

## **Conversations for a One Planet Region - Update, 7 August 2023**

Dear friends, we want to bring you up to date on our Conversations work, and our plans for the next few months. **We are working to initiate a participatory futures process for this region, provisionally titled “Conversations on the Shared Future of Our Bioregion”** - although we are also thinking of the term ‘home space’ instead of bioregion. (see attached document “Establishing the Conversations” for more details, see below for a brief discussion about ‘this place’.)

Our aim is very simple: **We want to put the issue of the need to become a One Planet Region squarely on the social and political agenda.** We realise this will take time, even though it is increasingly clear that time is short (although that may help speed up the conversation and the necessary changes). We also recognise that we cannot talk about this place without understanding the natural and cultural history, dating back thousands of years, as well as the current reality for the Indigenous people of this place. Accordingly, **we are committed to finding ways to work in partnership with Indigenous people as we move forward.**

These new Conversations are intended to be multi-nodal and multi-modal and to extend over many months. Let me unpack those terms.

- **Multi-nodal:** We need to have conversations in as many different places as we can; homes, schools, workplaces, libraries, faith centres, service clubs, boardrooms and anywhere else you can think of, including of course in the many virtual meeting spaces so many people now use.
- **Multi-modal:** There are so many ways of engaging people in conversation, which the Oxford Dictionaries define as “a talk, especially an informal one, between two or more people, in which news and ideas are exchanged”. We have started to list some of the ways this can happen – see attached. While our preference is for in-person, face-to-face conversation, we also recognize the value of virtual conversations and conversations via social media.
- **Many months:** While time is short, we can only move at the ‘speed of trust’, as the Reciprocity Trust recently put it. (For more on the South Island Reciprocity Trust, see below.) If we are to involve as many of the 400,000 residents of this region as possible in one or more conversations, it will take time.

So far, we have held discussions with a number of key regional stakeholders and influential organisations in the region, to test the idea out and seek support. We are finding both interest and support, and will be continuing those discussions over the rest of the summer, including with members of local First Nations. **In September, we hope to convene a meeting of some of those organisations that have already established partnerships or close working relationships with local First Nations.**

**In October, Joe Brewer and his colleagues from the [Design School for Regenerating Earth](#) will be in Victoria for three days** as part of a tour of the Cascadia bioregion, working with [Regenerate Cascadia](#), a bioregional group in which one of our Board members, Clare Attwell, is a leading member. Some of you may have heard Joe speak a few years ago, when he was here.

The Design School works on the ground in bioregions to support people in organizing themselves around holistic, integrated landscapes known as bioregions, while connecting those bioregions into a planetary network of learning exchanges. We will be organising a number of public and targeted sessions, and hope to do so in collaboration with key partners interested in the bioregional approach - stay tuned.

**Then in November, we hope to convene a first meeting of a partnership network/guidance council** to help us develop and steer the “Conversations on the Shared Future of Our Bioregion”.

**We see our role in this as catalysts, conveners and coordinators**, but hope and expect that various organisations, groups or even individuals will undertake one or more of the many options for conversations we have identified (or create their own versions), at any scale that they are interested in undertaking. **We will provide as much as we can in the way of guidance, resources and support as we are capable of** – and that will depend upon the resources and funding we are able to assemble.

**In partnership with the Saanich Legacy Foundation, we have started with an application to the Victoria Foundation for a Sparks Fund grant** of \$5,000 to support the meetings in September, October and November; we will hear in late August if we were successful.

We will be in touch, but in the meantime, feel free to send us your thoughts.

Trevor Hancock

President

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**‘This place’**: What should we call this place we call home, this southern part of Vancouver Island (itself a recent settler name)? Its boundaries are roughly contiguous with:

- The traditional territories of the local First Nations identified in the Vancouver Island (Douglas) Treaties.
- The watersheds that flow into the ocean within the Capital Regional District.
- The municipal boundaries of the Capital Regional District.

It is not clear to us yet if there is an Indigenous name for this whole region, although a central portion of it is encompassed by the traditional territory of the Lekwungen People.

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**South Island Reciprocity Trust**: The South Island Indigenous Reciprocity Trust has officially launched as of June 1st 2023. If you live and work on Southern Vancouver Island you are now able to make your voluntary Reciprocity payment. <https://reciprocitytrusts.ca/>

*We want Indigenous Nations to see tangible proof that many land owners, businesses and those living and working in their territories choose to recognize Indigenous lands and Indigenous rights. Reciprocity is an opportunity for property and business owners, renters and event planners to start saying thank you by returning wealth, a little every year, and creating a direct and ongoing Indigenous-owned revenue stream that is independent of federal or provincial governments, and increases over time as land values increase.*