

## Deliverable Proof – “Other document” - EIT-BP2020

<p><b>Name of EIT Climate-KIC project the report results from that contributed to/ resulted in the deliverable</b></p>	<p>Building a Methodology and Community of Practice for Catalysing Transformative Change through System Innovation (MOTION)</p>
<p><b>Name of document</b></p>	<p>Blog (DEL 200255-04): A Narrative About the Transformation to Sustainable Land Use Management: SATURN’s Portfolio of Actions.</p>
<p><b>Summary/brief description of document</b></p>	<p>This blog post describes SATURN’s portfolio of activities in a narrative format. It is structured by the Transformative Outcomes and based on a co-creative research approach. The purpose of this narrative is to be published on the TIPC website. As such, it is written for a non-academic audience.</p>
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# A Narrative About the Transformation to Sustainable Land Use Management: SATURN's Portfolio of Actions.

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Cities and their communities want clean air, clean waterways and thriving landscapes for their health and wellbeing. Yet, growing cities put pressure on natural landscapes, deplete resources and diminish the integrity of ecosystems and the services they provide.

This demands fundamental changes in the relationship between cities and their surrounding landscapes. Therefore, many practitioners and decision makers are looking for more sustainable land use management practices in areas where the urban and the rural landscapes interface. They strive for an improved appreciation of this particular type of environment as well as an enhanced connection between the city and its hinterlands.

To give meaning to this new type of relationship, a strong and compelling narrative is crucial since it's a central device for connecting different elements and linking them to a meaningful whole. Narratives mobilise people to take action by providing a shared rationale for how and through which measures such a relationship can be realised.

Developing such narratives are at the heart of initiatives that work on transforming the relationships between cities and their surrounding natural landscape. SATURN for example works on such a transformation through a combination of innovative services and experimental activities in three geographical and cultural contexts (region of Trento, Birmingham and Gothenburg). By drawing on the ideas and experiences of people from these different locations, SATURN curates a collection of actions that contribute to enhancing this relationship.

The following narrative reflects SATURN's portfolio of activities and the collective actions of people from different backgrounds, living in very different cities. What unites them is their vision for a future with sustainable land use management and the narrative that tells their story of working towards this transformation.

All actions of SATURN are grouped into three pathways of change, in which each pathway comes with its own set of implications and measures to progress transformation. By means of describing the

ongoing actions and services in this way, a basis for further reflection on the transformation of the relationship between cities and their surrounding landscapes is set up.

### 1<sup>st</sup> Pathway of Change: Developing New and More Sustainable Practices

The first pathway is all about the birth and early adoption of new and more sustainable practices. Such practices are promising in potential but yet rather poorly represented. For instance, a current dominant practice treats social, economic and environmental wellbeing as independent aspects, while an alternative approach, proposes framing nature and landscapes within one holistic vision. In this approach the inter-dependencies of social, economic and planetary well-being is noted with the intent of establishing a financially sustainable initiative that creates value from and for sustainably managed land. This new and more sustainable practice yet needs to be adopted more widely.

Alternative practices are especially valuable for progressing transformation as they provide the seeds for establishing a more sustainable way of doing things. Four leverage points to progress alternative practices have been identified, namely: a) shielding b) learning c) networking and d) managing expectations.

**Shielding** (= the process of protecting new and more sustainable practices from external influences and helping them grow):

Establishing new and more sustainable practices requires the freedom to do things differently and a commitment to support and protect them. The people in the different hubs have developed good relationships with municipalities which enabled the creation of **institutional support and space** for alternative food practices and those who champion them (local entrepreneurs, social cooperatives, etc.). This is particularly important because oftentimes those who support new and sustainable practices are not (yet) big and powerful players and benefit from such organisational endorsement. By means of actively shining a light on those groups of stakeholders, the **visibility** of these groups (e.g. youth groups, grassroots initiatives, farming entrepreneurs, etc.) is increased and their **voice** is strengthened.

In the case of making urban and land use management more sustainable, the strong involvement of local municipalities has led to them offering test sites for alternative agricultural practices and business opportunities for urban food production. Importantly, to support new practices and their champions, economic backing is needed. As such, the provision of **alternative financing models** (for example by local government) as well as **basic infrastructures and tools** help considerably to support local entrepreneurs and initiatives.

**Learning** (= activities that provide regular opportunities for discussing experiences, obstacles and needs related to a new practice as well as challenging related values and assumptions that people might have):

For new practices to develop learning in a broad range of dimensions (e.g. political, technical, biophysical, social etc.) as well as deeper underlying assumptions (e.g. beliefs, values, etc.) are needed.

On one hand this means that evidence is needed to understand and demonstrate if and how new practices work. This element of learning is supported by acquiring **new data and evidence** around biophysical aspects (e.g. resource flows, ecosystem services, underutilised farmland) as well as socio-economic aspects (e.g. stakeholder maps, preferences of stakeholders, historical context of land and land use).

Learning also requires the **synthesis of knowledge which then needs to be disseminated more widely**. This is achieved in Birmingham, Trento and Gothenburg through the use of different media channels (e.g. video, social media), face to face engagement opportunities such as conferences, exhibitions, talks and presentations as well as online formats and workshops. Following a more targeted approach **dedicated capacity building** programs and activities address the needs of particular groups (e.g. farming entrepreneurs, grassroot initiatives, etc.).

Uncovering the beliefs and values associated with new and sustainable practices is a critical element of learning. This is supported by a process of **learning through reflection** that can take on different forms. Through making stakeholders reflect on the beliefs and values related to land use practices in the different regions, the local governance situation as well as the connection people have with their land and how this shapes their identity, opportunities for challenging those deeply held assumptions that support unsustainable practices arise.

Additionally, knowledge sharing is facilitated by **bringing groups of actors together** that do not necessarily interact frequently (e.g. political actors with local initiatives or academics). At different occasions these interactions allow local researchers to share their knowledge and ideas with political actors (e.g. mayors and their deputies in Trentino), or brought together proponents of alternative practices (e.g. established farmers) with groups who are particularly interested in this topic (e.g. new farming entrepreneurs).

Showcasing what works is a very powerful approach to facilitate learning and to grow credibility of alternative practices. In each region, the cases **demonstrate and display** models of alternative land use and land management practices to stakeholders. Such demonstrations assist in learning about what works and what does not work so well and that these models represent viable and practicable alternatives. This convinces sceptics and inspires others to try them out.

**Networking (= protecting and progressing new practices by gaining interest of more people and creating connections between them):**

New practices require strong networks of actors that champion alternative practices. The activities in the regions provide the **opportunities for these networks to establish and to organise themselves**. This also includes individuals from stakeholder groups who are not as powerful in matters of land use (e.g. youth groups and youth associations). Moreover, the people in the different hubs are also part of forming **a network of champions** themselves, thereby growing the community that advocates for alternative land use practice across Europe. Building connections with other projects and initiatives in the European Union increases the “reach”.

New and sustainable land use management practices also require cross-sectoral collaboration. These new partnerships are established through fostering new relationships and **models for collaboration between private and public sector actors**, notably around small-scale private sector actors

(grassroots-initiatives, entrepreneurs, social cooperatives). In addition, new working relationships between **academics and actors from the public services sectors** for knowledge sharing and exchange are developed.

**Navigating expectations** (= through navigating and converging expectations of different actors the legitimacy of new practices is developed and their potential explored):

Supporting the development of new practices is also about exploring and shaping the expectations and meanings people attach to them. A number of activities address this. For example, through the **development of shared visions** which serve as a basis for articulating the needs and wishes among different stakeholder groups. These visions are also used as a strategic approach to create a shared direction between local authorities and an anchor for collaboration. Visions are also combined with the development of **shared narratives** which support the connections between a diverse set of grassroots initiatives in the regions. In addition, different activities and the use of different methodologies are focused on the **contextualisation of land and land use practices in the history of a region**. This serves as a reference point for understanding current issues but is also used to project and interpret what future land use and management could mean in a particular place.

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Pathway of Change: Mainstreaming New and More Sustainable Practices**

For transformative change to happen, new and more sustainable practices need to expand in scope and scale. This relates to a process in which alternative practices grow stronger and lead to the reconfiguration or disappearance of more dominant practices. Ultimately, new and more sustainable practices replace previously dominant ones and become the new mainstream.

Four leverage points to mainstream new and more sustainable practices have been identified, namely a) upscaling, b) replication c) circulation and d) institutionalising.

**Upscaling** (= this refers to the process of conducting deliberate action to get more users involved into new and more sustainable practices):

For new practices to grow and expand in scope and scale, opportunities need to be created to make them accessible to more people. The use of **tools that can increase the access** to alternative food sources (e.g. digital platforms) are valuable in this regard as they provide opportunities improving the access to locally farmed produce and **stimulate the demand**.

In addition, the development of alternative, more local and also shorter supply and value chains is supported by connecting supply and demand for alternative land use and possible outputs (e.g. food produce). This is the backbone of working **business models** for alternative land use management practices which shows that alternative land use practices are profitable and practically viable beyond a specific demonstration case.

**Replicating** (= relates to transferring the entire new and more sustainable practices to another location):

New and sustainable land use management practices need to be used in different locations and different contexts so that they become more widely accepted. Through working on a **replicable approach** as well as transferable **tools and models** a guide for sustainable land management practices (e.g. land lease models and financing) or support programs for actors that champion alternative practices (e.g. visioning process; guidelines for incubator and capacity building for farming entrepreneurs, guidelines for testbeds) is developed. Importantly, this replicable approach, its tools and models are flexible and adaptable to the local context which supports the application in other locations.

**Circulating** (= refers to the exchange of knowledge, ideas and resources between multiple related alternative practices):

To support the mainstreaming of new practices and new knowledge, ideas and resources need to travel between people, places and application areas. **Regular formats of exchange** between people in Gothenburg, Birmingham and Trento serve project management purposes but also aid the circulation of ideas and knowledge around enabling factors, support strategies and lessons learned. This filters through to the people who directly work on sustainable land use management in the different regions but also reaches interested third parties elsewhere. The circulation of ideas and knowledge is also supported by their **active dissemination** through a variety of different outlets specific to different target audiences. For this, a range of different media channels (e.g. video, social media), face to face engagement opportunities (e.g. conferences, exhibitions, talks and presentations) as well as academic outlets (e.g. journals and books) is used.

**Institutionalising** (= refers to the process of turning new and more sustainable practices into more permanent and more widely available ones):

For new practices to become mainstream they need to become embedded in the formal rule sets that determine how things usually get done. To support this embedding, different research outputs have provided **new evidence for decision making** in local municipalities. Additionally, this also found its way into the strategic documents of municipalities (e.g. agricultural protocols, policies) and thereby helped in formalising ideas and approaches of alternative land use and management practices amongst decision makers.

### **3<sup>rd</sup> Pathway of Change: Opening Up and Unlocking Dominant Practices**

The ultimate aim is to replace dominant and unsustainable practices. New and more sustainable practices can only become dominant when significant individuals or organisations open up for change, and the desire and will to make alternative practices competitive is being developed. Openings in dominant practices provide innovations with 'windows of opportunity' to challenge the current practice and claim more space for alternative ones and system configurations. The process of unlocking relates to the rigidity of practices that are supported by dominant actors. The four leverage points to

open up and unlock dominant practices are: a) readjusting and destabilising, b) unlearning and intrinsic learning, c) strengthening interactions between alternatives and dominators and d) changing perceptions of landscape pressures such as the climate crisis.

**Dealigning and Destabilising** (= relates to the process of disrupting and weakening dominant practices. This can be done by changing one of the dominant dimensions for example through the introduction of new policies):

The disruption of dominant practices happens when new constellations of people start to challenge existing governance arrangements, policy or organisational routines. A first step towards that is through the creation of **new and informal (de-facto) governance arrangements** between different people with shared goals in a particular region. These informal ways of collaboration bring those together that really want to change land use management in their organisation. This gives them opportunities to try something new together and to work outside of normal organisational routines. Additionally, more experimental activities have also been set up between organisations as new means of collaborating more formally. This strengthens **municipal collaborations while crossing established jurisdictional boundaries**.

**Unlearning and Deep Learning** (= is the process in which dominant actors question their assumptions and change their view on the potential of new and more sustainable practices and the ability of the dominant practice to respond to threats and opportunities, such as climate change and digitalisation):

Unlocking the established way of doing things requires the **challenging of commonly held perceptions and assumptions**. Visioning activities, new collaborations or showcasing sustainable land use management practices all contribute to changing the perceptions amongst incumbents. Important questions about what sustainable land use in cities and peri urban areas means, the usage and constitution of valuable land, as well as appropriate ways of managing or farming it, are raised to create **political awareness** of sustainable land use in city regions.

**Changing perceptions of landscape pressures** (=relates to the need for dominant actors to reach the point of view that immediate action is warranted and new emerging more sustainable narratives need to be promoted):

Crisis events and other external pressures can be an opportunity for opening up dominant practices. Most recently, the COVID-19 crisis sparked particular attention to more sustainable land use management and the different examples of that in the different regions. This opportunity was utilised to **frame the cases** in the different regions in terms of **supporting the supply resilience** on a local scale through alternative and more decentralised food supply and value chains.

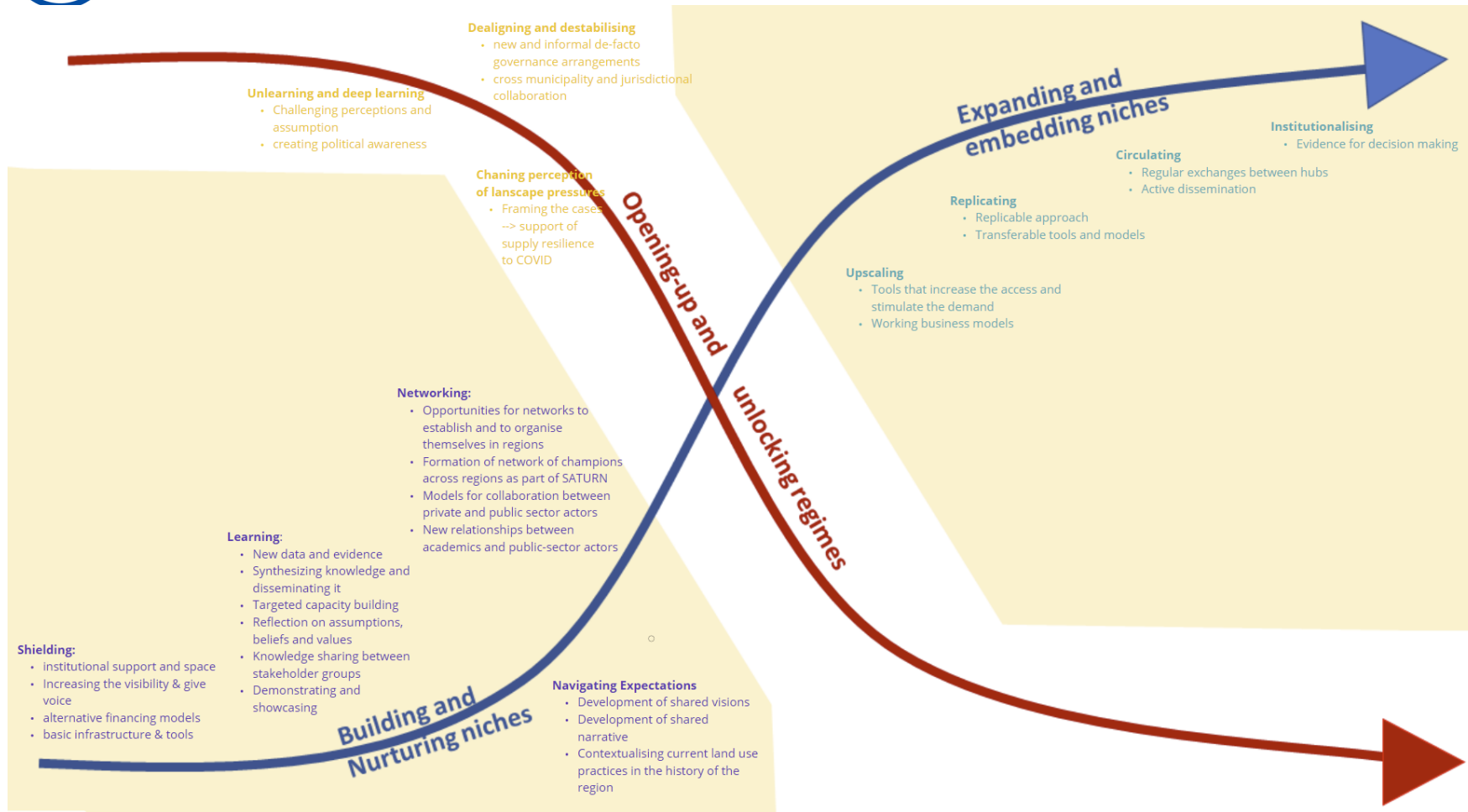


Figure 1: Visualization of the narrative depicted by the X-Curve (Loorbach, 2014)







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