

## **‘Goodwill Hunting: A Metalogue on Setting up Hubs to Foster Multispecies Relationships for the Common Good’**

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### **Abstract**

‘Goodwill Hunting’ is the title of a movie by Matt Damon and Ben Affleck in 1997. Our paper has (almost) nothing to do with the film because it is literally about finding ways to create and build goodwill for the common good of multiple species. Still, it does have something in common as it is about building relationships through the genius of local wisdom. The paper and panel presentation are in the form of a metalogue and trace the story of setting up multispecies hubs to address what works, why and how?

How can we balance the needs of individuals and species? How can we scale up local wisdom by working locally and at the broader level? Is the subsidiarity principle scalable? We discuss old and new wisdom to promote turning points for the better through a community of practice. It is structured as a metalogue on what multispecies relationships imply together with Indigenous custodians and community facilitators in South Africa, Australia and Indonesia.

In line with the latest IPCC synthesis report (2023), this paper works with local policy knowledge holders using a metalogue approach with academics and practitioners who are concerned about climate change and who understand the implications of species apartheid.. Members of the community of practice lead local hubs using mixed methods for participatory engagement. A metalogue approach originally refers to reflection on ideas and was first used by Gregory Bateson in “Ecology of Mind” (Bateson, 1972). We use it to engage in a series of policy conversations that strive to make sense of so-called contextual warm data, a term used by Nora Bateson (2021) to support deeper local understanding. We also reflect on our participation in an SDD led by Yiannis Laouris and Marcus Hallside. The SDD process entails engagement based on generating ideas in response to an agreed triggering question, grouping ideas into clusters, ranking, voting on the most important ideas, and considering which ideas are vital to achieving specific outcomes. On the 11th of March, we met as a community of practice to discuss maps of ideas generated in the structured democratic dialogue comprising 52 members. From 36 ideas, clusters were formed, and then these formed three layers of ideas on which we reflected and voted to produce an action plan in the form of maps generated from the ideas. This was followed up by a survey by Anon X and Y to assess significance and feasibility. The result has been raising the enthusiasm of the members of the COP to work on ‘doable’ projects focusing on water security and soil protection to support agroecology and to raise awareness of pollution.

### **Keywords**

multispecies, relationships, food, shared habitat, common good

## Goodwill Hunting: A Metalogue on Setting up Hubs

### 1. The call to know our place : exploring ways to scale up our endeavours

**Janet** : ‘Goodwill hunting’ came to mind as it is the thoughtful title and story by Matt Damon and Ben Affleck ( 1997). Our paper has (almost) nothing to do with the movie because it is literally about finding ways to create and build on good will for the common good of multiple species, but it does have something in common as it is about building relationships through the genius of local wisdom. It is linked with our concern to address mitigation and adaptation to climate change in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sendai Risk platform – which highlights the risk associated with climate change, water insecurity and in particular the challenges development poses in regional and urban areas . The 21 March 2024 is Human Rights Day in South Africa to commemorate Sharpeville , 1960 when , children died to defend their right to a better education . The Apartheid government policy led by Verwoerd (a sociologist) implemented Apartheid Education so that children would be educated to be ‘ hawkers of wood and drawers of water’ , to know that they could not ‘graze in the green pastures’ allocated to white privileged children. On this day *Earth Rise* led a celebration on Zoom to focus the minds of the participants on alternative visions for the future, one that is linked with nature and not separate from it. Children died during the protest at Sharpeville and are dying today as a result of wars in Gaza , Ukraine and ongoing civil wars in Sudan, the horn of Africa, Central Africa, Zimbabwe , for example.

Protests are important, as are visionaries who implement prefigurative projects . As a community of practice we have shown some hopeful ways forward . These are documented in a series of volumes and articles on education, ethics, governance and better forms of democracy rooted in appreciation of biodiversity and that human beings need to know their place in nature.

### 2. Our community of practice.

Our aim is to facilitate and cross fertilise and learn with people across the hubs spanning universities, community organisations and NGOs and GOs geared to organic healthy food, wild and domestic animal rights and our shared habitat , including for example University of South Africa, the University of Venda, The University of Adelaide, University of Indonesia, Universitas Padjadjaran , Universitas Sultan Agang and the Ministry of Religion linking with the village schools in Indonesia, known as Pesantran.

Members of the community of practice lead local hubs using participatory engagement. As facilitator of the COP we discuss ways to scale up protecting the commons : our shared multispecies habitat on which we all depend. We used Mixed Methods and participatory engagement which we discussed in informal zoom meetings on which we then commented based on a form of metalogue . In addition we discussed a formal question in a forms of engagement. The outputs from the community of practice give a sense of our work to date and the outcomes include progress towards green jobs linked with agroecology ( as detailed in a companion paper by Makaulule et al) and the promotion of water security ( as detailed in this paper and a companion papers with Lisman et al ) also see the published contributions to date<sup>xiii</sup>.

Our mission is to foster spaces and places to protect multispecies relationships by working with people of good heart and good will who wish to protect and re-generate our shared habitat<sup>xiv</sup>. This requires recognising old and new wisdom that supports communication as ‘ a multispecies endeavour’, along with forms of democracy and governance that celebrates diversity to the extent that our freedoms and diversity do not undermine the rights of others, including other species. The process helps us to avoid colonising or ventriloquy. Colonising is appropriating or imposing ideas. Ventriloquy is speaking *over* or *for* others. The mission flows from the shared values of our community of practice that has developed over decades of work to apply praxis to areas of concern and attempts to show ways forward. We formulated our steps using a Structured Democratic Dialogue with Marcus Hallside and Yiannis Laouris

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together with 54 participant leaders in Indonesia , South Africa and Australia. This will be discussed in more depth elsewhere.

### *The rationale for setting up multi -species hubs*

We work in rural, urban and peri-urban areas in Australia, Indonesia and South Africa . in all three contexts species are displaced as a result of climate change (McIntyre-Mills et al , 2024 forthcoming).

**Janet** : What do we mean by multispecies hubs in normative a priori terms and a posteriori governance terms? What does it take to develop and apply a priori norms and a posteriori indicators and laws to make a difference? We are one of many species and need a statement on food and water and safety in a shared habitat. Food shapes our lives and we are what we eat and what we choose to eat. The work of Dzomo La Mupo and PGS have been discussed elsewhere on earth jurisprudence wild law , multi-species relationships, but the focus here is on the stories of relationality. Food security ought not be used as a weapon of war. We need to make a statement through our work that as human animals our health, safety and fate is linked with many species. Wild animals and farm animals ought to live lives free from fear and violence. In the Cape, for example the onset of fires as a result of the very dry conditions and fires has destroyed the habitat , for example of baboons and guineafowl. In this context keeping verges and garden as biodiverse safe corridors is vital to provide food whilst the fynbos regenerates during the rainy season.

The work of the Wild Law Institute will become ever more important and Biodiversity Policy needs to address the impact of poeverty,homelessness and associated fires in many parts of South Africa.

### *A priori norms*

We recognise and express solidarity with other species and advocate for spaces for farm, wild, liminal, domestic ( Donaldson and Kymlicka, 2011) and human animals within a shared habitat . We support the notion of a right to peaceful life that is worth living Nussbaum because the capabilities of sentient beings can be achieved . These a priori notions have been expressed by Nussbaum ( 2006) in ‘Frontiers of Justice’ , Donaldson and Kymlicka,(2011 ) in Zoopolis and Higgins et al, 2013, Higgins, 2012,2018) The work on earth jurisprudence by Burdon (2010, 211,2015) that builds on the work of Berry (1999) and Cullinan (2003, 2014) makes a plea for the protection of habitat ( see The Universal Declaration of the Rights of Mother Earth, Cullinan, n.d.).

### *A posteriori governance through considering social, economic and environmental indicators of wellbeing*

We have discussed ways in which to engage with the community through community engagement using story telling to map social, economic and environmental indicators of wellbeing in a range of contexts, in order to consider what we have, what we need, what we are prepared to add or discard from our lives in material and non material terms , the turning points for the better and worse, the barriers and how we can strive to overcome them in the case study contexts in Australia, Indonesia and South Africa .

## 3. Our approach and methodology

**Janet:** We engage in Zoom Sunday informal conversations on how to support the commons, webinars on specific areas of concern , WhatsApp brainstorming and follow up conversations help to connect us with one another and specific hubs. In this paper we discuss our multi-species hubs , how they were set up and continuing to widen a community of practice which expands on indigenous knowledge networks. In line with the latest IPCC synthesis report (2023) this paper works with local policy knowledge holders

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using a metalogue approach . Academics and practitioners who are concerned about climate change and who understand the implications of species apartheid meet together.

As a facilitator of the COP we discuss ways to scale up protecting the commons , namely our shared multispecies habitat on which we all depend. We used Mixed Methods and Participatory Engagement which we discussed in informal Zoom anthropology meetings on which we then commented based on a form of metalogue via email or Whatsapp . In addition we discussed a formal question through a structured democratic dialogue.

### *3.1.Metalogue on Multispecies relationships*

The purpose of our forthcoming book ‘Affirmative intervention to address Multispecies Relationships’ is to address the displacement of multiple species as a result of convergent social, economic and environmental challenges expressed as conflict, climate change and the loss of habitat and to explore ways to make a difference through a) inner work ( self-reflection and meditation on our values, assumptions and the consequences of our choices), b) outer work on purposeful interventions to try out and ( attempt to scale up interventions and future work on conceptualising scenarios and c) future work considering ‘if then’ scenarios that could help us to bring about change.

**Pat:** Yes, Unisa, Unisa, Adelaide University and Universitas of Padjajan, Dzomo La Mupo are working collaboratively with indigenous communities in Vhembe district which is in Limpopo province. The neighbouring countries are Zimbabwe, Botswana in the North, Botswana to the West and Mocambique to the East.

**Janet:** A metalogue ( as we use it) is dialogue with a purpose to explore meanings contextually cross conceptual boundaries . it enables reflection on the recorded zoom conversations. It is useful to reflect on the content and process of our research to date. A metalogue approach originally refers to reflection on ideas and was first used by Bateson in his book “Ecology of Mind” (Bateson, 1972). The way we use it is to engages in a series of policy conversations that strive to make sense of so-called contextual warm data ( a term used by Nora Bateson, 2021)<sup>xv</sup> to support deeper local understanding. The metalogue for mutual learning is adapted from the work of Gregory Bateson and his daughter Nora. It can be regarded as a form of kithship or ‘mutual being’ as it involves weaving together our strands of experience in stories that make meaning and sense. We tried to ensure that each voice is heard and documented.

Some of the time we recorded the Zoom sessions and on a few occasions used the AI bot called firefly. Members of the community of practice lead local hubs using participatory engagement guided by shared values. I think that the metalogue approach illustrates the entangled nature of content and process. The team already have much expertise, thus what we are doing is drawing out this expertise in respectful dialogues in our ongoing community of practice.

There is no shift in expertise from indigenous knowers to academic knowers as the roles overlap or are alongside non indigenous knowers who use a multi-species relational approach and are informed by new physics, systemic and re-generative literature ( synthesised and applied in transformative research projects. Instead of displacing species through deforestation and inappropriate agriculture and attempt to re-introduce local indigenous species is central, thus we aim to protect sources of water by protecting forests and soil though preventing deforestation and organic farming<sup>xvi</sup> Instead of diving homeless people from the river banks it is vital to manage the ecological footprint through setting up locally based enterprises to support a circular green economy. This could be rooted in the policy espoused by Jokowi’s

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‘One Village, One or Many Enterprises’ approach and the notion that community co-operatives can : ‘*Learn, Earn and Grow a Future*’.

This is achievable through providing a culturally appropriate public health education on ways to manage the population through a demographic transition that respects the rights of each mother and child to academic or vocational education and training. The loss of farm land and destruction of the water sources is caused by development at the expense of habitat on which human beings and other species are dependent. In some of the upstream villages, flood plain areas of Jakarta and Bantam coastal area, the lack of affordability of clean safe water, lack of re-generation of the environment and health related issues will be addressed through participatory action research on the cyclical green economy approach together with the team spanning University of Indonesia, Universitas Padjadjaran and Universitas Sultan Ageng Tirtayasa, Kota Serang, Indonesia University of Adelaide.

The issues experienced in Indonesia are the issues being experienced in South Africa where inorganic fertilisers pose along with pollution from sewerage pose a threat to rivers and coastal waters. The Fish Hoek Valley where the second author is based is a case in point<sup>xvii</sup> ranging from water shortages<sup>xviii</sup> to pollution linked with sewage plants failing during power outages to contamination<sup>xix</sup> with herbicides including glyphosates<sup>xx</sup>, a range of pharmaceuticals<sup>xxi</sup> and plastic.

### ***Organic farming and the soil biome : Protecting mother earth and making compost***

**Butshabelo :** “ My journey began on 15th Sept 2015 with four people...at the Bryanston Organic Market. After 15 minutes of meeting them, I decided to become an organic activist..This is because I wanted to learn ... I was trained in agribusiness and wanted to re-teach all the people who had learned from me about organics so they would not use chemicals.. I have to change and redo what I had done by going back to the people with organic lessons. ...I said , I am willing to work with you and so I was retrained from May 2016 to August 2016.So we began meeting with 4 women supplying the organic market. We grew in numbers and did practical training at one another’s houses. One person took cow dung, another green leaves a third dry leaves. Then we learned to make compost and about soil preparation.... From 2016 -17 we grew to 28 and we formed a co-op . We helped one another to develop their backyards 65% had bore holes and drippers. ...The group won awards in 2019 from the department of agriculture, but during Covid from 2020 – 2022 there was nothing But in 2023 they won another award. One woman is growing Indigenous coffee plants....I am proud of what Dzomo la Mupo has achieved. We had a meeting at Uni Ven and they brought compost to sell. I showed them how to make it....”

**Ida Widianingsih :** At Universitas Padjdjaran we have a model to use to bring people from across the sectors in the university together to work in the community .

**Adib Shomad :** I am at the Ministry of Religion and work with pesantram ( religious schools) . In the area where I live and work there is too much reliance on chemicals . It is one of the main areas for growing onions. We need to show better way and the awareness of the organic faming .We need to eat organic food and we want to eat organic and healthy food. We must have an agreement with the farmers – we will market better if we are organic... We need to teach the local people .

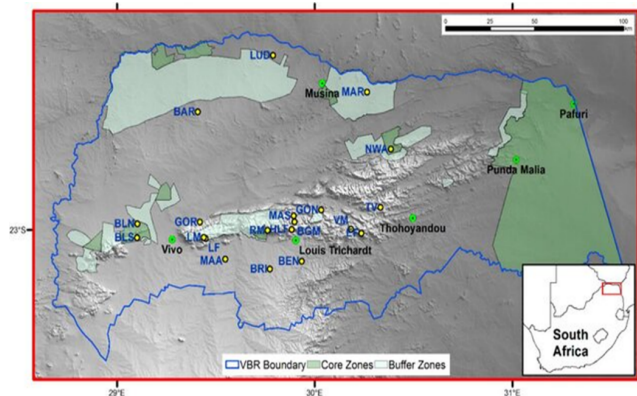
**Janet :** We could offer to share contacts to help with organic farming Adib.

**Adib :** Curriculum needs to focus on ways to protect wellbeing of our shared habitat and invite PGS and uni departments to help with this .... We emphasise through our Islamic sources...stated in holy Koran that disasters caused by human beings doing bad things. We have to encourage people to do the right thing and not to use chemicals to ‘get results’ and it destroys the land. Onions are being harvested and stored so they can get high prices. They use chemical to make more productive but they destroy the soil. The Traders buy the red onions and who they lack onions they keep the prices inflated. When farmers plant the price goes down and then they sell all the onions when price high --- so buy low and sell high. So we want to do organic farming . I work in Ministry of Religion and a leader and I also own land and lead a pesantran. We want the farmers to do things more sustainably.

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**Dennis** summarised his work with local community and co-ops in the UK , for example he supports young politicians and helps engage the community PGS and our models . I live in a highly industrialised and interested in rewilding and re-generating community Yes I support other organisations and local political scene with elections and canvas with prospective councillor, mayor and new MP .... I also help a university professor on climate change and land use ..... She is articulate and I help her by linking her with local community networks . I have been involved in activism since the 1970s...

**Pat :** The area where the group are based is called Daveyton at Ekurhuleni in Gauteng province. The distance to OR Tambo airport is 28, 7 KM and to Tshwane (Pretoria) is 62,1 KM(Distance Calculators) Ekurhuleni in Gauteng Map [Ekurhuleni in Gauteng Map](#)



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**Mokwale:** We are keen on engaging in small-scale agriculture and small business entrepreneurship. Our resources consist of wetlands and the production of fruit juice. Janet educated us on the significance of using organic food, although we are uncertain about how to effectively promote our items. We are familiar with the manner in which we previously provided assistance to each other as a collective.

**Pat:** Consider the significance of participating in stokvels. In rural places, people used to engage in communal ploughing to assist one other. The collective ploughs one field at a time, alternating between one another or two fields simultaneously, until all individuals are accounted for. The similar approach is used to stokvel, with the exception being that it operates in monetary terms.

**Mokwale:** Additionally, we may assist one another via Stokvels.

**Norma:** Yes, solidarity is important.

**Janet:** As a COP please let us reflect on how agroecological approach of Dzomo la Mupo, PGSA and the work of Vhonani at Uni Venda and Unisa with the help of colleagues at UnPad and Uni of Adelaide has progressed food security and let us share some of the qualitative and quantitative data to map progress Consumption in other services ( attending school, clinic or buying food or other items for the home, for example) is possible as a result of increases in organic harvests.

**Pat Lethole :** We at Unisa work now on wet lands and bamboo co-op projects and learning from **Dzomo La Mupo** .

**Mokwale :** I volunteer with Pat Lethole at the Daveyton hub. Most people are not aware that it is a wet lands – We are interest in creating awareness and learning about he many species.We wish to work with people of good will who are open and respectful so that we can foster multispecies relationships. Many did not know about the many species here in the wet lands around the Daveyton UNISA campus. We

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need to protect the water from chemicals and dumping. Openness and respect. We are keen to work with indigenous people and to find out where the fountains and water sources are.

**Pat** : Over the weekend we held a workshop to protect the wetlands and we tested the water quality. We also measured the quality of bottled water and we found chemicals in the bottled water. We thought it would provide a benchmark for water quality!

Mphaṭhe Makaulule and Vhonani Netshandama : We at the Uni Venda link intergenerationally the old wisdom with the ideas of young people through organisations such as Dzomo Ḳa Mupo , PGSA and Earth Rise to plant, protect forests, rivers, wet lands and coastal areas. Dzomo Ḳa Mupo empowers members to work the land in ways that foster the spirit of the land and living systems. PGSA teaches specific organic farming skills and importantly protects the voiceless including farm animals and wild creature from violence. It also makes a strong statement about empowering women to find their voice as detailed in our joint work.

Mphaṭhe Makaulule : The eco mapping helps us to go to the ancestor's ways. Animals are the cultivators of the forest ... thee ecological mapping helps people learn; we encourage each other to return to organic way...agro ecology . we use the mapping of all of nature , from grasses to the stars above. Wellbeing not only for us but for multi-species. Our seed and mapping not only about the needs of human beings. It is the wellbeing of the climate and the soil. We learn in an indigenous ways. Praying is not just about human beings it is to renew and through ritual to connect Indigenous and ancestors ways. ... We link with our totems . In our ecological calendar it is not only about the needs of people wellbeing of climate and the soil. We depend on the spirituality was not for human beings to pray alone hut to engage in the lives of animals our totems.

**Janet** : Re-generation can be helped through ritual ( carrying practical knowledge ) as it is a form of teching and can be used to remind people in a community to re-member their totems. Totems are relatives ascribed at birth to ensure that the land and its creatures are honoured by specific clan members. This seems to be a pervasive notion in Indigenous cultures internationally as similar stories have been shared with me for example in Cape Town by a Xhosa healer and in Alice Springs Central Australia by an Arrerente leader. Totemism reminds and links people to the land , waters and the many species on which we depend . I was given the totemic link with the crab by a Xhosa mentor in the Cape.

**Mphaṭheleni** emphasized how she works with a coastal community of Jeffrey's Bay in the Eastern Cape, South Africa and Lisman explained how he works with an urban community living along the banks of the river in Depok, Jakarta. We agreed that microplastics are now strongly linked with human illnesses.

**Mphaṭheleni and Lisman Manurung** stressed that the damage to waterways results in the ill health of fish and that the microplastics pervade the entire ecosystem. **Ida and Mphaṭheleni** also explained how they work in highland forest regions to protect springs and rivers in West Java and Limpopo, south Africa, respectively. This is detailed elsewhere and is mentioned in a companion paper in this SIG.

### *The displacement of people , plants and animals*

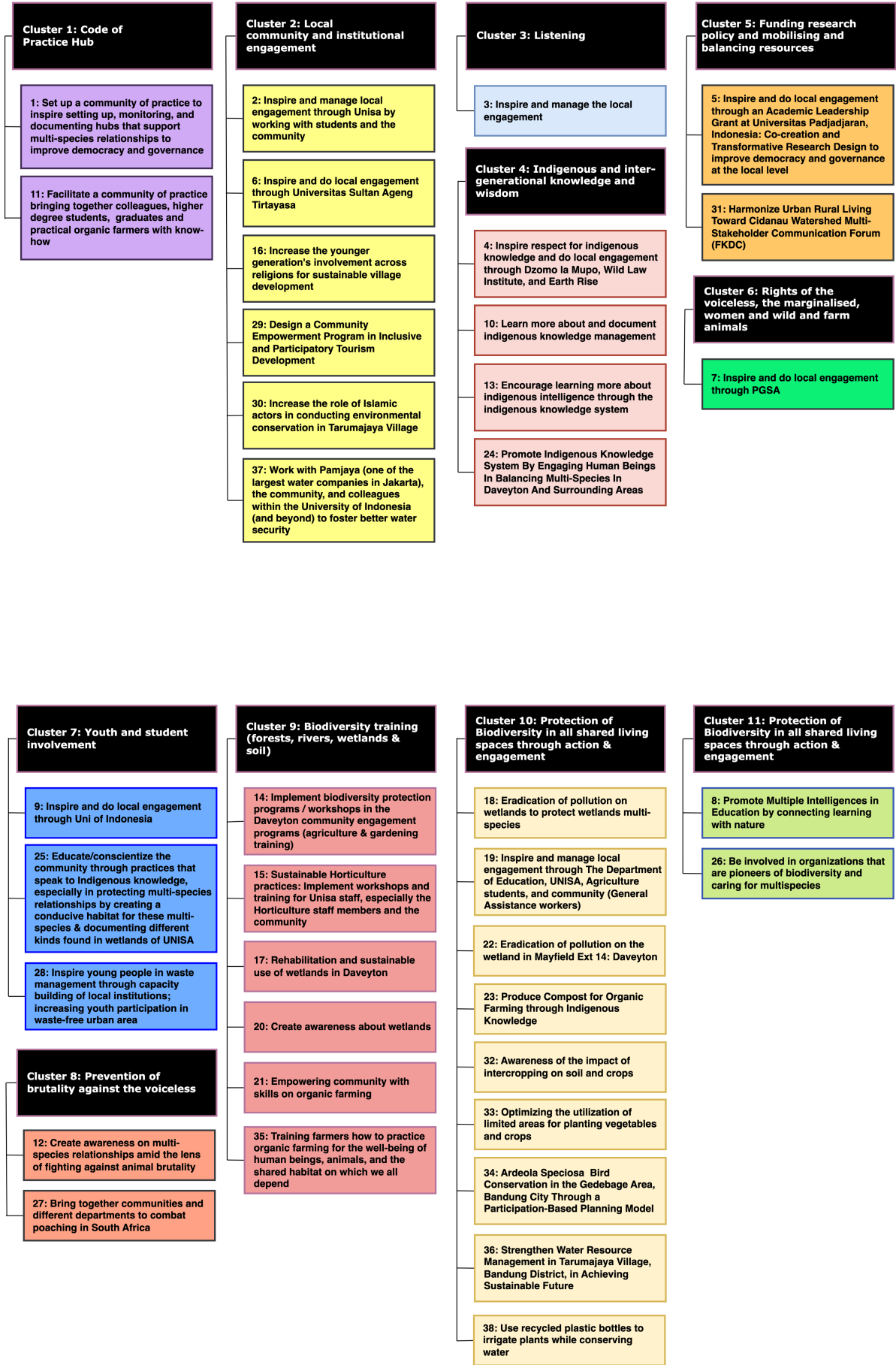
The displacement of people, plants and animals was highlighted in discussions on people who can no longer survive as farmers coming into the urban area near the campus of Sultan Ageng in Bantam, Indonesia. **Riswanda** explained : “ Children live on the street and are given informal classes in a bus station. As a group of academics they have reached out to various ministries ‘to garner support and to raise awareness.’ **Lisman** talked of trying to use recycling and repurposing to enable the local homeless and low income residents to work with Pamjaya to create jobs whilst cleaning up the river. **Ida** stressed that working with mosques can also help as a centre for community education. In Tarumajaya they help to plant avocado trees with young people . This is a way to lean skills, create jobs and awareness of the potential of local, circular green economies. **Mphaṭhe** stressed that the young people who learn with her organic hub linked with Uni Venda often move away and so there is a constant need to keep training and trying to make the local hubs self-sustaining. **Janet** commented that perhaps this could also be regarded as part of the success of Dzomo Ḳa Mupo as people are empowered and new people sustain the movement. Perhaps those who are empowered can be encouraged to continue to volunteer.

### 3.2.The Structured Democratic Dialogue on multispecies relationships

The SDD approach entails engagement based on generating ideas in response to an agreed triggering question, grouping ideas into clusters, ranking, voting on the most important ideas and considering which ideas are vital to enable achieving specific outcomes. On the 11<sup>th</sup> March we met to discursively discuss maps of ideas generated in a structured democratic dialogue comprising 52 members. From 36 ideas clusters were formed and then these form three layers of ideas on which we reflected and voted. The top 5 ideas were discussed and we voted, in order to generate action maps on the ideas which people selected through voting. This process will be discussed in detail by Yiannis and Hallside et al (2024). Here we discuss some of the ideas which resonated. The ideas are edited for clarity and discussed in the metalogue which is asynchronous and follows our Zoom conversations :

- **Set up multispecies hubs**  
Idea #1: Set up and scale up a community of practice to inspire setting up, monitoring and documenting hubs that support multi-species relationships to improve democracy and governance
- **Local community and institutional engagement through listening and action**  
Idea #2: To inspire and manage the local engagement through working with students, community, NGOs and GOs where possible
- **Biodiversity training ( forests, rivers, wetlands & soil)**  
Idea #26: Promote Multiple Intelligences in Education by connecting learning with nature. Protect biodiversity in all shared living spaces ( rural, urban, periurban) through action & engagement
- Idea #4: To inspire respect for indigenous knowledge and to do local engagement through relevant organisations ( for example PGSA, Dzomo La Mupo, Wild Law Institute and Earth Rise, UnPad, UniVen, UNISA multispecies hub, Daveyton<sup>xxii</sup>, Adelaide Uni)
- **Prevention of brutality against the voiceless**  
Idea #12: To create awareness on multi-species relationships and fight against brutality.
- **Multispecies relationships : fostering social engagement, democracy and governance of shared habitats through action learning hubs**

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### 4. Discussion on the most feasible ideas to date

**Janet :** The survey which some of us filled in was useful to focus our thinking on the significance and feasibility of our ideas. From our conversations clearly setting up a network and addressing compost and recycling is the most feasible (doable) and impactful, provided the agroecological planting occurs in unison. Protecting the water supply in Daveyton wet lands is another 'doable' task which will need education and getting a broad section of the community (including University, schools, Council, business and NGOs) on side.

The devastating hail storm in Daveyton would have been mitigated if there had been more trees to protect the area. On March 24th the Daveyton Hub members met to highlight the need for more trees in the area. The hail storms last week led to damage as a result of the lack of trees. We discussed the need to think about steps to bring about change. Organic compost and recycling would be a good first step along with planting trees. The type and location of bio digestors for biogas needs careful thought.

Human, animal and plant waste can be a source of energy, but the management of risks needs to be worked through carefully. It would be preferable to focus on compost and recycling first. Also the focus on multispecies hubs needs to understand that animal safety is a priority and that free range farming in line with PGS mission is followed. Cattle lots are not supported according to ecologists who understand that our carbon footprint cannot support the growth of the meat industry, despite Alan Savory's ideas about fertilising the soil through appropriate free range pastures. Not all the ideas are equally doable. Through post SDD engagement we agreed recycling could be linked to the creation of arts and crafts. One such art and craft could be toys and puppets sold in weekly markets along with produce and educational events with PGS. The construction of biodigesters comes with risks<sup>1</sup> and so the energy of the group could be focused on recycling, re-using and educating the local community on how to make compost, grow vegetables and (hopefully) set up a circular green economy locally through for example supplying lunches to schools, university and council. A license would need to be obtained. We discussed holding eco mapping with Mphaṭhe and then soft systems mapping with Janet. The next step could be connecting with sectors across the university and municipality to support a workshop<sup>2</sup>. Together we can map an area of concern drawing on the eco mapping and discuss the methodology and the lenses needed to set up a multispecies hub linked with Dzomo La Mupo, Voice of the Earth, PGSA, Unisa and Uni Venda plus Uni of Adelaide and ISSS. The process will involve listening to the community comprising local residents plus the UNISA staff and our COP. Given our early discussion some of the emergent themes include

#### *We agreed to work on water security and prevention of pollution*

Pat and her team explained how they are testing the water quality in the wet lands region of Daveyton and educating the community not to use it as a dumping ground for rubbish. Discarded animals and dumped corpses appear in the wet lands area and the group stressed the need for laws to protect animals and to raise awareness. Homeless people and children are also an issue in Daveyton UNISA members are now supported by an NGO and attend training workshops to learn how to measure water purity. The information will enable them to monitor, lobby and work on ways to improve water quality.

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<sup>1</sup> If not properly maintained compost stations and biodigestors can lead to biohazards.

<sup>2</sup> Training with Dzomo la Mupo and PGSA and Sakhile plus the community to:

- make compost and possibly biogas if carefully managed
- tree planting and seed preservation
- coverings and fence protection for nurseries and plants

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In Indonesia the hubs around Tarumajaya supported by Universitas Padjadjaran and Depok area supported by the University of Indonesia agreed to focus on water quality.

### 5. Earthrise : Transformative education

This section is written after attending the *Human Rights Earthrise Day* on 21st of March , listening and reflecting on the online event which some of the members of the community of practice attended on line and in which Mphaheleni Makaulule helped to facilitate . The ceremony was opened by Gogo Rutendo Ngara who grounded us and introduced the custodians from Australia, the Amazon, Kenya , Venda , the Cape Khoisan and India. The shared wisdom focused on spirituality and the need to avoid greed associated with capitalism.

**Rutendo Ngara:** We dance with the wind, we exhale ...we call on the spirit of nations , we dance through the fire and exhale.... We follow an ancient track.

The Khoisan leader drew on his masculine spirit knowledge, whilst the leader from Rajasthan drew on the divine feminine and the Jaine tradition of treading gently on the earth. He explained that he had been ‘educated ‘ at Harvard , but his deep learning comes from the goddesses of wisdom and empowerment. His mission is to “end the great fragmentation... between the spiritual and the practical ”and the need to “redefine education ....” He asked the rhetorical question:

“What is wealth? A sense of abundance and generosity?” He then reflected that a sense of wellbeing flows from “Kindness and connection.... We need to give back , not extract ...”He then concluded that we need to learn to “compost and re-generate.”

His vision dovetails with the mission outlined in ‘*Transformative Education*’ ( McIntyre-Mills and Corcoran-Nantes, 2022) . He too advocated the setting up of ecoversities . Setting up multispecies hubs is a way to transform education through communities of practice spanning multiple sites that form clusters of energetic outreach as advocated in ‘ *Affirmative Intervention to support Multiple Species...*’ (McIntyre-Mills, 2024, forthcoming). His advocacy for re-imagination is also resonant with our vision to work in ways that support nature. He also advocated a sense of ceremony and playfulness as a way to keep people engaged.

The young custodian from Kenya advocated holding a grass in her hand to remind herself that she was speaking for nature.

The Amazonian leader stressed that if we lose our sacred sites we will lose ourselves and that greed is threatening our existence. Elsewhere we have stressed that forest protection and regeneration is vital as without the lungs of the planet we cannot survive. These forests are threatened by those who advocate for pasture for cattle to maximise the unsustainable beef trade at the expense of the forests The argument for veganism or vegetarianism can be made in terms of the right to a life worth living for all species( Nussbaum 2006) who need to share a common habitat. Heavy carbon footprints from cattle farming whether it is free range or in cruel containerist food lots is unsustainable . One thing is clear and that is that Alan Savory’s ideas appeal greatly to the meat industry. It can be argued that feedlots are indeed harmful for the health of animals (including human animals) (see Ketcham, 2017). Often the feedlots also rely on antibiotics to ‘enhance’ the health of animals.

Credo Mutwa’s daughter led the dancing to end the ceremony whilst Mphaheleni Makaulule led the singing.

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i This paper needs to be read along with the companion papers presented at the conference in the SIG ‘Balancing Individualism and Collectivism’. One is an overview of our community of practice and several joint papers are presented by us.

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- xxi <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/south-africa/2019-06-26-pharmaceuticals-and-industrial-chemicals-found-in-fish-caught-off-cape-towns-coast/>
- xxii Step 1 : as a Community of practice ( COP) we discussed holding 1. eco mapping and then 2 soft systems mapping with Mphathe and then with Janet
- Step 2 : connecting with sectors across the university and municipality to support a workshop and habitat going forward. I will map an area of concern drawing on the eco mapping , discuss the methodology and the lenses needed to set up a multispecies hub linked with Dzomo la Mupo, Voice of the Earth, PGSA, Unisa and Uni Venda plus Uni of Adelaide and ISSS
- Step 3. We will listen to the community comprising local residents plus the UNISA staff and our COP. Given our early discussion some of the emergent themes include
- Training with Dzomo la Mupo and PGSA and Sakhile plus the community to:
- make compost and biogas
  - tree planting and seed preservation

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- coverings and fence protection for nurseries and plants
- water security and prevention of pollution with UNISA and our broader network