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Going Local: The Economics of Happiness

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Presentation by

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I'm very happy to be here at the Communities in Control conference. Communities in Control – actually, that's what my work has been about for 40 years now.

I'm particularly happy to see there are so many women in the audience – because I'm particularly keen that more women start looking closely at the economy rather than just glazing over and saying “No, no, that's not for me”.

And in order to bring back control to communities, we've got to look at the economy. That can sound a bit dry, it can sound a bit far removed from our daily lives, but today it's become a huge opportunity to reverse the social and environmental crises that are facing every society on the planet today.

Localisation as an economic trajectory is simply a remarkable win, win, win strategy. Localisation is not just going to reduce – and, in many cases, solve – our social and ecological problems.

It also helps restore democracy, and, perhaps most importantly, and precisely for the reasons that Hugh McKay so beautifully articulated earlier, it's the economics of happiness. We need to look one another in the eye. We need that connection. That's how we evolved, in human scale groups.

How can we rebuild that connection again? Not just as something that we choose to do within the structures that are actually pulling us apart; how can we actually rebuild the structures, rebuild the interdependence, that has been the fabric of community from the beginning of time?

Rebuilding those structures is the key element of what we need to do. But in order to look at this, we have to see that so much of the discussion about taking back control and rebuilding community, about bringing structural power back to the community, has been a focus on political power.

In Scotland right now, for instance, people want to have more control over their lives and they're looking at political decentralisation. Again and again as people think about bringing power back, they tend to look at political power.

The problem is, however, that we haven't been looking at the real political power that is shaping our lives. Actual political power today is in the hands of

interlinked global structures – the banks and corporations that have come to dominate democracy, that have come to dominate our lives.

Many of you are old enough to remember that even 20 years ago, the first item on the news was not how the stock market was doing – was not constantly about this unstable economic system on which we're now so dependant.

Bringing this up, and talking about how our real government has become this centralised, interlinked, mad structure of giant mega-corporations and banks can often lead to a feeling among people that there's no point talking about it because we can't change it.

Any talk of change can be seen as unrealistic. But I hope that I can convince you that when you combine such discussions with a careful study not just of mega-structures at the top but also of what is actually happening about localisation – if you start studying what is happening around the world that's really inspiring, really positive, and clearly restores both human and ecological wellbeing - you'll be vitalised and encouraged.

Once you look at the structural significance of localisation, you'll be amazed – I'm amazed - at the number of new projects that fall under that umbrella.

In my organisation – and I think probably I coined the term localisation some 30-40 years ago – these new projects are called local futures. We're really studying them, and almost every day, we learn about new initiatives that we didn't know about.

We don't know about them partly because they're not getting coverage in the media, but also because, by their nature, they tend to be a multitude of smaller things, and for that reason people sometimes overlook their significance – forgetting that many small can be more powerful than one big.

Before I go on to talk more about localisation, I do want to talk about its opposite, which is globalisation – a process of international trade and finance treaties.

These international treaties were devised after the great depression to shape economic activity around the world. They came in at the same time as the

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World Bank, the IMF, and something called the GATT, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade.

For very good reasons, many people who were even then concerned about the power of multinational corporations didn't really pay much attention to this process of trade treaties.

After all, a general agreement on tariffs and trade sounds rather nice. When we hear in the media, that countries are meeting to negotiate a new trade treaty, we think we really do want them to agree, and we'd be disappointed if it turned out that they couldn't come to an agreement.

That's now beginning to change, thank goodness. Right now we have an invitation, as never before, to shed light systemically on the central trajectory that has taken the world in the direction of mass consumerism, mass commercialisation, massive increases in energy, plastics, toxins, massive threats to democracy, and massive threats to social and community cohesion and stability worldwide.

The opportunity we have is to raise awareness of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) between Australia and the nations of the Pacific rim and the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) between the US and Europe – partly because those treaties will affect life here in Australia, but also because we are people who view these things with an empathetic, holistic, and global concern.

We don't want to close down in to some narrow localism that's without any concern for other people, and it's very important that we try to understand this process in a more global perspective – that we see how it's affecting people in China, in the United States as well as here in Australia.

When we see the more global picture, it becomes clear that taking this next giant step, towards these new treaties, is pure madness.

Can I ask how many of you are familiar with the negative side of the TPP?
Very few of you.

And in no way should those of you who aren't familiar with the TPP feel ignorant or stupid, because the vast majority of people haven't heard about this at all.

Why haven't they heard about it? I still find that hard to understand, but I think mainly we haven't heard about it, because it's assumed to be too dry, too complicated, for ordinary citizens.

Certainly this is what we've been told year after year by journalists – who don't cover these issues when we raise them.

I was asked to do an interview for a very big paper in Italy about half a year ago when I was in Florence.

They wanted me to talk about the fate of Florence, with all the tourists pouring in and the pressure of immigration, and generally how I felt about what was happening in Florence.

I talked about how people felt that their whole society was disintegrating, and how you could walk down the streets of Florence and barely see an Italian – people from virtually everywhere else in the world, but not from Italy.

In most of the shops and the restaurants and the businesses you find eastern Europeans, who are able to work for a lower salary.

I talked about all of that and they were perfectly happy to print it, but when I mentioned that we should all take this incredible opportunity and say “no” to these latest trade treaties they left that out.

When I asked the journalist why, he said “Well, I didn't want to get too technical”.

I really don't think this is a dark conspiracy with a few Rockefellers and Rothschilds sitting in a dark room smoking cigars and trying to destroy the world in order to make billions of dollars.

What we're up against is this blindness of very specialised thinking. Whether you're a social worker or an activist, whether you're an economist or an environmentalist, we've been encouraged to specialise and we haven't been

paying attention to the bigger picture, whereby the economy as a system has subsidised and aided and abetted those industries that use the most fossil fuels – those industries that are forced to look across the world for the cheapest labour.

They have to, by their very nature, to be competitive in the global economy, which means sourcing the cheapest labour, and of course what's happening is you end up with the sort of rape and run economy where big industry, the big sweat factories, come in and then leave again to go another place where labour is cheaper.

It's not benefiting the majority of people.

The pressures of that global economy on the so-called third world, the destruction of their livelihoods and their cultures and their societies, are also the main reasons why there is such a pressure of immigration within industrialised countries, such a flood.

This is an incredible opportunity, because in these latest treaties they are spelling it out. This isn't happening in a dark room with a few men, it's public knowledge. It's a systemic escalation, and not enough people are paying attention. But you can read about it, and I hope you will.

In these treaties they have clauses called ISDS, which stands for Investor State Dispute Settlements. What this means is that countries are signing on to saying that yes, we will let foreign corporations and banks sue us if we do anything to impede their profit making potential.

I'm originally from Sweden, and I can tell you that the majority of Swedes were against nuclear power. But global corporations have so much influence that the government has gone in that direction, and we do have it; and now a Swedish nuclear power company called Waterfall is suing Germany for 3.7 billion Euros because that country decided to phase out nuclear power after Fukushima.

As you probably know, Australia is being sued by Phillip Morris for mandating plain packaging of cigarettes ... and please look on YouTube for a comedian named John Oliver looking at how these cigarette companies have been suing

small countries like Togo, basically saying: “Unless you let us market cigarettes to your 10-year-olds with very attractive advertising you’ll get sued for hundreds of millions, if not billions, of dollars”.

These treaties that the heads of our governments are pushing upon us are virtually everywhere. It's not a matter of left or right. Clinton and Obama are pushing them every bit as hard as Bush did, and Gillard previously pushed as hard as Abbott is pushing now.

The economic picture goes beyond divisions into left and right – which is a wonderful thing, because now we have the potential to create coalitions that we've never had before, left and right together on a resistance to further trade treaties, an open door inviting us to say, no, no, that's just going too far.

Once we are able to halt this acceleration the whole world will breathe a sigh of relief, because we're all feeling the pressures of more debt and more growth and we can't afford to look after people. In this economy, we've always got to have more debt.

Joe Hockey was on Q&A yesterday, for example, encouraging us all to go in for more debt. This is how it works. And most of us aren't looking at why we have to have more debt. We're not looking at where the pressure comes from, and we're not looking at the real government.

Many people have lost faith in doing anything to change policy, to really change government. Around the world, even in our tiny country of Sweden, where we used to feel that we had some sort of voice as voters and we had a bit of a dialogue with government, people are giving up.

We feel that when they're trying to get elected they talk to us about jobs, about the environment, about the issues we care about, but when they're in power they're suddenly singing from a different songbook in a sort of global capital karaoke.

Well, perhaps our problem with politics, perhaps the reason we didn't have so much of an impact, was because we weren't looking at the real government. We weren't actually looking at what was governing us, because

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it was in the global arena – very mobile, and very hard to see, especially because the media didn't cover it.

And academia hasn't really covered it either. In post-modern academia everything under the sun gets deconstructed, except the global economy.

On the other side we have a big opportunity to strengthen the opposite to the global economy, which is communities. We can really strengthen community fabric by supporting the local economy movement.

The local economy movement is beginning to rebuild the interdependence between people – having that human connection and looking each other in the eye, feeling a sense of belonging, not sitting on a computer and being an appendage to a business that's working all over the world, becomes a structural change that's part of our daily lives.

Our arms have grown so long, we can't see what our hands are doing.

Within those very mobile long distance relationships of the global economy it's almost impossible to act ethically.

As a consumer, as a corporate CEO, I once had the opportunity to be a member of a forum on globalisation. I helped to start an international forum studying the impact of trade treaties around the world.

We had some very big players – actually, at that time we had one of the richest men in the world, a right wing tycoon named Sir James Goldsmith, and on the left someone named Doug Tompkins, who started the Esprit Company. They both became convinced that these trade treaties really were a serious issue and put in funding to raise awareness.

We tried to reach other multimillionaires. At one meeting Richard Branson and the head of the Gap Corporation came. We weren't able to convince them, but the Gap CEO was basically a good man.

He was, however, angry at activists who were going out to Vietnam and claiming the Gap was using sweated labour and abusing their workers. He said to us: “We aren't abusing labour, and we're sending out people regularly to check”.

What we've found out over the years, of course, is that the central government is often not really in touch with what's happening on the ground.

When you're a Gap CEO sitting in San Francisco, and you send someone over to Vietnam once a month, is that the labourers are told "Be quiet, or you're out," and sometimes even "Be quiet, or you're dead".

We're dealing with a system where long distances make it almost impossible to be ethical. We're dealing with a system where the market is rigged in the favour of the big and global in such a way that it's almost impossible to have really ethical market solutions.

Which is why we also have to be wary of pure economic instruments in isolation, like carbon trading, even like divestment.

Divestment could be a good thing within a campaign that highlights that these trade treaties have to be reversed. Without, we're talking about putting a market solution into a system where the big simply pay the fines and the small are going under in larger and larger numbers. We're talking about a system where we don't even see it.

But while our governments are deregulating global banks and corporations, local and national businesses are over-regulated. You might want to build a staircase in your house, say, and you want each step to be one inch higher than the local council rules say.

Your taxes will pay for that policing to prevent something being built inside your house, while at the same time your taxes are subsidising the McDonalds superhighway and the exit for the McDonalds.

Even straight highways are for the super large lorries that are literally carrying the same products back and forth. We're signing on to trade treaties which encourage us to grow our economy through more trade, but actually that trade is in many cases swapping identical products.

The US exports 900,000 tons of beef, and turns around and imports around 900,000 tons of beef. The UK exports as much milk and butter as it imports. Australia exports wheat to Europe and imports wheat from Europe.

Australia importing oranges from California, which sell in the supermarket for half the price of Australian oranges, even though the Australian ones are available.

We have far more of this than you realise, because we don't hear about it. It's the main cause of global warming. We don't hear about it, the global food economy. They fly English apples to South Africa to be washed and waxed and fly them back again.

They fly shrimp to Thailand to be peeled and flown back again. They fly fish from Norway to China to be deboned and fly them back again.

We need to raise awareness about this, because stopping that redundant trade would be a giant step towards both economic and environmental health – the biggest step we could take to reduce global warming in one fell swoop.

Because when you're talking about swapping identical products, or flying things off to be peeled and deboned and so on you really are talking about the most incredible waste of energy.

I must get on now to tell you why the antidote to all of this is to strengthen local economies, but I must stress that we must combine that building of local economies with raising awareness of the need to resist the TPP. Please just send out emails.

When people ask what you can do, raising awareness is one of the most important activisms in a climate where the media is simply not doing its job (partly because, as we know, the media is itself one of those giant corporations).

To come back to localisation, the central area to focus on, the one that helps us to see clearly why it is such a win-win strategy, is food. I want to make a plea for all of us (and I'm so glad so many of you are women) that there's nothing else in the world that human beings produce that every single human being needs every day of their life.

Nothing else compares in importance. One way to also think about it is to remember that if we do have any upheavals – through climate, or politics, or an energy crisis – most supermarket shelves will be empty in three days.

Bear in mind that if that happens to your community you could manage with the clothes you have now. You could manage with the buildings you have, even if you all had to move in to a schoolhouse. But food would become the issue in a very very short time. Let's not allow our politicians, who are meant to be our representatives, to treat agriculture as just another industry.

First of all, it should not be treated as an industry because it turns out that the truth is that the industrial production of food, which we have been led to believe actually increases productivity, doesn't.

We believe that because back when industrial agriculture and the green revolution was being pushed we all went along with the idea that if food production without people – with fewer jobs – produces food, well then, that's efficient.

We were sold on the idea of large-scale industrial monocultures and machines being efficient through efficiencies of scale. A long time ago already we should have re-examined what's efficient.

It is not efficient to replace jobs with energy-guzzling machinery or with toxic chemicals at a time when two of our biggest problems are pollution - both climate-changing carbon pollution and toxic pollution – and unemployment.

Study after study, particularly since about 2000 – huge studies that the whole world would have known about, if we didn't have a corporate media – have shown this.

IAASTD – the International Assessment of Agriculture, Science and Technology for Development – ran a five-year study, involving about 400 scientists and farmers, in 63 countries. It was actually commissioned by the Royal Bank in the UK.

When the results came up, it was buried, because the results said industrial green revolution agriculture is a disaster. The head of the study said “If we continue in this direction we'll be living on a planet no one wants to inhabit”.

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The results pointed very clearly towards more diversified smaller-scale agriculture.

A more recent study from UNCTAD – the United Nations Commission on Trade and Development – said the same thing, but even more strongly.

That study actually warned against the trade treaties, and recommended more localised food production for local needs.

One of the biggest social movements in the world that you won't have heard of is Via Campesina – Spanish for “the way of the farmer”. It started in South America, but it now has over 200 million members, from all over the world, including smaller farmers associations from Norway and Japan – and from Australia.

Via Campesina has been for 30 years, lobbying for what they call food sovereignty – that farmers should be allowed to prioritise feeding their own regions and their own countries first.

It's a very big discussion, and I know in Australia it can sound unrealistic to think that we can work locally when you have such big farms, so far removed from the city.

But keep in mind that localising, as we're defining it, is simply a process of shortening distances. It would be better to be looking at how can the farms of Australia, first of all, feed Australia.

We need policies that help farmers diversify – even if it's just shifting to some trees as well as grain, some vegetables as well as animals.

What you do immediately when you help farmers to diversify is to create conditions that are inherently more ecological, but also more productive. You can get much more out of any given plot of land, whether it's one acre, or a thousand acres, or 10 thousand acres.

If you have diversified production, you'll be able to get more out of a given piece of land. Highly diversified small family farms, in the so-called third world, sometimes produce 10 times as much food per unit of land as large monocultures.

We really need get this message out and support that kind of food production in the so-called third world.

This means reversing some of our ideas about efficiency, productivity and scale. When people start seeing this bigger picture, of the big economy being a problem for jobs and for financial security, what's very exciting.

We're now hearing there's another 2008 crash coming this way, many economists are aware of it. That instability, that fear, is being accelerated and structurally encouraged through these trade treaties.

So please raise awareness about that.

In the meanwhile, from the bottom up, we have numerous projects where local food is the centrepiece. It's just unbelievable, the curve of growth in these local food industry is leaping up. There's still not enough to turn everything around, but in America, they are growing so rapidly!

What's happening is that consumers and farmers reconnect. Very often it starts from big cities, where consumers realise that the global food economy is a threat - both to the environment, for all those reasons I told you, and to the welfare of people who are exporting food but not getting to eat it.

So it's very often urban consumers that take the initiative and link up with farmers to start farmers markets, start food co-ops, or produce consumer co-ops.

One of the biggest movements is in Japan. We have to be a bit careful that it doesn't get too big, because then it can't help and support a multitude of small farms; it's better to have several initiatives, rather than one giant structure.

But they're popping up everywhere.

I had the pleasure of meeting one of the first initiators in Beijing, who started a community supported agriculture scheme. What is so wonderful is there are a lot of young people, who as part of these small-scale, human-scale, more direct relationships with their consumers love farming.

This is not about standing in some giant field like a machine, like migrant labour. This is about being far more in control of your life, where your work is different every day.

There is a real wave – it's a small one, and it's not in the media, but there is a real wave of a new farmer's movement.

It's particularly in the industrialised countries, but not only there. We're connected with many of these groups in India, and there's a real pattern of young people who find their work in front of the computer very energy-draining. When they go out and work on a farm, they find it energy-enhancing. It's good for their health, it's good for their bodies, they're moving, they're working with people. They're working with plants and animals.

Edible schoolyards are another element of all of this. Have you heard of Alice Waters? She's a friend of mine who's been promoting edible schoolyards in the US for 40 years. She's the one who got Michelle Obama to plant a garden at the White House. It's so affirming, so strengthening, and it builds not just community between people, but between people and nature.

What we have found by looking at the world through these lenses is that almost every successful therapy dealing with the most frightening and difficult addictions particularly prevalent in the modern world – drugs, alcohol, sex, eating disorders– involves community.

The ones that are even more successful combine it with reconnecting to the non-human world, to animals, to plants. It's a communion with the realities of life. It's rebuilding a pattern and a way of being, an interdependence, which is how we evolved for millennia.

Living in high rise buildings far removed from nature and from our neighbours is a very unnatural blip.

Statistics show again and again that highrise isolation is bad for us, for our health, for our spirits, for our wellbeing. I came back to Sweden having lived for long periods in a place called Ladakh, which is in West Tibet, and Bhutan just as that area was opened up to the modern economy.

I spoke the language fluently, and I witnessed the changes that happened when people were crowded together suddenly on top of each other, but not knowing each other and with no structural interdependence.

I also saw that the reason why people were all crowding together in major capital cities was that's where the economy had centralised the jobs.

Without looking at how our economic trajectory is pushing this mass urbanisation we won't really be able to solve the problem, and the localisation movement is about bringing jobs to smaller towns and decentralising and localising economic activity.

We start seeing how we can in a very practical, very pragmatic, very realistic way, reverse so many of the problems we have because that alienation and that separation which happens when we are unnaturally crowded on top of each other.

Suddenly even within the city, when you create the structures of interdependence, you start knowing each other and you start forming community groups.

We need to avoid further mega-urbanisations, even though we can solve it socially by rebuilding the community fabric within cities. Environmentally it's very difficult to create healthy cities, if we keep expanding the spread of the urban megacities.

So we need to support the revitalisation of economic activity in smaller cities and smaller communities. If we do that, we'll actually see people wanting to move to smaller towns, where there are also jobs available. This is also linked to a change in education. Again, there are these wonderful initiatives, where schools are doing more than bringing in the edible schoolyard.

Seoul, in Korea, is one of the most soulless cities in the world. It is the high rise capital of the world, but there is still a huge longing among the South Koreans for a connection to nature, a connection to community.

I wrote a book called *Ancient Futures*, which was a best seller there, and I've been there many times and helped a localisation movement start there. I don't know how much of it has to do with us. We have helped to spark a lot

of initiatives, but one which I don't think we had anything to do with, is something called Sungmisan Village in Seoul.

It started with families who wanted a different school and came together to build a different school. That was more ecological, that was more community based. That was linked to skills that could lead to more meaningful jobs, in a more sustainable economy.

Sungmisan started with a school and then grew, and now it's a neighbourhood where people are interlinked, and they have something like 100 different small businesses. I went to the dentist there. The whole identity of the place is in having created their interlinked structures, and there are 20,000 people in some way connected to this community initiative in Korea.

Very importantly, their school has a connection to a farm some distance from Seoul. Part of the schooling is that children also spend time on the farm.

You see people thriving from having more abilities – not only using their bodies from the neck upwards, but also using their hands to develop skills and to work together. Please do go to our website if you can – www.localfutures.org.

We have lots of links to other initiatives, and we have a series we call Planet Local, where we bring in examples of some of these initiatives around the world.

But even we are just not able to stay on top of all the things that are happening. The things that start with food tend to be the strongest and have grown most effectively around the world. But we also have things like local business alliances. How many of you have heard of Business Alliance for Local Living Economies (BALLE)? I'm really glad to be able to introduce you to that.

It was started by a friend of mine named Judy Wicks. She began with her own restaurant, and realised that she didn't want to be part of this wasteful global economy. She connected to local farmers, and so on.

But then she realised the benefit of connecting with other local smaller businesses – to create networks, to support each other, and to educate consumers.

So now there is a whole fabric of these business alliances, especially in the United States. There are also initiatives here, and in October we're holding a conference in Castlemaine, so there should be papers on your table about that.

I hope some of you will come, or let people know about it, because we have people from the other side of the world coming to show how these things are happening in India, in Brazil, or in France, and how beneficial they are.

They will also, as I have done, talk a fair amount about the other side of it, the trade treaty side. It's important, though, that we don't just say no, we don't just resist, but we renew.

Resistance and renewal, when we can present a picture that shows that there is another way. We mustn't fall in to the trap of believing that: "Well communism didn't work, and this corporate capitalism that just grows and grows is the only alternative".

No, there is another way, and the beauty of the other way is that it's not one other way - it's a systemic shift that respects diversity.

Localisation allows us to adapt economic activity and culture to diverse climates, diverse ecosystems. That's how cultural diversity arose in the first place.

Remember, we're not talking about some kind of isolation and a the lack of concern for others. We're talking about this as a globally interlinked movement which will only ever really be able to be successful if through international collaboration, information exchange and support there's a bigger and better understanding of the global system.

We need action at the community level, and we need to insist that it happens at the national level. Because, of course, our global problems, like global warming, need global collaboration – but that's actually the antithesis of the treaties where governments are now collaborating with corporations, where

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profit is the most important thing, profit for a few at the expense of the 99 per cent.

The new collaboration says we know that the real economy is the soil and the water and the people. We want global collaboration to protect the environment and human rights, and then under an umbrella of protection we want to allow for a range of diverse applications.

We want to see different languages and different cultures flourish. We want to see a respect for diversity in its fullest form.

The amazing thing is that if you really study this from the bottom up it's only through diversified production – not only maintaining but renewing biological diversity – that we're going to be able to survive. This other path is taking us towards an extinction of species.

As I speak right now, we're extinguishing species, and we're extinguishing languages, and they go with that diversity of clients.

There is a model where we could be vitally and healthily diverse – not just accepting difference, but nourishing and nurturing difference. When people are secure, they are strong enough to welcome diversity.

In Ladakh and Bhutan, I saw people who lived side by side for generations, Buddhists and Muslims, for 500 years. There had never been group conflict between those local communities, they were interdependent yet they were different. It was one of the most beautiful things I had ever seen.

Then over a decade, I saw what happened when the global economy came in with subsidised food, subsidised roads, bringing in butter from the other side of the Himalaya that sold for half the price of local butter and destroyed the local economy, local jobs.

Within a decade, people were suddenly fighting each other over the scarcity of jobs in the city. For 500 years there had never been a scarcity of jobs, there had never been unemployment.

The structural benefits of building economies that nourish diversity, both cultural and biological, offers such potential that we have not even begun to comprehend it.

The grassroots movement that Australia is one of the leaders in is permaculture. Permaculture is a design system that was started by two Australians, Bill Mollison and David Holmgren – and in fact David Holmgren will be speaking at our conference in Castlemaine, which is near where he lives.

Their whole principle is designing diversified food systems, but also buildings that are adapted to local climate, using local materials. They are among the leaders in the world, at the grassroots.

Their work has happened without any help or any funding from the media, from academia or from government - which is true generally of the local food movement. Almost all these initiatives have happened without help from above.

That is for me why it is such an exciting movement. It is answering deep human needs for connection, an innate longing for that reconnection.

And in developing and enhancing diversity biological diversity, we're talking about supporting life. We're talking about an absolutely fundamental principle of life. Please don't let anyone tell you this is not realistic. That is to say that life is not realistic. If we say the human longing for connection and community cannot be met, it is not realistic, we can't have diversified production. We're basically saying we can't really let life into our lives.

So please, please do think about these issues.

I know that I've told you a lot of things that you already know. But in putting together the bigger picture the way we do, we believe that we're helping to form a frame, a big picture frame that can allow for this incredible coming together of social and environmental movements.

In fact this is already beginning to happen.

In America there's a new economy movement, there is some very wonderful economists taking the lead. But the most wonderful thing about is that it's bringing together social activists and environmentalists into coalitions for what some are calling the next system, or the new economy.

The new economy is localisation, which is the economics of happiness, thank you.