

# The Power of Regeneration to Transform Tourism

Anna Pollock

[Conscious.Travel](https://conscious.travel)





# This Time Last Year - Overtourism!

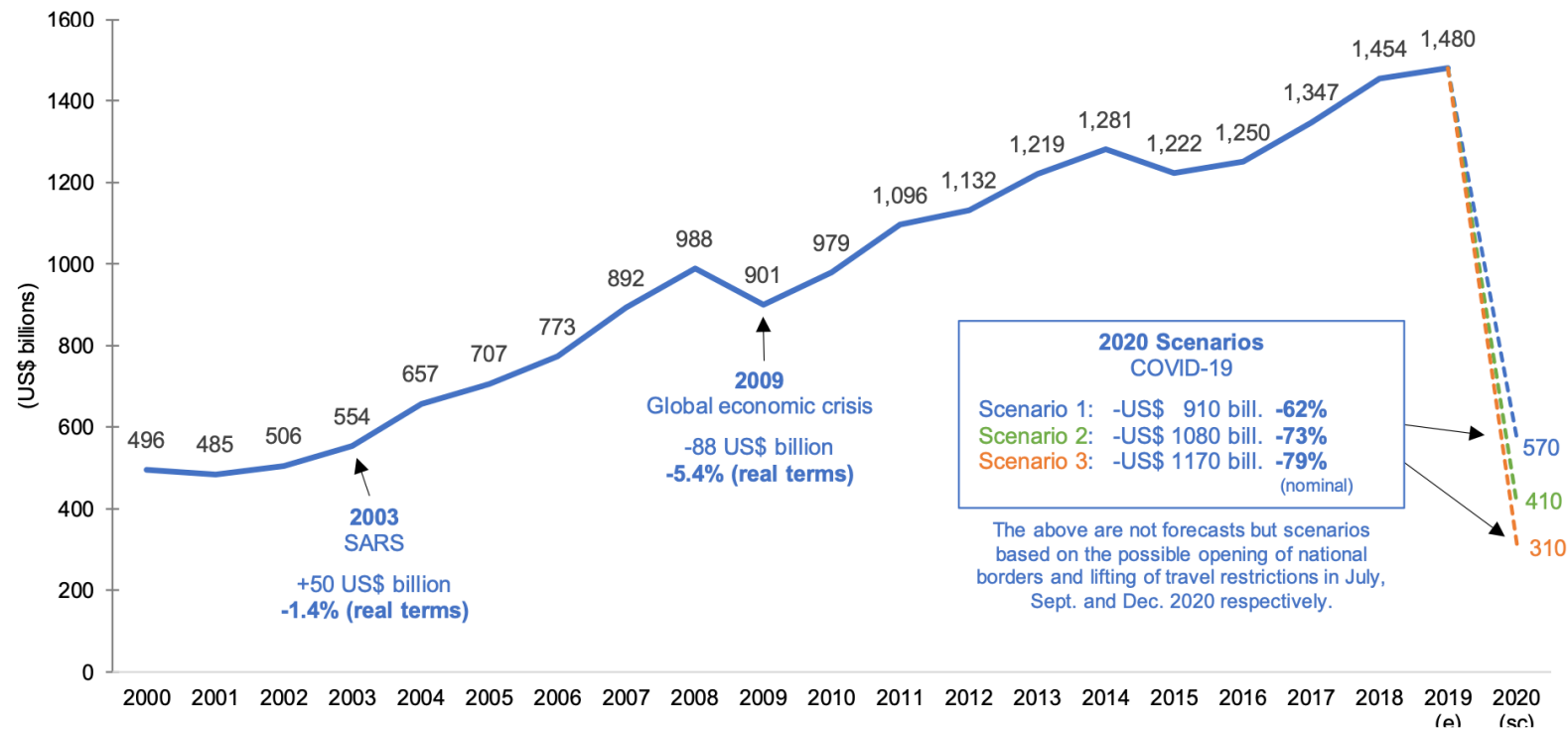


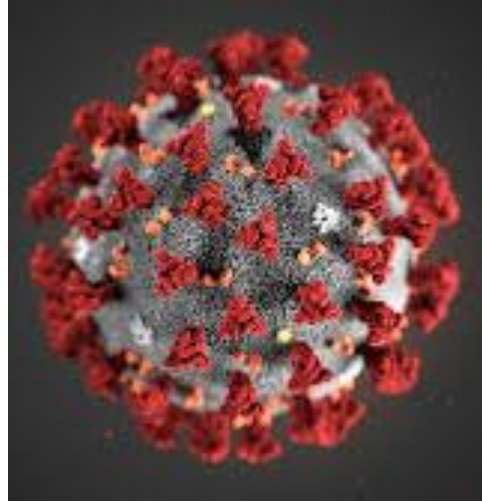
# This Year - Undertourism!



## International tourism receipts could plunge by US\$ 1 trillion

International tourism receipts, 2000-2019 and scenarios for 2020 (US\$ billion)





**What has this tiny microbe taught us ?**

**What must we learn?**

**The answer lies in the framing!**

Is Covid19 and an enemy or a messenger?



# Lessons: the facts of life!

## 1. Uncertainty, unpredictability are here to stay

*The future can't be predicted, but it can be envisioned and brought lovingly into being.*

*Systems cannot be controlled, but they can be designed.*

*We can't impose our will upon a system. But we can learn listen to what the system tells us, and work together to bring forth something much better.*

Donella Meadows



# Lessons: the facts of life!

1. Uncertainty, unpredictability are here to stay
2. **Our vulnerability and interdependence are real and intensifying**

Fragmentation, separation, silos  
are illusions

Seeing WHOLES

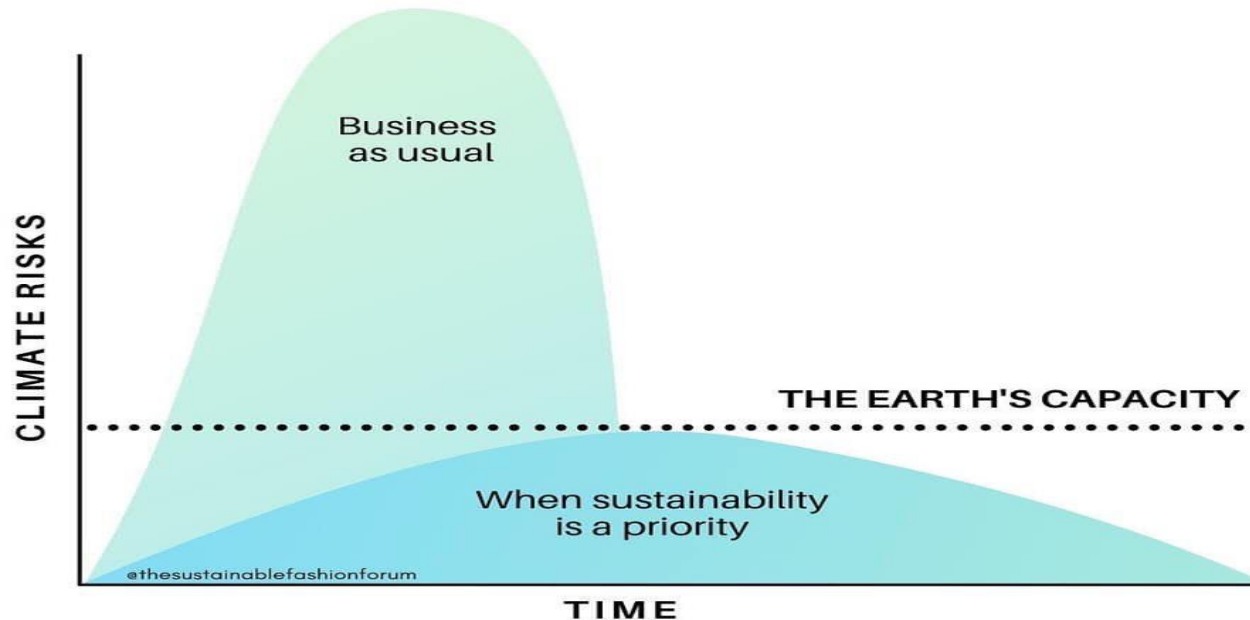


*You can't be a healthy business in an unhealthy  
economy on an unhealthy planet*

# Lessons: the facts of life!

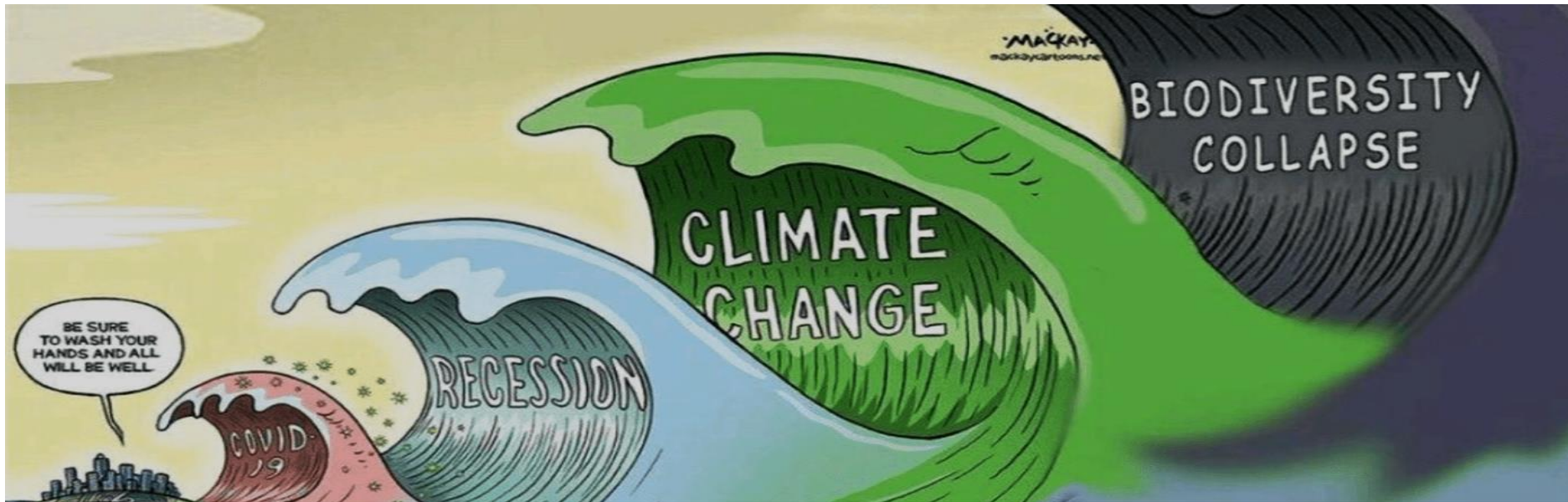
1. Uncertainty, unpredictability are here to stay  
Illusion of control
2. Our vulnerability and interdependence are real and intensifying
3. **There are limits to “carrying capacity” but left alone nature will heal**

LET'S FLATTEN THIS CURVE TOO



# Lessons: the facts of life!

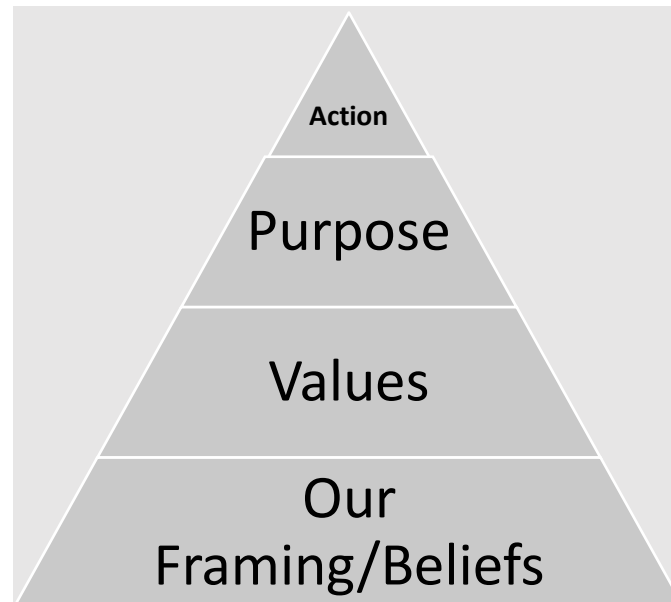
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3. There are limits
- 4. The other existential challenges persist**





# Lessons: the facts of life!

1. Uncertainty, unpredictability are here to stay
2. Our vulnerability and interdependence are real and intensifying
3. There are limits
4. The other existential challenges persist
5. **We're not helpless or innocent victims!**



Once you change philosophy, you change your thought pattern

Once your change your thought pattern, you change your attitude

Once you change your attitude, it changes your thought pattern and then, You take action!

MalcomX

# Lessons: the facts of life!

1. Uncertainty, unpredictability are here to stay
2. Our vulnerability and interdependence are real & intensifying
3. There are limits
4. The other existential challenges persist
5. We're not helpless or innocent victims!
- 6. Resilience precedes thriving**

## Six Foundations for Building Community Resilience



- What is REGENERATION all about?

A little cue: it involves re-membering!





Regeneration  
is NOT

A trendy buzzword

Sustainability on steroids!

“Doing More Good”

Making incremental improvements

A thing, a noun but.....



Regeneration  
IS  
Mauri  
at work!

## ... a verb

Dictionary definitions of the verb to regenerate include:

*“to give new life or energy”*

*“to re-vitalise”*

*“to realise potential”*

*“to create the fertile conditions for LIFE to **thrive/flourish** and evolve.”*

## The Life force at work in human society

*Life on Earth is more like a verb. It repairs, maintains, re-creates, and outdoes itself.* Lynne Margulis

Informed by nature and indigenous  
wisdom – an act of remembering

An informed intent and creative practice

Michelle Holliday

Involves fundamentally different patterns  
of thought

Michelle Holliday

# Regeneration is a Journey!

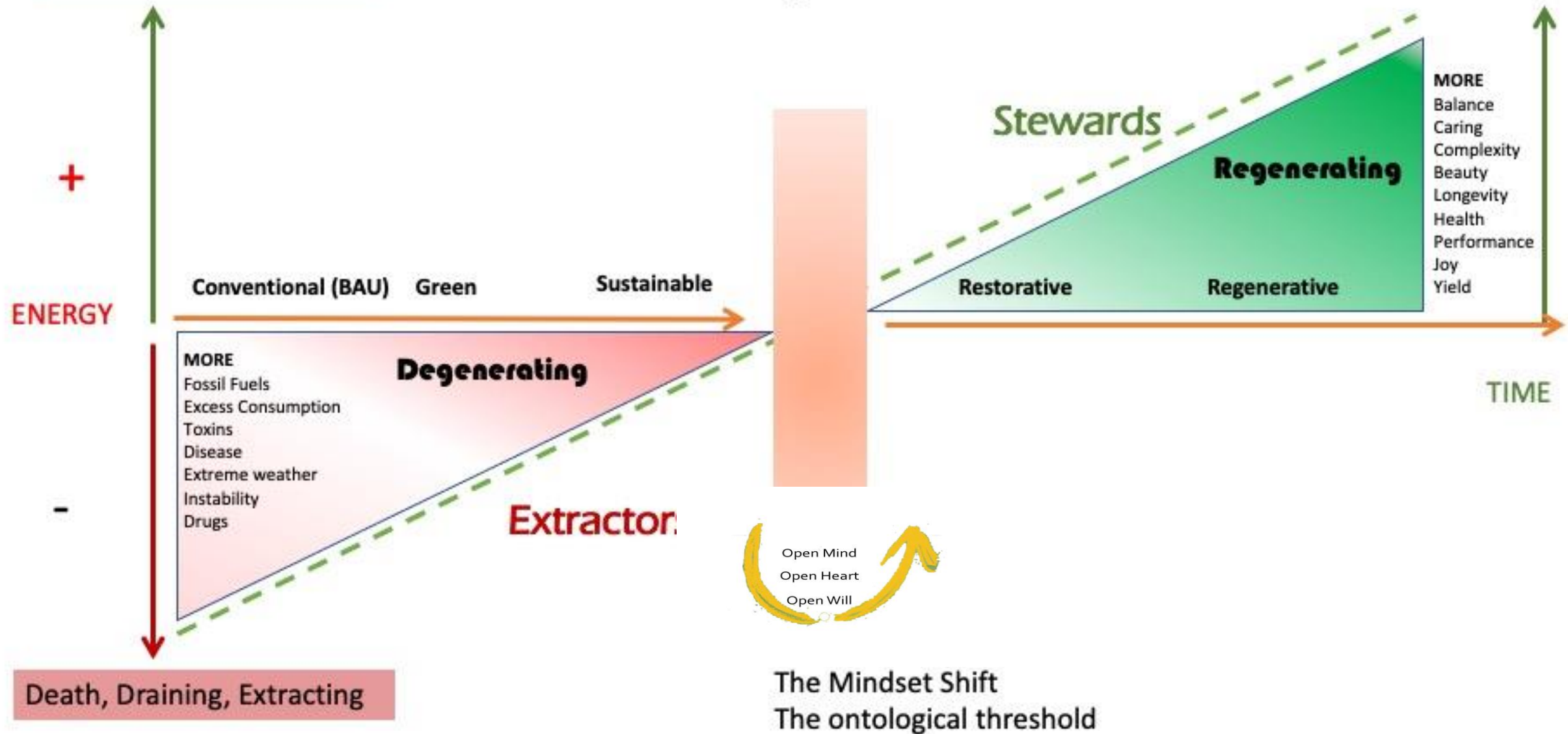


Business As It  
Could Be!

Business as Usual



# Our Journey Home



- What makes REGENERATION so very different?

# The Key Takeaway

If sustainability is doing less harm, then  
regeneration is about developing the  
innate **capability** of a system  
to self-organize, thrive and evolve

*It's about creating the conditions for LIFE to flourish*

*Individual*

*Business*

*Community*



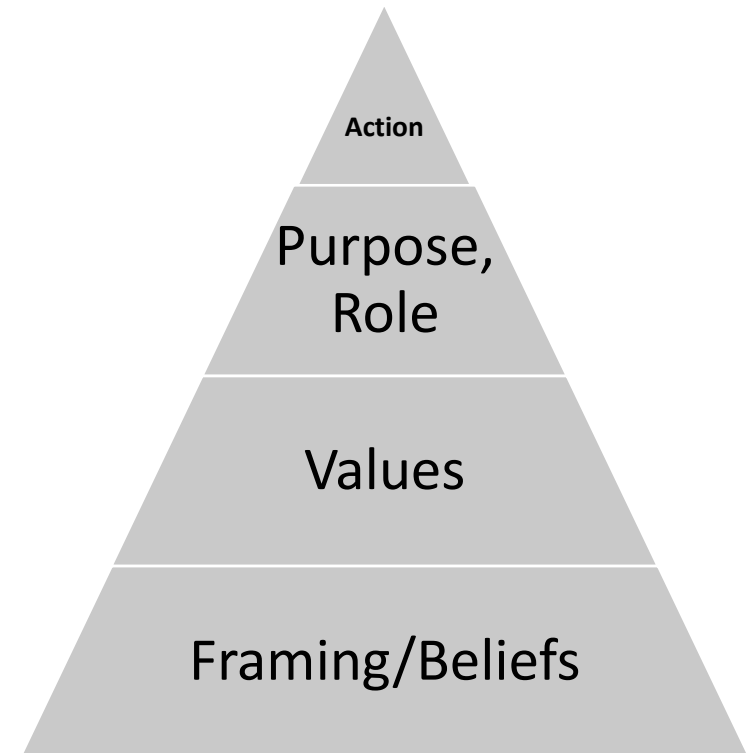
# What makes Regeneration so very different?

Perception & Thinking

Purpose, Role & Success

Nature's Principles

- Place
- Potential
- Harmony
- Development



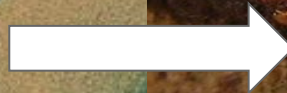
Regeneration  
Involves  
Changing Our  
Lens!





## SHIFTING HOW WE SEE THE WORLD

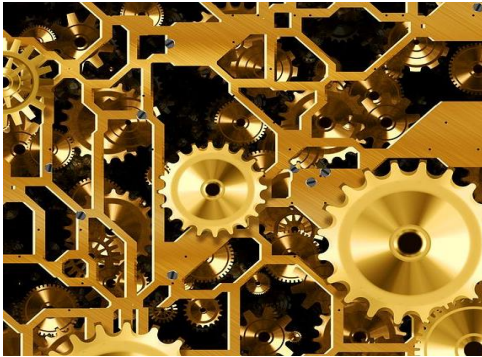
AS A DEAD MACHINE



AS A LIVING SYSTEM



# Supposing we re-frame a destination



**Machine**

**to**

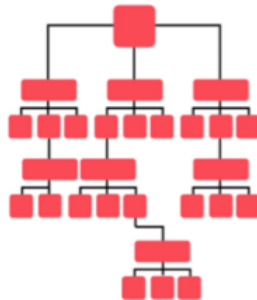
**Living System**



**Assembly Line**

**to**

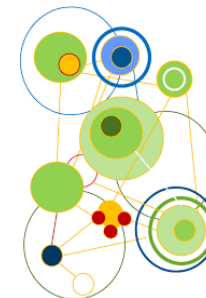
**Community**



**Silos & Hierarchy**

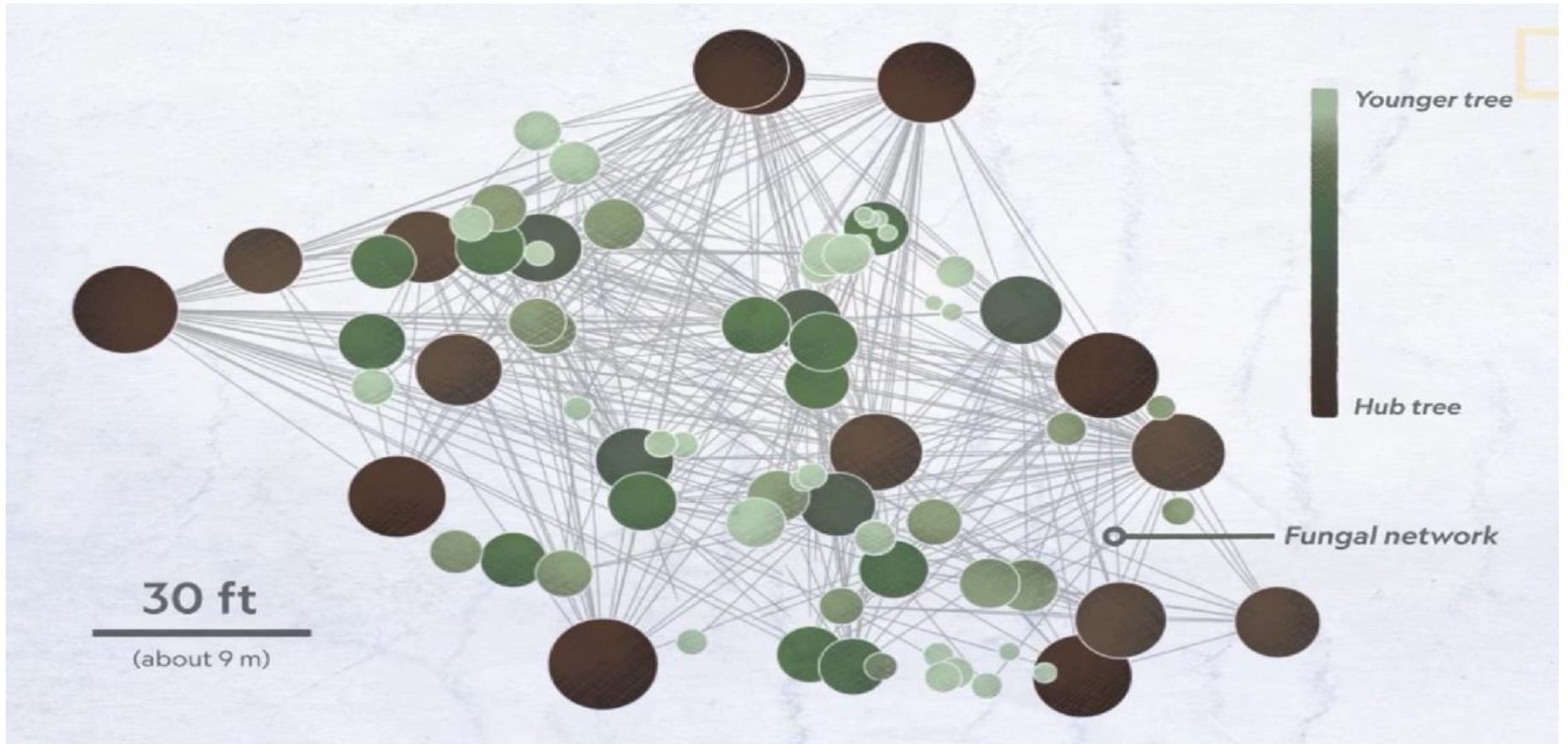
**To**

**Collaborative Network**





# A COMMUNITY OR A FOREST?



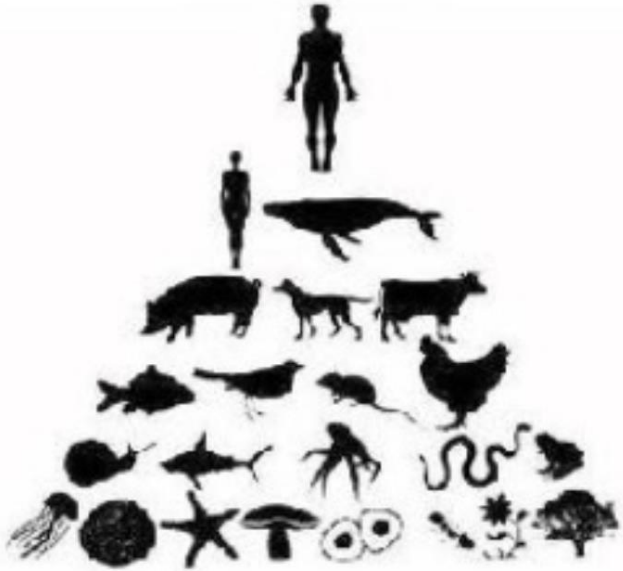
Learning to see wholes



WHAT IS LIFE'S PURPOSE?

# ROLE: How do we shift from mining to gardening?

**EGO**



**ECO**



**SEVA**



How do we act in service of LIFE?

# WHAT does a “Successful” Living System in Nature look like?

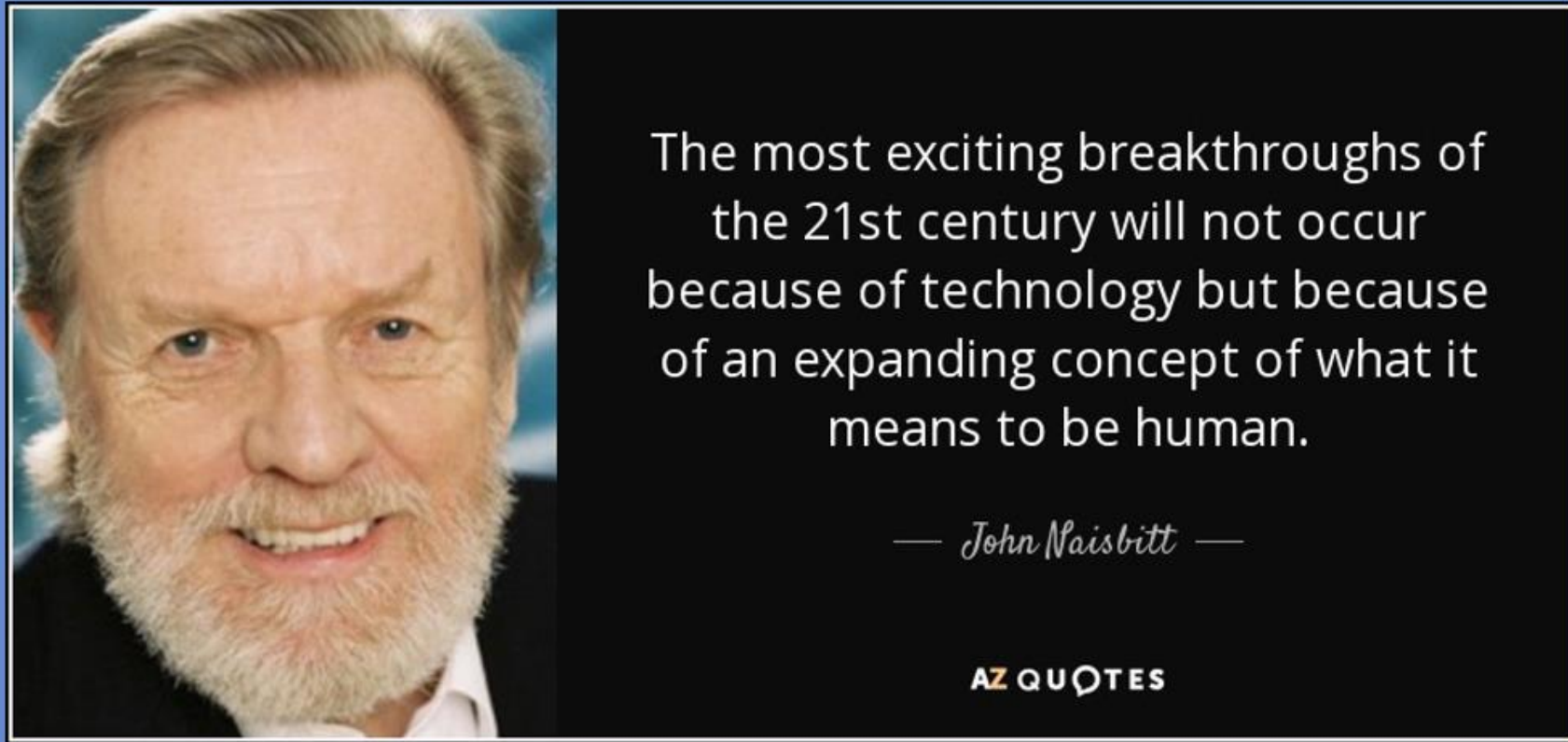
It's **ALIVE!**

- It's **self-organizing**
- Creates **conditions for other life to exist**
- Adaptable, constantly changing, resilient (**learning**)
- **Balance** with all other parts – harmony
- **Productive** – generates **ABUNDANCE**
- Efficient - **Zero waste**
- It's **evolving** – greater order, complexity, beauty - dynamic equilibrium
- **Unique**, distinctive

**It FLOURISHES, IT THRIVES**

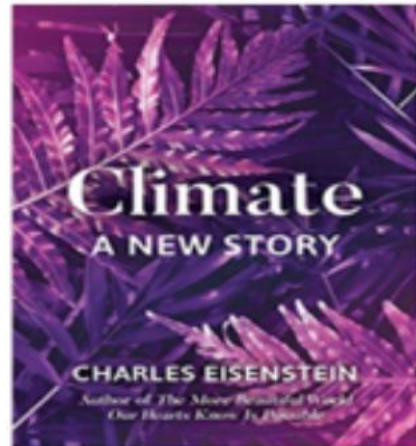
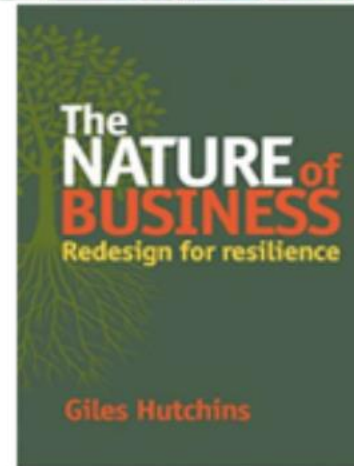
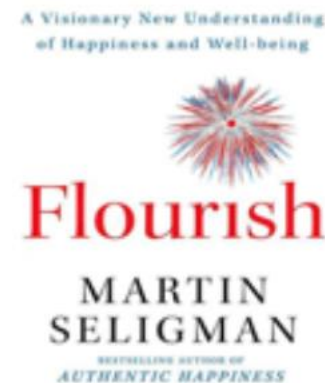
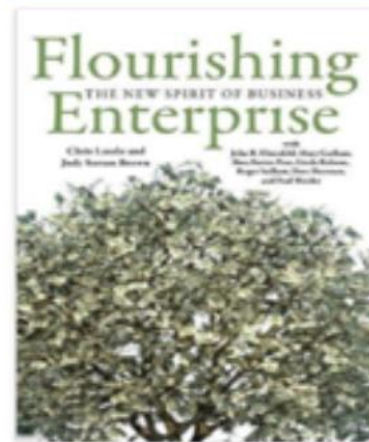
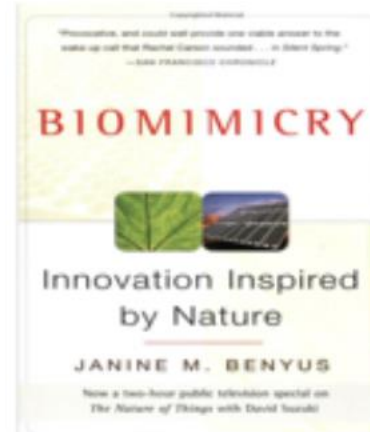
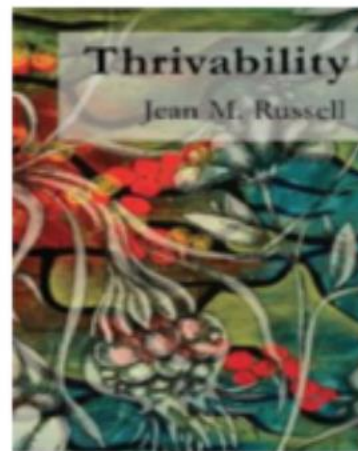
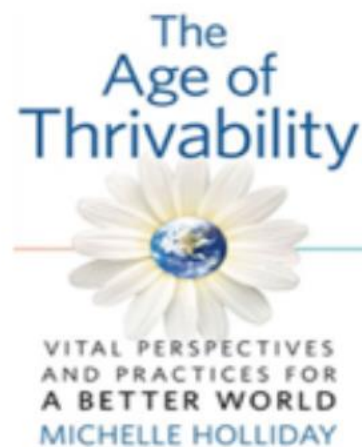
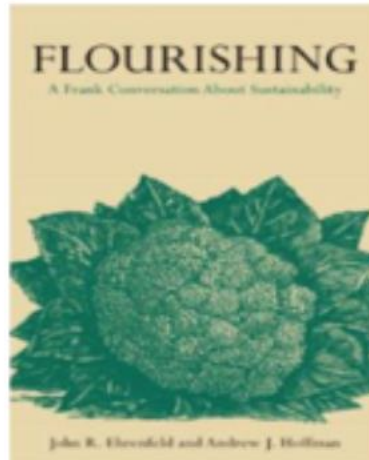


What will it take to unleash the untapped potential within the human being and nurture our capacity to flourish?

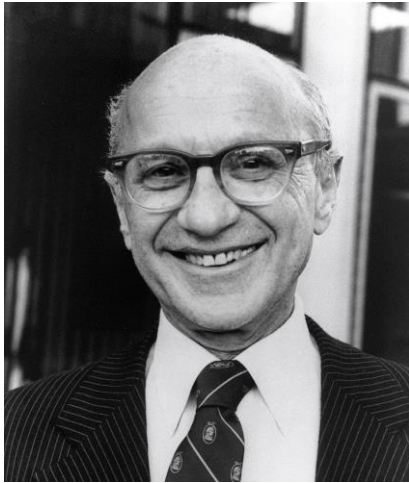


How do we put the HEART and SOUL back into tourism?

# GROWING INTEREST IN FLOURISHING / THRIVING



# BUSINESS IS CHANGING ITS PURPOSE & ROLE



*"The sole purpose of a business is to make money for its shareholders...."*

*[Any business executives who pursued a goal other than making money were] unwitting puppets of the intellectual forces that have been undermining the basis of a free society these past decades."*

*Milton Friedman, 1970s*



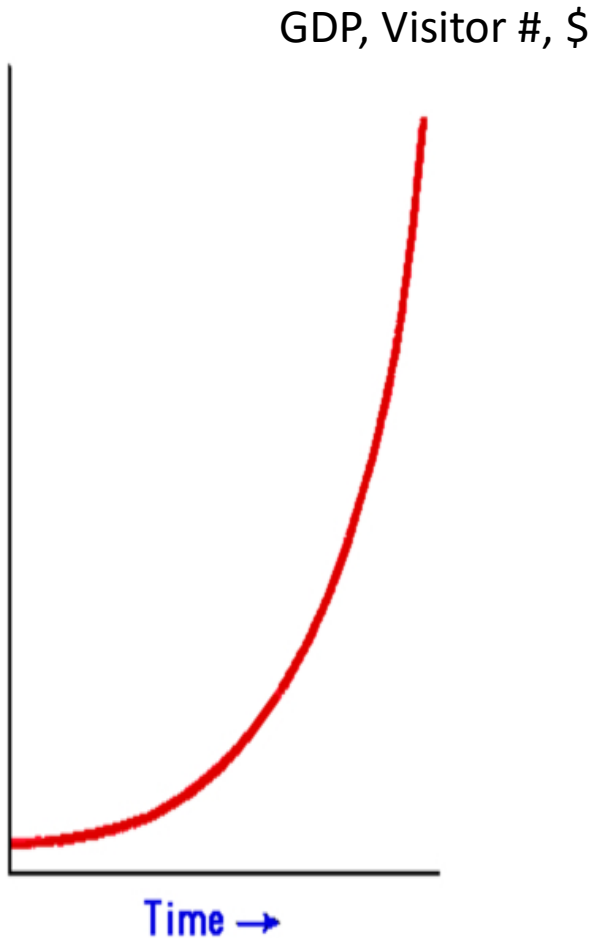
*"If you want to be a successful company in the future, you have to go beyond CSR and **make a contribution**"* Paul Polman



Faces of the  
Wellbeing Economy  
Movement



## SOME GOVERNMENTS ARE RESPONDING

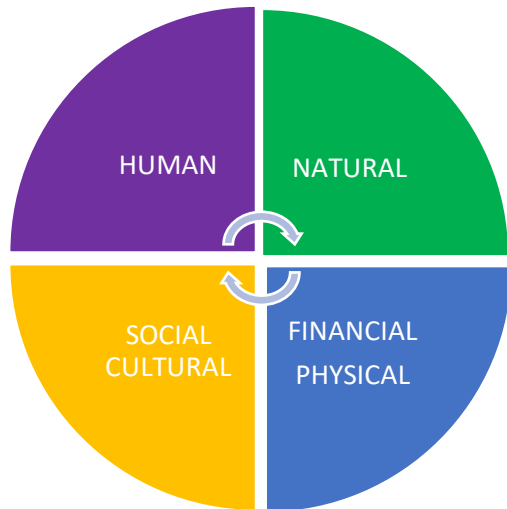


**Jacinda Ardern Says Economic Growth Is Pointless If People Aren't Thriving**



# How do we grow Net Benefit ?

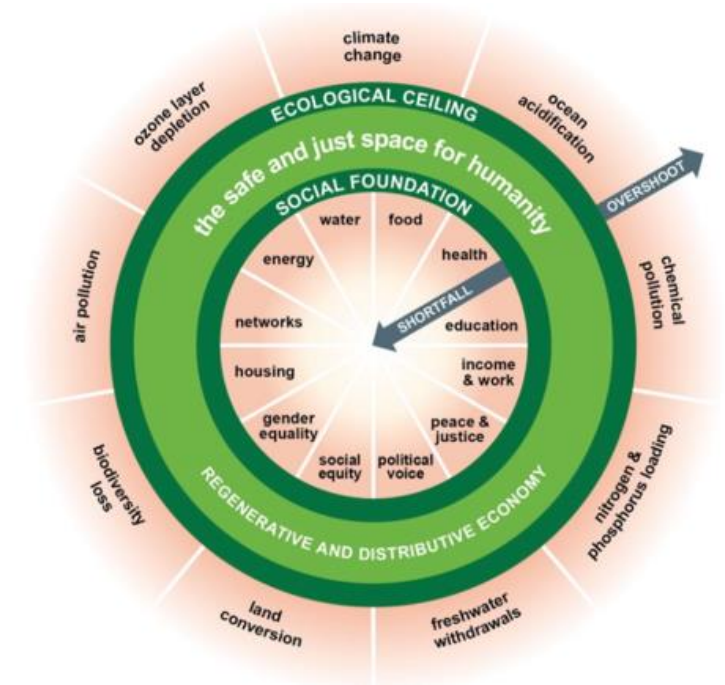
Conceive wealth as “wellth”  
Capitals? or Capabilities?



Ensure the benefits “stick”  
Localise



Bring everyone along



Regeneration  
shifts from  
extracting  
wealth to  
generating  
“wellth”

Regeneration is NOT about LESS but MORE of the things that matter.

MORE health, vitality, harmony, diversity, equity, opportunity, inclusivity, productivity

GROWTH AS MORE complex, connected, inter-dependent, resilient, effective, abundant, productive

DEVELOPMENT of our CAPABILITY to thrive and evolve

So  
Regeneration  
means  
asking  
different  
questions

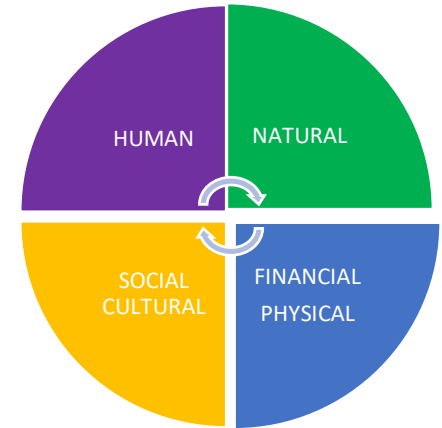
FROM:

“what can this country do for tourism?”

TO:

“what can tourism do to  
contribute to the health and well-  
being of the country and its  
citizens?”

“How can we build a tourism that  
delivers demonstrable net benefit  
to the host communities that  
serve the visitor?”





How do we create and sustain a Visitor Economy that tangibly enables resident **individuals, businesses and communities** to **thrive, flourish and be healthy** in every way?







“We [in tourism policy] must dare to let go, ask questions and trust more, particularly when it comes to [tourism operators]. Involving residents as a group is increasingly important and must not be underestimated.... These are great stories about the significance of collaboration.”

- From an interview in Visit Flanders' report



# TRAVEL TO *tomorrow...*

Recommendations for  
tourism policy 2019-2024

Memorandum from  
**VISITFLANDERS**



# What would it take to become a flourishing place that cares?

**COMMUNITY** – tapping into  
collective intelligence

**PURPOSE/SUCCESS**  
defining success,  
purpose,  
role



**PLACE WHO** is this  
place and how do  
we love & care  
for it?

**PEOPLE**  
Realising human  
potential

**ENTERPRISE/ECONOMY**  
Flourishing Businesses

**RELATIONSHIPS/VALUE** – enriching,  
enlivening, enchanting  
**ENCOUNTERS**



When we see the visitor economy as a living ecosystem, we are called to be gardeners, cultivating the capacity and resilience of local hosting communities.





**Community** is to Regenerative Tourism tourism what  
**Soil** is to Regenerative Agriculture!

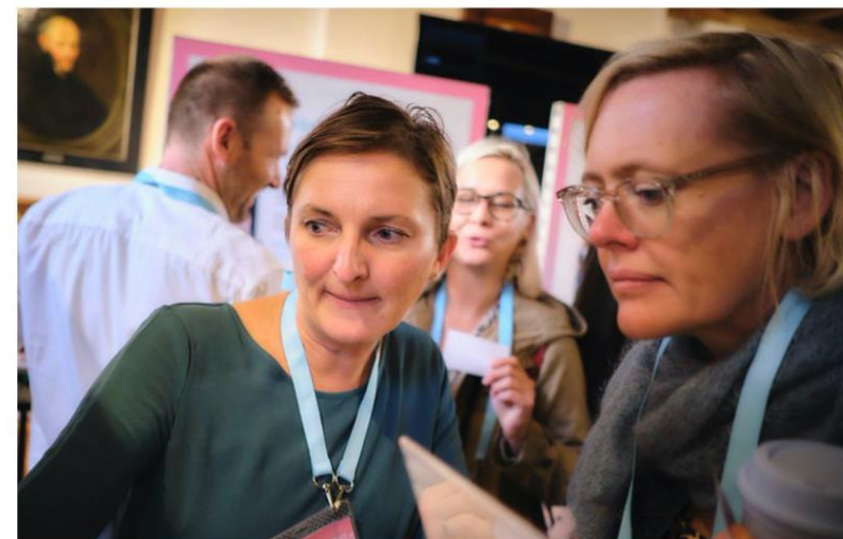




# TRAVEL TO *tomorrow* ...

“The [operators] all agree on this: the first step is conversation. This means listening to one another, determining together what is important, and sustaining the balance between the various interests.”

- From Visit Flanders’ report about their multi-year regenerative tourism initiative, *Travel to Tomorrow*, guided by Anna Pollock



En route to a  
flourishing destination

Innovators are  
designing the future

## TRAVEL TO *tomorrow* ...

GROWING  
FORWARD  
TOGETHER

Join the summit  
on the future of tourism.

12-13 SEPT  
Bruges, Flanders



Curated by Anna Pollock, this summit gathered several hundred operators and professionals



# Here's what that has looked like in other parts of the world

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/FlourishingDestinations>



Participants in the year-long “Flourishing Destinations” learning journey  
from Belgium, Scotland and Romania

“[Regenerative Tourism] means embracing a new way of thinking, most importantly ensuring that when hosting, the whole community understands the role they play in tourism.”

- Alison Elliott, Murton Farm, Tearoom, Nature Reserve & Educational Center (Angus, Scotland)

“[Regenerative Tourism] means for me a path of discovery, learning and engagement; sharing the knowledge gained of seeing things with new eyes.”

- Norma Lyall, Flourish9, local enterprise (Angus, Scotland)

# Forthcoming Attractions!



- An online course and community of practice to develop and nurture regenerative change agents supporting the visitor economy
- A curated encyclopedia + who's who of experts, articles, videos, papers & podcasts. Everything you might want to know about Regenerative Tourism but were afraid to ask!
- A collaborative partnership with
  - Regenerative Travel &
  - Regenerative Resorts