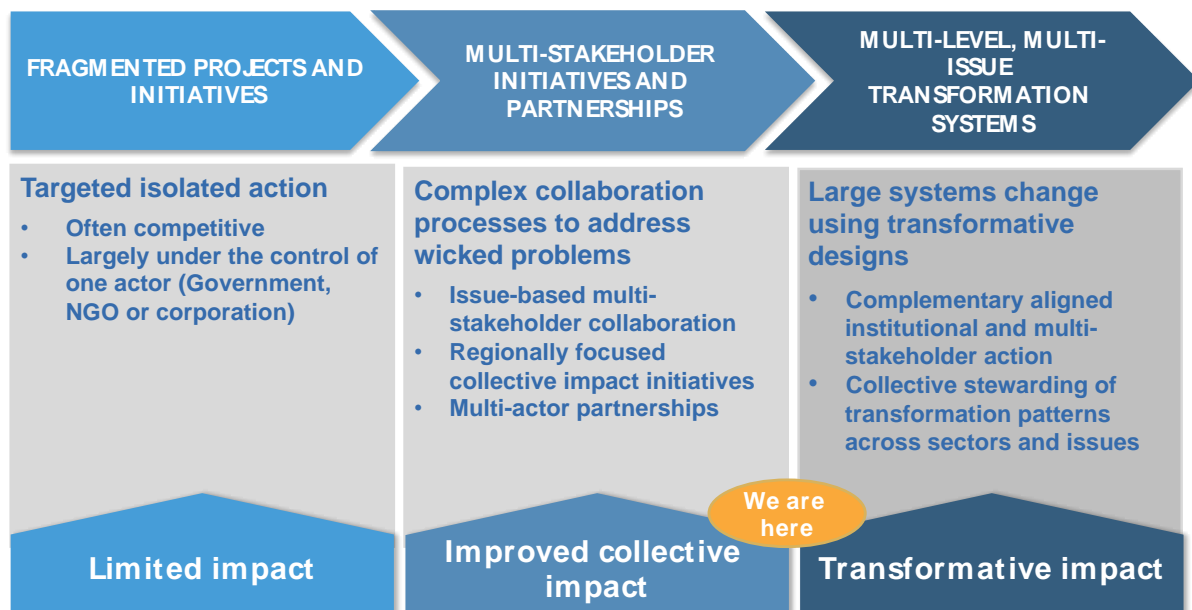
Why is the way we design and implement sustainability transformation so important?

The world is experiencing massive changes in many areas of human existence: scientists call the emerging era the Anthropocene, because in the next hundreds of years to come the influence and impact of human interventions is and will be so great that they are affecting the entire balance of the geo-and biosphere. Transformation to sustainability at global level requires courageous and collaborative human agency at all levels of the global society. Accelerated transformation is going to be the work of billions of activist, change agents, game-changers and ordinary people who invigorate human competencies for leading transformative change collectively.

What is transformation?

What *transformation* means in the context of sustainability is the subject of an ongoing debate among academics and practitioners. It refers to a fundamental change involving deeply innovative approach towards thinking, acting, power structures and relationships in the (global) society. Sustainability transformation is a new way of how humankind responsibly operates with each other and the planet. This requires a paradigm shift in how individuals find their leadership roles in the spirit of collaborative co-creation and contribution to sustainable futures. At the core of this ability is an increased capacity for multi-stakeholder collaboration. Diverse approaches and initiatives need to complement each other. Planned interventions towards sustainability need to move from fragmented institutional actions to multi-stakeholder initiatives and further to various initiatives becoming part of a co-designed transformation system (see fig. 1).

FROM ISOLATED ACTIVITIES TO COLLECTIVELY STEWARDING SUSTAINABILITY TRANSFORMATION





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What are transformative change designs?

Transformative change designs are strategies and intervention designs that accelerate impact. For designing transformation two elements are important: transformative process designs and transformative systems designs. Process designs refer to intervention architectures around solving issues of common concern in multi-stakeholder or collective impact initiatives. Well designed they ensure ownership and lead to dynamic changes. Systems designs are the choreography of multiple relational issue-based multi-stakeholder interventions that – together – accelerate transformation. Both are needed for sustainability transformation.

How can we accelerate sustainability transformations by designing transformative change?

The current state of the world can be seen as critical in the sense that change of collective and individual behavior needs to be accelerated in order to keep humanity's 'safe operating space' and work towards a world that works for 100% of humanity and the planet. Various discourses around sustainability transformation take place, but often in disconnected thought and action communities. Yet, the scale and acceleration of transformation needed requires looking into the feasibility and impact of different and mutually supportive approaches to transformative intervention design, e.g. through enlivening narratives, empowering metrics, enabling processes and structures, governance systems, guiding regulations, life-supporting innovation, or future-oriented investment.

The workshop explored the emerging field of transformative change designs that can accelerate collective behavior change for transformation at multiple levels. It engendered an inspiring explorative dialogue among thought leaders and change activists, building on the following questions:

- *How do we design change interventions in a way that it engages many actors to self-organize for human agency towards more sustainable and desirable future?*
- *How can a systems view of life and rigorous knowledge generation in understanding evolutionary processes inspire transformative change designs?*
- *How can measurements and resource allocations support a paradigm shift towards accelerated sustainability transformation?*
- *How can business become change-makers in sustainability-oriented innovations and accelerated transformation to an economy in service of life? Which major stakeholders are needed through the value chain?*

Out of the many innovative approaches to large system change this workshop highlight four complementary perspectives in an exemplary way.

Presenters



1) **Petra Kuenkel, Executive Director, Collective Leadership Institute** presented a framework for large-scale transformative change designs, which is anchored in a systems view of life, based on the emerging 'patterns of aliveness theory' and substantiated by 20 years of practice in complex global multi-stakeholder collaboration initiatives, from integrated water resource management to



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responsible value chains. It focuses on six elements of transformative designs and shows how pattern identification can become a pathway to social and structural change in large system change with multiple actors, power differences and institutional cultures.

2) **Mariana Bozesan, Integral Impact Investor, philanthropist, author, researcher on consciousness leadership, Co-Founder AQAL Group & AQAL Foundation**, focused on the ten elements of transformative change designs to accelerate sustainability within the context of the 'Investmentwende'. This includes how to overcome company and investor short-termism, new approaches to strategic asset allocation and responsible investing, quantifying long-term investment implications, developing new risk management tools as well as disclosure practices and financing. It will also look at how to aggregate capital to finance the Sustainable Development Goals.

3) **Vala Ragnarsdottir, Earth Science Faculty, University of Iceland** focused on empowering metrics for sustainability transformation and how measurements of social progress can become a driver for systems change. She will present approaches to measurements that relate to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), but conceptualize metrics for sustainable wellbeing that can motivate and guide the process of global societal change. The Sustainable Wellbeing Index (SWI) connects with and complements the SDG implementation monitoring in a comprehensive systems dynamics model.

4) **Sandrine Dixon-Declève, Senior Advisor & Facilitator, Corporate Purpose, Sustainability, & Low Carbon Solutions** focused on the role of business as change-maker in accelerating sustainability transformation, and in particular how this can support the transition to a new economic system, such as a low carbon economy. She will present strategies how, within the existing economic logic, transformative change can be introduced by innovative public and private sector actors as well as sustainability-oriented innovation as well as new business and partnership models that provide solutions for sustainable products and processes.



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