

We Have Powerful Tools to Build the Future We Want – and NEED!

The All-Win Principle and the Commons

We live in a world in which all people and nature are part of an integrated whole. Therefore, the more we empower one another and nature to flourish – without causing harm – the more we create an all-win universe.

Many hundreds of millions of people are already putting the all-win principle into action in their communities, professional groups and even worldwide networks.

Wherever groups of people share and produce the resources they need in an open democratic manner so that all stakeholders benefit, we can speak of a commons. When commons apply the all-win principle to their work, they multiply the power of one manifold. Commons provide powerful tools for the future we want and need.

Commons Have Three Aspects

*Commons Goods--resources a community collectively needs and uses;
Commoners--stakeholders who steward them for the benefit of all involved;
Commoning--an open and democratic form of making decisions and producing.*

Commons provide a powerful foundation for an all-win world that can benefit all people and nature.

The commons idea is centuries old. For example, Indigenous Peoples have long used ways of living in harmony with nature, stewarding and producing resources and making decisions that benefit all members of the community, as well as future generations. In recent times, many millions of people live in Ecovillages and Transition Towns and other communities that use a commons-approach to stewardship, production and sharing.

Farmers and fisherman get together to ensure that the land and fish stocks their livelihoods depend upon remain bountiful. They decide on quotas, share information on new technologies, organize farmers' markets and share transportation for their wares.

The Internet itself is a global commons and supports a host of others, such as OpenCourseWare and Wikipedia, where people share information. Everyone contributes, every one benefits and many of the commons resources are even free.

One billion people are registered members of cooperatives, collectively owned and/or managed businesses. These include credit unions, banks, supermarkets, health insurance companies and much more. They are businesses that use a commons-approach.

Where people see themselves as the custodians of the resources they need, they tend to nurture them for their own benefit as well as that of their children and children's children. Where people feel their voices are heard and their needs are met by their communities, mutual appreciation, generosity and benevolence tend to flourish.

A commons approach deflates conflicts and creates resilience for both societies and nature.

The Array of Commons that Exist Worldwide Are a Step toward a World Where All People and Nature Can Prosper.

This kind of stewardship cannot be performed by the typical corporation. They need to make a profit for their shareholders, often at the expense of many other people. Governments are at a disadvantage, too, when it comes to stewarding trans-border commons, because these are in part outside of their influence.

Only the United Nations (all nations of the world acting together), coupled with people can bridge the gap between business and governments. It is thus crucially important for the UN to adopt a Commons Based Approach to sustainable development.

We Invite You to Join with Us to Help Connect the Dots

We are growing network of NGOs and individual people who are dedicated to a commons approach. So far we have focused mostly on the United Nations.

- We write to Heads of State and Government, the UN Secretariat and speak personally with the Ambassadors of the UN Member States, pointing to the many ways in which a commons-approach can help eradicate poverty and build both resilient local and global economies that are in harmony with Nature.
- We also apply a commons approach, as we join with like-minded groups and people both within and outside of the UN to empower one another to do much more than any could do without the others.

Yet like-minded people from *every* walk of life are needed to create a tipping point from a world that is governed by just a few to one where all people have access, management and production over the resources we all need and become responsible custodians of Mother Nature.

For more information, please visit www.commonsaactionfortheUnitedNations.org

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