

How to achieve a wellbeing economy from macro to micro¹

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ABSTRACT

More than 50 years after the pathbreaking publication of the first report on the Club of Rome's "Limits to growth", the organization published "Earth4all". This new report suggests not only complying with the limits set by the Paris Agreement to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions and other environmental goals, but also and foremost to achieve a "wellbeing economy" all over the world. To attain this, it is crucial to intertwine macro, meso, micro and individual levels of action in policy, business and personal fields. By means of this contribution, I will discuss some framework conditions for more wellbeing for everyone: How the macro, meso, micro and individual level correlate (and which indicators help us picture this) and which challenges and opportunities derive from that (e.g., planetary boundaries set by nature). Therefore, this article brings together theoretical insights and practical learnings, and drawing on those, proposes elements which are applicable to various domains at every level.

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1. Background

Despite the multiple crises in the environment, society and the economy that we are facing today, current studies also show ways out that nurture the hope of escaping them. One of those studies is the "Earth4All" report (Dixson-Declève et al., 2022), which was published by the Club of Rome 50 years after its pathbreaking first report on the "Limits to growth" (Meadows et al, 1972). It basically requires a new social contract based on a systemic view of the world in which five comprehensive turnarounds are described that would enable a giant leap towards sustainability. In such a view, wellbeing serves as an ultimate aim that is strived for in order not to exceed the planet's limits and at the same time to fulfill fundamental social conditions that make such a transformation possible in the first place. This can be described as a threefold target system of ecological, distributive and economic targets as well as wellbeing goals in which the economy can develop without overstressing planetary and social systems and requires a monitoring system at the micro, meso and macroeconomic levels, which are closely intertwined.

When we define wellbeing as a key factor in dealing with the "limits to growth," it needs to be integrated at every level (micro, meso, macro or individual/collective) and requires a framework that allows the intertwinement of every level (in alignment with a systemic worldview). For this, we must define what wellbeing means to us, formulate appropriate goals in this context and identify indicators which qualify to measure and monitor the progress.

1.1 An earth for everyone: dealing with the limits to growth

Climate change is unavoidable, and has turned into a veritable crisis, which comes on top of the recent pandemic, wars, economic stagnation and inflation. How can we best deal with these upheavals that seemed impossible just a few years ago? Shall we continue as before with a policy of small steps?

In their report (Dixson-Declève et al., 2022), the Club of Rome describes the efforts made to date in the field of sustainability as "too little too late." This scenario shows that these efforts do not bode well, neither for the climate and the environment, nor for society and the economy. It is therefore predicted that global warming will continue, the quality of life will decline despite economic growth, social tensions within society and between regions of the world will continue to increase and the planet will become even more unsafe as a result.

However, the Club of Rome also outlines a way out of this downward spiral: taking the upheavals seriously and actively working on a transformation that the Club describes as a "giant leap," which the report describes as "possible and necessary." To achieve that, five turnarounds in the fields of energy, food, poverty, inequality and "full gender equality in terms of representation, rights, resources and power in law and employment" are crucial. This means nothing more and nothing less than "updating our economic system with the aim of redefining what is really important for economic strategies" (Dixson-Declève et al., 2022). The Club of Rome further writes in the executive summary of that report:

"If we act now, with the largest effort and investment in this decade, then within a single generation we can achieve many of the sustainable development goals, and we can build societies that respect planetary boundaries." (p. 2)

Such a future will be built on the basis of a new social contract between a government and its citizens to upgrade the economic system. In the report, the following is described as an overarching goal in this context:

"Choose wellbeing economies, adopt new economic indicators that deliver better outcomes for people and planet and place them at the centre of policymaking." (p. 12)

This requires action at every level: the individual as well as in business and policies.

The five aforementioned turnarounds refer to poverty, inequality, empowerment, food and energy, and their development is based on:

- forward thinking - long-term and intergenerational
- reorganized markets and a new global financial system
- new ways of thinking about property rights so that everyone benefits from the global commons such as the climate system and biodiversity
- circular economy and regeneration.

This can be understood as a contemporary version of the notion of sustainability.

1.2 A systemic world view

Contributions from individual people and companies (micro level) will only lead to major changes if government policy at the national or supranational macro levels sets appropriate framework conditions. On the other hand, politicians will only take action if they can rely on acceptance from the micro level and companies will only provide sustainable solutions if they expect sufficient appreciation on the market.

Between the micro and macro levels, there are various meso levels, such as regions or sectors or even socially more or less strongly organized groups or communities, such as trade unions, citizens' initiatives or "bubbles" linked by social media, which act as a hinge between the two levels.

Therefore, it is important for decision makers at every level (local, regional, national and multilateral governments and organizations) as well as businesses and individuals to understand their systemic contributions to current and potential problems and hence to the achievement of comprehensive goals for the future. Or in other words: it is crucial to intertwine macro, meso, micro and individual levels of action in policy, business and personal fields and find suitable ways to measure and monitor the progress.

Viewing the world as a whole systemically (and understanding it with corresponding computer models) has always been one of the main concerns of the Club of Rome. In this article, I want to add a further system aspect to this: the interweaving of the macro level with underlying levels down to the individual and thus the subjective. This brings the notion of wellbeing into focus.

1.3 The doughnut as a sustainability framework at different levels

Empirically, rates of economic growth are declining worldwide in the long term. At the same time, crises are lasting longer and longer. Yet, the economic system should be

fit to enable a high quality of life while respecting planetary boundaries and minimum social conditions in a sustainable way regardless of whether the economy grows in monetary terms or not. Therefore, governments, businesses and individuals need to set new goals.

The British economist Kate Raworth (2012, 2017) proposed the image of a "doughnut" to illustrate what the economy and society are ultimately about: the simultaneous observance of planetary boundaries and minimum social conditions for a good life for everyone - now and in the future. The economy and society would then be able to develop freely within those guidelines. The graphical representation as a doughnut is a playfully serious approach to framing this challenge, and it serves as a compass for human progress in this century.

The ecological ceiling consists of nine planetary boundaries, as set out in publications in journals such as *Science* and *Nature* (Rockström, 2009, Steffen, 2015, Richardson, 2023), beyond which lie unacceptable environmental degradation and potential tipping points in Earth systems. On the other hand, Raworth derived 12 dimensions of the social foundation from internationally agreed minimum social standards as set out by the world's governments in the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. Between the social and planetary boundaries lies an ecologically safe and socially just space in which humanity can thrive.

From this follows that the economic system makes a high quality of life possible while respecting planetary boundaries and minimum social conditions in a sustainable way, regardless of whether the economy grows in monetary terms or not. Wellbeing, on the other hand, will have to be decoupled from economic growth in order to allow a flourishing society and at the same time meet nature's needs to be able to support our human needs (i.e. to provide ecosystem services).

If we now take a systemic view of the updated version of sustainability in the sense of an Earth for everyone ("Earth4All"), the wellbeing of people becomes the guiding concept both at an individual (micro) and at higher levels (meso and macro), and systemic analysis shows us how improvements towards wellbeing at one level can influence the other levels.

1.4 The role of monitoring

The doughnut can be used to both inform and evaluate policies on the macro level but also the management of businesses as well as individual choices. Respecting planetary boundaries requires a reduction of resource consumption, especially but not only of fossil fuels, to 10-20% of today's level in a few decades (see IPCC 2023 and United Nations Environment Programme 2024 for details) to achieve the macro goals of climate neutrality and biodiversity loss reduction. This requirement concerns each actor in society at the micro level such as individuals of companies.

Individuals, companies, organizations and governments set goals, make plans and monitor their compliance. Indicators for monitoring need to refer to the goals set. If not, implicitly used indicators define goals. Often, one-dimensional indicators are used, for instance monetary values such as individual income, a company's profit, regional or gross domestic product (GDP), which measure production or income at a regional or national level.

The concept of measuring progress in terms of GDP was developed about 80 years ago in close coordination with corresponding scientific findings (of Keynesianism as a response to the prevailing neoclassicism) and political programs (of deficit spending - after the Great Depression) (Lepenies 2013, Schmelzer 2016). At the micro level, this refers to income or profit. The great achievement of national accounting is that individual incomes and business profits can be summed up to regional, national and global incomes in terms of GDP.

The importance of GDP hints at economic growth as the implicit goal. Indicators for income do not say much, though, about whether or how this affects wellbeing, as long as the purchasing power behind it is not taken into account. The same applies to other indicators such as poverty risk or inequality parameters: they do not directly say anything about target values (where do we want to go) or how they can be achieved (Becker 2017, Koch 2022).

For a transformation towards a more sustainable and distributive society, the measurement of progress beyond the financial (income, GDP) needs to be broader (Binswanger, 2006; R. A. Easterlin, 1974). The global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN's 2030 Agenda are scientifically (e.g., Alliance for Sustainable Universities in Austria, 2021) and politically (e.g., United Nations, 2015) justified.

The development of indicators requires a strict metric to determine whether I myself, whether a company, a region or a country is moving towards sustainability or not. For this we need a method that is applicable to all regions, companies, organizations and countries so that it is possible to describe the respective contribution of the individual, the company or a country to the (non-)achievement of the overall goals, in the same way as GDP can be understood as an aggregation of the income of people, companies, sectors or regions.

1.5 Wellbeing as an ultimate aim

Every individual has his or her personal goals and every company has genuine corporate goals, which are not exhausted in the maximization of income. It starts with dreams and wishes for the future to achieve personal wellbeing or the company's purpose, which relates to a concrete demand on the part of its customers. Sustainability goals must be integrated with those aspirations before integrating individual and company goals at higher societal levels.

When it comes to concrete issues, such as the construction of a motorway under a nature reserve or the question of how to deal with a pandemic, deep social divides become apparent - not only through society, but right through families, companies, organizations and communities. The baby-boomer generation, now aged around 65, is increasingly being asked by young people: what have you actually done to prevent the ecological, social and economic crises?

The Covid-19 pandemic has also worsened the mental health of many people around the world. There can and will only be an "improvement of the world" in terms of ecological, social and economic sustainability if each individual has the feeling and

awareness that they are improving their own situation, and at the same time get acceptance from the community. This acceptance is in the end necessary because without acceptance within a community, people are not willing to entertain suggestions that should lead to improvements. Therefore, the approaches presented below are oriented towards the goal of a "good" life (or wellbeing) in the sense of an objective and subjective quality of life, as advocated politically by the "Wellbeing Economy Alliance" for example.

The international Wellbeing Economy Alliance defines a "Wellbeing Economy" (WE) as an economy

„designed to serve people and the planet, not the other way around. Rather than treating economic growth as an end in and of itself and pursuing it at all costs, a Wellbeing Economy puts our human and planetary needs at the centre of its activities, ensuring that these needs are all equally met, by default“

(Wellbeing Economy Alliance, 2024, para. 1)

This can be traced back to the model of fundamental basic needs by Manfred Max-Neef (1990). Last but not least, in addition to the issues addressed in the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), political participation is also considered to play an essential role for a "good life" (see also Hare (2017) on the importance of prosociality ("kindness"), Isham et al. (2022) on the issue of material values and Hauser et al (2017) on the contribution of global and local action to individual wellbeing).

2. How to develop and implement the necessary transition in a participatory way?

How can we (as people, companies, municipalities, regions or states) tackle those challenges? Based on earlier work by the Austrian Chapter of the Club of Rome, the Alliance for Sustainable Universities in Austria, the University of Applied Arts Vienna and the University of Salzburg, we have been working in several projects on schemes to monitor sustainable development derived from goals and involving citizens and stakeholders, in which we applied participatory, i.e., transdisciplinary approaches, which support citizens and/or stakeholders in developing pathways into a positive future in line with their own wellbeing as well as with planetary and societal conditions.

The following part of this article describes the concept developed in those projects along with first experiences at the micro, meso and macro levels. They are all based on participatory workshops in which we accompany citizens and stakeholders to

- understand the system at stake
- formulate collective visions and goals based on individual needs, wants and wishes
- derive indicators from the very goals of the participant that lead the way
- into developing pathways to achieve the goals together.

The participants are guided and supported to elaborate measurable goals in a co-creative way, the implementation of which can then be communicated. Progress can be documented, for example, in sustainability reports and the program adapted

systematically. This is how a transformation towards more wellbeing in times of multiple crises can succeed.

In such a way, individuals, businesses, regions and countries (in the end: all of us on Earth as a global community) can achieve a common system understanding and problem identification to reach their goals in terms of synergies and trade-offs as well as problems and conflict potentials that may arise.

2.1 Understanding the system at stake

Firstly, we help the participants to familiarize themselves with possible goals in a systemic view, i.e., understanding possible synergies and trade-offs as well as balancing and reinforcing loops. The result is an imagined systemic picture of the future that also shows how the players (can) work together, but also to develop an understanding of which goals are achievable and need not remain mere wishful thinking. This creates a common language, a common understanding of the dynamics that need to be considered.

The aforementioned ecological and social limits are based on our current scientific understanding and should not be crossed for defined bandwidths if we want to be able to be in charge of our future. Crossing these limits could trigger ecological and social tipping points that would bring us into an unsafe operating space (Steffen, 2015, O'Neill, 2018), and in order to get to action we must also develop a shared understanding of them. The main question to be asked is: How do those goals relate to one's own wellbeing and the wellbeing of other parts of the system (human and non-human)?

2.2 Formulating collective goals based on individual needs, wants and wishes

Individual and collective goals and visions are instrumental for real change. As the second step, we therefore develop concrete, personal goals for ourselves and then, in a group process, common goals for the organization, the company, the region, the country - always linked to the question: How can I know whether we are getting closer to the goal? For example: Which kind of poverty do we seek to reduce? How do we reduce global warming, protect ecosystems or contribute to world peace?

In order for all people on Earth to be able to live well in the future, it is necessary to set goals at all three levels, the individual, national and global, which describe qualitatively and quantitatively what kind of future they envision. When it comes to ideas about the future, people have images in their minds that they formulate as stories of how the world should become for them. Breithaupt (2022) states that "[n]arratives make the offer of an end to the resolution of a crisis" (p. 187).

Images are central to cooperation and therefore to a future-oriented, creative policy, especially for the problems of the environment (Ötsch & Horaczek 2021). Ötsch and Horaczek speak of the "imaginative person" (homo imaginens) who thinks that the world can be shaped in contrast to "externally orientated people" (as we find this e.g. in standard economics).

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Therefore, we invite them to develop positive images of the future at all levels (from the individual to the collective and ultimately for the world as a whole). Those images can then be developed as communicable stories, which allows participants to relate them to each other.

In addition to scientific methods, artistic strategies and communication formats specifically adapted to the context are used. This way participants can open their minds from the confinement of problems and focus on what is really important to them and combine fact-based rational knowledge with subjective perceptions in order to develop a holistic understanding of which goals are achievable and need not remain mere wishful thinking. Methodologically, artistic actions and media can be used together with intellectual ones (e.g., systemic analyses) in order to look beyond the familiar.

The results of that step are qualitative narratives and collages, or even songs in which the goals are described in the form of positive images of the future. The system understanding of the current situation needs to be confronted with the system understanding of the future vision. From that, transition pathways and leverage points (Meadows, 1997 and 2008) can be identified in terms of stories for change, focusing on possible actions on how to choose, to start, to continue, to alter and to stop on a pathway, and asking questions on how to recognize if one is on the right pathway, for interpreting signs if one is to change or leave the pathway will help to pinpoint the most effective places to intervene so that the future vision may be achieved.

That results in qualitatively and quantitatively formulated statements in which they describe their goals in the form of positive images or stories of the future. In this way, the participants formulate and achieve their goals as a team with everyone involved, without this being at the expense of others.

2.3 Deriving indicators from people's very goals

But how do we measure whether we are moving towards the agreed targets or away from them? Indicators that are important to people should be derived from their goals and not vice versa. Indicators derived in this way must be applicable at different levels (similar to the methodology of the carbon footprint) and make it possible to describe the respective contribution of the individual, a company, an organization or a country to the (non-)achievement of the goals (just as GDP can be understood as an aggregation of the incomes of people, companies, sectors or regions).

This measurement in the three dimensions of sustainability (ecological, economic, social) is combined with the assessment of the personal subjective wellbeing of all those involved, i.e., ourselves and all those affected by our actions.

To this end, a conceptual framework was created within the UniNEtZ project (Hinterberger & Spittler, 2021) based on Kate Raworth's (2012) concept of "doughnut economics" and including personal wellbeing in a comprehensive and at the same time limited set of indicators. It describes a society and economy that make a good life possible for everyone within the planetary boundaries set by nature but also within social boundaries.

The task is now to develop a comprehensive indicator system in the sense of a wellbeing index that describes in a directionally reliable and easily understandable way whether and to what extent individual actors, concrete developments and politicians (as well as entire countries and regions) contribute to the achievement of the global goals.

It is important that the impacts of human activities within the existing environmental boundaries (planetary boundaries, Steffen et al. 2015) contribute to the achievement of social goals and thus ensure human wellbeing. Importantly, the micro-level indicators can be related to the macro level to determine how a person, household, company, product, or service contributes to goal achievement at the macro (global, regional) level.

This is related to discourses on the topic of "Beyond GDP", which has recently gained some attention again. The central idea is that GDP is not a meaningful indicator (Kubiszewski et al., 2013). Therefore, various alternatives to GDP have been developed to help move societies towards a "wellbeing economy".

Both objective conditions and subjective wellbeing are important for the assessment. A wellbeing index should therefore capture and visualize both. For the objective factors, threshold values must first be defined for social target values and ecological indicators.

As stated before, to ensure that indicators are used by people and decision makers and are therefore effective, it is necessary that indicators relate to the goals that people also have. Implementation can subsequently strengthen the self-efficacy of the participants, the organizations, regions or companies involved.

In the framework of the so-called Bellagio STAMP Principles (Shortall et al., 2015 a and 2015 b), participation was defined as an important principle for the development of assessment frameworks for sustainability, including indicators (Hardi & Zdan, 1997). This requires a process of affected citizens or relevant stakeholders (business, politics, interest groups, media, science and civil society).

Finally, that makes it possible to review the progress in the form of sustainability reports to determine the extent to which the goals have been achieved. In this way, at least ideally, communities can achieve goals as part of the larger system developing towards the goals, without individual goals being achieved at the expense of others' goals.

2.4 Achieving goals together

In a final step, all those realizations are used to create pathways and concrete steps at both the individual and collective levels in a way that macro, meso, micro and individual levels of action are intertwined, as are policy, business and personal goals.

Individuals, businesses, regions and countries (in the end, all of us on Earth as a global community) achieve a common systemic understanding and problem identification regarding reaching their goals in terms of synergies and trade-offs between these goals as well as problems and conflict potentials that may arise due to potential trade-offs between the goals. That insight is crucial for creating pathways together, which allows the participants to achieve their respective goals.

3. Some cases: a practitioners point of view

Since 2020, the Austrian Chapter of the Club of Rome together with the UniNEtZ project at the University of Applied Arts Vienna and the University of Salzburg have been working on the “Wellbeing - a good life in a world full of crises” project, which is essentially about monitoring sustainable development derived from goals and involving citizens and stakeholders. In several projects in association with the University of Natural Resources and Life Sciences, Vienna (BOKU), cooppa and Saphenus Medical Technology GmbH, we have been applying and testing several aspects of this approach with and for concerned people, organizations and regions (Hinterberger et al., 2023, Kirchner et al., 2023, Bukowski et al., 2024). Those applications have included workshops in the Austrian region of Salzkammergut with five start-up companies, students and Austrian stakeholders interested in consolidating goals related to the SDGs 1, 8, 10 and 13. It is in principle applicable to other issues and communities worldwide.

3.1 An application at the macro level

In a project called SDGVisionPath², we combined the application of “Communities of Practice (CoP)” (Wenger, 1999) for stakeholder and expert collaboration with two models specifically suited to address SDG interactions and for integrating stakeholder and expert knowledge at the Austrian national level.

The project’s theme focuses on SDG 8 (decent work and economic growth), SDG 13 (climate action) and SDGs 1/10 (no poverty/reduced inequalities). In a first workshop, the stakeholders developed a common system’s understanding of these SDGs, applying a method from systems thinking called causal loop diagrams (CLDs) (Sterman et al., 2000). In a second workshop, stakeholders jointly formulated visions and goals applying an arts-based method called speculative thinking (Dunne and Raby, 2013). In a third workshop, stakeholders applied storytelling to developed pathways that could bring us to their desired futures. In a final workshop, yet to take place at the moment of writing, stakeholders together with the research project team will try to identify a set of policy recommendations based on the findings in the previous workshops and guided by findings from the quantitative simulation model iSDG (Spittler and Kirchner, 2022; Allen et al., 2019) as well as the qualitative Inequality and Poverty Assessment Model (IPAM) (Bukowski & Kreissl, 2022).

In addition to the workshops, we used a survey to identify the usefulness of indicators suggested to measure the degree to which the goals had been achieved and asked for target values. To this end, the project team proposed indicators not only based on the objectives formulated in the SDGs but also by the stakeholders. In this way, we wanted to ensure that these indicators really measure what the stakeholders directly or indirectly involved in the transformation process are really aiming for, rather than imposing concepts developed by experts or bureaucrats.

In addition to typical SDG indicators, such as “be able to heat living space adequately” (SDG 1/10 – energy poverty), “job satisfaction” (SDG 8), “real GDP per capita” (SDG 13) and “greenhouse gas emissions” (SDG 13), stakeholders broadened this horizon by including additional indicators for goals that were important in their goals, for

² <https://sdg.visionpath.at>. The work on the research “SDGVisionPath” project (Co-creating future visions and transition pathways for the SDGs climate action, inequality and decent work and economic growth) mentioned in this chapter is funded by the Austrian “Klima-und Energiefonds” (“Climate and Energy Fund”) within the Austrian Climate Research Program ACRP (Funding number KR21KB0K00001).

example “hours spent on basic needs such as eating or sleeping and leisure activities” (work-life balance), “gender equality at work” (gender equality), “material footprint” (circular economy) and “soil sealing” (biodiversity). Furthermore, stakeholders suggested to include institutional goals and indicators for education (e.g., education for sustainable development), transparency (e.g., monitoring progress) and governance (e.g., citizen panels).

3.2. Applications at the meso level

In another project (Hinterberger et al., 2023), which consisted of four regional workshops, interested people and decision makers from the Dachstein-Salzkammergut-Totes Gebirge region developed a shared positive image of how the economy, society and nature should change in the face of the climate crisis and how they can subsequently recognize (“measure”) whether the region is moving in that direction.

For this, adaptation to climate change plays a central role thematically. What do we want to adapt to in the face of climate change and, going further/deeper: Where do we want to go? Or even more concretely: How do we (people and nature) in the region want to live with climate change? The global sustainability goals provide a globally recognized framework for this. “Adaptation to climate change” represents one of the 169 targets (i.e., sub-goals) of the UN's 2030 Agenda - more precisely, Target 13.1. The measurement of the success of “adaptation to climate change” can thus be placed in relation (synergies and trade-offs) to the other goals of the people in the region: What adaptation is needed to achieve the goals?

Together, these images of the future were developed in line with the goals that were set as a contribution to a good life for everyone, now and in the future. This resulted in communicable stories and strict metrics (ecological and social footprint) that complement each other to form a credible statement on the current progress towards a sustainable future.

More recently, we could test the feasibility of this concept with a group of students interested in the topic of affordable sustainable housing in Salzburg (Bukowski et al., 2024) using a song-writing workshop to develop goals for a “good life for all” in the sense of “leave no one behind” under the conditions of the climate crisis. The success of the corresponding implementation steps can then be evaluated in a holistic sense with the help of a set of comprehensive leading indicators.

3.3 An application at the micro level

In 2022, we supported five companies and start-ups in formulating their sustainability program, in which companies formulate 5-10 goals with key figures that are accompanied by ambitious stories and a carbon footprint. The sustainability data is then followed up with annual sustainability reports. It is important to us that indicators for monitoring sustainable development be derived from the company's specific goals.

The process comprised four modules, the sequence of which follows the path outlined above. From a footprint perspective, a common, comprehensive and systemic understanding of the challenges and one's own role in the topic of “sustainability” was

established and the challenges of one's company within the framework of the 2030 Agenda were clarified.

On this basis, personal and shared goals were formulated in the form of visions of the future and stories. The leading indicators derived from this (similar to the carbon footprint methodology) must be applicable at different levels (from individual people to the world as a whole) and make it possible to describe the respective contribution to the (non-)achievement of the goals. The targets developed were quantified: How can I know if we are getting closer to our goal?

The group provided a wealth of ideas and perspectives. For example, one of the companies was able to report on its plans for the circular economy. Scraps and offcuts from the construction of large yachts were to be used for new products in the tiny house segment.

Another participant was an innovative farm with its comprehensive range of agricultural products (cattle, pigs, bread and cider) for sale in the farm shop and its own restaurant. For them, the purchase of organic products from neighboring farms as well as a further education program for young and old were important goals linking sustainability to their own personal and company goals. We encountered a lively need for discussion on the topic of carbon footprint and its reference value: How is the carbon footprint of the entire farm divided up among the various products?

A typical office-based company had to learn how difficult it sometimes is to collect data. What is the annual electricity or heating requirement in the rented office? Where can the carbon footprint be reduced? Employee mobility and nutrition usually had a major impact. Or how do you measure the impact of a company's consulting services?

4. Conclusions

The methods described in this article show promising opportunities based on transdisciplinary research for participatory processes that support people and communities in striving for their aims in terms of wellbeing and sustainability. Wellbeing can be considered as the basis for positive visions and therefore transformation towards what is considered as a "better world" by the people involved.

The combination of arts-based workshops to develop visions, goals and systemic methodologies to judge their feasibility along with monitoring indicators derived from those goals proved to be applicable at the micro, meso and macro levels.

The initiators are looking for more experts and stakeholders, individuals and organizations such as companies or citizen initiatives to apply the tools developed and support them in the further development and implementation of the concepts developed.

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