

Beacons of Hope:

Harnessing Lessons for Transitions to Sustainable Food Systems

G-STIC 2018 Thematic Session: Agroecology for Sustainable Food Systems
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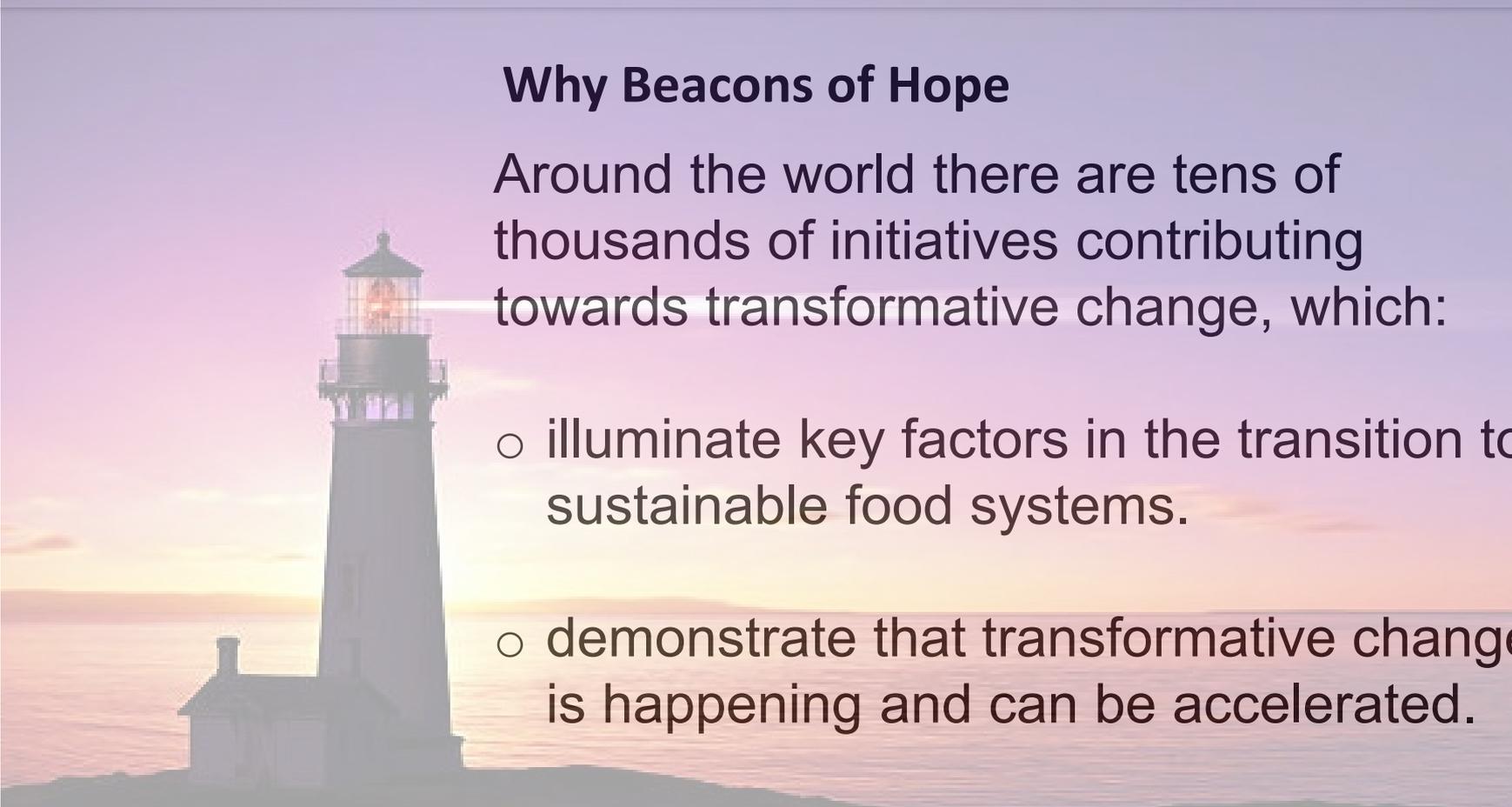
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What is the Beacons of Hope Project?



A collaboration between Biovision Foundation for Ecological Development and the Global Alliance for the Future of Food,

Aims to amplify the power and potential of transforming food systems now and for future generations.



Why Beacons of Hope

Around the world there are tens of thousands of initiatives contributing towards transformative change, which:

- illuminate key factors in the transition to sustainable food systems.
- demonstrate that transformative change is happening and can be accelerated.
- We can learn from these!

Why Beacons of Hope?

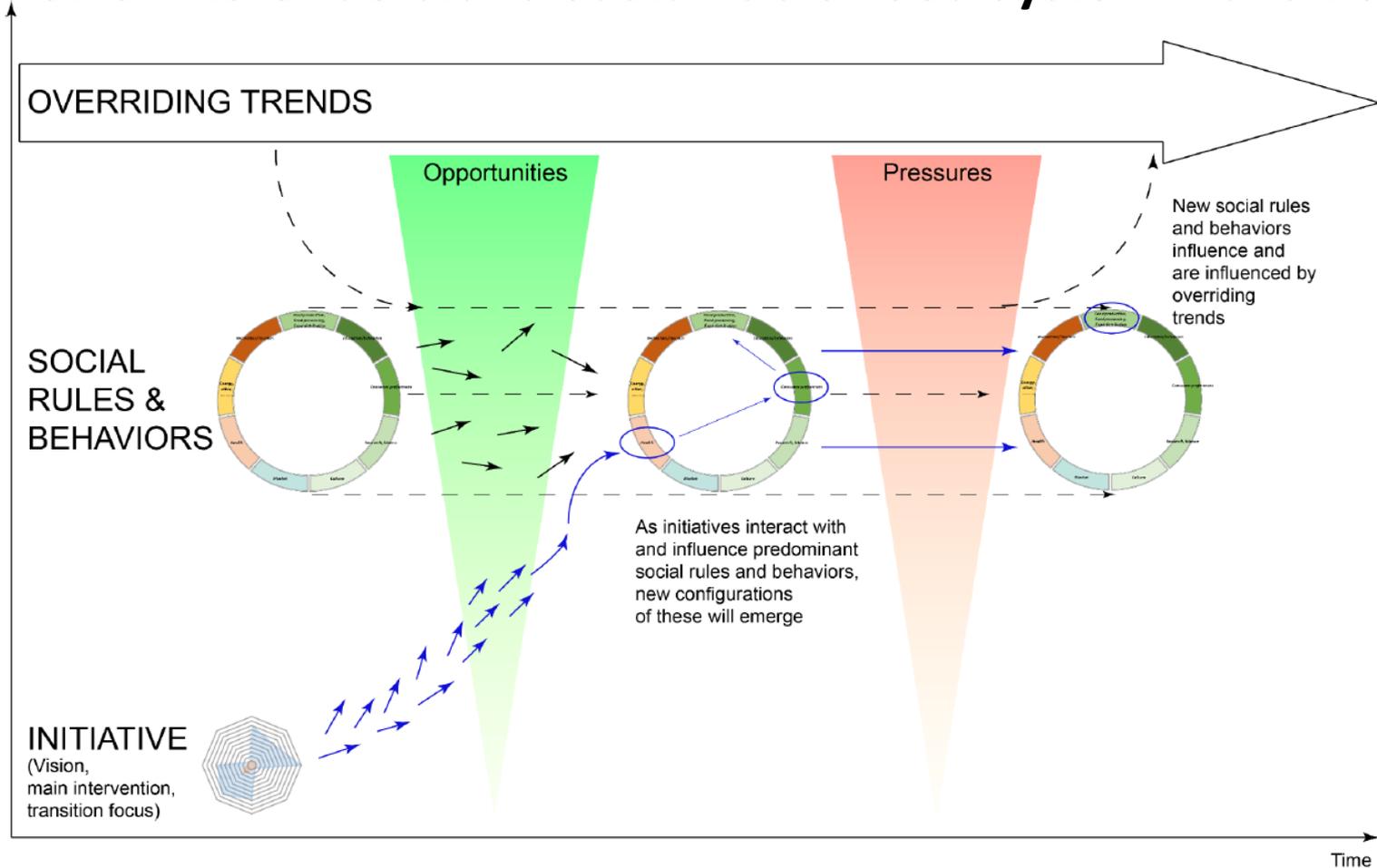
- Efforts to transform food systems are contributing inspiring, creative and necessary solutions to urgent global issues such as climate change, migration, urbanization, and the need for healthier diets.
- While these issues pose a serious threat to the well-being of the planet and people, they are also creating opportunities for systemic change.

Why Beacons of Hope?

These transformations are occurring, so:

- How can we embrace opportunities and overcome challenges in implementation, practice, and policy?
- Achieving the ambitious goals outlined in the Sustainable Development Goals and the climate change agenda requires us to better understand how to support and facilitate these transformative processes in place-based, contextual ways.

A Framework to Understand Sustainable Food System Transitions



Initiative level	Description of initiative and its intervention strategy & transformation focus. Uniqueness, key actors, phases of acceleration, funding.
Societal rules & behaviours level	Main societal rules and behaviours addressed by the initiative or affecting the initiative and their interactions
Overriding trends level	Main overriding trends affecting the initiative and its interactions
Multilevel interactions	Main interactions between different societal rules and behaviours, also main societal rules and behaviours-overriding trend interactions. Thus the initiatives' pathways towards SFS.
Levers of change	Key levers opening opportunities for greater success and upscaling for the aims of the initiative
Building legitimacy	Legitimization processes and means that the initiative is pursuing to attain credibility.
Main challenges	Main challenge according to interviewee, across all three MLP levels.
Main opportunities	Main opportunities according to interviewee, across all three MLP levels.
Key lessons learned	Adjustments made by the initiatives and reflections on key lessons learned.
Anchoring mechanism	Characterization of possible anchoring mechanisms, taken as the instances and circumstances in which initiatives find ways to embed themselves in societal rules and behaviours.
Story	The last question in the interview guide asked for a personal anecdote or story of the interviewee in connection to the initiative.

Beacons of Hope

We interviewed 21 “Beacons of Hope” to better understand transformative food system transitions, and identified the following activities, approaches, and interventions at the heart of these initiatives:

- Supporting agroecological approaches
- Co-creation of knowledge and knowledge exchange
- Developing cooperative ownership models
- Establishing participatory approaches and governance
- Identifying new market mechanisms
- Engaging in policy development
- Adopting new metrics

Featured Beacons of Hope



Agroecology for home and market: a winning combination for rural communities in Mashonaland East, Zimbabwe

Agroecology Case Studies

This collection of 33 African case studies to counter dominant narratives about agricultural investments and land grabbing and to show the potential of agroecological methods to raise incomes, sustain productivity, improve livelihoods and adapt to climate change. These examples can be used to show that Africans have found successful solutions to their own problems.

Featured Beacons of Hope



Brazil's National Plan for Agroecology and Organic Food Production

This PLANAPO plan follows six strategic axes: production, use and conservation of natural resources, dissemination of knowledge, commercialization and consumption, land and territory and socio biodiversity. The goal is to improve the quality of life of the population by working towards sustainable rural development and increased consumption of healthy food.

Featured Beacons of Hope



EOSTA

This private sector initiative dedicated to production and importation of sustainable, organic and fair trade fruits and vegetables. They provide full traceability of their products, provide extension services to farmers, promote true cost accounting and build a sustainable market with consumers.

Featured Beacons of Hope



HIVOS Sustainable Food

This initiative promotes healthy and sustainable food systems for all through different levels of strategy and intervention. The first, invests on an individual level with small and medium enterprises. The second strategy is the creation coalitions of the willing, including food change labs that foster local markets and promote systemic change. The final strategy is at the national level, in policy influence.

Featured Beacons of Hope

Soils, Food and Healthy Communities

This initiative, based out of Malawi, focuses on gender and social equity and nutrition and health. They work with communities using transformative, participatory methods of training on agroecological practice and discussions about nutrition, gender and governance. They are advocates for policy change.



Farmer-led Research for Food Security and Nutrition in Malawi

Featured Beacons of Hope



Vanuatu

This initiative is a national sustainable development plan in Vanuatu that builds alternate pathways to sustainability based on culture, values, natural wealth and indicators of happiness. This plan focuses on a devolution of authority to local area councils, that merge with customary boundaries based on shared culture.

Featured Beacons of Hope

Zero Waste San Francisco

This initiative works to reorganize waste management in San Francisco through the shift to a circular system. Their approaches target growers through ugly food campaigns; wholesale markets through links to food banks; diversion for animal feed; retail food date issues; food establishments; diversion of grease and fat; consumer behaviours; information technology; composting; policy on labels; and recycling mandates.



Key Take-Aways

- There are multiple entry points for people engaged in transformative food systems, including health, environment, climate change, sustainable livelihoods, and the SDGs.
- Efforts to transform food systems are contributing inspiring, creative and necessary solutions to challenging global issues such as climate change, migration, and the need for healthier diets.

Key Take-Aways

- Efforts to transform food systems are confronting and seek to reform dominant policies, regulations, institutional arrangements, governance systems that hinder their progress. Power dynamics course through the transition process.
- Agroecological approaches and practices, as well as health and well-being are at the core of transformative food systems. Transformative food systems seek to minimize negative externalities and enhance positive benefits, applying a true cost accounting approach.
- Strategies to build legitimacy through practice (“seeing is believing”), peer to peer knowledge exchange, and documenting the evidence illuminate the need for new holistic metrics for assessing the outcomes of food system activities.

Conclusions

A sustainable food systems transitions framework illuminates principles, patterns, barriers, opportunities, and key questions across dynamic, complex contexts, and can be used for discussion, sharing, and movement building.