



European Parliament



- Nature-based solutions for more sustainable & resilient communities -

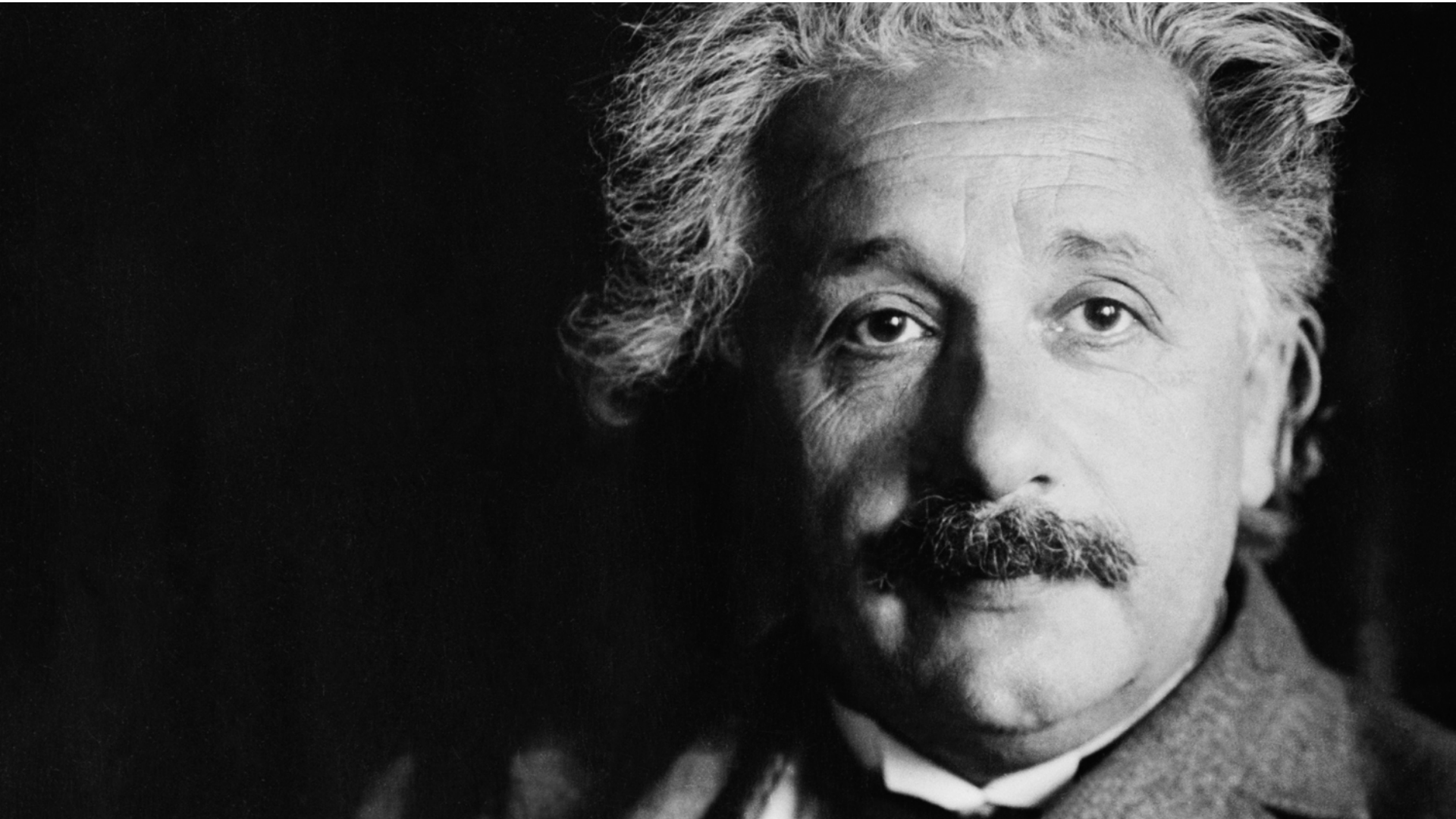
# INNOVATING LIKE NATURE

The best strategy to innovate in harmony with nature

Leen Gorissen  
06.11.2017

# PREMISE

“You cannot solve the problems of today with the same consciousness that created them”



# *Beyond the 'symptoms'*

## **EVENTS**

*What is happening?*

**Respond**

## **PATTERNS**

*What trends have there been over time?*

**Develop**

## **STRUCTURES**

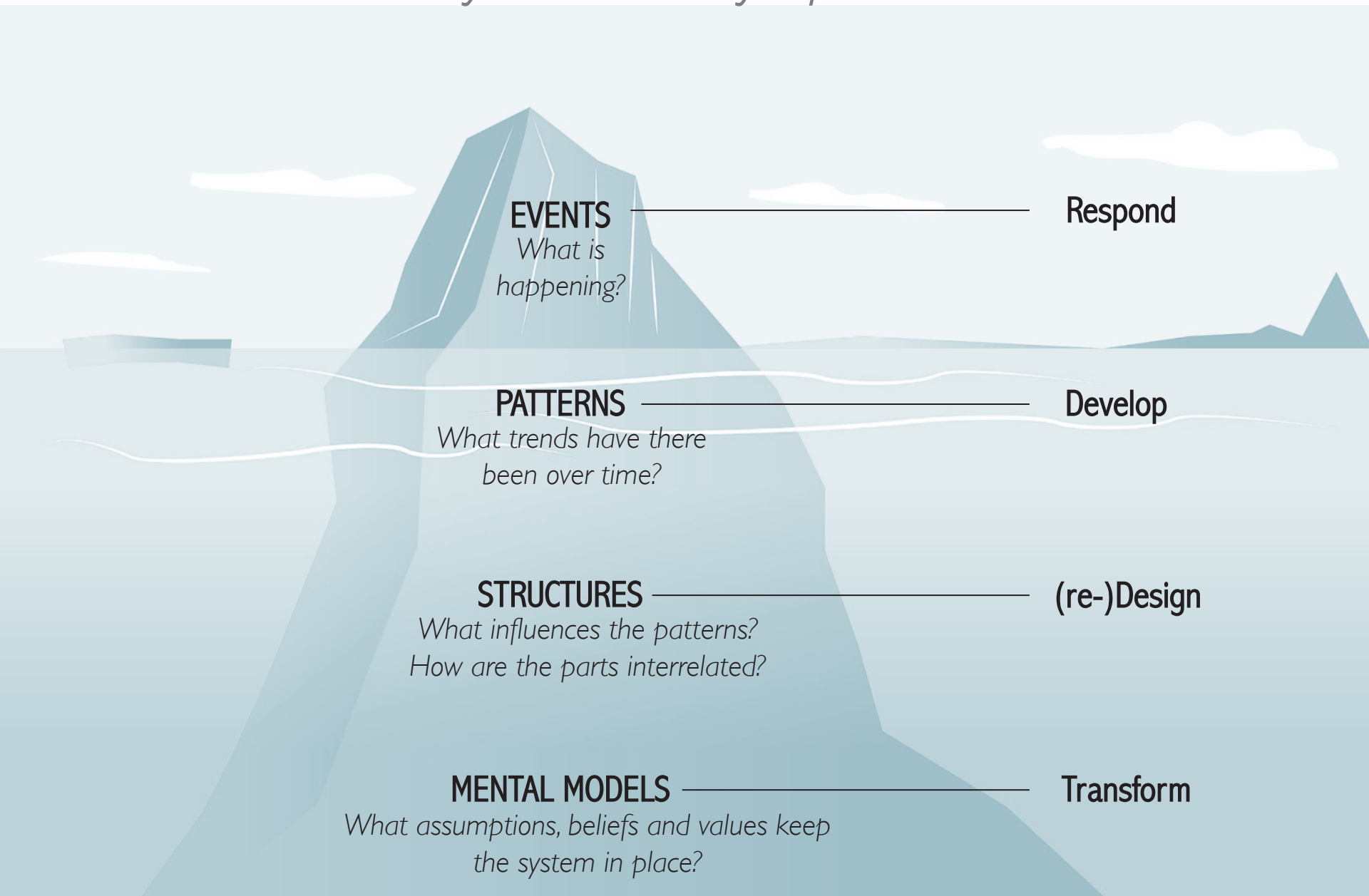
*What influences the patterns?  
How are the parts interrelated?*

**(re-)Design**

## **MENTAL MODELS**

*What assumptions, beliefs and values keep the system in place?*

**Transform**



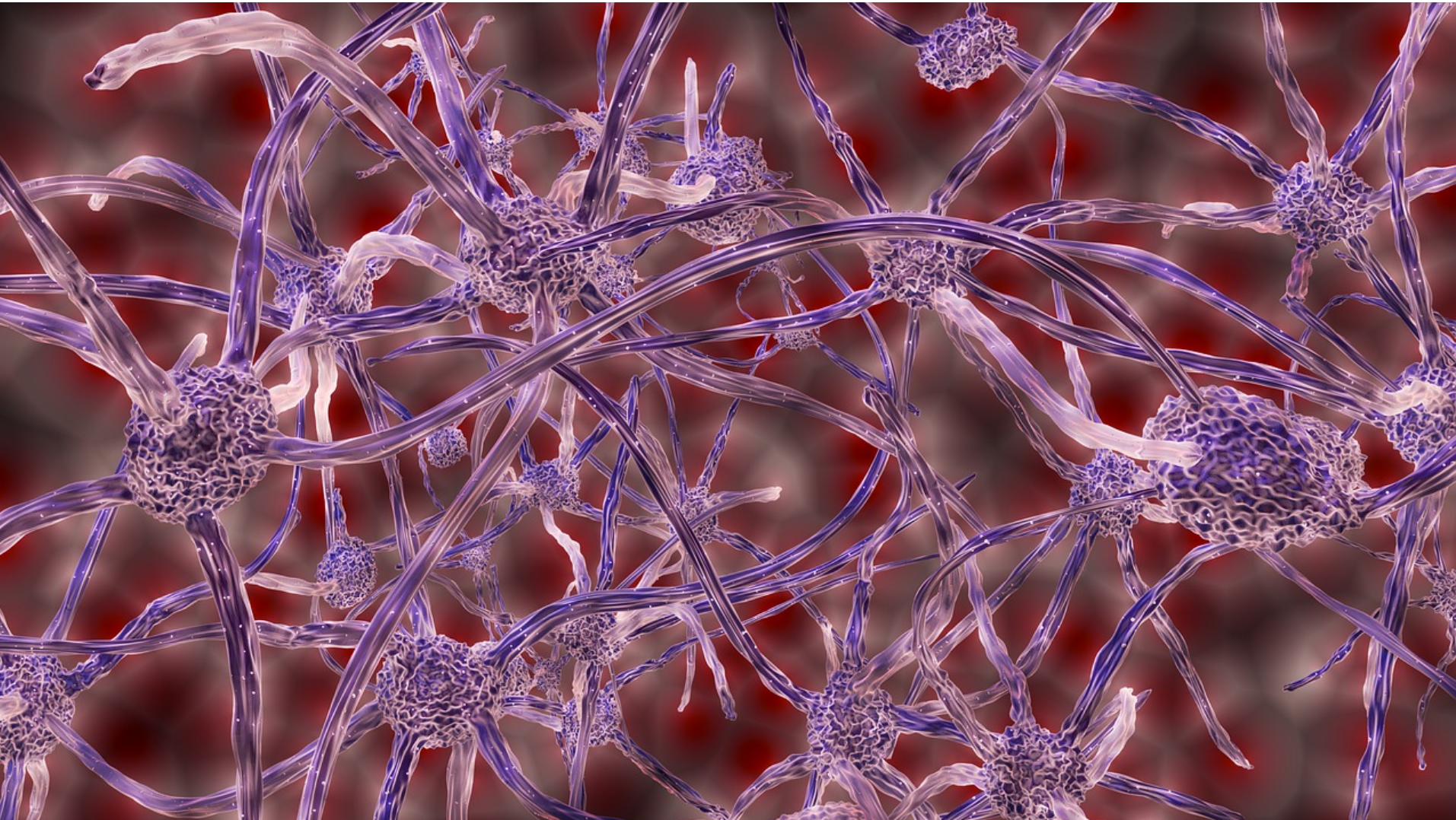


New **insights** change the way we look

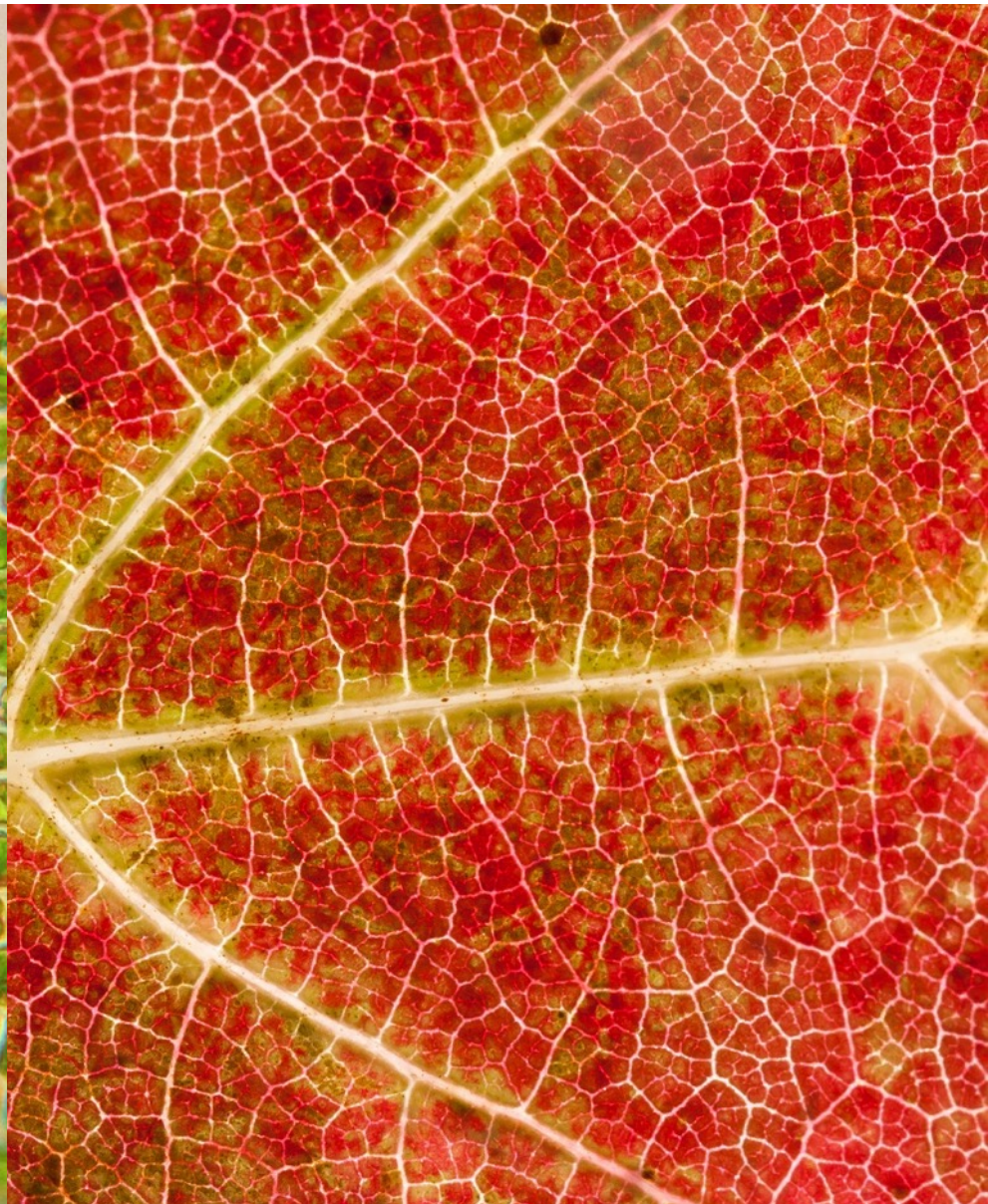
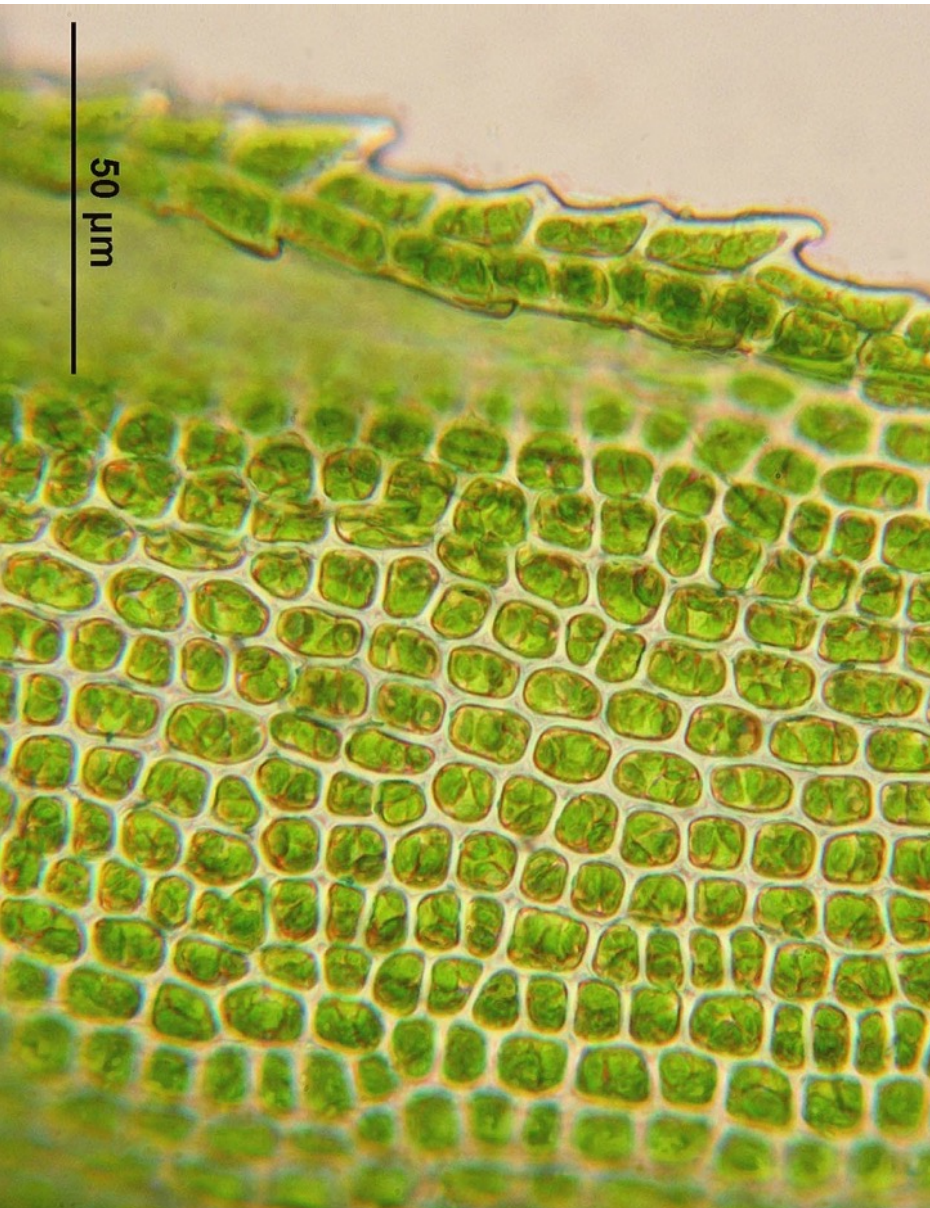
# NETWORK

The fundamental unit of biology is not the self  
but the network

Prof DG Haskell



A leaf is a community: made of relationships



According to recent estimates, there are 9 trillion more non-human cells than human cells in our body





*THE “SELF” IS A SOCIETY*

Prof DG Haskell



THIS MATTERS

BECAUSE



WHAT WE DO TO NATURE  
WE DO TO OURSELVES



# THRIVE

Some ancient societies have been around for hundreds of millions of years



Withstanding generations of change & disruption



They do more than survive: they thrive



Because innovation is geared towards the continuous improvement of the environment



# Arctic foxes upgrade their environment



# COOPERATION

While there are many examples  
of competition & predation





Prevailing relationships are cooperative



# Snuggle for survival

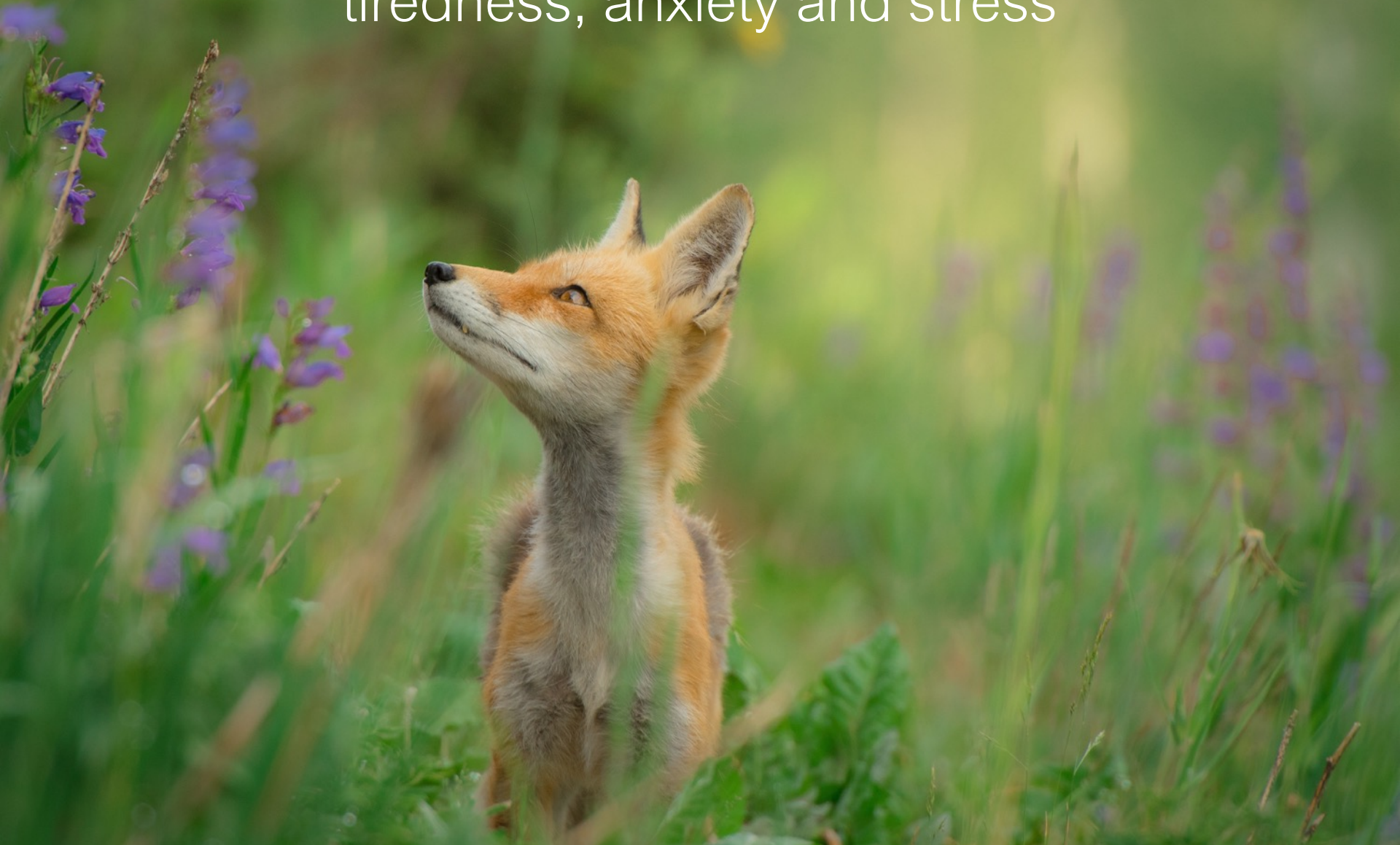


# VITAMINE N

Nature not only makes us healthier,  
she makes us happier & more creative too



Looking at nature footage increase feelings of joy, wonder, awe and curiosity while reducing feelings of tiredness, anxiety and stress



# Systemic Innovation

An iceberg floating in a light blue sea. The tip of the iceberg is above the water line, while the much larger base is submerged. The iceberg is divided into four horizontal layers, each with a label and a question. Lines connect these labels to corresponding action verbs on the right side of the image. The background features stylized white clouds and a small blue boat on the water.

## EVENTS

*What is happening?*

Respond

## PATTERNS

*What trends have there been over time?*

Develop

## STRUCTURES

*What influences the patterns?  
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(re-)Design

## MENTAL MODELS

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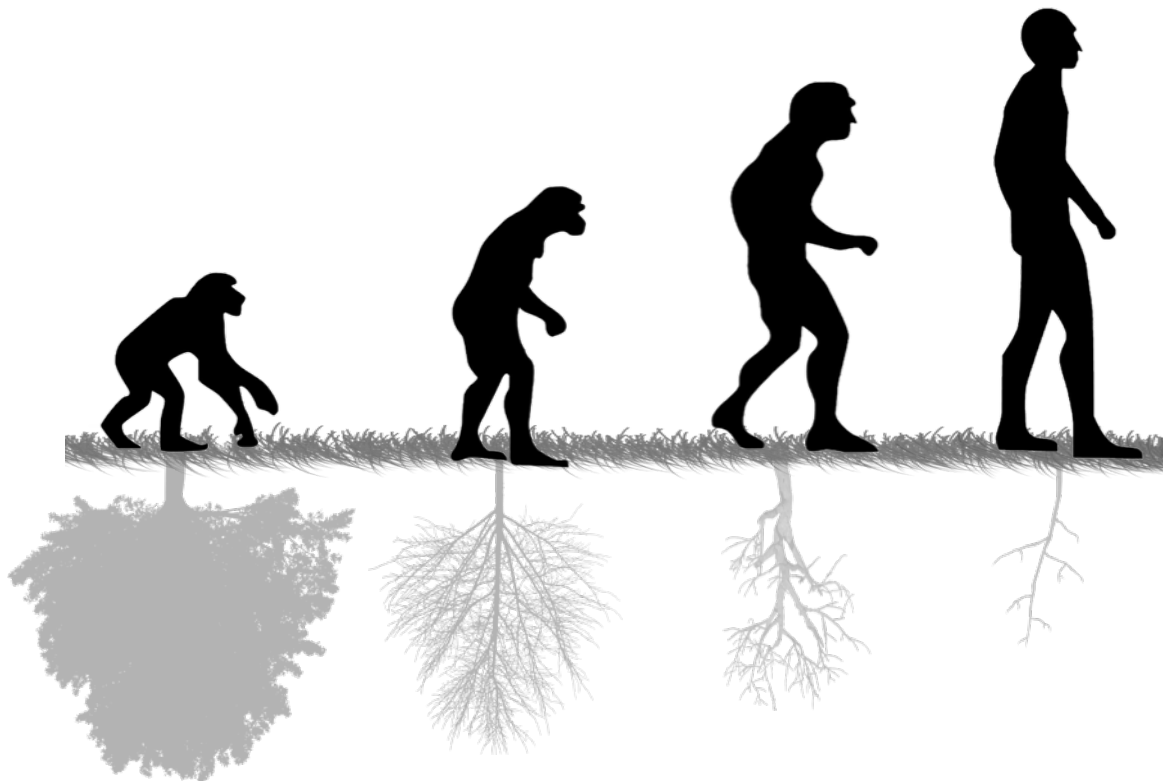
RENATURE  
HUMAN  
NATURE



# THE **ILLUSION**

OF SEPARATION

between HUMANS and NATURE



# SKILLS

*Shift our collective consciousness*



by building awareness that WE ARE NATURE TOO



# SKILLS

*Harness our capacity for evolution*



Evolving from being a pioneer species into a mature species and inhabit the Earth as if we intend to stay here.



FROM  
DEGENERATIVE  
TO REGENERATIVE  
DESIGN

*Beyond sustainability: from zero to positive impact*



DEGENERATIVE

\$\$\$



GENERATIVE

“sustainable”



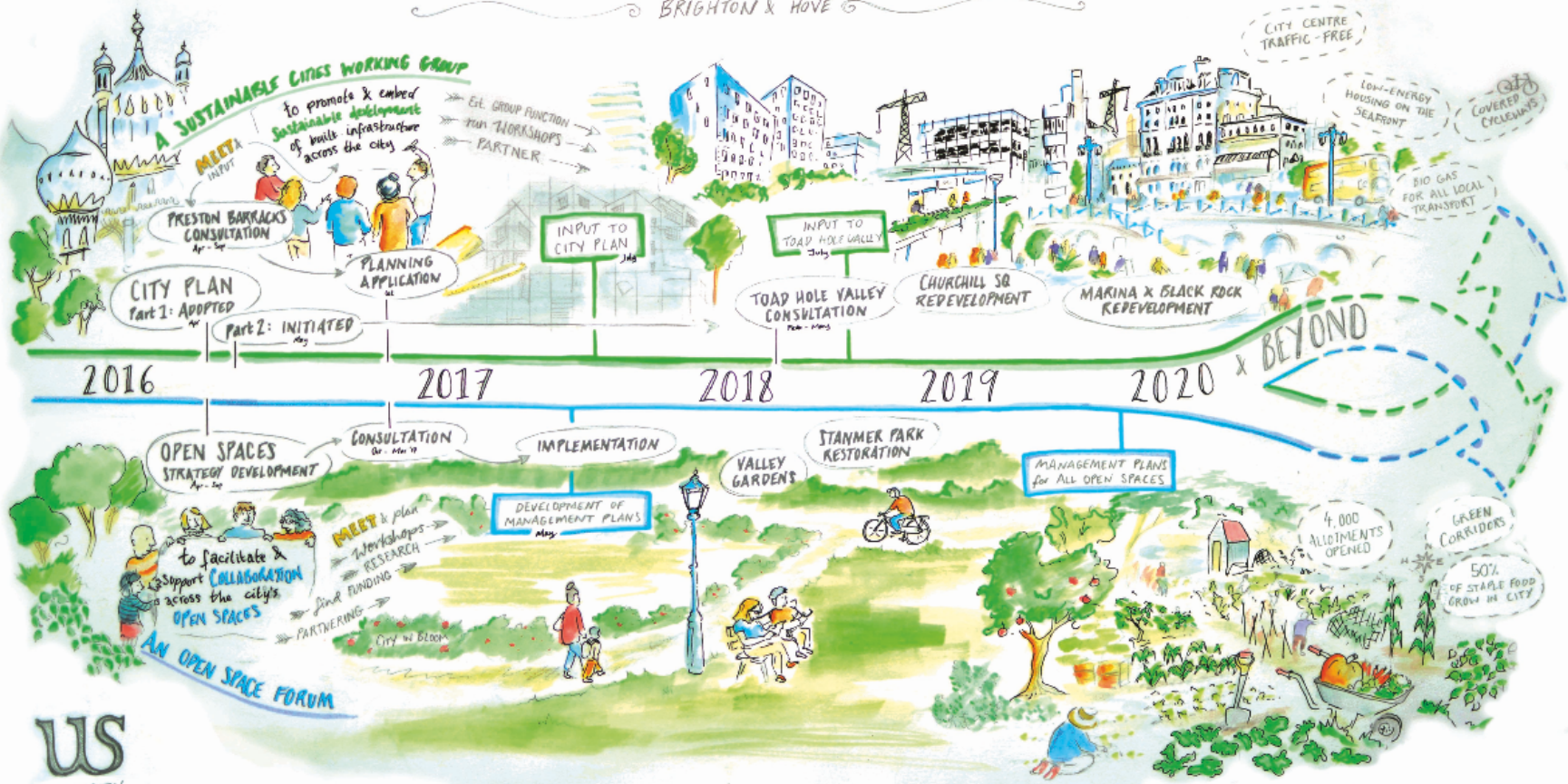
REGENERATIVE



# SKILLS

## Develop regenerative cultures

### ROADMAP for A SUSTAINABLE CITY BRIGHTON & HOVE



UPSCALING - REPLICATING - PARTNERING - EMBEDDING

Artwork by Tenjam.com

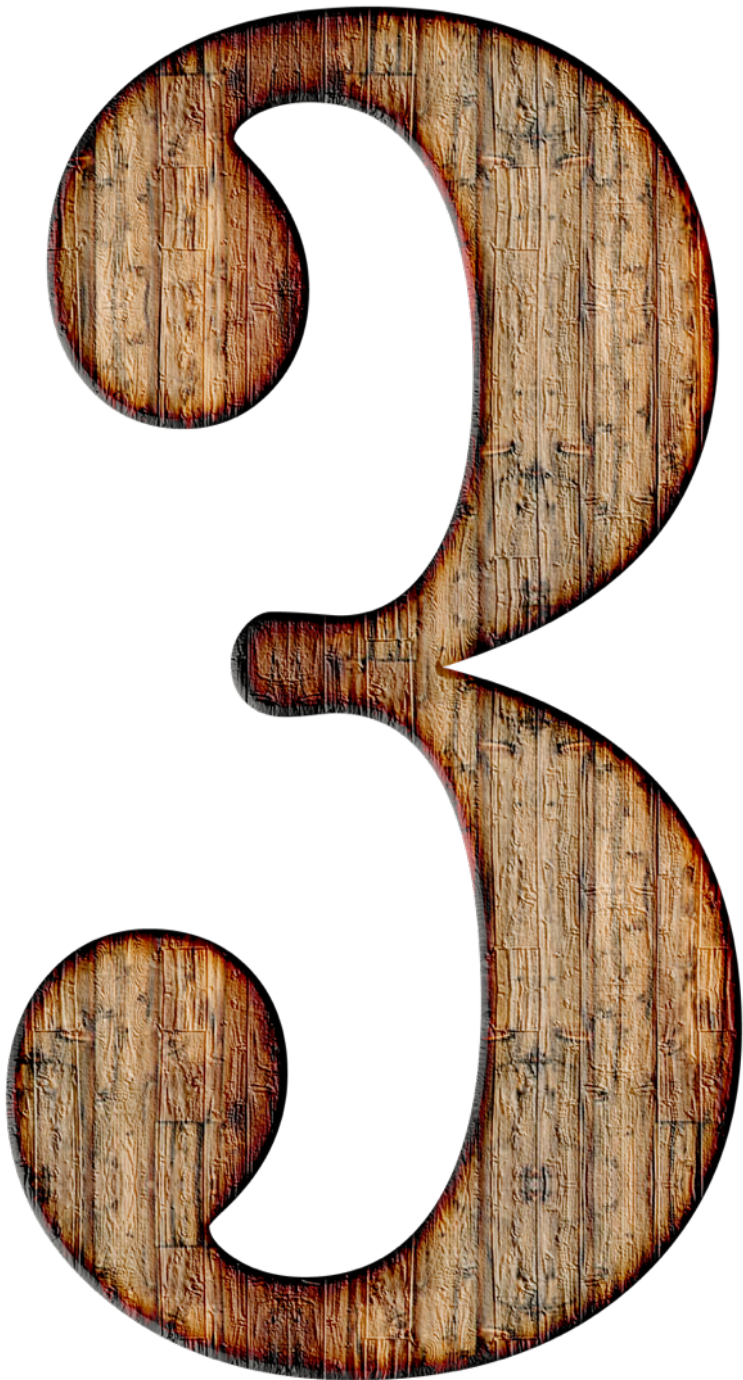
An ARTS project  
COLLABORATION with  
local initiatives

**SKILLS**  
*Shift from technical to living systems design*

**BOERI**  
STEFANO  
BOERI  
ARCHITETTI



**LIUZHOU FOREST CITY**



RECONNECT  
HUMANS TO  
NATURE



# SKILLS

*Take people outside & bring nature inside*







HARNESS THE  
POWER OF  
COLLABORATION



# SKILLS

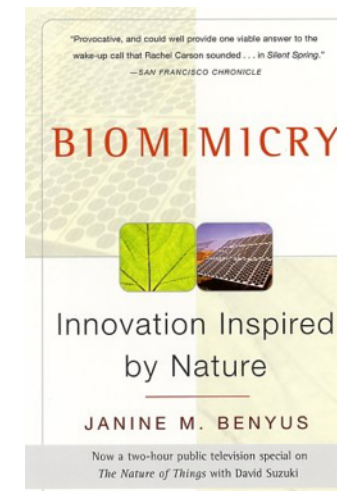
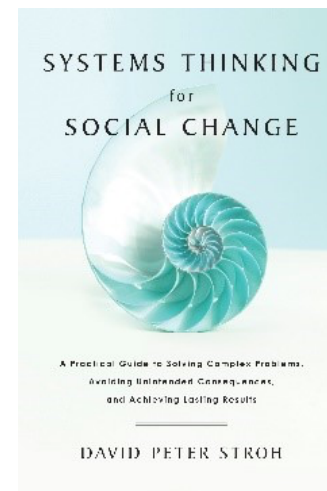
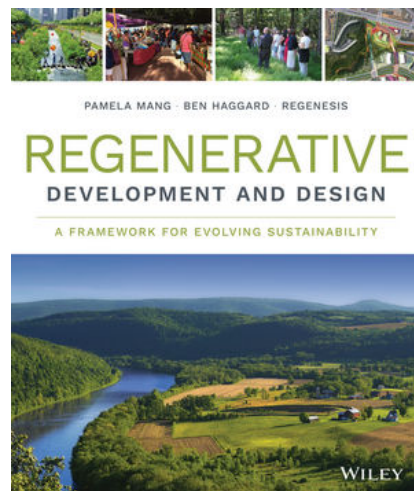
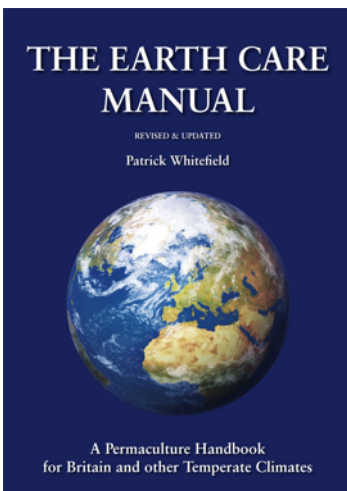
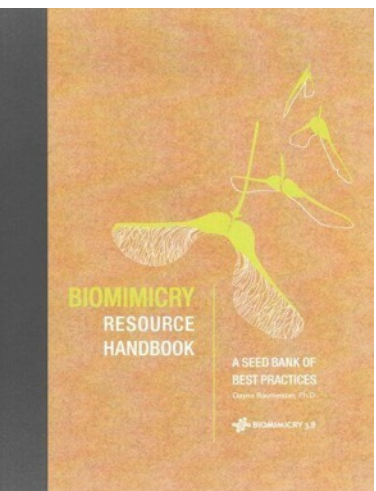
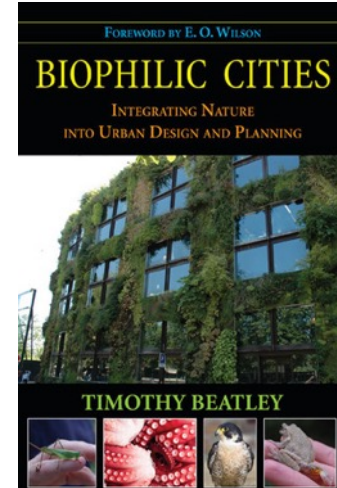
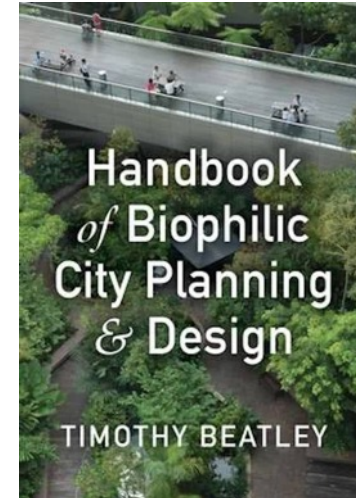
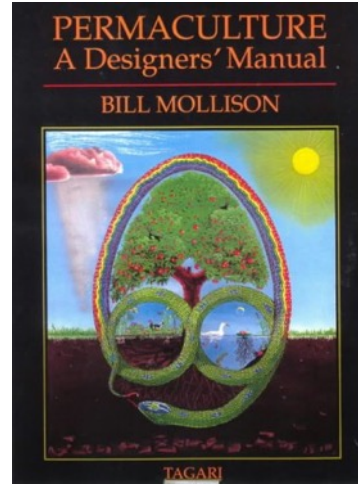
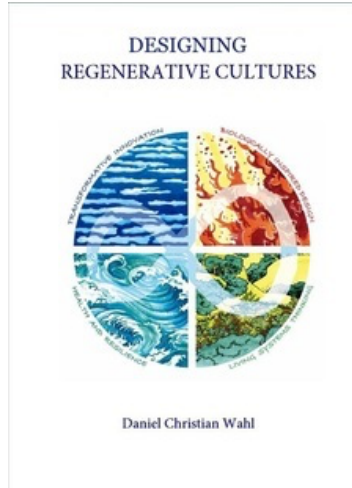
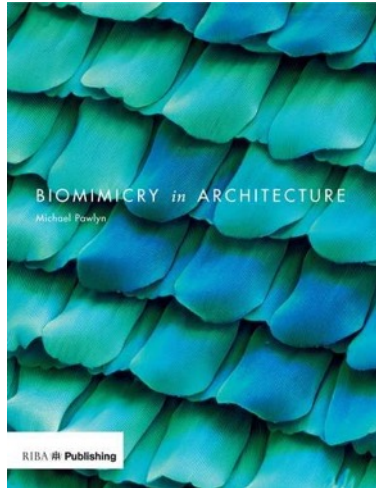
*Growing our collaboration, co-creation and relationship building skills*



**Systemic solutions**  
are already out there



# Most promising fields of systemic & regenerative innovation approaches



# Transition initiatives all over the world are reconnecting humans to nature



Citizens are pioneering restorative food production systems by facilitating instead of controlling nature



Businesses are changing the logic of value creation and get 'Return On Reputation'

# Interface®



Interface cut their carbon emissions by **98%** by innovating like nature. They are now building a 'Factory Like A Forest'.

Architects are designing circular eco-systems by bringing solutions together in symbiotic clusters



The Mobius Project co-locates and integrates food production, energy generation and water treatment processes in synergistic cycles.



# CONCLUSION

We share the same purpose with the rest of life:  
to create the next generation and ensure its success



# R&D

The role of R&D is not to triumph over or control nature  
It is about becoming a life-friendly part of nature



# POLICY

How can policy support this transition

**to create conditions conducive to life?**





“

I think the biggest innovations of the 21st century will be at the intersection of biology and technology. A new era is beginning.

- Steve Jobs -



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Innovation inspired by nature