




Manifesto and Landscape Plan

Online meeting

**Bioregional Weaving Lab
Waterford**

21st October 2022





Agenda to meeting, expanded to content of meeting report

Introduction

Manifesto workshop summary

The manifesto – live reading

Where does this lead to now?

- Landscape plan
- Thematic working (sub-weaving) groups?

Discussion

Next gatherings

Introduction



Bioregional Weaving Lab (BWL) across Europe



Our vision

A **biodiverse** future with **healthy ecosystems, regenerative economies and thriving communities**, where solutions that work with **nature** and **communities** in landscapes are the **norm** and scale widely.

Our mission

To mobilise **1 million changemakers** by 2025 to overcome systemic barriers and restore, protect and regenerate **1 million ha of Europe's land and sea**, with significant impact on **4 Returns** (social, natural, economic and inspiration) by 2030

Which translates to the following for Waterford context, though these are before further co-creation with more local stakeholders:

Our Waterford bioregion vision??

A resilient food system that supports thriving landscapes, seascapes and communities in the Waterford bioregion.

Our Waterford bioregion mission

To mobilise **?65 thousand changemakers** by 2025 to overcome systemic barriers and restore, protect and regenerate **?65 thousand ha of Europe's land and sea**, with significant impact on **4 Returns** (social, natural, economic and inspiration) by 2030.

How we work

What is a bioregion?

“A bioregion invites us to inhabit a place in a way that is full of relationship. **Seeing where the natural boundaries of our bioregion are, we can then see the many ecosystems and human systems alive within it.** All of these systems, such as fresh water and biodiversity, or transport and health, are connected.

There is also a connecting story that starts in deep geological time, shows up in the landscape and soil, and then in human culture.

Bioregioning is the collective practice of bringing vitality to these connections, angling the systems towards regeneration, and taking actions for a climate resilient and biodiverse future”.

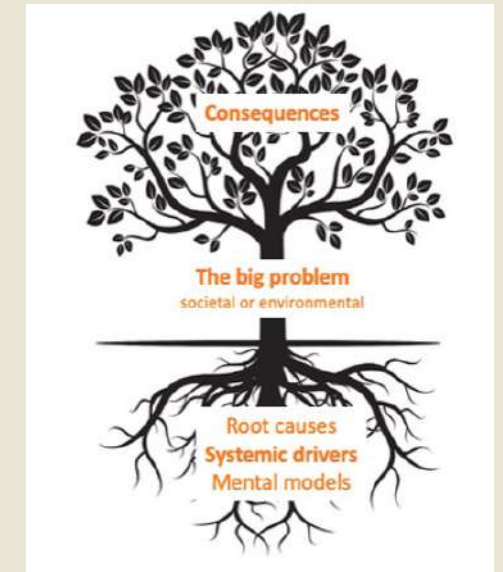
What is weaving?

Connecting people, projects and place for universal well-being

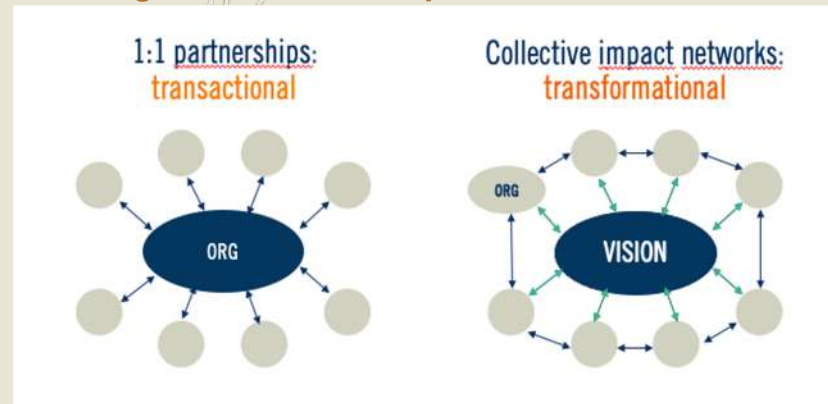
We look for indicators of four returns:



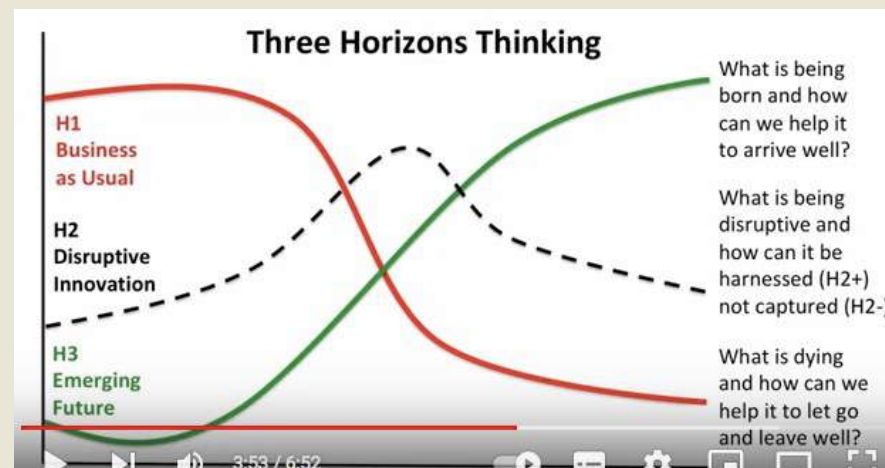
We work for systems change:



We design for collective impact with a common intent:



We look for the future we know is out there:



Who we are and what we do – go to BWL on GIY website



COMMONLAND



ASHOKA



PREENCING
INSTITUTE

**BIOREGIONAL WEAVING LAB
WATERFORD**

Building a resilient food system that supports thriving landscapes, seascapes and communities.

From our home in Co. Waterford, GIY has joined four other regions in Europe, who have each set up Bioregional Weaving Labs, to explore how we can collectively build new ways of working for a better world. We call it a collective impact approach to the societal and environmental challenges we face locally and globally.



BWL Waterford on GIY programme webpage

Links to events and reports:

- Collective knowledge and insights
- Manifesto Workshop

Links to BWL Europe

- Insights Report
- White Paper

<https://giy.ie/programmes/bioregional-weaving-lab/>

Why the manifesto workshop happened



All the reports can be accessed via BWL webpage
<https://giy.ie/programmes/bioregional-weaving-lab/>



**Manifesto
Workshop
11th Sept 2022
Highlights**



We asked: What is a manifesto?

"A manifesto is not a policy document. It is something much more unruly.

Manifestos are designed to shake us up, to get us thinking, to change not just our minds but also our hearts.

They are not the summation of how far we have come. Instead, they are the starting-points for change.

They wake us from complacency. And they help usher in futures we can't yet imagine."



Will Buckingham from Wind&Bones, co-facilitator

Personal manifestos

- What I know
- What I believe
- What I want



Nature - social - financial - environmental

We live on the most wonderful place in the universe and we share it with all living things. The way in which we live is breaking our world and we need to repair it and nurture it we will restore nature and cherish all life. We will grow food for local communities and farm responsibly. We will grow food without chemicals. We will protect our rivers. We shall be good ancestors. We will measure success through profit/lossing.

Know + Believe

- we have an inherent understanding and appreciation of our environment and its fragility.
- we need to learn/feel/do experience rather than read/talk/theorise
- we need to do stuff on our own + together
- we need to share (teach) others in order to really learn new stuff.
- Want
- repetition, opportunities to change

WHAT

- PEOPLE WITH IDEAS VALUE TO BE HEARD
- MORE PEOPLE WANT TO CHANGE TO BE INSPIRED
- FA ENTHUSIASM ON PEOPLE IN COMMUNITIES TO BE HELPED WITH

... now. I'm alive, I'm ...
 I'm living, at the moment is all there is, I know I prefer the connection of talk + vocal exchange. Human person to person is the reason to get out of bed in the morning. It's what we all need. I know I am human and I share this space with other sentient beings, I don't own it.

Believe we are all here for a purpose. Focus Believe this weaving is not a project ~~to~~ to be tackled. I believe it is a new way of connecting with our surroundings. Connects with everything from the rocks to the human heart. ~~is~~ is an all inclusive planet this. It is about our surroundings and the people and places, rocks, sea, land, flora, fauna, Necessity is the mother Nature of all invention.

Co-writing manifestos for each of the four returns



NATURE

What we know and believe

- Reduction of diversity has reduced ability to react to disease, e.g. ruminants
- Loss of biodiversity
- Our rivers and water sources are polluted
- Demand for cheap food has brought about intensification of farming
- Our food is chemically contaminate (glyphosates). An attempt to fence nature to submit. We are poisoning nature
- Industrialisation and urbanisation have moved us away from nature.
- Our soil has been damaged both physically and biologically by modern farming practices.

What we want

- Protection and enhancement of our soil health
- Educate our children and communities on the importance of our soil health for our future
- All our rivers and water bodies to be restored to pristine status
- To apply nature-based solutions
- To transition to a regenerative model with due consideration given to practicality and scale
- More awareness that there can be more productive dairy farming with out the use of chemicals

SOCIAL

What we know and believe

- Lack of trust between:
 - XXX and scientists
 - Planners (officials) and people
- Huge energy available
- Consumer/Retailer/Processors/Farmers are not singing from same song-sheet
- Create a platform for this to xxx
- Social = community
- People, mammals, plants, all living things
- Lack of trust between various groups
- Belief of trust between various groups
- DS – 1st point: acknowledge there is a problem
- Fear and lack of truth. Lack of trust.
- Trust is earned
- Understanding is necessary
- Integrity is necessary
- Food quality should not depend on..

What we want

- Experiences with people for people with nature
- Greater trust between stakeholder based on integrity and evidence
- New language to combat the trap and reductionism of labels
- Build earned trust based on understanding
- Integrity major part of healing and integration (need for safe space)
- Abandon labels that determine relationships and dynamics
- Amnesty – and a safe space
- A different form of growth
- Communication - conversation around our environment and how we treat our natural resources
- Use of language needs to change
- Acknowledge there is a problem to find a solution
- He who pays the piper
- Should be only one way to produce food – not organic, not conventional.
- Good nutrient-rich food affordable to everyone
- Farmer/consumer driving the food system

FINANCIAL

What we know and believe

- Farmers can't afford to produce
- Consumers don't know the true cost of food
- Ineffective grants
- Mass production – go big or go home

What we want

- Remove retailer stranglehold on producers
- Producer paid fair prices
- Personal and environmental wellbeing index
- Delicious seasonal food locally accessible and affordable for everyone
- Informed consumers
- Cut out food waste (700 Euros)
- Policy change to support sustainable practice
- Consumer - more direct link and seasonal

INSPIRATION

What we know and believe

- Fear XX
- Think possibilities not problems
- Inspiration comes best from people we know
- Without passion we will fail
- Stories of change are inspirational
- People are overwhelmed and need new inspiration

What we want

- To be inspired every day, pervasively in everyday conversations
- No barriers between doers and thinkers
- People with ideas to be heard
- Priority to inspire not just inform

Discussion in workshop

What happens next regarding signatories and changes to the current manifesto?

Options:

1. Be open to further input into the manifesto and continue with co-creation. Treat this as a 'seedling of our diversity' with room to grow
2. **Accept this version is a snapshot of something based on who was present on this day.** Other future manifestos would be different snapshots. We could have a multiplicity of manifestos.
3. Offer this version as it is for anyone that would like to sign saying they support it, even if they are not co-authors. Signing would be to express support and not to commit to doing more than that

How to use the manifesto?

- **As a starting point for discussions with decision makers. A pathway to start moving along.**
- Use it to feed into a future policy document (while avoiding being a policy document itself).
- Media interest? This could be of huge interest to the media. Do we want this to go nationwide?
- We are building a web of persuasion – this is a part of it.
- It can be a way to get through blocks that arise when working with ideology and incomplete evidence base.
- It can also be a way to stimulate new actions and make a platform for evidence to build around.
- it is a call to action, clear and broad.
- To invite conventional farmers and food producers/retailers feel aspirational rather than attacked, i.e. not too dogmatic nor too preachy

Other key points;

- Demonstrations will be key – we must show what works. Individual landowners and their sites are key. To inspire for change we need to link to what this can look like in reality
- Topic breadth: There are other larger challenges that are not included. This group was convened under the banner of a regenerative bioregion, in particular regarding food systems, so maybe we stick within that remit in this group.
- Might we fail? Are we brave enough to admit that we might fail? If we are consciously upfront and transparent about this, we will be brave enough!
- Irish is a nature based language. How would a manifesto written in Irish read?
- Changemaker mindset and identity: 'We are the decision makers. We are the planners. Their plans will not work if we don't follow them'. We need politicians and planners too.
- Change is possible

A Waterford Manifesto for a Regenerative Bioregion

This document is the result of a coming together of approximately 30 farmers, teachers, researchers, growers, social entrepreneurs, communication and marketing experts, engaged citizens, ecologists, fundraisers and others to co-write a Waterford manifesto for regenerative bioregion. The particular focus was resilient food systems and how these relate to healthy ecosystems and community well-being.

In the Waterford bioregion we **believe and know** that :

- Water is not pristine
- Biodiversity has been lost
- Soils are damaged
- The ability to make agri-food choices for well-being of planet and people is difficult
- There is a lack of trust
- Understanding is a must
- Community is core
- The cost of food must be transparent
- Grants are not effective
- Mass production is not the only answer
- Inspiration comes best from people we know
- Possibilities are more inspiring than problems
- Without passion we fail
- Change is possible

In the Waterford bioregion **we want**:

- To work for a transition to a regenerative model
- A society for the protection of soils, including education
- Restoration of rivers and water bodies to pristine conditions
- Nature based solutions
- Dairy farms showing how to be more productive without chemicals
- Contact with, and experience of, nature
- Trust - through understanding and demonstration
- A new language for communicating nature and relationships
- New indicators of growth for universal well-being
- Farmers and consumers to drive our food systems
- A weakening of the retailer-producer bond
- Fair prices to be paid to producers
- Seasonal food to be locally accessible and affordable to all
- Food waste to be drastically reduced
- Policy changes to support sustainable and regenerative practices
- To be inspired everyday, pervasively
- No barriers between thinkers and doers
- People with ideas to be heard
- Policies that inspire, not just inform
- Demonstrations of what works for nature, health and well-being

The manifesto is a co-produced document, created through a deliberative and democratic process amongst those that were present on 11th September 2022. We acknowledge that the opinions represented here are limited to those that were present on this one particular day. We also believe that as 'seedlings of the bioregion's diversity', the findings might resonate with others, and that perhaps one day they could be nourished and grow to include many more voices and another future version of The Waterford Manifesto for a Regenerative Bioregion.

Waterford Bioregion's Food Manifesto *(to be read out loud)*

Food is not a luxury.

Food is a basic social need to which everyone has a right. It is a right not only to enjoy food, but to be able to create it.

Food is a way of building ideas, connections and communities. Through food we become aware of ourselves and of each other.

Food is a common good. It is grounded in our common need, and our common vulnerability.

Food is revolutionary. How we grow food, how we consume it, how we think about it, can lead to radical change.

Food is not only about the present: rethinking our relationship with food is a call for a different future, a better one.

We, the local producers and consumers of food in the Waterford bioregion, assert:

We have the right to disagree, to disrupt the status quo.

We have the right to respect, even while we dissent.

Our dissent is moral, philosophical, cultural, affective, economic and political. Sometimes all at once.

Our dissent is about building a better world.

We stand for:

The breaking-down of barriers between thinkers and doers. We are, all of us, both thinkers and doers.

A reinvention of the relationships between retailers and producers, because we are the ultimate decision makers

Food that is sustainable for our health

The protection of the land.

The richness of the soil.

The flourishing of the imagination.

New ideas. New stories. New inspirations.

New ways of relating to the food we grow and eat.

We want future food to come from a place where community is core. Our aims are both idealistic and practical. We want to create new habits, and new ways of working. We want viable ways of living. We want to protect our rivers, restore nature, cherish life. We want a world where everything is connected, from rocks to the human heart.

We want our children and grandchildren to know the taste of wild salmon and the foods those before us enjoyed. We want to be good guardians of the soil, and of our traditions. We want to become good ancestors.

We want future food to be:

Grown and eaten with passion, without which we will fail.

Inspirational

Easy to get and affordable for all.

Connected to people and communities

Familiar

Surprising

Secure, in a system where farmers and consumers share an interest in this security.

Pristine

Fair

Seasonal

Delicious

Nutritious

**Where does this
lead to now?**



Combining ideas for action from July workshop and input from September manifesto workshop, building from there towards a Landscape Plan

Workshop Report
Bioregional Weaving Lab
Waterford
 5th July 2022



Possible actions
 The actions below are based on the question posed in workshop closing session: "What is needed next?" combined with analysis of the leverage points and trends emerging during workshop.

Our common intent?

- Vision and rallying call – co-visioning workshop?
- Apply CBD ecosystem approach with 32 principles?
- Co-write a manifesto with key principles that people and organisations sign up to. Direct to mayors, local national and international decision makers.

Education

- Start with education - including on how to handle complexity.
- Education initiative – need action now. What would that look like? Gather sub-group of teachers and others?
- GY garden in every school in bioregion, with empowered teachers - linked to Irish Sustainability Network?
- Community garden in every community in bioregion?

Tramore as a town ambitious for tomorrow, and the next day

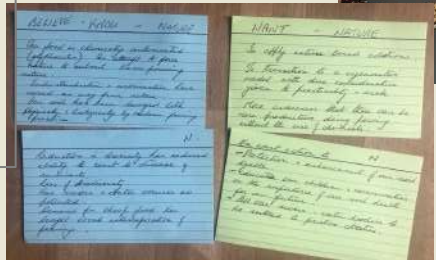
- An umbrella organisation to access resources?
- Community Innovates support joined up initiative like this – interested in being connected?
- Link to Participatory City model – community kitchens, gardens, social enterprise etc?
- Local restaurants (Mezze and others) club together to find young grower to be their supplier?
- Short food value chain study for whole town?

+ many more

DO WE NEED A CO-CREATED MANIFESTO?



What is a manifesto?
 "A manifesto is not a policy document. It is something much more unruly. Manifestos are designed to shake us up, to get us thinking, to change not just our minds but also our hearts. They are not the summation of how far we have come. Instead, they are the starting-points for change. They wake us from complacency. And they help usher in futures we can't yet imagine."



Waterford Bioregion's Food Manifesto *(to be read out loud)*

Food is not a luxury. Food is a basic social need to which everyone has a right. It is a right not only to enjoy food, but to be able to create it. Food is a way of building ideas, connections and communities. Through food we become aware of ourselves and of each other. Food is a common good. It is grounded in our common need, and our common vulnerability. Food is revolutionary. How we grow food, how we consume it, how we think about it, can lead to radical change. Food is not only about the present: rethinking our relationship with food is a call for a different future, a better one.

We, the local producers and consumers of food in this Waterford bioregion, assert:

- We have the right to disagree, to disrupt the status quo.
- Our dissent is moral, philosophical, cultural, affective, economic and political. Sometimes all at once.
- Our dissent is about building a better world.

We stand for:

- The breaking down of barriers between thinkers and doers. We are, all of us, both thinkers and doers.
- A reconnection of the relationships between retailers and producers, because we are the ultimate decision makers.
- Food that is sustainable for our health.
- The protection of the soil.
- The richness of the soil.
- The flourishing of the imagination.
- New ideas. New stories. New inspirations.
- New ways of relating to the food we grow and eat.

We want future food to come from a place where community is core. Our ideas are both idealistic and practical. We want to create new habits, and our rivers, rewild nature, cherish life. We want a world where everything is connected, from rocks to the human heart.

We want our children and grandchildren to know the taste of wild salmon and the foods those before us enjoyed. We want to be good stewards of the soil, and of our traditions. We want to become good ancestors.

We want future food to be:

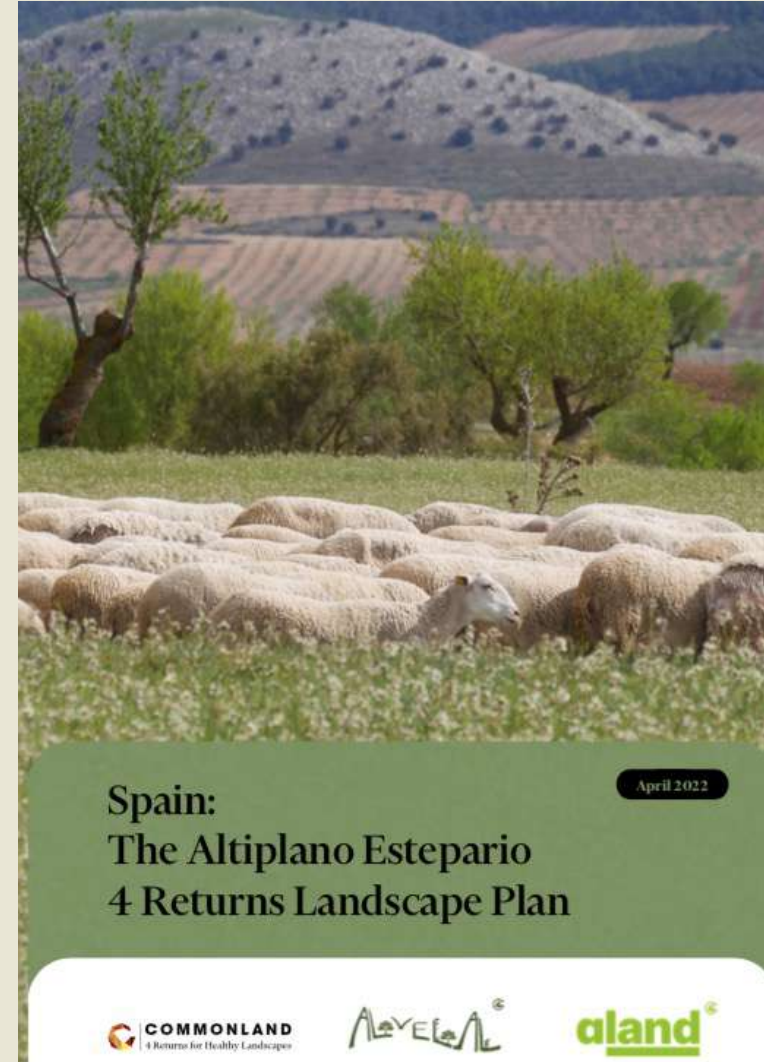
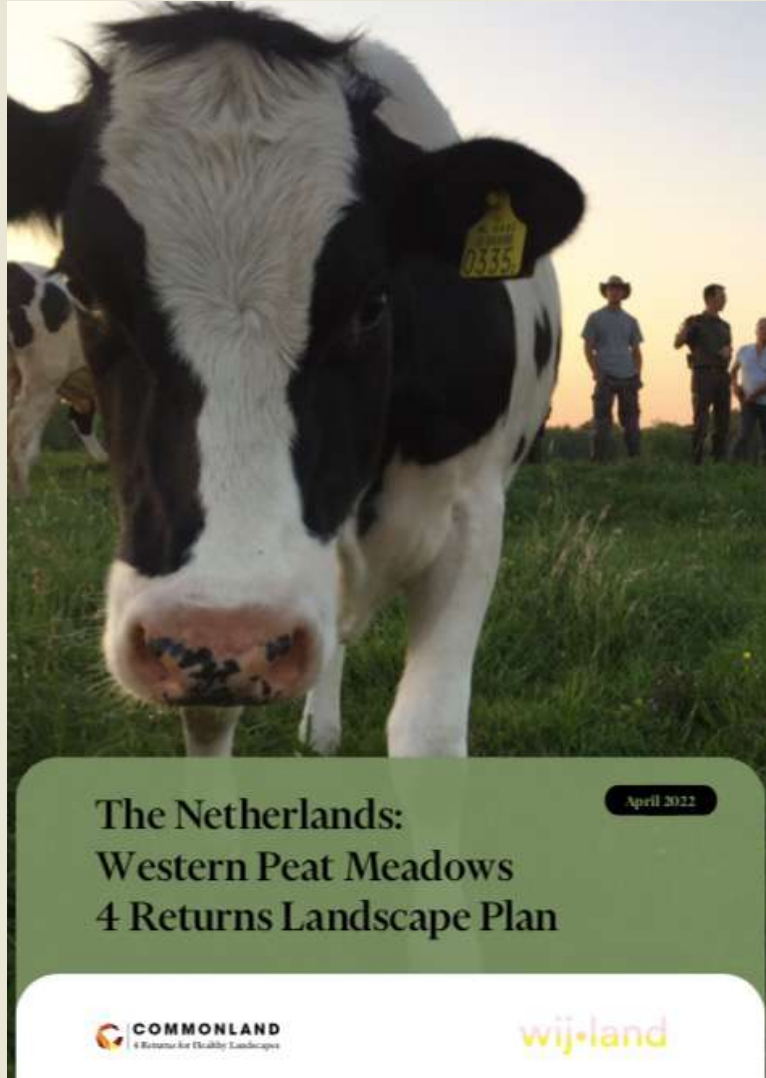
- Inspiring!
- Delicious and eaten with passion, without which we will fail.
- Easy to get and affordable for all.
- Connected to people and communities
- Familiar
- Surprising
- Secure, in a system where farmers and consumers share an interest in
- Bill security.
- Justice
- Fair
- Seasonal
- Delicious
- Nutritious



The Netherlands:
 Western Peat Meadows
 4 Returns Landscape Plan



Bioregional Landscape Plans



Landscape Plan

- Description
- Maps
- Analysis
- Opportunities and needs
- Pathways and returns
- Actions and roadmap
- Funding

Overview and analysis

Introduction

- Irish land/sea context degradation/regeneration
- Partners and background
- How we work: The four returns and three zones. Bioregion and weaving. NBS and SI. Systems change

Description and overview of bioregion, with stakeholders and partners

- Geology and geomorphology
- Soil
- Vegetation and biodiversity
- Water
- Weather and climate
- People and culture
- Landuse
- Planning and architecture
- Education – schools and adults
- Entrepreneurship
- Farmer, food and nature organisations
- Donors, funders and partners

Landscape analysis

- Maps that resonate and can document change
 - Three zones
 - Regen land and sea
 - Regen social, financial and inspiration
- System barriers and root causes
- Holistic opportunities to transition

Planning and strategy

Returns regeneration strategic framework

- The Four Losses in the bioregion
- The Four Returns in the bioregion
- What works? Past and present
- Future scenarios – high level

Nature Based Solutions (NBS)

- Current
- Potential to upscale
- Needed NBS to be developed or imported
- Needed systems and mindset changes

Social, inspiration and economic innovations

- Current
- Potential to upscale
- Needed innovations to be developed or imported
- Needed systems and mindset changes

Structure, governance and ways of working

- Collective impact network
- Governance
- BWL
- Funding (inc. of systems change and weaving)

Funding and Roadmap

- 5 year plan
- 10 and 20 year plan
- 5 year budget Waterford bioregion
- 10 year budget Waterford and beyond



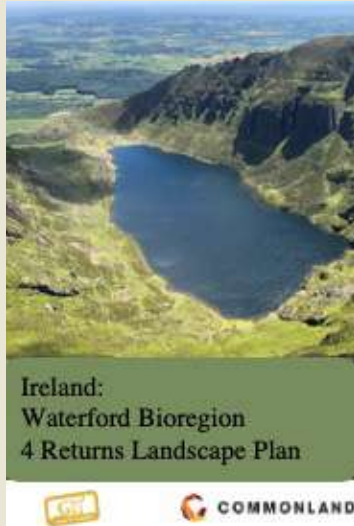
Ireland:
Waterford Bioregion
4 Returns Landscape Plan



From words (and building the ground for an impact network) to actions

Thematic working groups? *Sub-weaving thematic groups?*

- Manifestos in general and specific
- Maps and visualisation
- Farming – with nature and regenerative
- Disconnect
- Nature Based Solutions
- Social Innovations
- Education – schools
- Education – Higher Ed
- Capacity building – adults
- Food distribution networks and value chains
- Food partnerships
- Waterways
- Biodiversity
- Business models
- Planning and Architecture
- Tramore as changemaker town
- Communications
- Art and culture
- Weaving as a practice to make impact
- Funding for systems change
- Governance of multi-stakeholder network



Discussion...



Some summary points from discussion (see recording for full discussion)

Well-being and mental health came up as core to sustainability

- We could be clearer on the importance of what we are doing for **mental and physical health**. 53% of the population in Ireland is obese, and 1 in 4 farmers suffer from mental health issues. This initiative could have real value on both counts.
- Teagasc had a webinar on mental health and well-being recently. It came up that farmers are working 3000 hours pa. This is not sustainable. Farming cannot be environmentally or socially sustainable with this as a starting point.
- People around Cheekpoint are depressed because they cannot fish any more.
- Would this be a way for framing the BWL work? **Healthy and sustainable** waters, farmers, kids, urban areas, food?

The hope for lifting what we want into the future

- Soil type is going to be key. Waterford Whiskey looking at the soils of SE Ireland and 52 different types.
- Labelling fish, and where they come from, could be a thing to work for.

Funding

- Can we look at a five or ten year plan now? Yes we can. Commonland have committed funding for leverage. GIY are committed.
- EIP funding is coming up, could be very relevant. FLAG too.
- Interesting funding models for socio-ecological change are emerging: Look at The Nature Trust and Foodcloud (social bond).

Describing our work and our region:

- Is a good name for thematic working groups **sub-weaving groups**?
- How will sub-weaving groups emerge? For example: visualisation through maps: Sarah will talk to Waterford County Council on Monday about GIS maps. Will depend on local energy, interest and capacity.
- Should we focus more on smaller areas within the larger bioregion? For example the very start of a tributary, feeding into a tributary, feeding into another and into a river? Good to focus, but must not become fragmented – we work to join fragments. Water is also linked to land management.
- Irish is a nature-based language and place-names matter- let's make sure this is reflected. Is a word for our initiative perhaps 'Fás', Irish for 'grow'. Irish is a nature based language. One day maybe someone would like to translate the manifesto into Irish for us?

System and transformation work practices include the ability and need to see things at different levels and different frequencies of change happening at the same time.

Landscape change could take 20 years, system change 5 years, while project based change could be quicker. We need to work on all scales at the same time (see next slide too).

Other system practices recognisable BWL Waterford work include developing the Central Purpose (manifesto) and enabling the system to see itself (3D system modelling at July workshop).

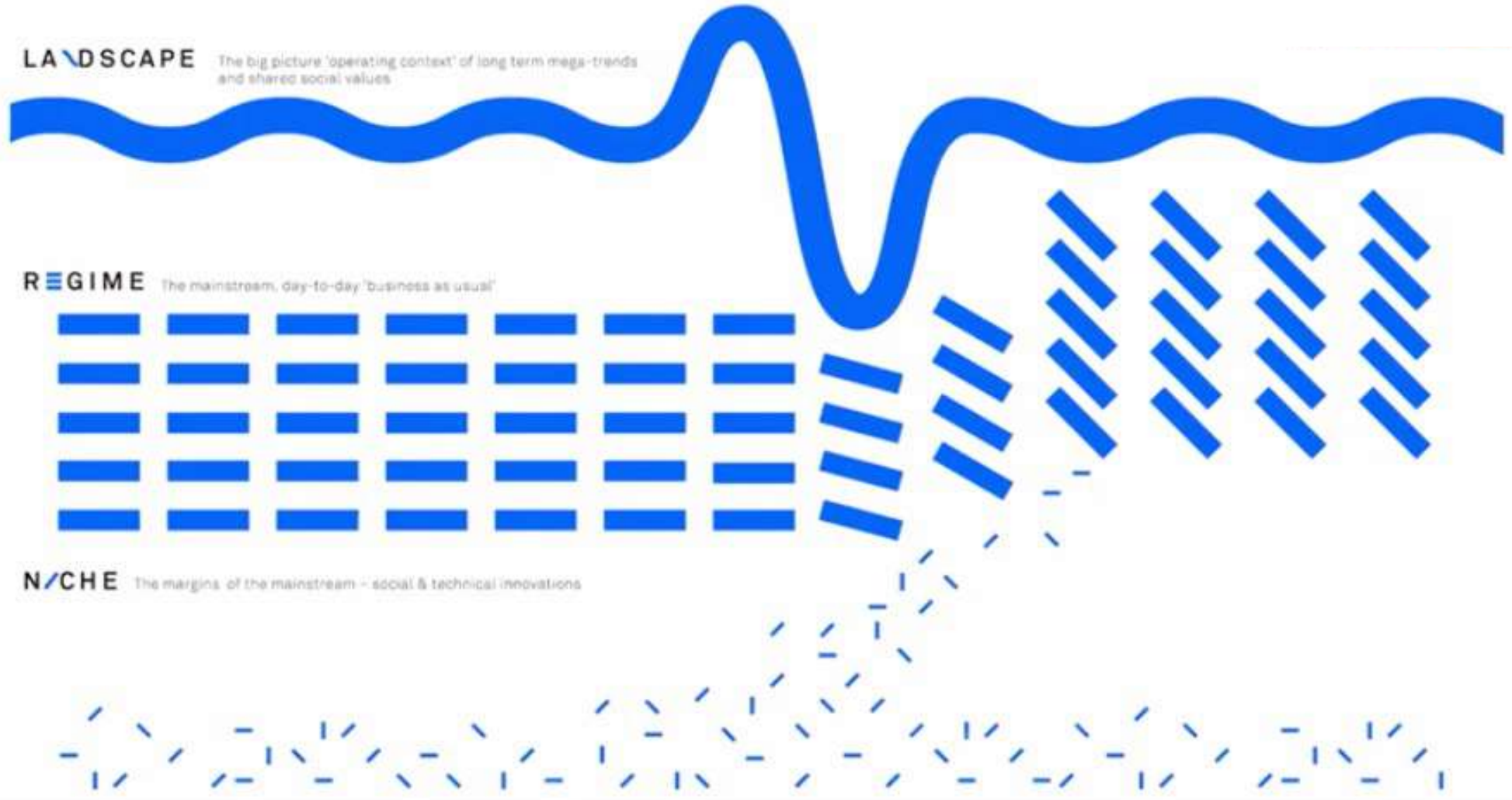
For more on this topic see: <https://sustainability-transitions.com/FFTF>



System practices

Discussion included the different frequencies of change al happening at the same time

Change happens at different scales and altitudes



Next gatherings

NOVEMBER

The informal coffee and disucssion event

Sunday November 13th, 10am-11am

Join Sarah at GROW HQ for coffee and informal catch-up and discussion

The co-creative thematic workshop event

Monday November 14th, 2-5pm

Main aim: Co-creation of analysis and plan for systemic and collective actions around different themes – detailed agenda to follow.

Please register your interest already now by sending mail to sarah@giy.ie

Numbers will determine if location will be at GROW HQ or alternative location.

DECEMBER – keep it free!

The big learn and inspire event

Friday December 16th, 1.30pm-5pm

Location: Dunhill Multi-Education Centre. Registration details will follow.

Followed by optional Festive Supper Club event at GROW HQ (tickets can be bought now on GIY website).

Aims:

- Invite local and non-local complementary inspirational people and projects to share.
- Sub-weaving topic presentations and discussion of possibilities
- Present the draft Landscape Plan to wide audience and highlight the opportunities
- Bring the elements of the bioregion together into one space.
- To call for partnership, investment and action in projects and approaches to communicate the value of a weaving lab in the Waterford bioregion.



Contact:

Sarah Prosser sarah@giy.ie

Mick Kelly michael@giy.ie