

WeINTRO **AN INTRODUCTION TO COMMUNITY** CATALYSTS











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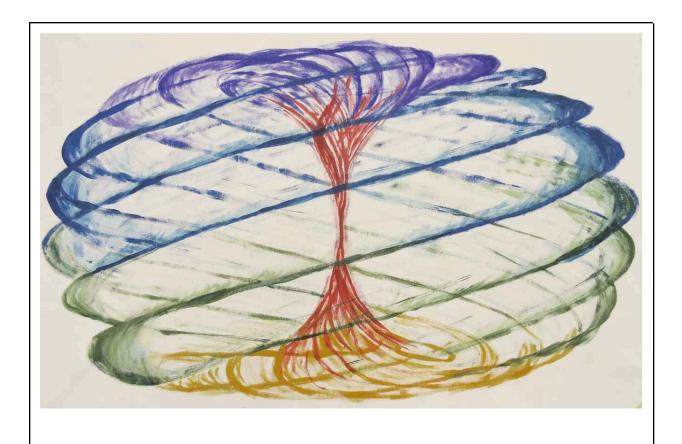
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Welntro

An Introduction to Community Catalysts

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WELCOME



You're opening a door to the **Community Catalyst universe**. Welntro is an introduction to the tools proposed in this online learning platform and the underlying work of the consortium who is co-creating it.

A **seven modules** two hour long online learning experience that takes you through a cycle of the *WeLand - Making Sense of Place -* a vortex of different phases of the learning process.

By going through the Welntro curriculum you will:

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Get introduced to the Community Catalyst universe. Purpose, Principles, Patterns and Practices and the online learning platform;

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Get familiar with the WeLand collaborative design process and related frameworks; find inspiration to try useful tools in your community;

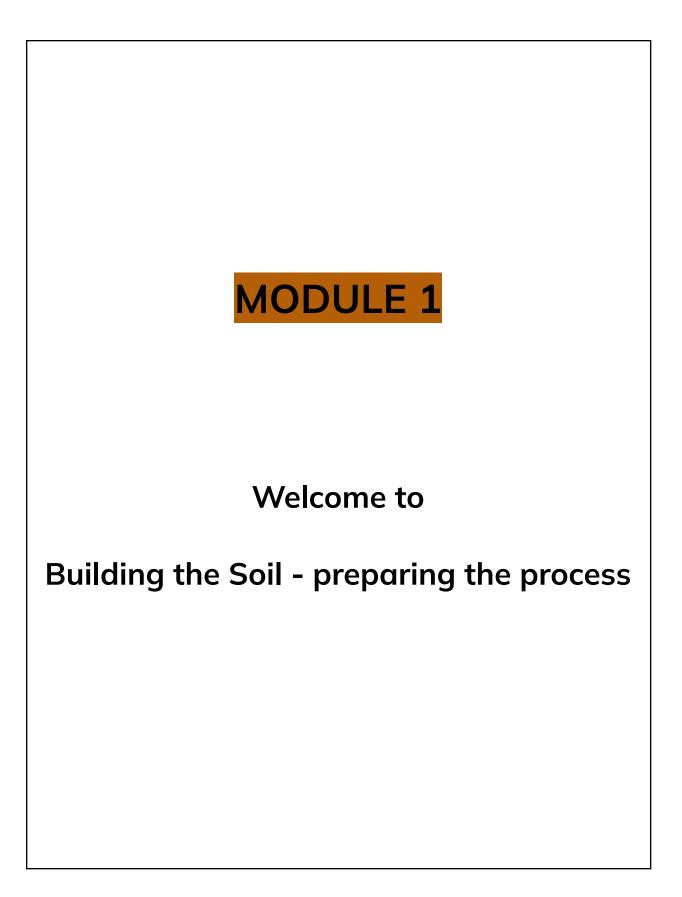
★

Discover Community Catalyst's learning opportunities. Get orientation to choose and design your learning pathway.



WeIntro Curriculum Modules

Module 1- Building the Soil - preparing the process Module 2 - Landscape Integrity - a place-based regenerative approach Module 3 - Co-Sensing - communities as sensors of the wider metabolism Module 4 - Identity Naming - each community is unique Module 5 - Co-Design - collaboration for meaningful change Module 6 - Becoming - regeneration from within Module 7 - Back to the Soil - every end is a beginning



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Building the soil is the first preparatory phase, entering the WeLand-Making Sense of Place vortex. This curriculum will guide you through its foundations, the purpose of this platform and the WeLand -Making Sense of Place as a collaborative design process.

This phase invites you to choose the most appropriate tools to build a common ground for collaborating towards catalysing change in your particular context and prepare the soil for a healthy, agile, and inclusive process.



Get ready to enter the WeLand vortex and its phases!

Thank you for entering this learning space.

Make sure you are in a comfortable place with everything you might need to enjoy the journey.

Welntro Curriculum

How does it Work?

• You will now enter the **vortex of the Welntro curriculum** - each module corresponds to a WeLand phase - 7 phases, 7 modules.

• It will take you approx. 5/7 minutes to go through the **lessons** in each **module**, including definitions of terms that are relevant to understand the **basics of the overall Community Catalyst universe**.

• You will then be invited to watch a **video** in each module to better understand what sustains the WeLand phase you are in.

• At the end of the modules, you will be invited to take some time to integrate what you just learned and answer some **questions for reflection**.

• Create a free account to save you advancements, write private notes and access many other functions.

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Community Catalysts

what is it?

It started as a <u>European partnership</u> of activists, facilitators and researchers who got involved in a series of funded projects all aiming to co-create tools for **regenerative social change** at local and bioregional level.

Through this online learning **platform** we aim to share useful tools and offer learning opportunities that may accelerate processes of change that are rooted in specific places, local communities and bioregions.

If you are here, you are probably a Catalyst already or are interested in becoming one. This means you are already part of the change!

This curriculum introduces the overall Community Catalysts universe so you can become familiar with the proposed frameworks and processes. It is also useful for you to understand the *WeLand* phases and navigate this platform for future use of all the available resources.



The Community Catalysts Online Learning Platform

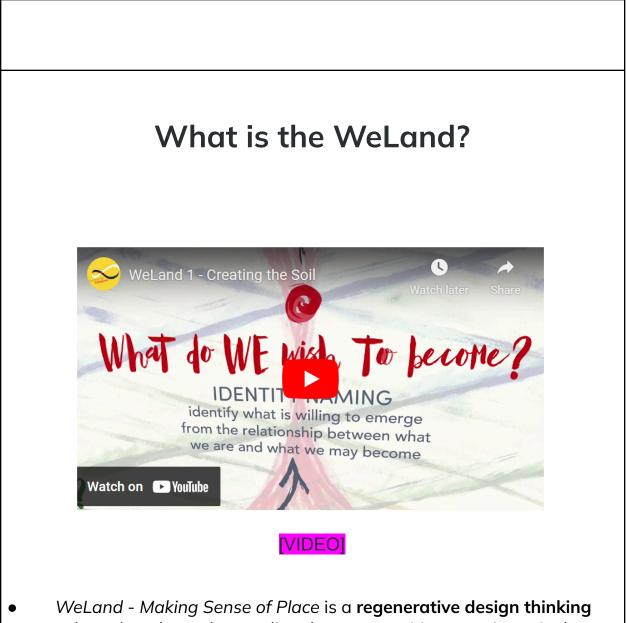
• In the CC platform you can find many **tools for self and collective learning** processes resulting from a series of CC Erasmus plus projects: Community Catalysts for Regenerative Development, for Civic Engagement and Community Resilience; and for Transformative Economies.

• You can find guidelines, toolkits, and curricula and also become part of a **Community of Practice** of engaged catalysts with a common language, either locally or online.

• All materials are open source and the toolkits can be used online or printed for offline use.

• You can also build your own Toolbox with selected practices appropriate to your context and current conditions.

• You can also add your own practices on blank cards in any phase.



• WeLand - Making Sense of Place is a regenerative design thinking process based on the understanding that communities grow integrity by making sense of place, by creating a sense of belonging. It aims to cultivate awareness of natural patterns and act on that awareness through a holistic engagement that listens deeply to the voices of human and other-than-human actors in the landscape.

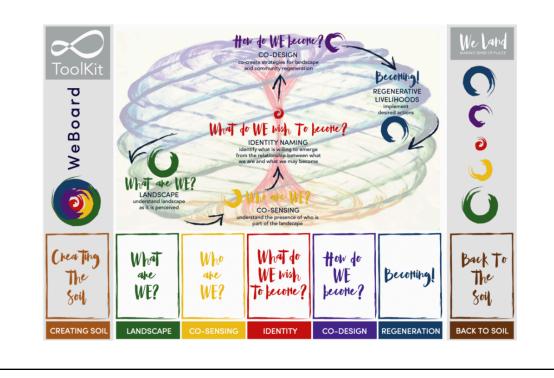
• It is a **collaborative design process** that engages Community Catalysts in co-creating place-based strategies for regenerative livelihoods presented as **a board game** with different phases and decks of practice cards to choose from, according to who, where and why it's being used. • It is a pattern language journey that allows communities to collaborate. (A **pattern language** is an organised and coherent set of patterns, each of which describes a problem and the core of a solution that can be used in many ways within a specific field of expertise. The term was coined by architect Christopher Alexander and popularised by his 1977 book <u>A Pattern Language</u>).

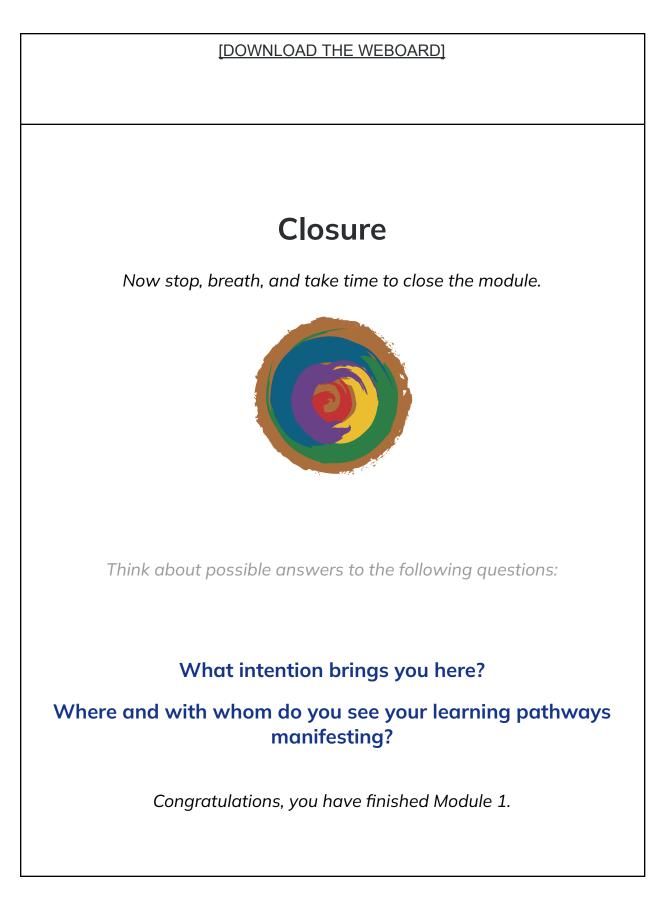
• *WeLand* is based on a **whole systems approach**, considering the complexity of our existence within a wider whole to create an impact that responds to the complex systemic challenges of our times.

• It is a process that allows us to test several selected regenerative **frameworks** - you can learn more about each in the Learning section of the platform.

• It enhances effective communication, facilitation, alignment and decision making between changemakers within a community, enabling them to shape spaces into places by working together on propelling meaningful social change and community resilience.

Track the movement of this curriculum and activate future design processes by having the WeBoard.





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Welcome to

Landscape Integrity - a place-based regenerative approach

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In this module you will deepen the relevance of landscape, the ecosystem, and the biosphere.

This is when you enter the vortex, in a slow wide circular movement, deepening the contact with the landscape, ecosystem and biosphere that holds you and this process.



Where are you right now?

Before you begin, take a moment to connect and feel your surroundings and all its forms of life. What do you see, hear, smell, feel, sense?

Allow yourself some time to connect to the place where you are right now.

Be present.

Why is a place based approach important?



[VIDEO WeLand 2]

• Currently, globalisation has imposed its worldview on **human development** globally which is totally degenerative and disconnected from place.

• A **place-based approach** for catalysing communities is about understanding issues, interconnections and relationships specific to a place in order to coordinate collective action to accelerate desirable change. It engages people in taking decisions and actions that affect them. This creates a deeper sense of **purpose** and **belonging**, which strengthens relationships and community resilience.

• In a **regenerative approach**, human social consciousness recognises itself as nature and acts towards developing a system that is just as similar and aligned to nature as it can be.

• Community Catalysts works **glocally** - it connects people and

communities through an online platform to share resources and learnings and it also encourages people to collectively navigate challenges and opportunities that are locally meaningful and relevant to manifest a new paradigm that is place-based, regenerative, resilient and transformative.



Image 01: Mother Nature Knitting (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

Syntagma - an emerging new paradigm

• In a globalising world, Community Catalysts emerge to contribute to the shift towards a **new paradigm**, a refreshed vision of the world that moves from and in a different direction than the globalisation process.

• This understanding of the whole is embodied in the **traditional knowledge of Indigenous people** and more recently **western philosophers** have been speaking and writing about this way of knowing.

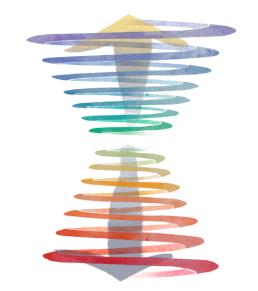


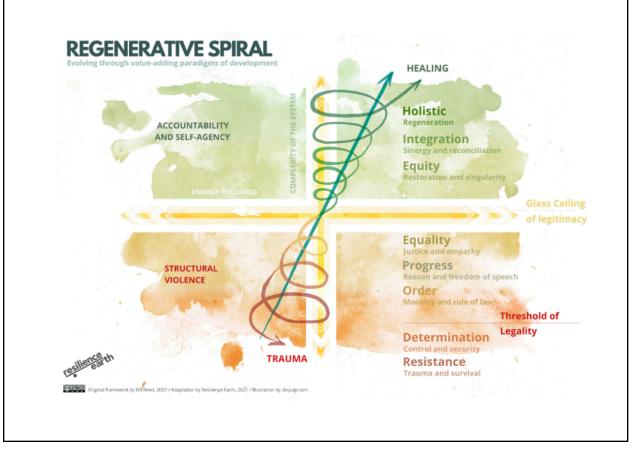
Image 02: Upward Spiral (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

• The emerging regenerative paradigm - or **syntagma** - has been described in many ways: from separateness to oneness, non-duality, intercultural dialogue, presence in the living systems or other expressions that go from a fragmented world to a systemic perspective.

The Regenerative Spiral

• The framework was adapted by CC partner Resilience.Earth and Originally developed by Doug Reeler (2007), whose pioneering work on regenerative development has since inspired a wave of "**beyond sustainability**" regenerative systems practitioners.

• It means "regenerative" thinking, the understanding that the communities we work with are mostly working from "degenerative" thinking, embodying systems that are hurting and harming other humans and the whole planet. By **regenerative systems**, we refer to communities and ecosystems that are more **complex** and that are able to **add value/energy to their systems**, i.e. more biodiversity, more interrelationships, etc. By degenerative systems, we refer to communities and ecosystems that are becoming less complex, impoverished over time and instead of adding value and energy to their systems, they deplete them, i.e. extractive economies, oppressive governance structures.



• Community Catalysts are based on a regenerative perspective. Learning programs aim to be a guide for each individual, group, organisation, municipality, community to **develop their own syntagma** and theories of change, so that they can catalyse change at the community level.

Do you want to learn more about the Regenerative Spiral framework?

<u>Watch this video</u>



SDGs as common language for transcultural dialogue

• The 17 <u>Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the United Nations</u> for 2030 and the regular progress tracking of their 169 targets represent the currently dominant **international "language"** for having conversations on desirable futures and for coordinating respective action **across scales**, from local, to national to international. The SDGs provide a multidimensional framing that acknowledges the interconnectedness of different goals.

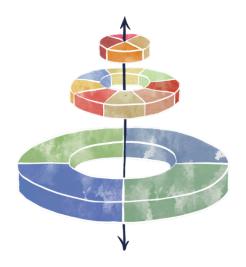
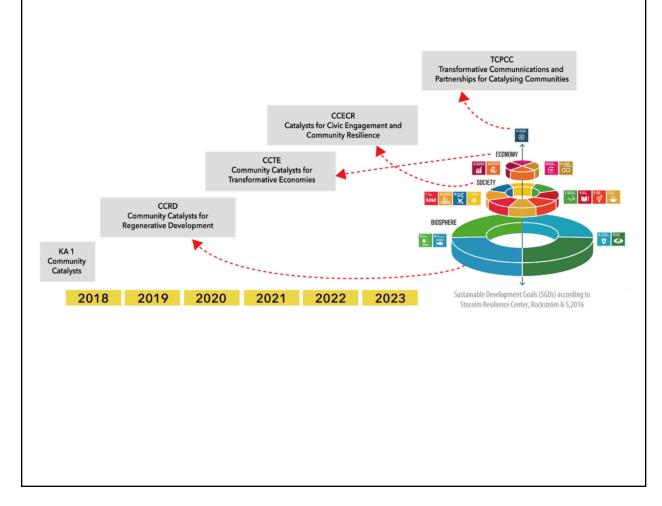


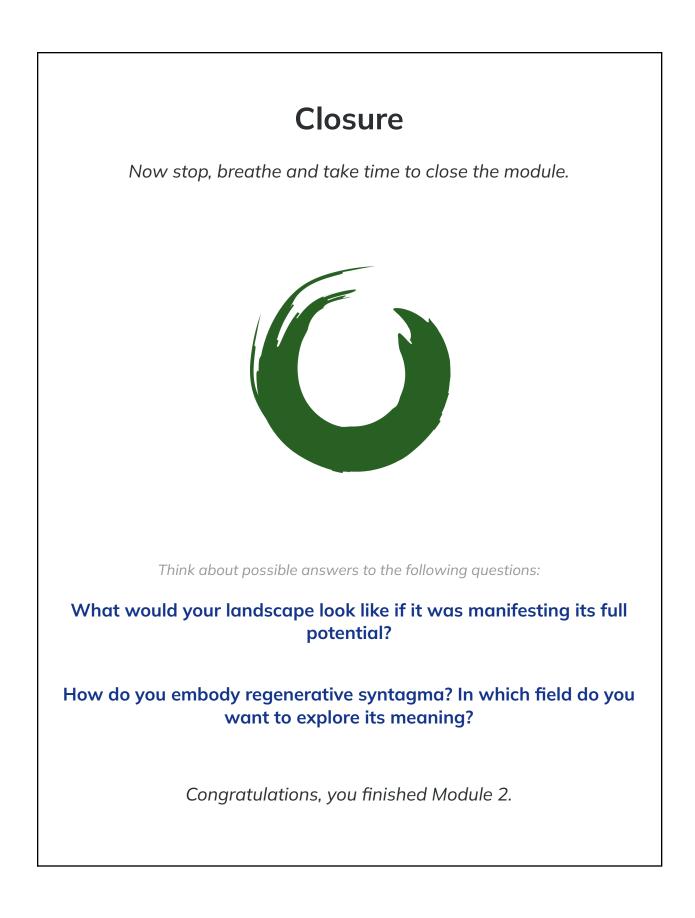
Image 03: Wedding Cake of the United Nations' SDGs (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

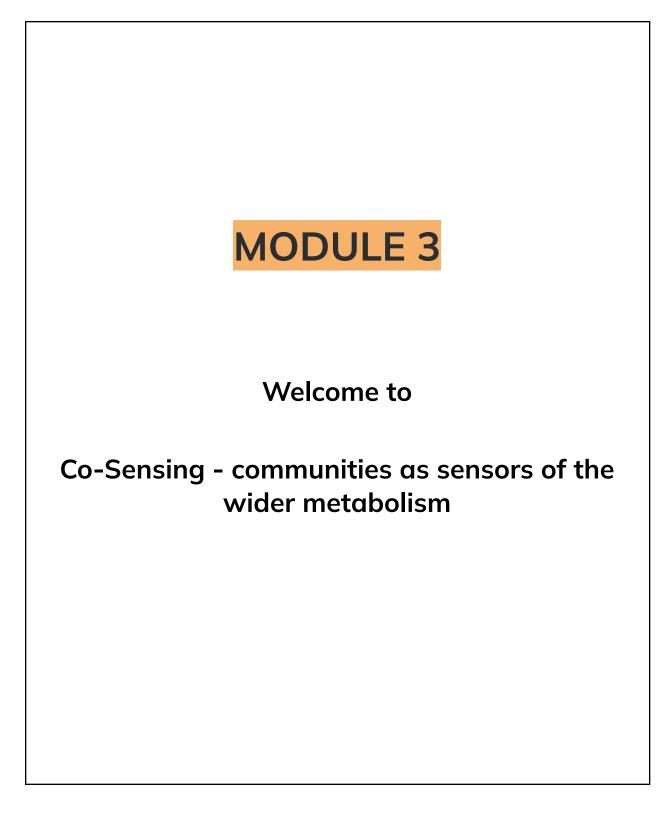
• As Community Catalysts we recognize the benefits of such a shared language for engaging highly diverse contributors with each other around a shared agenda. As **systemic thinkers** and actors, we also value the attempt to establish an interconnected multidimensional framework. At the same time, we remain critical regarding the flat, side-by-side view of economic, social and environmental goals and the total lack of <u>Inner Development</u> <u>Goals</u>. We also stress how far we are from what has been called the Inner Development Goals, calling for people to be able to live in communities that are happy, connected and interconnected.

• The CC consortium has decided to take a **regenerative interpretation of the SDGs**, which allows the projects to develop with a stronger theoretical basis. This framework is known as the "Wedding Cake" of the Stockholm Resilience Center in Sweden. It gives us the added value of seeing the interconnectedness between layers (environment, society, economy, communication), and to see our biosphere and our bioregions as 'keepers', incorporating and holding all layers within their complex systems. This perspective allows us to better understand where we are and how to move towards regeneration in each layer.



Community Catalysts and the SDGs Wedding Cake





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Co-Sensing will guide you into the Community Catalyst's social landscape and also on how communities are crucial local sensors of a wider global metabolism. Human relations create social landscapes that live within natural landscapes. Social landscapes are systems, ecosystems made of humans and their interconnections.

The guiding question of this phase is 'WHO ARE WE' and invites you to understand the presence of who is part of that social landscape and the relationships that happen through a shared territory.



The movement starts speeding up in the vortex.

Within the whole landscape you are part of many communities.

Some are more easily reachable than others.

Co-sensing means understanding who you are in your social ecosystem and how to offer your best contribution.

Take a moment to sense into the wider community around you, human and non-human.

Who else is around you? How are we all connected?

Social landscapes and Catalysing Change



What is a social landscape?

Social landscape refers to the **texture of the social world**. It is constituted by social practices, social systems, and social relationships, as well as the boundaries between them. A social landscape perspective entails a **tacit or explicit awareness** of the complex social, cultural, and political texture of the world in which we live.

The various entities that constitute the landscape are not just the formally recognized ones. Three main interrelated types of structuring forces that configure social landscapes are:

• **Systems:** sets of designed elements, institutions, projects, activity structures, and artefacts that shape the landscape;

• **Practices:** what people actually do and the competences and approaches they have developed to do what they do;

• **Relationships:** people or groups of people who are bound by commitments, friendships, similar experiences, labels, or other ties.

by Etienne Wenger-Trayner and Beverly Wenger-Trayner



Image 04: Collaborative Beehive (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

• To interrupt degenerative cycles and address the major global challenges, we need an **inter-independent network of communities** around the world (*Panikkar, 2003*), to knit communities together while nourishing their distinct local relationships to land.

• This implies a change in paradigmatic forces, in which leadership occurs from local emergence and not from international policies. Therefore, the global network driver must come from the **recognition of common challenges**, which implies the need for **bioregional coordination**, and must not come from the interests of a distrustful and fearful patriarchal culture.

• To catalyse meaningful and long lasting change, a system requires a **reconciliation process** that opens up dialogue between supposedly opposing positions, through which new inclusive proposals emerge and are put into practice.

• This reconciliation process can **accelerate change** and as we assess which systems, practices and relationships are already in place we can **locate leverage points** and **co-create regenerative and meaningful strategies** for that particular social landscape (look at the image below to stimulate your curiosity about leverage points, more to come in Module 5).

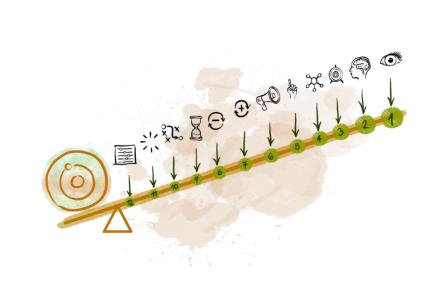


Image 05: Leverage Points (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

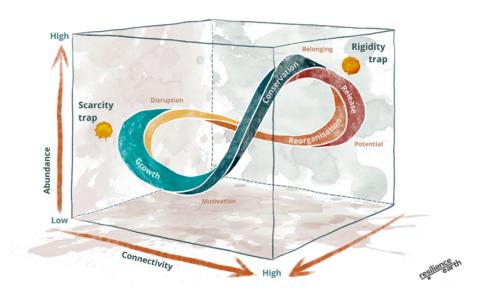
• To address fundamental social issues we need **tools to sense and respond** to this complexity and allow those affected to co-create a regenerative and equitable system that is more just and inclusive.

• Reconciliation involves learning and coming up with ways to deal with change and conflict, so that society can become more **adaptive and resilient** (Jean Paul Lederach).

The Resilience Cycle

• The Resilience Cycle is a framework originally developed by Buzz Holling (2010); amongst many, it inspired Community Catalysts consortium's work development in many ways.

• It's proposed to help us understand the **cyclic process of adaptive change**. By using the resilience cycle we are able to project the change process envisioned for Community Catalysts platform users and practitioners.



• The image of a Resilience Cycle the visualisation of viable alternatives to the current status quo, in order to accompany, or "midwife" our communities into a more **regenerative way of being and living**, while "hospicing" the fall of an old paradigm (Andreotti, 2021).

[DOWNLOAD POSTER]

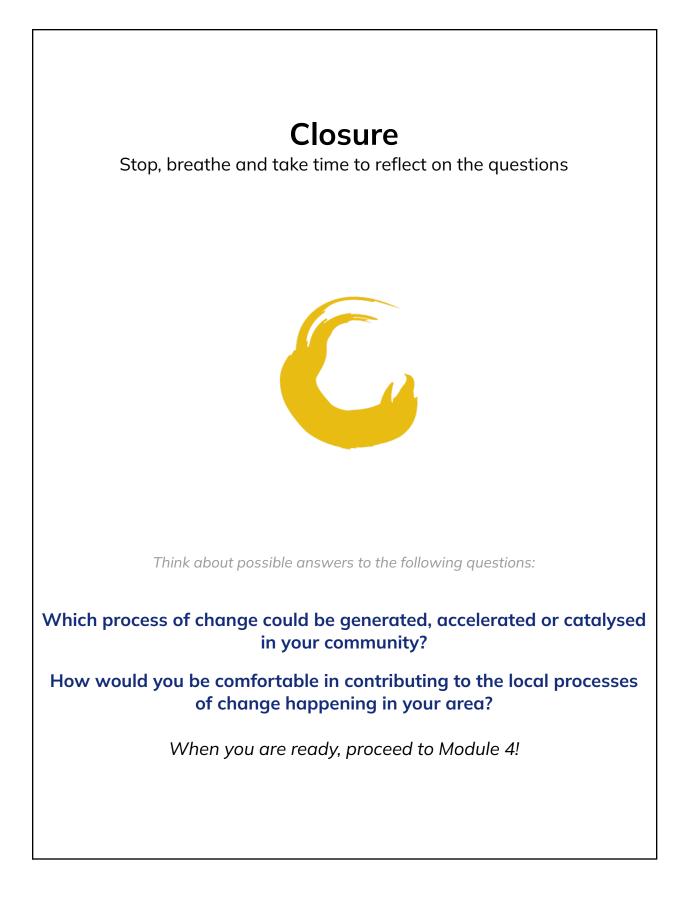
Our consortium - rhizomatic organising

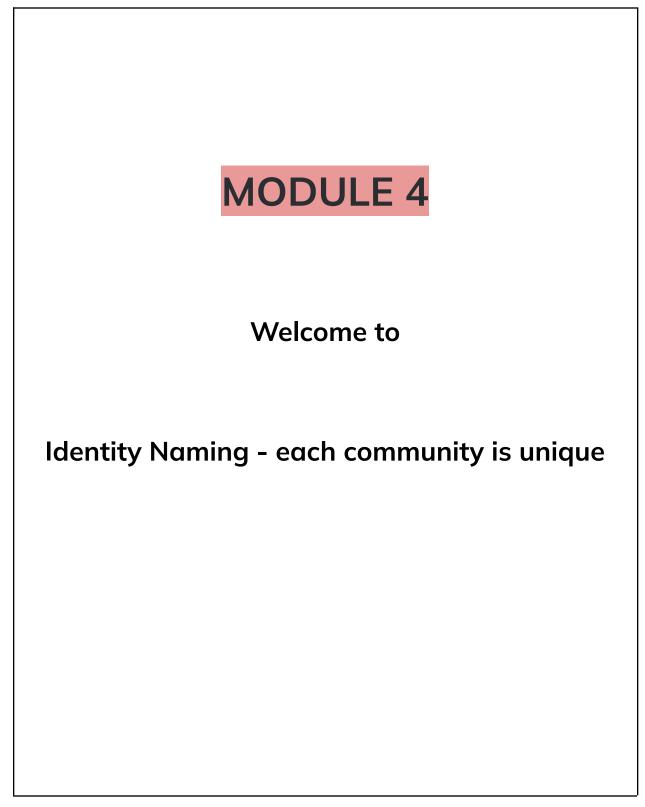
• A rhizome is the main stem of the plant that **runs underground horizontally**. Underground roots that spread the syntagma through place and nature-based strategies, considering their natural and social landscapes, is a **major inspiration** for the work of this consortium.

• We are an ecosystem of engaged designers, researchers and facilitators who develop tools for catalysing ecosocial change in local communities. An **ever evolving partnership** engaging with bioregions in four different countries and growing a translocal Community of Practice for advancing regenerative development across Europe.

• Through our exchanges we learn more, we become more diverse and our **impact spreads** wider into the metabolism of the collective body to which we all belong.

[IMAGE]





Identity Naming module 4 will guide you into the importance of place-based community identity and decolonial approaches that allow each community to value and manifest their uniqueness.

The guiding question of this phase is 'WHAT DO WE WISH TO BECOME' and invites you to identify what does your community aspire to, what is willing to emerge from a grounded relationship between what the community/group is and what it may become.



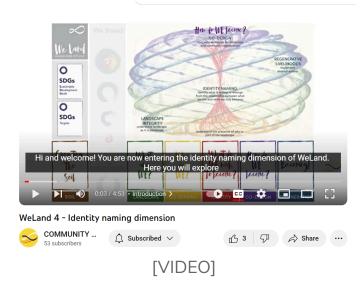
As the vortex continues its flow, this phase is short, fast and moves upwards.

After assessing landscape and social systems around and within us, we are now moving towards the understanding of what we wish to become, based on who we are as a rhizoma, a social metabolism, as a wider whole.

Connect with any insights you might have around the meaningful use of this platform and materials in your context.

How can you use it to serve the ecosystems you belong to and care for?

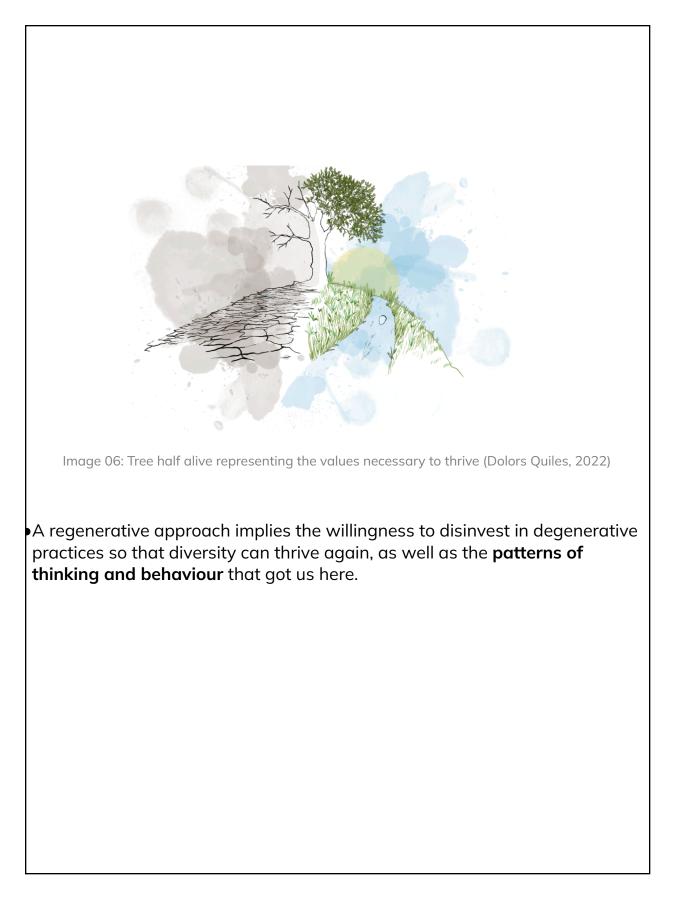
Place-based Community Identity



Each community is **unique** - where it is based, who inhabits it, which resources and skills are there, what are the relationships between different elements and systems, etc. This diversity can be observed in everything around us since the beginning of time.

Globalisation, which modifies cultures, politics and the overall development of countries, has been inducing social uniformity and **standardisation** in a world where cultural violence is created during the globalisation of the human imaginary in order to make it fit a global purpose. This violence has materialised in structures such as institutions, economy, laws and even architecture, agriculture and other human endeavours. This violence, which underpins culture and society, is known as **structural violence** (Johan Galtung).

The structure in which the current globalised culture stands lacks empowerment and accountability, both leading to increasing structural violence and **lack of participation.**



A decolonial approach to change

• Decolonisation helps us **identify the ongoing structural violence** that has contributed to the systemic crisis that we are facing, a legacy of continuous practices of colonisation that have been inducing trauma and degenerating ecosystems for generations and generations.

• By committing ourselves to a decolonial approach, the consortium's proposal is to accompany **communities to heal from the trauma** of structural violence (see Regenerative Spiral), in a way that is not through "one size fits all" solutions, but through reconciliatory and adaptive processes of change (see Resilience Cycle).

• This commitment is reinforced by a **pattern-based approach** where any suggested practices can be adapted, changed or evolved in ways that serve and represent the unique context of each catalyst, community or organisation.

• An approach that promotes the **co-creation of community catalysation processes**, via a place-based design process, the inclusion of the diversity of community voices, and increased participation and accountability.



Image 07: Tree half alive representing the values necessary to thrive (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

(Be)coming a Community Catalyst

• A Community Catalysts **is aware** of a world facing a systemic crisis without precedents that is threatening many forms of life and health on Earth.

• It is someone who is **trying to find ways** to accelerate systemic change that leads to regenerative cultures.

• It **comes from the attunement** with the evolutionary purpose of a place and responds to the need of thriving as earthlings with the places we inhabit.



Image 08: Tree half alive representing the values necessary to thrive (Dolors Quiles, 2022)

A Community Catalyst moves towards embodying regenerative principles and develop catalysing qualities

Regenerative principles

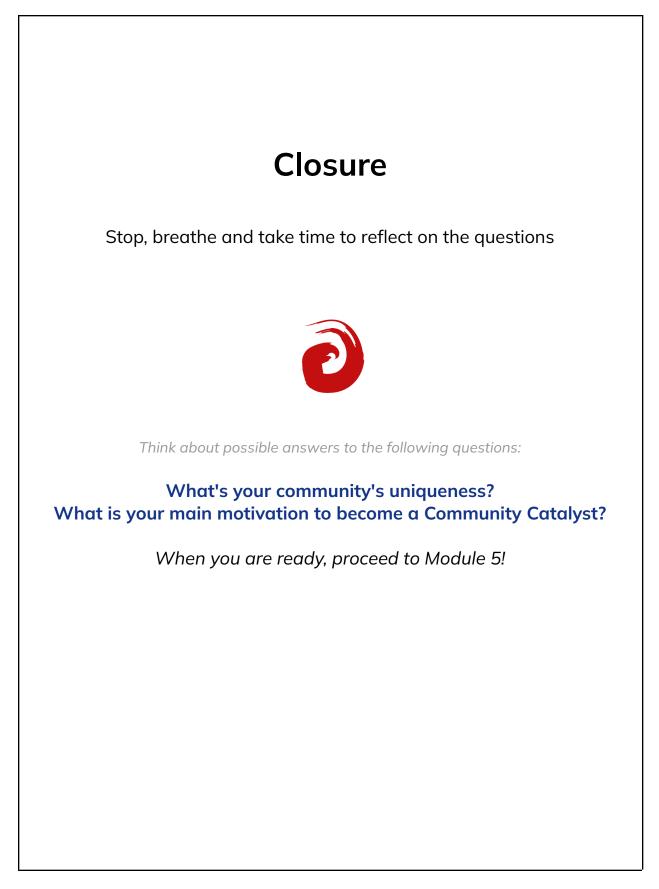
- 1. Develop wholeness perception
- 2. Attend to place-based emergence
- 3. Work from indirect nourishing centres
- 4. Include edge voices with their singularity
 - 5. Image developmental processes
 - 6. Build up resilience each step
 - 7. Embed inherent cycling
 - 8. Focus on potential to regenerate



Image 09: Hierarchy Theory XYZ (Dolor Quiles, 2022)

Desirable Qualities of Activators

Deep listening Close observation Warm facilitation Non-judgement Non-attachment to one's own way Attending to relationships Synthesising patterns



MODULE 5

Welcome to

Co-Design -

- collaboration for meaningful change

Co-design will guide you through the actual design to create meaningful change. After the green and yellow phases to assess context and community, after the rising of us, of 'who we are', WeLand vortex brings people to design and draw strategies.

The guiding question of this phase is 'HOW DO WE BECOME' and invites you to co-create strategies for landscape and community regeneration.

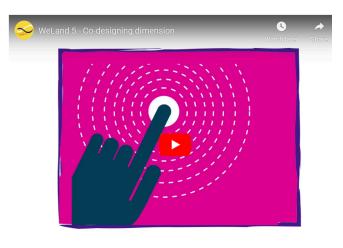


Within this phase of the vortex, the movement goes up and to the sides, starting to go downwards.

It invites us to root the identity and purpose which were identified into a collective strategy.

Discover this module and find inspiration on why and how to co-design successful strategies to catalyse change.

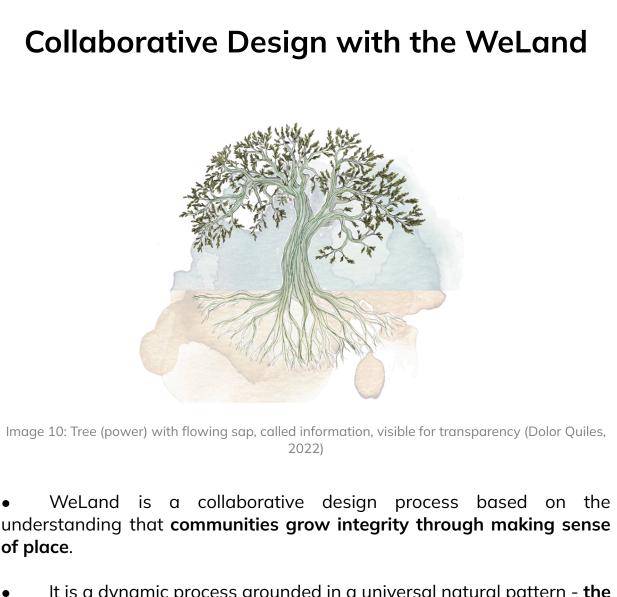
The importance of collaborative design



[VIDEO]

• Design is a concept of either an object, a process, or a system that is specific and, in most cases, detailed. Design refers to something that is or has been **intentionally created**. In social processes, to design means to imagine processes that reconnect, define and awaken place-based communities; to design means to create **strategies** to reach clearly **identified goals**. In the context of the WeLand, it implies that we first sense and then express.

• Collaborative design means to design something jointly with others or together and it allows us to **co-create place-based strategies**, **integrated with life itself**.



• It is a dynamic process grounded in a universal natural pattern - **the torus** - that invites communities to co-create regenerative livelihoods through engagement in a set of flexible practices that are part of the toolkit and aims to be evergrowing with inputs from all users.

• Collective strategies create a **sense of belonging** to the territory, meaningful action and accountability for the process, turning spaces into places by adding an intentional collective meaning and identity.

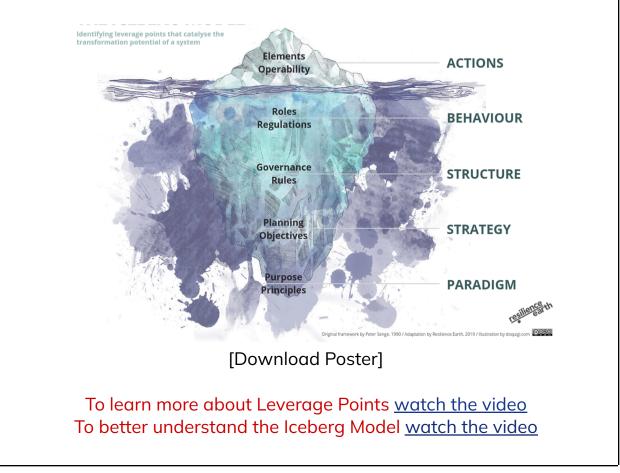
Leverage Points and The Iceberg Model

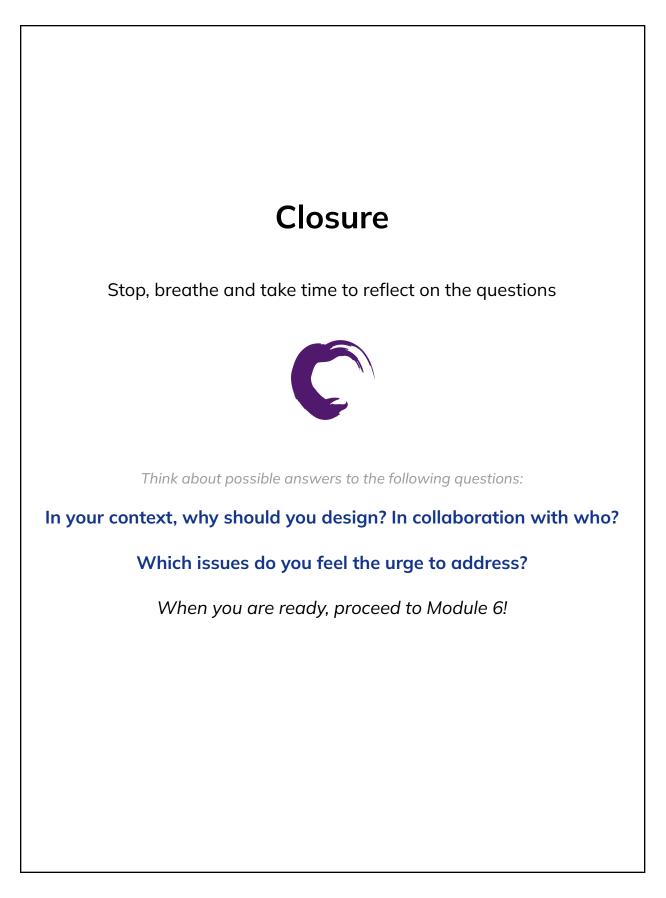
• When analysing contexts or creating strategies, **Leverage Points**, a concept originally coined by Donella Meadows in 1997, emerge naturally.

• In design, a Leverage Point is that element that allows you to have a greater impact with the same effort.

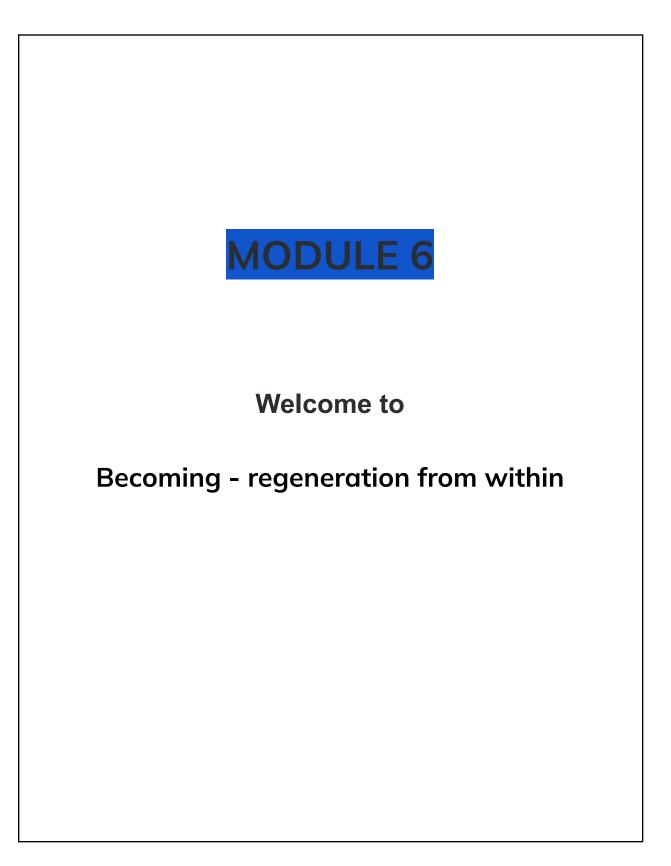
• The Iceberg Model helps understanding the depths of the waters under visible symptoms of society and guiding actions towards **paradigm shifts** and systemic change. It's a framework that helps identify leverage points to catalyse the transformative potential of systems.

• **Identifying** Leverage Points helps designing better strategies to go down the layers of the iceberg.





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Becoming will guide you through the ways you can adapt and adopt your own learning process to bring in regenerative practices to your people.

The guiding question of this phase is 'WHAT DO WE BECOME?' and invites you to implement desired actions. This is the moment to get involved by starting a learning program or a design process.



The vortex movement slows down and goes towards the ground while manifesting in the wider circles where it started, in the landscape, in the place it belongs to.

Where are you? What's your landscape becoming and what's your inner voice? How are you manifesting designed strategies and desired actions?

Adapt and adopt - embodying Regenerative Livelihoods



• To design a process, the WeLand invites you to **start from perceiving** where you are (green and yellow 'assessment phases'), to then truly **connect with the emergent purpose** and **plan strategies** for actions.

• As for the design process, any **learning journey** starts from where the learner is at, both in terms of awareness of topics and context (time, space).

• 'Adapt and adopt' is key to go through the proposed tools. It is **an invitation** to pick the elements that best suit your needs and shape them to what best serves your purpose. Own the process and be accountable for it.

• Find in other examples that inspire your pathway and share with others your stories of change and learnings.



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How can you engage and catalyse communities?

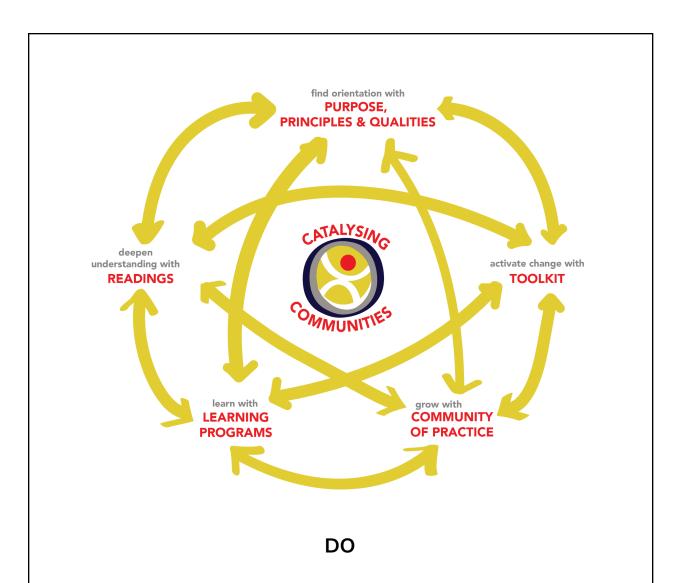
LEARN

• The Community Catalyst platform is an **interactive collection of tools for learning and practice**, and a growing collective space.

• Some learning programs are based on the WeLand - Making Sense of Place vortex, some are based on different **theoretical frameworks** and **methodologies.**

• Learning can be individual, but practice should be collective. Going through the platform and experimenting are opportunities for personal growth towards catalysing change. **Sharing, co-designing and co-thinking is when the real fun emerges.**

• The level of awareness required to target groups is wide, as programs and activities can be interpreted and enacted in more experimental and spontaneous ways or in more structured and complex forms. If you are a community catalyst **activating the vortex**, meet people where they are while testing the tool.



• The TOOLKIT is not a single tool but many tools. Use **#tags** to navigate and take time to personalise and keep track of your learning experience.

• The **TOOLBOX** allows you to build your own WePractice deck of cards, from the wide Toolkit virtual box. Create an **account** for different pathways with learning tools proposed in the platform, get Certificates and dive into more learning experiences!

• Wisely print and create your own posters to set and ground the learning space when needed.

SHARE

• Organise an initiative for collective assessment and activate regenerative conversations - download the canvas and involve your community through a **Participatory Action Research**.

• Organise a **daily event for Community Catalysts** and share the PAR results. Follow the proposed agenda, and use the Toolkit to hold the sessions.

• Organise, and/or search for partners to organise a Catalysts for Civic Engagement and Community Resilience Training

• Join our Community of practice to get engaged and grow together.

Closure

Stop, breathe and take time to reflect on the questions

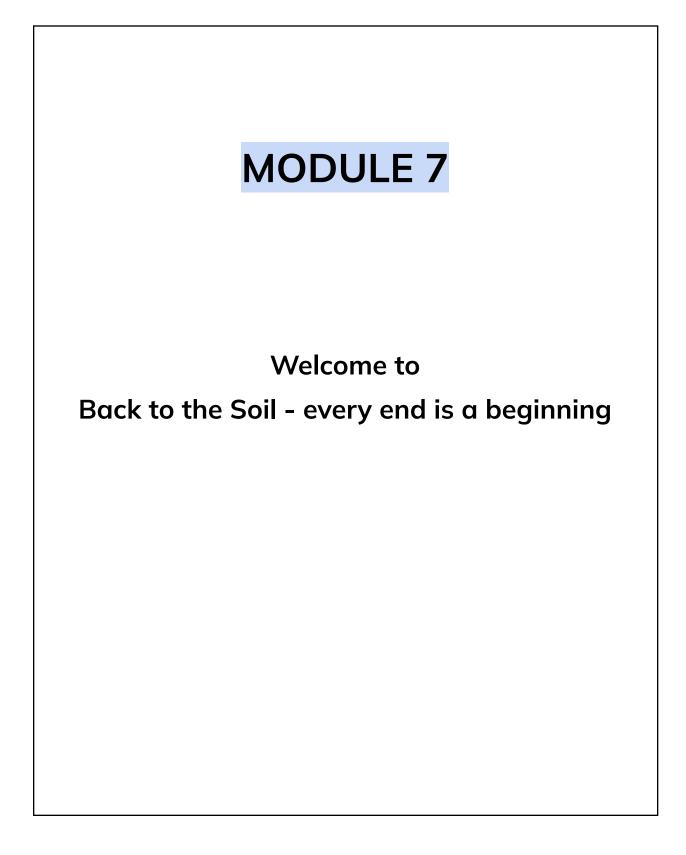


Think about possible answers to the following questions:

Which new pathway of learning do you feel inspired to dedicate time to? What is your driver?

What should your regenerative livelihood look like?

When you are ready, proceed to the last module!



Clopening*

*SOMETHING THAT IS BOTH A CLOSURE AND AN OPENING

You are in the 'Back to the soil' phase. Here is where you celebrate and get ready to close the journey

This is the last phase of the WeLand vortex that brings us to collectively evaluate and close the process.

You are now ready to open another vortex whenever the need emerges and go through a new cycle of learning or practising.



Take time to breathe and celebrate. Look at your notes and do a final reflection with some guiding questions. • **Think back** at this curriculum, look at the WeBoard to connect with and sense the phases in the WeLand vortex.

• How did you feel and **what inspired you**?

• Think about what you would like to do better next time you engage in a process like this - evaluation and lessons learned are an important part of learning experiences, the seeds for the new openings.

• What did you like the most? What could have been better? Check toolkit cards dedicated to evaluation.

• Visit the different phases and practices you went through **making** sense of your place, community and initiative.



Image 12: Planting the seed of reconciliation (Dolor Quiles, 2022)

We are grateful to have you becoming part of this community. May this work benefit all beings, everywhere.

Congratulations! You completed the first step into the Community Catalyst universe. • Read about the theoretical frameworks, check the <u>readings</u> available on the platform

- Navigate the <u>Community Catalyst Toolkit</u>
- Explore other learning tools checking the <u>Learning</u> section of our platform
- Join the Community Catalyst <u>Community of Practice</u>