Dear Friends, BUSSUM, July 5, 2012

This is a long email which contains elements of interest for most of you. To enable you to locate those parts that interest you most, I have colour-coordinated the various sections. The whole following text is also available as a word document attachment below (Report on Rio and next steps).

I look forward to taking our next steps together!

Lisinka Ulatowska

Contents of this Emial, Colour-Coordinated for your Convenience.

1. The dates and content of our next 2 meetings: A face to face meeting in the Netherlands on July 12th to meet with author and thinker Wolfgang Hoeschele; and an International telephone conference to develop our strategy for the coming years on Wednesday August 1st.
2. A disturbing influence on Rio+20 that requires immediate action.
3. A personal reflection on Rio+20; quotes from the Final Agreement; and bold new steps we are taking;.
4. A draft hand-out to be printed in 10 languages for you to list: your articles; courses; other resources; and actions; our new organizational structure and IT and other communications technology we shall be introducing to promote communications.
5. Photos: LJ conducting a commons meeting, working on our commons exhibit, 4 team members, informal meeting with the Dutch delegation.
6. As attachments

the full text of the Rio+20 Final Agreement for the Future We Want.

Our basic flyer in English and Portuguese that is ready for translation into the other languages unless there is an urgent request for changes.

A Listing of next steps that will be the subject of our second flyer, also in the body of this email and awaiting your input on [www.titanpad.com/activitiespostRio](http://www.titanpad.com/activitiespostRio) .

*The latter 2 documents will be made available in Arabic, Chinese, Dutch, English, Esperanto, French, German, Russian, Spanish and Portuguese and be sent out via our mailing lists and web sites, the various UN list serves, Posterious.com, and the social media.*

**1a. There will be a face to face exchange between people with commons-type initiatives in the Netherlands with Wolfgang Hoeschele, writer on economics abundance using a commons approach.**

Wolfgang and his wife are on a brief visit to the Netherlands from the US. Please contact me if you would like to come at 035 691 9275. (Translation available into Dutch if necessary).

**1b. An International Strategy Meeting by Telephone Conference**

**This will be held on Wednesday, August 1st at 7 am WPT; 10 am EDT(New York); 4 pm CET(Holland, Germany, France and Switzerland); 10pm Singapore Time and 11 pm Tokyo time.**

**Call in number: 1 218 339 4600. Access Code 999518.**

Agenda of the Strategy Telephone Conference

In preparation for this meeting, all are invited to go to visit as soon as possible: Titanpage [www.titanpad.com/activitiespostRio](http://www.titanpad.com/activitiespostRio) and give input into the document there. The finished version will appear

1. as a 1-page hard copy in the 10 above mentioned languages; and
2. as an electronic version so that readers can click and get information on how to locate the documents mentioned, register for courses, and obtain other resources; and more detailed explanations of initiatives they can join (also in the 10 languages.)

At the meeting we shall

1. transform the action steps, as modified by you in the draft document into a strategy for the coming years;
2. design a structure that encompasses:

geographically, the 10 language areas; and

two types of actions: i. outreach to the grass roots and ii. outreach to world leaders via the UN;

1. IT structures to make all documents mentioned available on request and to enable all parts of the international network to communicate as needed.

**We invite you all to help redesign our activites and structure and to make your articles, courses, and activities available to all interested parties worldwide.**

**2. Menacing Powers that Are Dominating Our Lives Can Still BeTurnedAround**

Rio was like a pressure cooker with a wealth of analyses, research, best practices and initiatives coming at us from the 18700 members of civil society officially registered at the Governmental Summit; some 500 side events at the conference itself; and hundreds of activities at the People’s Summit, held parallel to the Governmental conference at the other side of Rio.

Yet underneath these often upbeat communications a menacing refrain was heard: *we are losing our power to a few large corporations and families that hold a stranglehold on our very means to survive.* Our privacy is invaded and our movements monitored through electronic surveillance; the flow of our money is controlled by debt-driven federal reserve banks that are ***privately owned by a handful of families***; the world’s media are owned by a mere 3 corporations; the means to produce food are controlled by 5-6 companies; and now the fresh water sources are in danger of being privatized with Canada which owns 1/5th of all the world’s fresh water reserves, championing this cause. These are just a few of the ways in which a few people are causing the death and marginalization of a huge and rapidly increasing percentage of our world’s population. The influence of this tiny minority left its indelible mark on the whole conference proceedings.

**This dynamic will escalate, if not turned around, because the values that drive it bring neither happiness nor fulfillment and so the fruitless search to find these through wealth and power is both self-perpetuating and doomed to escalate, *unless a more satisfying way is found by those powerful elites that govern so many lives.***

**FORTUNATELY, THE COMMONS CAN CREATE AN ABOUT TURN IN 2 WAYS:**

* 1. The commons fosters a respect for the deep fulfillment of each member of the commons as well as for the whole community and the resources they must share. Once deeply experienced, this approach to life might be able to prove itself to those who are driven to find fulfillment through wielding increased power.
  2. Commons communities and networks have the potential of forming a vast global movement once they find a way to unite on a basis of unity in diversity. Where people connect on a basis of mutual caring, respect and sharing with the objective to throw off the yoke, they can not be controlled by a small number of people whose partnership is weakened to the degree they are in the end each out for *individual* gain.

Let us look at some fragments of a potential commons movement as they exist today:

1. Indigenous Peoples, some 370 million people in all, can contribute some of their eons of wisdom, experience and diverse cultural approaches and thereby aid other communities as they inculcate a respect for Nature, encourage their youth to develop in their unique ways; serve their communities and participate in communal decision making.

Indigenous Peoples have attained the status of a Major Group at the UN, have lobbied successfully to be recognized in International Agreements and to have the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples recognized almost universally as international law. They have done this by forming a global network that has worked together over the past 20 years.

At the same time, many Indigenous Peoples are fighting often losing battles to retain governance over their resources and lands and to overcome the effects of marginalization.

*2.* Cooperatives worldwide have one billion official members (one of every seven people worldwide). As the business branch of the commons movement, they are the mainstay of whole national economies (such as agricultural exports of Denmark). They are thriving at this time of economic downturn which is characterized by loss of faith in minority-owned corporations. At the United Nations, they have successfully lobbied to have 2012 officially proclaimed the *UN International Year of Cooperatives.*

Yet their main global organization, the International Association of Cooperatives, lacks the staff and funds to be able to form a movement that can change the dangerous mal-distribution of power worldwide.

* 1. The rapidly growing modern commons movement which includes conscious- living communities, such as Geocities, the Global Ecovillage Network with some 1000 communities, some 700 Transition Towns, and 18000 Sarvodaya communities.

These and many other similar rapidly growing networks are working against time to create a sustainable world, a task so huge that it leaves no room to conceive of and help build a global commons movement by forming effective partnerships with other parts of the potential commons movement.

Fortunately, the still fragmented commons movement also contains in it the means to overcome the lack of resources that plagues these three large branches. These include:

1. The many commons that are constantly forming to help people gain access to the resources they need that are increasingly being placed outside of their reach by a minority. There are, for instance: 3300 water cooperatives and many HMOs--health insurance cooperatives--in the USA; thousands of farming and food cooperatives worldwide, many using permaculture approaches to help people live more in harmony with nature; unarmed protection for civilians; educational resources such as Wikipedia, OpenCourseWare (provided by the prestigious MIT); General Public Licences, and the Internet itself that provides access to web sites such as that which lists millions of low-tech solutions to living problems such as solar ovens and fridges that cool as the temperature rises and costs less than one dollar to build (See <http://www.sristi.org/hbnew/aboutus.php>).

2. ***An International Communications’and Lobby Structure for Commons-Based groups and networks.*** This is ready to come off the ground as the need arises. This will allow diverse commons to learn from one another’s best practices; and to communicate, network and plan together to make their best practices, knowhow, values and needs known to their national governments and the UN; and to lobby for the tipping point from a power-over value system to one of equitable worldwide power-sharing.

In addition we shall need:

1. A group of people to reach out to each of the main branches of the commons to find mutually rewarding ways of empowering all aspects of a potential movement.

***2.*** People in each of the 10 language regions that we are opening up worldwide to make increasing numbers of people aware of the commons movement. These would for instance make contact with commons communities in their area, and make their best practices known through heartwarming stories via our various communications channels (newsletters, the social media, web sites, the UN); and encourage them to join the ***International Communications and Lobby Network.***

A FEW PERSONAL IMPRESSIONS OF THE RIO+20 SUMMIT AS WE WORKED ON THE FINAL AGREEMENT

The United States[1] (pleading that they were in an election year) insisted from the very beginning that they wanted a brief document not more than 5 pages-long: no commitments, no timelines, no funding. The G77 (134 developing countries) pointed out that according to international agreements developed and developing countries had *common but differentiated responsibilities****[2]*** and if the US was not forthcoming then they would not be either; and the EU insisted on firm commitments. The menacing influence mentioned above ran through the whole negotiations.

At the same time countries like Ecuador (The rights of Nature); Bolivia (Living in harmony with Mother Nature); Bhutan (Gross National Happiness); and Columbia (Sustainable Development Goals or SDGs) began to take leadership positions that are in strong evidence in the document. It was a daunting experience to see a new form of world leadership begin to emerge as old ways prove untenable and to realize that **the necessary shift in power can only take place if, we, the people, learn to live and stand for the well being of all people and nature and that no one will do this for us**.

When the official preparatory period ended, 190 of the 299 paragraphs had not been agreed. All hope for a decent Final Agreement seemed lost until Brazil took the negotiations in hand and the whole atmosphere shifted. As host nation, they could not allow Rio to go down in history as the city that, like Copenhagen, had hosted a fiasco.

Brazil pointed out that there was a choice between love and hate; and that as host country they would present the meager 109 paragraphs for signature to the 160 Heads of State scheduled to arrive that coming Wednesday. If the countries wanted more then they would have to come to an agreement, because the Conference was bound to produce a ***consensus*** document*.*

Starting Saturday through Tuesday the US, the EU and the G77 (the parties that were most in conflict) huddled in a corner surrounded by delegates from the other countries. Negotiations went from early morning to late at night. They ended up with a Final Agreement consisting of 283 paragraphs, describing *The Future We Want*. At a private breakfast meeting the EU negotiator said that the EU was satisfied that most of their points had got into the Final Agreement.

Columbia had offset the US refusal to agree to firm commitments, additional funding and timelines by introducing the Sustainable Development Goals that can form firm agreements and can be negotiated after the conference has ended.

By the time Brazil had started to turn things around, the negative press had taken over. I attach the whole document for you to form your own opinion and shall withstand with just a few quotes at the end of this (blue) section.

While the US was unwilling to make any official commitments themselves, they were eager for others to do so: nearly 700 concrete commitments were registered at the Conference from governments, business, industry, financial institutions and civil society groups, amongst others.

**Important Developments**

**1. Our world is developing the means to function as a global human commons.** For the very first time in history input into the Final Agreement was invited from **all** organizations worldwide--large, small, official, unofficial! If we consider that the sum of all actions by all people produce the world we have and that humanity as a whole is therefore (much like the Internet) an ***unconscious*** commons, then this was a first ***unconscious*** attempt at acting as a commons with the people of the world relating directly to the UN.

The UN Secretary General received 7000 pages of ideas, 6000 from civil society and 1000 from Governments. The themes were duly analyzed and formed the basis for the initial document of 19 pages that was adopted as a start for the negotiations. This is an amazing development for an organization whose Members and decision makers are exclusively Governments.

We had lobbied for ***a commons-based economy based on the well-being of all people and nature.*** Realizing full well that most people confuse commons with commons goods, we used that phrase over and over again as an educational device, while realizing that in the Final Agreement itself it would b e confusing if the word ***commons*** were used and that we were therefore going to have to aim to get the spirit of the commons in the document, even if the words were not mentioned. So we broke the concept down into:

1. All people (as commoners) responsible for sustainable development;
2. All people to be involved in decisions (commoning) regarding sustainable development.
3. All people and nature to be seen as one whole.

The following is the text in the Final Agreement.

39. We recognize that planet Earth and its ecosystems are our home…We are convinced that in order to achieve a just balance among the economic, social and environmental needs of present and future generations, it is necessary to promote harmony with nature.

40. We call for holistic and integrated approaches to sustainable development that will guide humanity to live in harmony with nature and lead to efforts to restore the health and integrity of the Earth’s ecosystem.

41. We acknowledge the natural and cultural diversity of the world and recognize that all cultures and civilizations can contribute to sustainable development.

**C. Engaging major groups and other stakeholders**

42. We … recognize the important role that such authorities and communities can play in implementing sustainable development, including by engaging citizens and stakeholders and providing them with relevant information, as appropriate, on the three dimensions of sustainable development. We further acknowledge the importance of involving all relevant decision makers in the planning and implementation of sustainable development policies.

43. We underscore that broad public participation and access to information and

judicial and administrative proceedings are essential to the promotion of sustainable

development. Sustainable development requires the meaningful involvement and

active participation of regional, national and subnational legislatures and judiciaries,

and all major groups: women, children and youth, indigenous peoples,

non-governmental organizations, local authorities, workers and trade unions,

business and industry, the scientific and technological community, and farmers, as

well as other stakeholders, including local communities, volunteer groups and

foundations, migrants and families as well as older persons and persons with

disabilities. In this regard, we agree to work more closely with the major groups and

other stakeholders and encourage their active participation, as appropriate, in

processes that contribute to decision-making, planning and implementation of

policies and programmes for sustainable development at all levels.

44. We acknowledge the role of civil society and the importance of enabling all

members of civil society to be actively engaged in sustainable development. We

recognize that improved participation of civil society depends upon, inter alia,

strengthening access to information and building civil society capacity and an

enabling environment. We recognize that information and communications

technology is facilitating the flow of information between governments and the

public. In this regard, it is essential to work towards improved access to information

and communications technology, especially broadband networks and services, and

bridge the digital divide, recognizing the contribution of international cooperation in

this regard.

49. We stress the importance of the participation of indigenous peoples in the

achievement of sustainable development. We also recognize the importance of the

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples in the context of

global, regional, national and subnational implementation of sustainable

development strategies.

50. We stress the importance of the active participation of young people in

decision-making processes, as the issues we are addressing have a deep impact on

present and future generations, and as the contribution of children and youth is vital

to the achievement of sustainable development. We also recognize the need to

promote intergenerational dialogue and solidarity by recognizing their views.

(51 and 52:Paragraphs on workers and trade unions and farmers)

53. We note the valuable contributions that non-governmental organizations could

and do make in promoting sustainable development through their well-established

and diverse experience, expertise and capacity, especially in the area of analysis,

sharing of information and knowledge, promotion of dialogue and support of

implementation of sustainable development.

54. We recognize the central role of the United Nations in advancing the

sustainable development agenda…

55. We commit ourselves to reinvigorating the global partnership for sustainable

development that we launched in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. We recognize the need to

impart new momentum to our cooperative pursuit of sustainable development, and

commit to work together with major groups and other stakeholders in addressing

implementation gaps.

**And on sustainable development goals (note the mention of participaton of *all* stakeholders:**

10. We acknowledge that democracy, good governance and the rule of law, at the

national and international levels, as well as an enabling environment, are essential

for sustainable development, including sustained and inclusive economic growth,

social development, environmental protection and the eradication of poverty and

hunger. We reaffirm that to achieve our sustainable development goals we need

institutions at all levels that are effective, transparent, accountable and democratic.

**B. Sustainable development goals**

245. We underscore that the Millennium Development Goals are a useful tool in

focusing achievement of specific development gains as part of a broad development

vision and framework for the development activities of the United Nations, for

national priority-setting and for mobilization of stakeholders and resources towards

common goals. We therefore remain firmly committed to their full and timely

achievement.

246. We recognize that the development of goals could also be useful for pursuing

focused and coherent action on sustainable development. We further recognize the

importance and utility of a set of sustainable development goals, based on Agenda

21 and the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation, which fully respect all the Rio

Principles, taking into account different national circumstances, capacities and

priorities, are consistent with international law, build upon commitments already

made, and contribute to the full implementation of the outcomes of all major

summits in the economic, social and environmental fields, including the present

outcome document. The goals should address and incorporate in a balanced way all

three dimensions of sustainable development and their interlinkages. They should be

coherent with and integrated into the United Nations development agenda beyond

2015, thus contributing to the achievement of sustainable development and serving

as a driver for implementation and mainstreaming of sustainable development in the

United Nations system as a whole. The development of these goals should not divert

focus or effort from the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals.

247. We also underscore that sustainable development goals should be actionoriented,

concise and easy to communicate, limited in number, aspirational, global

in nature and universally applicable to all countries while taking into account

different national realities, capacities and levels of development and respecting

national policies and priorities. We also recognize that the goals should address and

be focused on priority areas for the achievement of sustainable development, being

guided by the present outcome document. Governments should drive

implementation with the active involvement of all relevant stakeholders, as

appropriate.

248. We resolve to establish an inclusive and transparent intergovernmental process

on sustainable development goals that is open to all stakeholders, with a view to

developing global sustainable development goals to be agreed by the General

Assembly. An open working group shall be constituted no later than at the opening

of the sixty-seventh session of the Assembly and shall comprise 30 representatives,

nominated by Member States from the five United Nations regional groups, with the

aim of achieving fair, equitable and balanced geographic representation. At the

outset, this open working group will decide on its methods of work, including

developing modalities to ensure the full involvement of relevant stakeholders and

expertise from civil society, the scientific community and the United Nations system

in its work, in order to provide a diversity of perspectives and experience. It will

submit a report, to the sixty-eighth session of the Assembly, containing a proposal

for sustainable development goals for consideration and appropriate action.

249. The process needs to be coordinated and coherent with the processes to

consider the post-2015 development agenda. The initial input to the work of the

working group will be provided by the Secretary-General, in consultation with

national Governments. In order to provide technical support to the process and to

the work of the working group, we request the Secretary-General to ensure all

necessary input and support to this work from the United Nations system, including

through establishing an inter-agency technical support team and expert panels, as

needed, drawing on all relevant expert advice. Reports on the progress of work will

be made regularly to the General Assembly.

250. We recognize that progress towards the achievement of the goals needs to be

assessed and accompanied by targets and indicators, while taking into account

different national circumstances, capacities and levels of development.

251. We recognize that there is a need for global, integrated and scientifically based

information on sustainable development. In this regard, we request the relevant

bodies of the United Nations system, within their respective mandates, to support

the regional economic commissions in collecting and compiling national inputs in

order to inform this global effort. We further commit to mobilizing financial

resources and capacity-building, particularly for developing countries, to achieve

this endeavour.

2. **Both the Governments that were responsible for leading the negotiations and the UN Secretariat met with us regularly and actually listened to what we said.** At such conferences, the main negotiations are guided by the Bureau, consisting of representatives of a country for each main region of the world, a Chair (Mr. Shah Zukang of China) and two Co-Chairs (Barbados and the Republic of Korea). The representatives of civil society (divided into Major Groups[3]) had at least one or two special meetings with the Bureau during every preparatory meeting where we could present our points of view. These were indeed taken very seriously and the Chair would go over the points we made at the last meeting and let us know precisely what they had done about them.

In this context we must realize that we are dealing with two levels of communication: that to the delegates as people and that to delegates as representatives of their countries. It happened on a number of occasions that as people they would give us hints as to which government was blocking some part of the document. That way we were able to approach these directly. And if we came with good enough reasons, blocks were withdrawn by the governments in question. I did feel that we as civil society were listened to.

3. **We were regularly invited to give our input into the proceedings.** As Major Groups we gave one or two statements almost every day, during the preparatory meetings. We were even allowed to attend and speak at the negotiations which have generally been closed to all but Governmental representatives. I had been asked to head the Commons Cluster (Just and extension of what I was already doing for Commons Action for the United Nations.) As such when a statement was to be written I received a request from the Organizing Partners for the positions to be mentioned for the Commons Cluster. In that way our positions were constantly present in the NGO statements. I was thankful that I had not declined to take on the extra responsibility.

We were also sometimes expected to develop statements together with other Major Groups and the relationships became increasingly close. I am reminded of Jay’s idea that we should form a commons first with the organizations of the NGO Major Group and then between all nine. That has actually been happening!

In fact, as time went by, other NGOs and Major Groups took on one another’s points of view. Rio and its preparatory process were a giant mutual educational situation where we all learned from one another. The Business and Industry Major Group that included Dow Chemical requested Governments to implement norms and standards for **all of business and industry** to keep to. Unfortunately that fell on deaf ears.

4. **Despair of many Governments.** Bety Melo, our Brazilian representative, said she was struck by the contrast between the upbeat spirit of civil society both at the Governmental Meeting and the People’s Summit; and the sense of powerlessness, pain and suffering in the statements by the Heads of State and Government and Ministers during the Summit.Many of us agreed with her. *How can you think of developing sustainably when under the occupation of a harsh foreign power, or if your houses and streets are washed away by rising sea-levels?* she asked. Bety’s insight will colour the way we approach governments in the future as we prepare for the next UN meeting (probably in May 2013). **Over and over again, we were implored by Governments, the Bureau and the UN Secretariat to help break the deadlock that existed between the three Governmental parties that were at loggerheads with one another**.

5. **Governments included us in their high-visibility meetings**. The Dutch members of our team—5 in all—attended regular private briefings by the Dutch delegation; US participants were briefed by the US.

At a breakfast given for the approximately 40 Dutch attending Rio+20, the chief negotiator for the EU said that they felt good about what had finally come out of the negotiations. Here we were able to speak. Attending were: the Prime Minister of Aruba, the Prime Minister of St. Martin;s the Chief Negotiator for the EU, two Dutch Ministers of State (one for Foreign Affairs and one for the Environment); and the Dutch Ambassador himself.

6.The Commons Cluster had daily meetings with between 5 and 12 participants. The numbers increased when we moved the venue from the noisy foodcourt to a quieter place. Here important decisions were made:

On Rudolf’s suggestion to have all basic materials translated into the UN’s official languages with the help of the IPS. Even though Portuguese does not belong to this category, we had our basic hand-out on the Commons translated into Portuguese immediately since most of civil society in Brazil spoke only that language. Rudolf will take the Portuguese version to the 5 presentations he will be giving in Brasilia after Rio+20. ­­­­

On LJ’s suggestion we made a diagram of our present organizational Interconnectivity and Information Dissemination Channels. This had a great clarifying effect. I was asked to create a listing of activities which is appended to this document and also available for your additions and corrections on [www.titanpad.com/activitiespostRio](http://www.titanpad.com/activitiespostRio)

in preparation for the upcoming strategy meeting on August 1st (See above.)

**4. Draft Hand-out on Planned Activities from now until 2015 and beyond**

***Please go to: to list your articles, courses and activities and to help us develop the following activities into a powerful action programme.***

*HELP FOSTER A COMMONS-BASED GLOBAL COMMUNITY BASED ON CARING, SHARING AND THE WELL-BEING OF ALL PEOPLE AND NATURE*

We are developing newsletters, web sites, and communications via Facebook, Linked-In and Twitter as well as basic materials in English, Portuguese, Spanish, Dutch, German, French, Russian, Arabic, Chinese and Esperanto. Any action you take can be used to strengthen the commons in your region. It can also contribute to a global movement from the grassroots up and top down via the United Nations and the world's Governments.

ACTION STEPS

SUMMARY

Help foster a commons-based global economy and community from the grass roots up and top down via Governments and the UN.

Global commoning is a way of life where we learn to include other people in discussions and in decision making for the good of all people and nature. It is a way of taking responsibility for the resources we need; and it is a way of building communities based on caring and sharing. A commons approach -- if introduced on a wide scale via education and the media -- can help meet many of the challenges we face today, especially by the millions of people who are being marginalized and whose very survival is threatened.

Here are some ways in which you can help make this important world movement visible and become part of a large global movement:

1. Help inform people about the many types of commons that exist and encourage them through heartwarming stories to meet their needs by connecting with them through the various channels we have available to us now to get their stories out.

2. Get to know various commons personally and help them to connect with one another so that they can learn best practices and empower one another.

3. Join our letter-writing teams to inform governments of these best practices and how commons are helping to ease economic strain at all levels of society, giving people access to the resources they need and already forming a network of communities on which a strong bottom-up global economy can grow.

4. Form ***national*** teams to familiarize your government with how the commons can be a problem solving tool.

5. Join our UN team and lobby for a Panel of Experts to study how local, national, regional and global commons can form the basis for a global economy dedicated to the well-being of all people and nature.

STEPS IN MORE DETAIL

Learn about the Commons

Our world is a result of the sum of all the actions we take and those we do not take. This means that each of us is a global commoner whether we are conscious of it or not. Once we see this, we realize how necessary it is to actively practice the art of commoning.

Click here for documents

Click here for courses:

 Internet (Robin Temple, Mary Beth, LJ)

 Alanna’s Courses

 BA and MA through Notre Dame Business School

 UNITAR

 Quick Course for UN Team

Click here for links to like-minded organizations

 GEN

 Transition Towns

 Earth Condominium

 International Cooperatives Association

Introduce the Commons to Education Bodies and the Media.

When a commons approach to life is introduced at every level of education and also becomes a well-known story in the media, we will be creating a strong foundation for a world that is concerned with the well-being of all people and nature.

A first step: One in every twenty people are a member of a commons —1 ½ billion people ---. Help make this movement visible. Together we can:

1. Make lists of diverse commons that exist in each country;

2. Help these commons to connect with one another and show Governments how these commons can help them to meet social, economic and environmental challenges.

Send examples to your language coordinator to be made public via the newsletter in your language and our other publicity channels. Also, broadcast your work through local and national media.

Become a Commoner Yourself

We have no police force in the city where I live. To prevent break-ins we have created a Neighbourhood Watch with the help of our County Council. Others, concerned with the depletion of oil have formed a commons with the help of the Transition Town Network to explore how to live “beyond oil”. There is now a fast growing network ofTransition Towns.

Commons-based communities are forming to meet the most diverse needs: access to movies, photos, culture of all types, information, help in building sustainable communities, high-quality healthcare, and reliable community-run banks. All the activities of Commons Action for the United Nations are run as a commons. Explore joining a variety of commons yourself or starting one where you experience the need. (Read on…)

Help Create and Implement a Peoples’ Sustainable Treaty on the Commons

Rob Wheeler, Helen Findori and others are developing a People’s Treaty according to the structure used by other People’s Treaties. They will provide further guidance.

Become a Member of our UN Team and Work Closely with Major Groups

During the preparations for Rio+20 we began to work closely with other Major Groups using a commons approach. We found that through the collaboration that developed between us all, each Major Group would bring up points that reinforced the points of view of the others. In the end, it was as if a consensus was growing between us. There is likely to be a next UN conference in 2013. We intend to continue this close collaboration.

Help Develop Sustainable Development Goals

At the Rio Summit that ended in June 2012, it was decided to create Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) These will set targets for Governments and people to meet. We would like to help formulate and implement an SDG on the commons. Just imagine that diverse types of commons would form into coalitions of best practices and then be consulted by Governments and the UN to give advice on how to deal equitably and sustainably with aspects of the economic, environmental and social crises. Gradually clusters of diverse commons could become building blocks for sustainable local, national, regional and global economies, form a peoples representation in the UN and be administered by this new expanded United Nations.

Join our letter writing campaigns to Heads of State and Government, UN Ambassadors and the UN Secretariat

A letter writing campaign consists of a number of steps that we approach as a commons:

Usually we begin such campaigns as Governments are preparing to meet at the United Nations to deal with challenges in the social, economic and environmental fields. We compose a letter showing ways in which they can do so using a commons approach. This letter is edited and sent out to all participating organizations for their signature and then sent to Heads of State and Government, UN Ambassadors and the UN Secretariat as appropriate.

Join our Instant Action Network

Whenever governmental negotiations are stalled, we organize an Instant Action. We invite all our participants to write letters on the subject. These are sent to our Instant Action Coordinator, Emile van Essen, who then sees that the letters are sent either to the Ambassador or Head of State of the country in question or else to all world leaders, as the case might be.

Join our UN Team and Lobby for a Panel of Experts to research how to build a commons-based global community centred on the well-being of all people and nature

Whether you actually attend a UN conference or not, you can help to lobby Governments to set up a Panel of Experts within the UN Secretariat that will do research with input from people worldwide on how we can foster a commons-based global community based on the well-being of all people and nature. Once this panel is created, we will explore ways to connect them with the information that is collected in each of your areas of commons-based activity.

Communities of Sharing: Sharing Best Practices with One Another, Governments and the UN

Fostering a Commons Based Global Economy Bottom Up and Top Down

 We can divide commons into two groups: commons communities where people attempt to take care of their own needs sometimes in cooperation with the public or the private sectors; and communities that form to meet a *specific* need, such as access to information, educational materials, high-quality university courses, films, culture, software, etc.

Franco Iacomello, an IT expert, will create a process on the Internet that will allow commons of various types to communicate, learn from one another, network, plan and coordinate their actions. In this way they can form a powerful foundation for a global economy, based on caring, sharing and the well-being of all people and nature. We are just beginning to reach out to various types of commons to invite them to join. Please help us with outreach.