Creative Carlow Futures

Art and Sustainability for County Carlow and Ireland

An Carlow Arts Act Grant Award research study
by Cathy Fitzgerald, Ph.D. Visual Culture
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Dedication:

This report celebrates the encouragement and support to the author from the late Elinor Mountain (Kilkenny) and the late Dr. Chris Seeley (UK). Both were passionate and generous in all their community-building and education work, and in their understanding that the arts have a profound role in developing deep understandings of place. They lived and breathed a commitment that restoring our broken relationships to our lands and waters is fundamentally connected to creating caring, life-sustaining communities.

A walk to the summit of Mt. Leinster, Co. Carlow for Earth Day 2011, co-organised by the author.

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Executive Summary

Culture[1] is central to developing Carlow's sustainability

Creative Carlow Futures is a research report that presents why sustainability, developed specifically to suit our local places, is profoundly connected to creativity. This study reviews important international cultural sustainability policy, strategies and resources for Carlow's art policy developers, for Carlow's cultural institutions and Carlow's creative workers.

Carlow Creative Futures frames why sustainability is an urgent and exciting point of creative engagement for the well-being of all our futures.

Creative Carlow Futures identifies that developing knowledge and supports for art and sustainability activity will be crucial for engaging Carlow communities towards just and life-sustaining futures. This study identifies the creative, community-wide potential that envisioning sustainability through the arts will offer. Importantly, the research examines the un-realised potential and notes the independence of the arts and its practitioners to become key partners, with science, sustainability and local authority organisations, beyond merely illustrating sustainability issues or themes, to thereby engage a wider public in the most critical eco-social issues of our time.

County Carlow is well placed to become a lead authority on arts and sustainability strategy following its three strategic objectives in its *2016-2021 Local Arts Development Plan* to 'lead, nurture and sustain the arts in County Carlow' and in its prominent efforts to implement the national 'Ask: Has the Artist Been Paid' policy. Developing a strong, engaging and effective local art and sustainability strategy will also contribute to the ambitions of the recently launched *Creative Ireland Carlow* (2017) programme. The Creative Ireland Team in Carlow highlight they intend to support Ireland's first cultural policy document *Culture 2025- Éire Ildánach* (2016) objectives where 'a particular focus on language, landscape and the environment' is noted (Creative Carlow Ireland, 2017, p.6). However, developed sustainability objectives are not, as yet, detailed in either in local or national cultural policy. Yet, despite this lack of detailed strategy, it is more than encouraging that new Creative Ireland programmes in neighbouring counties of Laois and Kildare, are already initiating significant eco-social art programmes and partnering with scientists to develop public understanding of how to sustain bee pollination (Creative Ireland, 2017). In this way, the author notes that the Carlow Creative Futures report may have relevance for future Carlow's arts development strategy, Ireland's national cultural policy development, and for other Irish organisations that support Ireland's creative industries and their practitioners.

The following report consists of several parts: first, after presenting the background to this study, I review critiques of the concept of sustainability: What do we mean when we use this seemingly well understood concept in everyday life, in politics, and specifically, in the arts? As ecoliteracy in the arts (and in the wider Irish public sphere) is limited, I

[1] Culture refers to the way we live in this world. Cultural activity is broad and can include traditions, the arts, sport, education, religious and spiritual beliefs and ways of relating to the natural world. In this report, culture is primarily associated with the arts, but sustainability values can be transmitted in all cultural spheres. Sustainability values in other spheres are to be encouraged but

present summary graphs from new planetary boundary science and other science communication organisations to help simplify and frame the unprecedented environmental and eco-social crises humanity is facing globally. To make this information relevant to an Irish context, I present corresponding summary data on Ireland's declining environmental status.

Second, I review the importance of moral reasoning to guide cultural responses to eco-crises. I also share recent research that shows how specific cultural practices evolve life-sustaining values and new ideas for their communities. However, to support artists working in this context, reframing artists' role as activators for sustainability, rather than being viewed primarily as indicators for renewed economic and tourist activity is vital. Critically, recent UK economic and art research identifies that emergent sustainability learning for communities is linked to artists themselves having sustainable livelihoods. This objective, also recommended in this report, further supports County Carlow and national efforts to develop and sustain artists' livelihoods.

Third, I review international sustainability policy developments and resources that are being developed by the international network, United Cities and Local Government (UCLG), that advise Local and Rural governmental agencies on how to swiftly implement the UN Agenda *2030 Sustainable Development Goals* (internationally agreed by member nations, including Ireland, in 2015). I examine how culture is central for developing localised and relevant sustainability ideas and practices. This is because culture is now firmly regarded, if not yet widely understood in the Irish cultural sector, as the essential '4th pillar of sustainability' to advance society towards international sustainability goals.

Next, I briefly explore the as yet limited status of cultural policy for sustainability in Ireland and argue for this topic to be viewed as a key societal issue for cultural engagement, both locally, and nationally. To this end, I examine established cultural policy and programmes for sustainability developed over the last decade in England and Scotland. I assess, in particular, the Julie's Bicycle art and sustainability organisation, a London based charity, established in 2007, now partnered with Arts Council England, and Creative Carbon Scotland, established in 2011. I review how these two organisations' programmes support and inspire cultural institutions and creative practitioners to develop community specific examples of relevant life-sustaining practices in their operations and creative practices, with significant cost-savings to the cultural sector. I also briefly assess how these organisations, at times progressed by pioneering cultural actors, are nevertheless also directed by clear national environmental policy targets to reduce carbon emissions and by fostering significant non-cultural partnerships. Having clear national emission's targets contrasts the position in Ireland when the recently launched first statutory *National Mitigation Plan* (July, 2017) has been criticised by Ireland's leading climate scientist Prof. John Sweeney (*RTE*, Sat 12 August, 2017), and others, for its lack of key sector targets. This appears to have seriously delayed Irish public sector engagement in developing deeper understanding of the significant societal changes that are required by the nation to meet internationally agreed sustainability development targets.

In summary, I reflect that Carlow's creative community has significant potential to engage audiences to develop relevant-to-Carlow eco-social values and practices. I recommend key action points for County Carlow's policy-makers, creative institutions, organisations and creative practitioners (and these recommendations may also contribute to national Irish cultural policy). An appendix and a resource list of key information, organisations and links to international cultural policy is also included.

Supporting the findings from Creative Carlow Futures is a means for Carlow people to step toward expanded ideas of community, where our natural communities are cherished and valued in their own right, and for Carlow's future. While we necessarily celebrate our local art and heritage, promoting creative sustainability expands us all as global citizens for a just, equitable and thriving world.

Cathy Fitzgerald, Ph.D., Hollywood forest,
County Carlow, August 2017

foreword:

developing a Carlow-based eco-social art practice, learning about art and sustainability

This research report grew from my contemporary ecological art practice[2] and from previous science research experience. Since 2008, I have developed a transversal art-forest-community study, the *Hollywood forest* project[3], in a small woodland near Mt. Leinster in South County Carlow. Recent doctoral research was a means to deepen my understanding of the theory, methods and under-acknowledged potential of long-term eco-social art practices[4] and contribute to understanding of new-to-Ireland continuous cover sustainable forestry, to both online and local audiences.

Initially, I gained in-depth insight of wider art and sustainability policy developments by attending the Culture|Futures summit organised during the 2009 United Nations Copenhagen Climate Summit and by later volunteering to help develop the Culture|Futures website (this innovative programme during 2009-12, linked worldwide creative endeavours from all disciplines with new sustainability-focused cultural policy[5]). During my involvement with Culture|Futures and by following other international art and sustainability programmes, particularly the innovative cross-sector UK RSA Art and Ecology programme (2005-10), I became aware that art and sustainability policy is not developed in Ireland.

Of course, with eco-crises becoming harder to ignore, some Irish art exhibitions, festival initiatives and cultural activity on eco-social themes have developed intermittingly from some pioneering curators, lecturers, arts officers, groups and individuals. However, at a national cultural policy level, which directs national creative energies toward critical societal issues and county Arts Office programming, there appears limited understanding of the key role culture has to encourage society toward a more caring and life-sustaining way of living.

Seeking to understand why similar developments are not occurring in Ireland led to this study. I hope it will contribute to start an urgent conversation on art and sustainability in my home county of Carlow but also across Ireland.

Cathy Fitzgerald, Ph.D.,
Hollywoodforest.com
Carlow, August 2017

1

Why art and sustainability matter for Carlow (and Ireland)

Increasing reports of floods, wildfires, ecocide, mass species extinction, conflict and migration… in our industrial societies we need to move past the addiction to never-ending, unsustainable growth economics. Instead we must urgently mend our broken relations to natural communities and the Earth's lands, rivers, oceans and air.

Creativity can help us engage deeply with how we live. It can help us imagine living differently, living well, in Carlow and elsewhere.

Across the Irish art sector, we must urgently promote why independent cultural responses are vital alongside science in sustainability initiatives. Creativity has a key, if yet under-acknowledged role to inspire relevant Earth-caring values and practices to our communities, for all our futures.

Cathy Fitzgerald, eco-social art practitioner and researcher, 2017

1.1 Sustainability: a troubled concept in a troubled world

> "The struggle of embracing our moment — is the struggle that we live in the most destructive moment in 65 million years!

Brian Swimme, Professor of Integral Studies and evolutionary philosopher, *The New Story*, 2006

> "There are opportunities even in the most difficult moments.

Dr. Wangari Maathai[6], Nobel Peace Prize winner, Kenyan Green Belt Forest and Social Justice Movement Founder

'Sustainability' and 'sustainable development' are recent cultural terms evolving from improved understandings of ecology as arising from science and environmentalism in the late 20th century. Moving to an ecological worldview is essential for humanity's and other species' survival as it increases understanding of the material limits and environmental life-supports systems of this finite planet.

With the scientific data gathered in recent decades it is clear that humanity is facing numerous unprecedented eco-social challenges that threaten human and nonhuman species survival. However, a move to an ecological, life-sustaining society will require an enormous shift in societal behaviour to urgently adopt, in thought, practice and policy, a more complete understanding of humanity as being fundamentally interconnected to, and constrained by complex and ever-changing environments.

An ecological worldview, therefore, may make creative art practice that seeks to respond to these eco-social realities, considerably wide-ranging and complex. But first, whether we are directors of an art museum or a creative worker, it is important to understand that sustainability, frequently mentioned as a concept to remedy eco-social challenges, is often understood superficially.

At first we might easily agree with the well-recognised definition of 'sustainability development', and the ideas of sustainability that have become commonplace since the international Bruntland Commission report 'Our Common Future' (1987). This widely read report for a just and inter-generationally equitable world has directed the United Nations and many governments that 'sustainable development' must meet "the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs." This premise seems an obvious truth underlining humanity's future survival. However, a grave contradiction exists when mainstream economic dogma, widely echoed in Irish politics and abroad, continue to promote unsustainable growth economics on a finite and increasingly degraded planet. For instance, critics note that the United Nations continues to marry their recent Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (2015) to economic growth (Waters, 2017, p.29). Unquestioned economic growth, even though it may be surrounded by ever increasing discourse of sustainability, has meant modern society has been very slow to recognise that a profound 'culture of unsustainability'[7] exists in Western society. Retired Professor of Sustainability, Glenn Albrecht, has critiqued concepts of sustainability for many decades. He argues: ''sustainability' is inadequate as a concept because it does not specify what is to be sustained and over what time frame it is to be sustained. 'Sustainable development' equally fails to define what it is about development that is to be sustained, except perhaps development itself, for its own sake." (Albrecht, 2016, p.13)

The root cause fuelling the grave eco-social crises that are unfolding, are philosophically historic. It is a crisis of culture that at a fundamental level, Western society sees itself apart from its environments (Waters, 2017, p.29). This erroneous and unsustainable position is evident throughout Western culture's earliest recorded history, and has spread across our now globalised world (*ibid.*). For instance, we can find an almost complete disregard for the non-human realm, in Western philosophy and religious spheres, in education and academia, and most prominently, in mainstream political and economic aims.

In our short-attention span world, presenting paradigm-shifting and confronting views of widespread ecological unsustainability has been difficult to communicate to large sections of the global community (Marshall, 2014). Here, the new discipline of ecological (environmental) humanities has an important role to help us recognise the absence of the material, nonhuman in much of Western knowledge. Overall, however, an ecoliteracy commensurate to the scale and pace of the predicament is still in its infancy for the wider public sphere. Similarly, many working in art and cultural spheres are not educated adequately to respond effectively to eco-social concerns.

In the next section, I provide an overview of a new science that is summarising and visually communicating the scale and rate of the Earth's eco-crises, as caused by industrial growth society.

1.2 Recognising our 'culture of unsustainability' and how it is culturally maintained

Understanding our culture of unsustainability is difficult because the amassed scientific knowledge of ecocrises can be overwhelming and complex. However, summary graphs from the new field of planetary boundary science and the Global Footprint Network[8] can help us understand the scale and rate of environmental damage. They are useful ecoliteracy guides for the cultural worker to understand the unprecedented environmental pressure our current way of life is having on the Earth.

For example, in Fig. 1 below, the visual graphic from planetary boundary scientists shows the effects of runaway, extractive capitalism based on industrialism, since 1750. By exploiting natural resources, industrial capitalism supports most countries' continued economic growth but it fuels an exponential human population increase and severely deteriorating eco-social conditions. Not surprisingly, given the enormous scale and speed of change, planetary boundary scientists refer to the effects on industrial-capitalist growth society as 'The Great Acceleration'. Earth scientists are debating the significant and unprecedented impact of industrial society against the Earth's systems as a new geological epoch - the Anthropocene.

Fig. 1 The 'Great Acceleration' of worsening socio-economic and earth system trends since the emergence of industrial-growth society (1750-2010). Steffen *et al.* 2015.

'This pattern of accelerating socio-economic activity and environmental decline is mirrored in Ireland. In Ireland there is little mainstream public or political commentary[9] on the rapid decrease in 'biocapacity' and Ireland's rapidly increasing 'Ecological Footprint'[10] which accelerated during the Celtic Tiger boom period (see Fig. 2 below). However, the graph below from the Global Footprint network that index's countries' environmental 'costs', shows a representation of the negative environmental decline (the green line) and rise in unsustainable consumerism in Ireland in recent decades. Also, Pádraic Fogarty's *Whittled Away: Ireland's Vanishing Nature* (2017) is essential reading about Ireland's significant environmental decline.

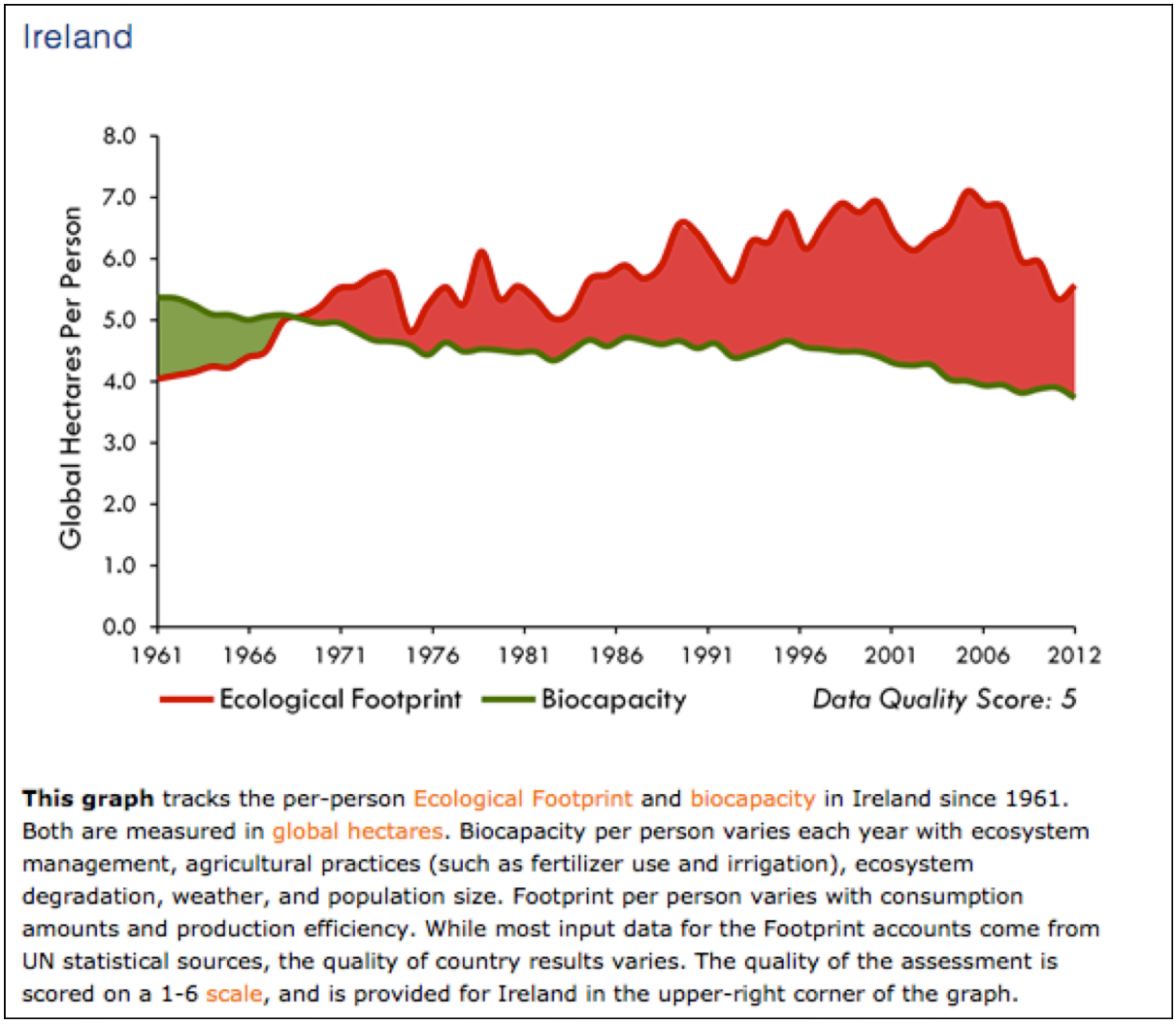

Fig. 2. The 'per-person resource demand Ecological Footprint and biocapacity in Ireland since 1961. Biocapacity varies each year with ecosystem management, agricultural practices (such as fertilizer use and irrigation), ecosystem degradation, and weather, and population size.' Source: http://data.footprintnetwork.org/countryTrends.html?cn=104&type=cdPC

The tragedy of the ecological emergency is the situation will decline dramatically within a short timeframe: today's 7.3 billion human population is estimated to rise to a staggering 9.7 billion in little over thirty years[11] (2050). When we have already used half of the Earth's land to inadequately feed the current global population, when we have lost almost half of the global population of wildlife since the early 1970s, it is evident that the expected rise in human population with business-as-usual economics will be particularly calamitous for human and the Earth's other living species' survival.

Ecocrises can seem diverse, numerous and overwhelming. Another graphic (Fig. 3) from planetary boundary science identifies nine life-systems that are necessary to adequately support life on Earth. The pie-chart is divided into segments of environmental interest and identifies the limits of the viability of Earth systems. The blue ring at the centre shows the 'safe operating space for humanity': Earth's planetary boundary for a thriving planet. Beyond the blue ring we can easily see what life systems are at risk, warnings marked in yellow, and critical areas in red. The critical (red) high risk alarms note the catastrophic collapse of genetic (bio)diversity (discussed more below) and the dangerous disruption to nitrogen and phosphorus cycles. High-risk warnings are in place for climate change and the environmental degradation caused by land-system change.

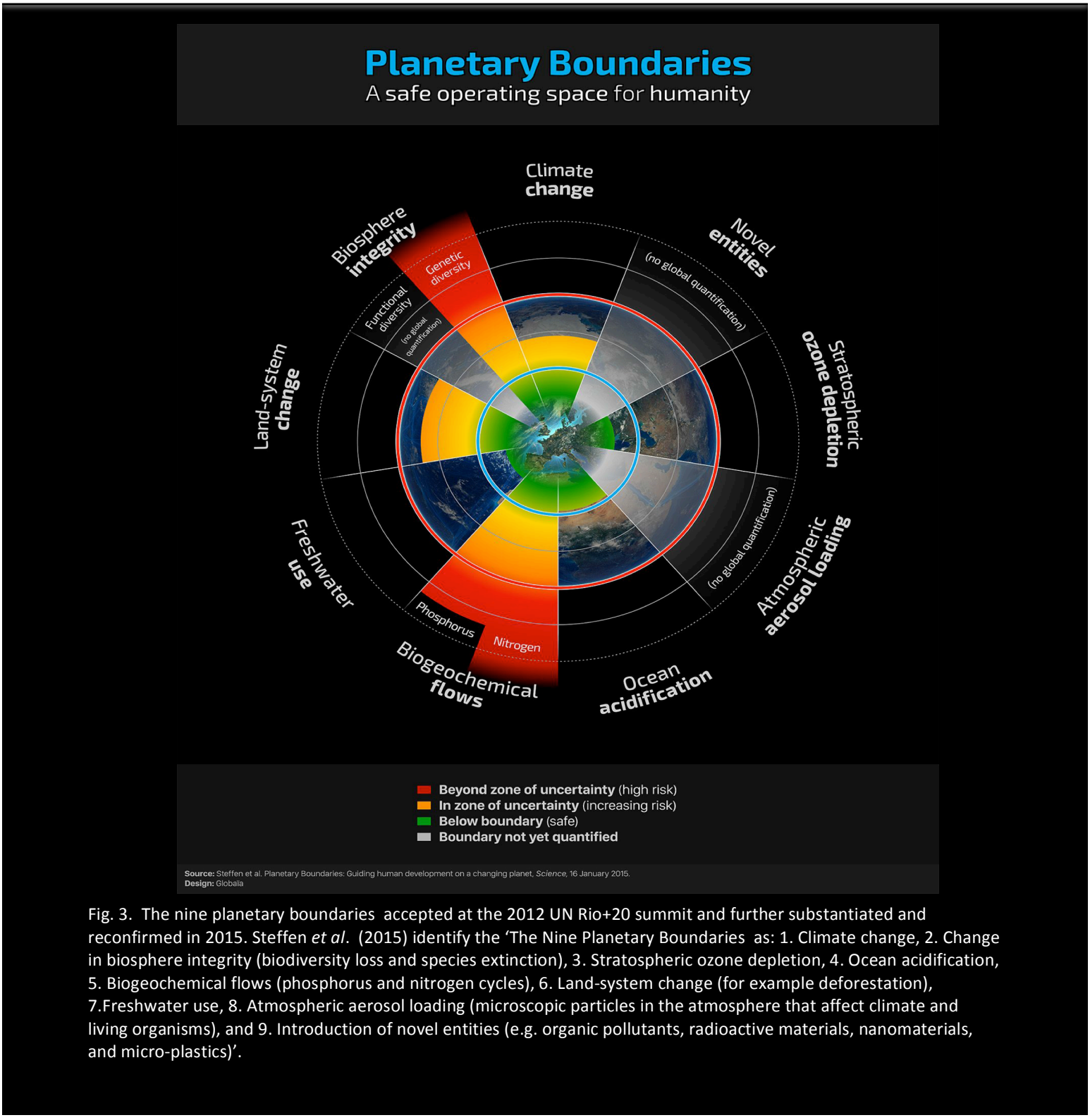

Fig. 3. The nine planetary boundaries accepted at the 2012 UN Rio+20 summit and further substantiated and reconfirmed in 2015. Steffen *et al*. (2015) identify the 'The Nine Planetary Boundaries as: 1. Climate change, 2. Change in biosphere integrity (biodiversity loss and species extinction), 3. Stratospheric ozone depletion, 4. Ocean acidification, 5. Biogeochemical flows (phosphorus and nitrogen cycles), 6. Land-system change (for example deforestation), 7.Freshwater use, 8. Atmospheric aerosol loading (microscopic particles in the atmosphere that affect climate and living organisms), and 9. Introduction of novel entities (e.g. organic pollutants, radioactive materials, nanomaterials, and micro-plastics)'.

Looking at the planetary boundary chart reveals the industrial-growth society is negatively affecting numerous environmental systems: biodiversity, geochemical processes, the atmosphere, and land, sea, and waterway habitats. The yellow to red areas highlight that four boundaries have been exceeded. Two of these, climate change and biosphere integrity, are important core boundaries, which unchecked may very well 'drive the Earth System into a new state' (Steffen *et al.*, 2015) that will dramatically effect the viability for many species survival. This image is, therefore, useful to increase awareness that industrial-growth society's effects are vastly unsustainable over a range of ecological parameters, and are interconnected and complex.

Visuals from planetary boundary science also emphasise that climate change is only one (albeit important) effect of industrially induced environmental change. Each environmental reality affects others; climate change exacerbates biodiversity loss, and reviewers of the UN 2010 Biodiversity report state that the economic case for preventing biodiversity loss is even greater than that of tackling climate change (Vidal, 2010). Still little discussed in the public sphere, but highlighted as a red high-risk warning, the collapse of biodiversity reveals we are currently experiencing a shockingly rapid mass extinction event. Unlike the Earth's previous mass extinction events due to natural phenomena, this 6th Great Extinction (the Anthropocene Extinction) is primarily caused by modern industrial society's activity. Truly alarming species extinction at 100 - 1000 times higher than natural background rates directly relate to meat consumption, deforestation, overfishing, and the profligate burning of fossil fuels.[12] Nevertheless, climate change dominates mainstream media reports when environmental reporting does occur, and this emphasis obscures understanding that the environmental indices are collective symptoms of a profound cultural crisis.

Summarising the main conclusions from planetary boundary science, Johann Rockstrom (2017) views the data as highlighting the effects of the destructive consumer patterns we have become accustomed to. He identifies our industrial food production practices, involving land clearances, deforestation, and high energy and resource inputs, as the chief culprits maintaining this culture of unsustainability. Currently, the environmental costs (economic externalities) of industrial agriculture are hidden, for instance, in the distance between our plates and our food. Similarly, industrial fishing, aquaculture farming, and monocrop forestry, while economically profitable, hide significant environmental costs. These life-limiting externalities of the industrial growth society need to be widely understood and acknowledged across society. All our futures are at stake. As primatologist and conservationist Jane Goodall implores:

> "We have not borrowed our children's future – we have stolen it and we're still stealing it now, and it's time we get together, whatever our religion, whatever our culture, and start changing the way – changing our attitude – so that we can leave a better world for our children, whom we love."[13]

Looking at the summary data above, our relationship to the nonhuman world requires radical change: in how we relate to lands, rivers, oceans and air. We need to imagine different ways, specific to our local contexts, to produce what we need, while at the same time urgently restoring and conserving life-supporting habitats. Albrecht (2016) argues we need to swiftly exit the Anthropocene to embrace the Symbiocene where we support the flourishing of all life (as in the meaning of symbiosis). In this way, eco-social cultural practices can act as memes for the Symbiocene. Overall, to foster sustainable and just socieities, cultural practices, including the arts, have a key role to help develop life-sustaining values and practices.

To develop an art and sustainability conversation in Ireland, cultural policymakers will need grounding in ecoliteracy. The above is only a brief introduction and I suggest readers involved in policy to look further into resources such as planetary boundary science and the resources listed at the end of this report. At the moment, art and ecology education modules are limited in Ireland: Dr. Paul O'Brien, NCAD, formally led an MA Module on this topic but

this has been discontinued since his retirement; the topic is examined at the Burren College of Art. However, given the urgency of the need to educate the cultural sector on this issue, some thought may be given to developing online courses. Partnerships with science educators and science education institutions with experience in delivering Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) would be highly relevant in swiftly delivering engaging content (video and written documents) and developing knowledge banks and communities around this topic.[14]

In the next section, I discuss the critical, if still under-acknowledged role for culture in fostering societal change for an ecological world.

2

‘Why Art has the Power to Change the World’

One of the great challenges today is that we often feel untouched by the problems of others and by global issues like climate change, even when we could easily do something to help. We do not feel strongly enough that we are part of a global community, part of a larger we. Giving people access to data most often leaves them feeling overwhelmed and disconnected, not empowered and poised for action. This is where art can make a difference. Art does not show people what to do, yet engaging with a good work of art can connect you to your senses, body, and mind. It can make the world felt. And this felt feeling may spur thinking, engagement, and even action.

Olafur Eliasson, artist engaged with eco-social issues, 2017

2.1 + ‘It’s wrong to wreck the world’: using moral reasoning to guide our cultural practices

If it’s wrong to take more than your fair share of the Earth’s resources and possibilities, leaving what’s left of a degraded and destabilised world for people in other nations or other times (and I believe it is);

if it’s wrong to reap the benefits of the profligate use of fossil fuels and foist off the costs on other people, especially future people who are completely powerless to defend themselves (and I believe it is);

if it’s wrong to bulldoze what is beautiful and life-giving and billions of years in the making (and I believe it is);

if poisoning the water and the air is an utter betrayal of the children, whom we love more than anything else in the world (and I know it is)—then we shouldn’t do it.

Period. End of question.

Kathleen Dean Moore (2010) Environmental Philosopher -
‘The No-Hope Fallacy: That’s No Excuse for Failing to Act’

Some leading scientists, such as James Lovelock, argue that it may be impossible or too late to change modern society's trajectory toward widespread ecological catastrophe (Knapton, 2014). While, the opinion may be logical, such a position is disempowering for social change (Herrmann, 2017). Others may too easily believe the myth that renewable energies will solve our environmental concerns. However, the roots and scale of the ecological emergency point to a profound crisis in contemporary Western culture, far greater than how we obtain our energy, although it is important. Moral philosophers of the ecological emergency, such as Kathleen Dean Moore (2010), encourage us to remember that human endeavour must not be limited to the perceived failure or success of our actions. Dean-Moore recognises the extraordinary challenges that humanity faces and urges us when we feel defeated by the scale of reported eco-social calamities, not to ask:

> […] [w]ill my acts save the world? Maybe they won't. But ask, do my actions match up with what I most deeply believe is right and good? This is our calling—the calling for you and me and everybody else in the room: To do what is right, even if it does no good; to celebrate and care for the world, even if its fate breaks our hearts. (Dean Moore 2011)

She explains moral reasoning further:

> [w]hat I want to tell the student [which is relevant to all] is that there is a huge, essential middle ground between hope and despair. This is not acting-out-of-hope, or failing-to-act-out-of-despair, but acting out of virtue, an affirmation of who we are and what is worthy of us as moral beings. This is integrity, which is consistency between belief and action. To act lovingly because we love. To act justly because we are just. To live gratefully because this life is a gift. (*Ibid.*)[15]

Importantly, Dean Moore and others recognise new cultural activity is the necessary but overlooked complement to scientific consensus of the unfolding environmental emergency. Dean Moore and others argue culture is the critical behaviour-changing lever to re-frame industrial society's relations to the Earth. (*Ibid.*) In an interview with author Derrick Jensen, she identifies that the values that build 'social tipping points' primarily arise in on-going, 'lived' cultural activities, and that this has always been the case in past social change movements: for emancipation, civil rights, and women's rights (Jensen and Dean Moore, 2014). Stephen Jenkinson, palliative grief counsellor and author of *GriefWise* (Jenkinson, 2015) sees ignoring the ecocidal impact we are having on the planet relates to how Western culture denies death, and explains that we need to more fully understand that meaning for humanity is made when 'the debt we owe to what gives us life' is fully acknowledged (2013). Similarly, Dean Moore (2016, part II, section 9) concludes a 'collective [moral] outrage' is required when modern society fails to recognise the generosity of the Earth that gives us life.[19] We must understand too, that if we ignore all our amassed scientific knowledge and do not act, we become complicit with this destructive industrial culture.

Clarifying the morality of a societal response, Dean Moore and others argue that culture activity (in the arts, humanities, religions, and other cultural traditions) is the key mechanism in generating new social values to foster positive societal behaviour change toward our environments (Dean Moore and Nelson, 2011; Dean Moore 2010, 2011, 2014, 2016). Dean Moore specifically articulates art's societal value-making potential for a 'resilient future' in a useful video summary:

> [t]hese are powerful ways to connect to the values we live by, whether they are values of community, connection and

collaboration, or of the dominant narrative of commodity and consumerism. Having an "art-shaped space" allows us to dream and experience empathy and make meaning (Dean Moore 2014a).

However, a cultural response to this planetary emergency first requires recognising and developing the values, and hence morals, that sustain life. In *Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril* (2011) Dean Moore and Michael Nelson bring 'together the testimony of over 80 visionaries—theologians and religious leaders, scientists, elected officials, business leaders, naturists, activists, and writers', to argue moral reasoning, informed by environmental science, is vital to engendering societal action in this age of planetary peril.[16] I share Dean Moore and Nelson's (2011) key moral arguments' (Fig. 6) below so those working in the art and wider cultural spheres may clearly understand the moral motivations for eco-socially engaged art practice and actions.

Fig. 4. Some of the key 100 moral statements of value to guide our moral actions for our environments collected by philosophers Kathleen Dean Moore and Michael Nelson (2011).

Importantly, Dean Moore's views in recognising the critical importance of cultural activity to foster new life-sustaining values are supported by advances from neuroscience and from new understandings of empathy, which I discuss below.[17]

Drawing together insights from cognitive linguistics, cognitive psychology and recent neuroscience, George Lakoff (2010) argues that we navigate the world through learned neural 'frames' of reference (p.71). He identifies that society's current 'frames' obscure our understanding of the unprecedented global environmental realities caused by modern society. Like Dean Moore and others, Lakoff stresses cultural activity with factual information as being critical to evolve neural 'frames' that recognise and contextualise environmental knowledge. He explains cognitive understanding of our place in the world develops not on reason or evidence alone:

> frame-circuits are directly connected to emotional regions of the brain. Emotions are an inescapable part of normal thought. Indeed, you cannot be rational (a neurological impossibility apparently) without emotions. (*ibid*. p.72)

Lakoff further contends this research also confirms the difference between previous successful Civil Rights and Feminist movements, and why many have not engaged with today's worsening ecological realities. He argues the Civil Rights and Feminist movements developed new cognitive frames employing both subjective and objective information for their audiences. The cultural activity of these movements— the songs, poetry, art and stories, made new ideas of equality, personal and engaging, and helped to rapidly spread these new cognitive frames across societies. Cultural activity, Lakoff argues, is critical to successfully overcome previously dominant and erroneous frames of reference that have disregarded the importance of the non-human world.

In the same way, political advisor and author Jeremy Rifkin in *The Empathic Civilization* (2009), concludes this new science explains why relying solely on reductive science and faith belief systems led to humanity's loss of identification with the natural world. Rifkin's animation *The Empathic Civilization* (RSA, 2010) (below) gives a useful overview and contextualises cultural activities' importance to foster new empathetic values for our environments.

Fig. 5 *The Empathic Civilization* – a RSA animation of the key findings of Jeremy Rifkin's book of the same name (2010) https://youtu.be/l7AWnfFRc7g

In the next section, I explore research that identifies what type of art activity encourages responsibility to our environments.

2.2 + How does art encourage care toward our environments?

Governments, the environmental movement and concerned communities should recognise and engage the arts as one vehicle for the transition to an ecologically sustainable society and in articulating change in ethical frameworks and belief systems. It is likely that the arts sector will be an important structural component of ecologically sustainable societies in the future.

David, J. Curtis; Nick Reid and Ian Reeve (2014)
'Towards Ecological Sustainability:
Observations of the Role of the Arts'

Recent sociological research (Kagan & Kirchener 2008; Kagan, 2011; Curtis & Aguila 2013; Curtis *et al.,* 2014) has clarified the most effective art activity for promoting responsible behavioural change toward our environments and how it may be incorporated into cultural policy. These are relatively new understandings. Generally, it is understood that there are four ways of changing peoples' behaviour: (1) laws and regulation; (2) information; (3) community development; and (4) morals and ethics (Curtis *et al.,* 2014, p.9). The first two are the commonly used avenues to direct public understanding, but Curtis *et al.*, 2014, demonstrate in a comprehensive five-year study,[18] the overlooked and significant role art has in community development and in the fostering of new environmental values, morals and practices.

Understanding the factors that influence developing responsible environmental behaviour helps pinpoint art's significant if under-utilised potential. Curtis *et al.*, 2014 pp.2-4, determine the following factors as critical for societal behavioural change:

- values, beliefs and attitudes
- awareness of consequences
- self-concept
- unfreezing habits
- social norms
- physical structures

Positive change in the above factors, as a result of art activity, were observed in a range of urban and rural creative environmental projects in Australia (Curtis *et al.,* 2014). Involving visual art, sculpture, music, performance, community art and writing, the researchers summarised the observations of farmers, scientists, artists, performers, extension officers, community groups, schools and tertiary institutions involved in exemplary environmental projects. This research confirmed Curtis' earlier work that participation in art-based environmental events can lead to learning and spreading the environmental message (2007, cited in Curtis *et al.,* 2014, p.10).

More research needs to happen to quantify the long term behavioural effects of such art activity on audiences, but Curtis *et al.,* 2014 comprehensive research reminds us of the power of art to persuade social behaviour.

Furthermore, if we doubt arts influence in society, Curtis *et al.,* 2014, remind us that art activity is integral to propaganda and advertising (with creative actions sometimes being suppressed by authoritarian governments) (p.8).

Curtis *et al.,* 2014, use the key findings of their research to develop a graphic model that simplifies understanding of how art activity in our communities leads to wider macro-level societal behavioural change toward more life-sustaining living (Fig. 6).

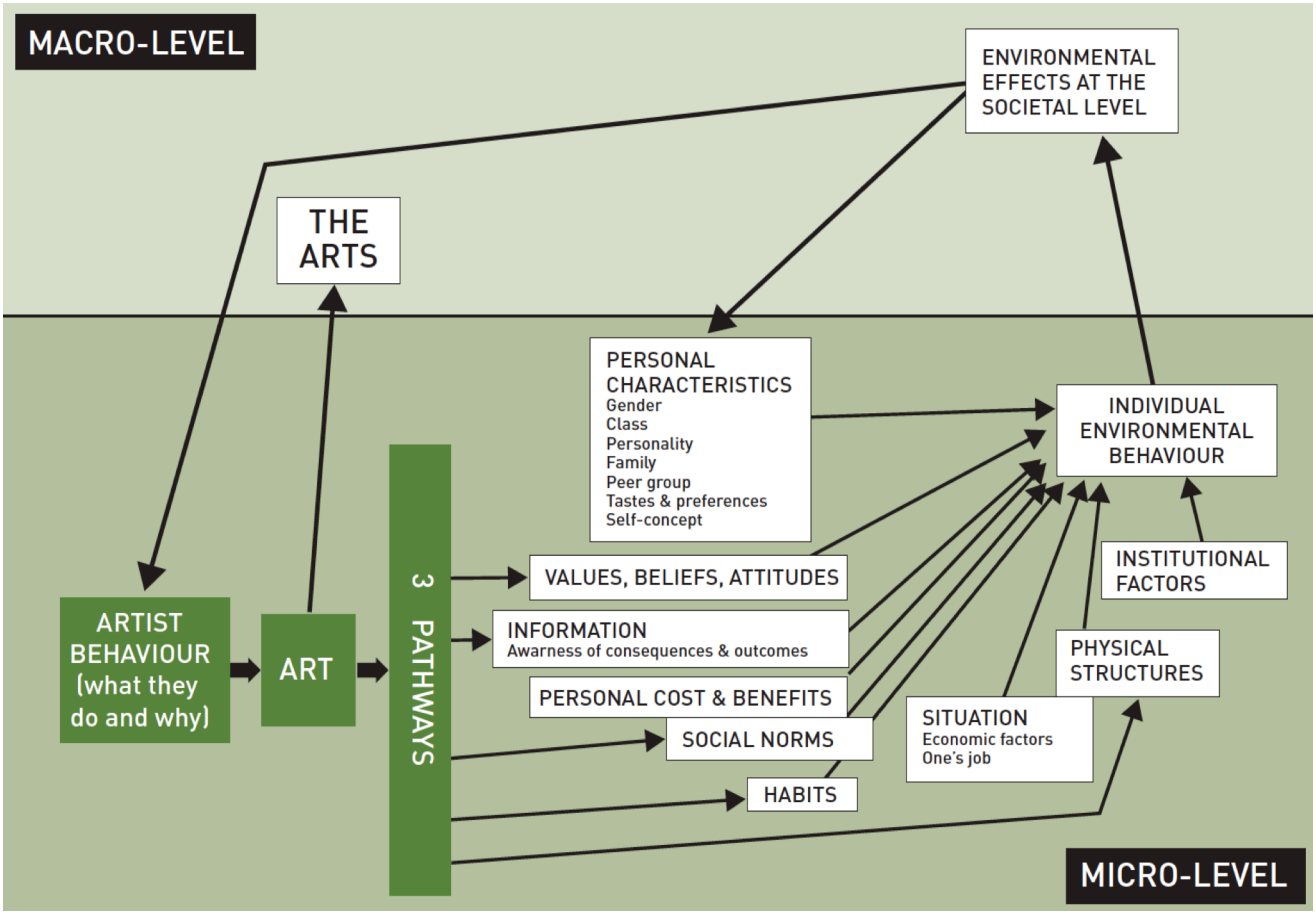

Fig. 6. Model of how environmental behaviour in our communities can be shaped by art activity to effect wider societal change. Curtis, 2007; cited in Curtis et al., 2014, p.10.

Particular art activity helps change societal beliefs and values through three main pathways: (1) communicating information in engaging ways, (2) increasing understanding and empathy for the limitations of the natural world, and (3) when art is included in sustainable development projects and infrastructure (fig. 7).

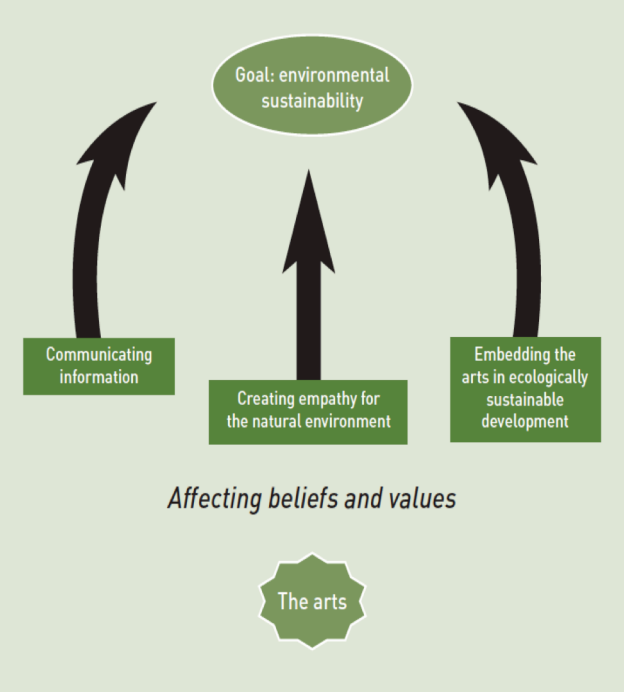

Fig 7. The three pathways through which the arts help achieve ecological sustainability (Curtis *et al.*, 2014, p.9).

In the diverse art world, Curtis *et al.,* (2014) recognise that art activity for an environmental context may span more than one of these pathways (p.9). Yet, it is helpful to look at these three pathways, in turn, to identify what type of art activities are most effective and why. In the first pathway, art that communicates information can be viewed as didactic - primarily educational. Here, visual and performing arts excel in their ability to synthesise knowledge in creative ways to engage audiences (*ibid*, p.8).

In the second pathway, art that increases environmental empathy may arise from some artists, musicians, writers, photographers, sculptors, makers and performers' practices. Their work may explicitly or intuitively reveal life-sustaining values if they choose natural, local materials and reflect on, or work directly in environments (*ibid*, p.9). Such works, or the aesthetic language used by such practitioners, may be more abstract or emotional, but as noted above, this is an important means to develop new frames of environmental knowledge for audiences.[19] The researchers note how large art-environment celebratory events can have a 'snowball effect', where 'participation leads to learning, performance leads to expanding the message, which leads to more participation' (*ibid*, p.10). Importantly, but not widely acknowledged, in Carlow and across Ireland, there are established creative practices that operate in these ways.

The third pathway, involves art activity that tackles both knowledge-making and solution-building scenarios. Some community art projects excel in inclusive eco-social problem solving and may contribute to engaging grass-root knowledge and initiatives (*ibid*). The third pathway is also associated with long term, but lesser known ecological art practices, that have been developing at the margins of contemporary art practices since the early 1970s.

Ecological art, or eco-social art practices (as they operate in a similar participatory way to social (socially engaged) art practice), utilise a creative practitioner's lifeworld knowledge and connect knowings from non-art spheres, like ecology, sustainability, politics, energy, food and fuel production. With community participation and audience development, such practices develop valuable life-sustaining new thinking and practices toward specific contexts and bioregions. For example, the author of this study has developed an ongoing transversal eco-social art project in a small wood in South Carlow since 2008. In my practice, I employ artistic, political and scientific knowings through interactions with professionals from

non-art fields, to engagingly communicate an alternative to clearfell, monoculture forestry[20] for local and secondary audiences.

Furthermore, ecological art practice has deeper implications for education as a whole. As it routinely synthesises many artistic strategies and art genres[21], with a transversal way of operating across diverse knowledge domains, it can reflect a more ecological way of being in the world. In this way, eco-social art practice is increasingly being viewed as an interdisciplinary-lifeworld experience model toward challenging the fundamentals of education toward an eco-pedagogy (Richard Kahn, 2010; Charles Garioan, 2012; Helen and Newton Harrison, 2016 [fig. 8]). In other words, developing eco-literacy and new ways to relate to the world via transversal, transdisciplinary practices, is increasingly viewed as necessary across all education. Elsewhere, examining how art activity leads to new understandings of sustainability, art and action research scholars, Chris Seeley and Peter Reason (2008), recognise art practices effectively translate critical 'real-world' experiential knowledge into engaging creative works and practices for audiences (my doctoral eco-social art practice research details why participatory action research is a valuable methodological approach to better articulate these important but often multi-dimensional transversal practices[22]).

However, it is important to note from my practice research and experience, and others' research (Curtis *et al.,* p.10), that valuable community art and ecological art practices often fail to be accepted as legitimate art practices, compared to more traditional art endeavours. A disturbing absence of ecoliteracy in art education no doubt hinders the art world's appreciation of this important field, but some suggest that these practices' ability to politically challenge the status quo also leads to difficulties (*ibid*). This lack of recognition, although potentially improving in Ireland, as some newer Art Council and Create Ireland grants and initiatives support broader, long term social art projects, has considerable implications for practitioners obtaining adequate funding to support their work. Such funding, while welcome, is nevertheless a precarious means for sustaining creative practices[23]. In the next section, I discuss important art and economic research that observes that sustaining artists' livelihoods directly fosters sustainability learning in our communities.

Fig. 8. Helen and Newton Harrison's new book *The Time of the Force Majeure* (2016) 'offers a 21st-century manifesto from the pioneers of the eco-art movement. Since the 1970s Helen and Newton Harrison have been creating art inspired by the earth. They established a worldwide network among biologists, ecologists, architects, urban planners, politicians, and other artists to initiate collaborative dialogues about ideas and solutions which support biodiversity and community development.'

2.2.1 + Supporting sustainable art livelihoods fosters sustainable communities

We need a new story about art and sustainable development that starts with artists and the places and communities in which they live. That recognises how they breathe particular kinds of life into the places where people congregate and come together. That demystifies their involvement in an informal economy exchanging skills, ideas and materials. That shows their role in helping communities see the often-unseen 'livelihood assets' around them that can bring them adaptability and resilience. That shows the type of 'social learning' and innovation made possible when people, ideas and imagination come together. What could be more important, at a time when the types of exchange facilitated by the economy provide such poor ways of valuing and growing what really matters?

MMM, EXCHANGE & new economics foundation (nef), (2013) p.9

An important document that argues sustainable development in our communities is substantially related to our creative practitioners achieving sustainable livelihoods is the UK report 'The Art of Living Dangerously' (MMM, EXCHANGE, & new economics foundation (UK), 2013). Key recommendations for proposing sustainable livelihoods for artists requires a significant reframing of how we understand the role of art in our communities. Instead of viewing art, as has recently has been championed here in Ireland and abroad, as indicating local economic growth potential (*ibid*, p.32), the authors argue that art practitioners embedded in specific contexts and communities can foster valuable ideas and practices of eco-social resilience for their audiences.

In the context of sustainable development, greater understanding is needed to place a value on what artists do. While not within the scope of the Creative Carlow Futures report to devise an economic model for supporting sustainable artists' livelihoods, the research and particularly the summary diagram (Fig. 9) from the 'The Art of Living Dangerously' report are useful to confirm key mutual benefits: how sustaining artists' livelihoods stimulate local communities toward new life-sustaining values. Further study is necessary, and this research would complement equitable pay for artist's policy, that has begun to be addressed recently in County Carlow and across Ireland. Also developing, are critical arguments from Paul O'Brien[24] and others, on the benefits of a universal basic income (UBI) for a more equitable society. O'Brien argues UBI would benefit creative workers (O'Brien, 2017, pp. 52-55) and the environment (pp.106-109). While no one can as yet predict how UBI will ultimately affect society, growing international discourse about the unsustainability of inequitable wealth distribution indicates that some form of UBI will be inevitable (O'Brien, 2017, personal communication). O'Brien explains that as UBI departs from a capitalist worldview that it would 'make a critique of [unsustainable] industrialism…' more likely (*ibid*, p. 106), and 'an ecological mindset more probable' (*ibid*, p. 108).

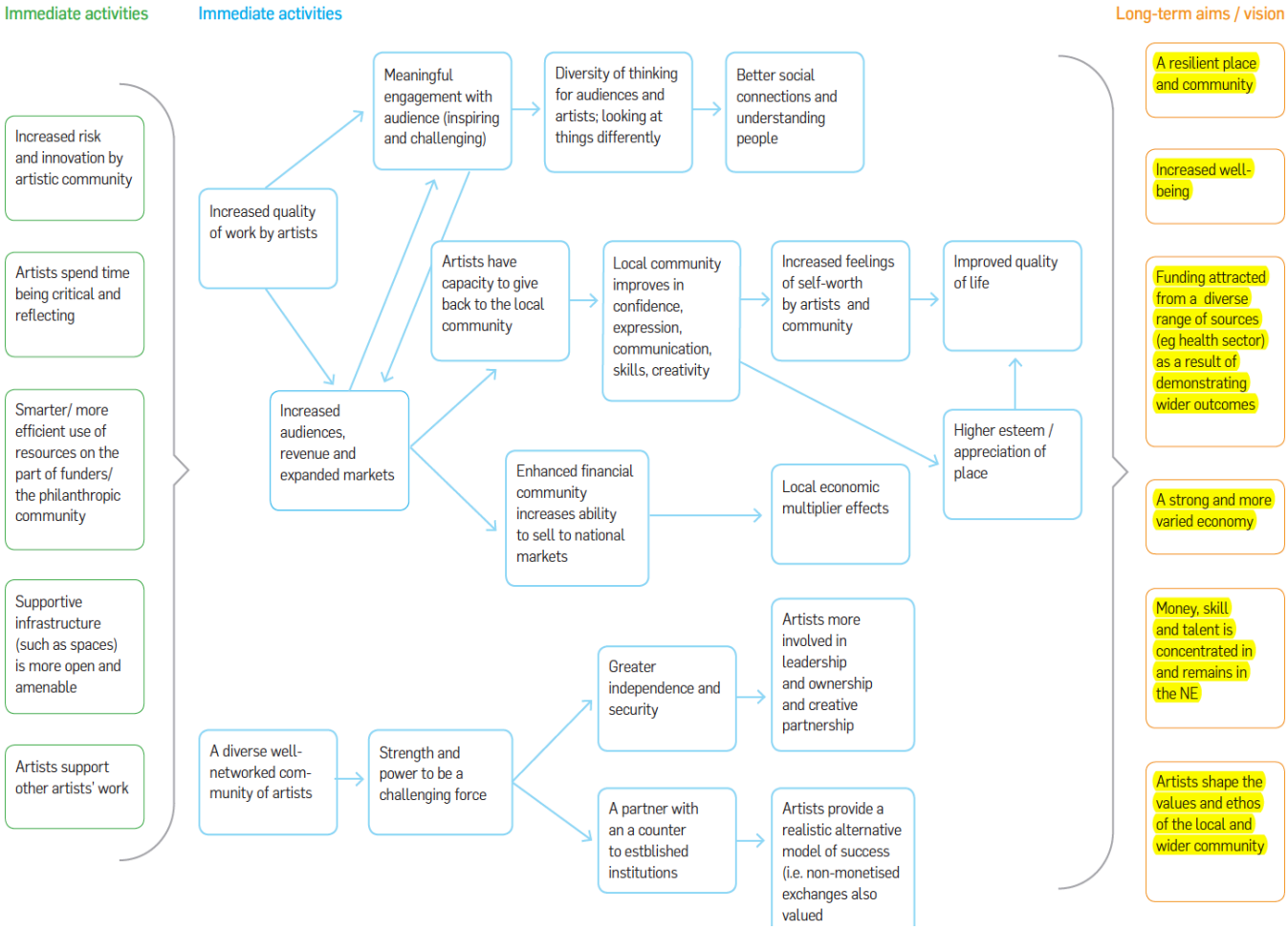

Fig. 9. A vision for a thriving community of artists contributing and inspiring a more sustainable community. [The author has highlighted the long-term benefits.] MMM (Mission Models Money), Exchange, and NEW ECONOMICS FOUNDATION (nef) (2013, p. 27).

In all, I believe the information and graphics in this section are a useful means to understand how particular art activity has an important, if under-acknowledged role, to motivate audiences toward life-sustaining knowledge. However, working in an ecological way means that we need to explore financial supports to support creative practitioner's often long-term eco-social projects. To conclude, we need to reframe the role of art in society. Implementing these ideas will have immense quality of life benefits for us all, as Curtis *et al.*, (2014) describes: '[f]ar from being a sacrifice, living lightly on the planet can increase one's quality of life and sense of well-being.' (p. 11) And, in making the environment necessarily central in our culture for long term sustainability, they conclude: '[t]he arts can help make this behaviour attractive in many ways.' (p.11)

In the next section, I identify key international cultural policy developments toward sustainability and review how significant art and sustainability programmes in England and Scotland have developed.

3

Review of International research, policy and programmes for art and sustainability

> In all spheres of life and art, it is time to acknowledge the intimate connectivity of humans to one another, and to the ecosystem as a whole. The challenge for the arts now is to recognise that sector leadership, in the absence of robust political, regulatory or financial interventions, is critical, and that this is not an issue that can be left to others.

International Federation Arts Councils & Creative Agencies (IFACCA), 2014. *The Arts and Environmental Sustainability: an International Overview*, D'Art Report 34b. Co-funded by the Irish Art Council and Canada Council for the Arts, p.5

+ Developments in international cultural policy for sustainability

3.1

As a result of a large array of efforts internationally, especially since 2000 – from local to international-scale, and involving scholars, practitioners, planners, and policy-makers at various government levels – culture is gradually becoming recognised in principle as a cross-cutting issue in local/urban sustainable development.

Duxbury *et al.*, 2016, 'Why must Culture be at the Heart of Sustainable Urban Development? Global Network of Cities, Local and Regional Governments (UCLG), p.7

In this section, I give a brief overview of important international cultural policy for sustainability developments that are relevant to County Carlow, and Ireland (readers can pursue more detailed information in the endnotes).

Today, two significant global policy directives are guiding nation states to act swiftly for sustainability: first, the United Nations *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*[25] (2015), presently being translated for the European context[26], and the newly announced draft *Global Pact for the Environment*[27] (IUCN[28] World Commission on Environmental Law & *Club des Juriste*[29], 24 June, 2017), championed by French President Emmanuel Macron and other leaders including Former Irish President, UN Human Rights Commissioner and the UN 2016 Special Envoy on *El Nino* and Climate Change, Mary Robinson. Robinson was invited to speak at the launch of the *Global Pact for the Environment* and spoke of the necessity of a coherent and robust legal framework to guide the world toward sustainability and intergenerational justice (Robinson, 2017). Positively reflecting on these developments, International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) commentators explain the *Global Pact for the Environment*, drawn up by many leading judges, will be a legally-binding framework to support the implementation of the SDGs in all UN country jurisdictions (IUCN, 2017). The urgency to address environmental degradation effectively is emphasised when Macron indicates he will present the *Global Pact for the Environment* for full adoption by the UN General Assembly in September 2017.

These international policies will shortly direct national and regional policy development in Ireland. *Agenda 2030* outlines significant Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for all signatory countries (fig.10) to address the eco-social challenges facing humanity, and builds on the previous Millennium Developments Goals (MDGs) agreed at the beginning of this century (fig. 11 below).

The global network of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG, www.uclg.org) is the lead network and knowledge transfer organisation that informs and supports Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) on how to engage local communities toward achieving SDGs.

Fig 10. The Second World Assembly of Local and Regional Governments (LRGs) to the *Third United Nations Conference on Housing and Sustainable Urban Development - Habitat III*. 16 October 2016, Quito, Ecuador (UCLG, 2017, p.).

UCLG argue that local and regional government agencies, such as Carlow's Local Authority, have a major role in the learning and localising of international goals for the implementation of the SDGs (UCLG, 2017, p.5). Sharing this information with local cultural actors will be crucial for local implementation of sustainability goals.

Fig 11. Comparison of the earlier *Millennium Development Goals* (MDGs) with today's *Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals* (SDGs) (UCLG, 2017, p)

Grouping the 17 SDGs around 'Sustainable Development' in the graphic below (fig. 12) shows the five themes or the 'five P's' that *Agenda 2030* supports: the 'people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership' (*ibid.* p.14). A much greater emphasis on environmental conditions is evident in comparison to the earlier MDGS: five of the *Agenda 2030* 17 SDGs focus on the planet (water and sanitation, sustainable consumption, fighting climate change, marine and terrestrial ecosystems), whereas in 2000, only 1 MDG focused on the planet and it was extremely broad (sustainable development), (*ibid*, p. 16).

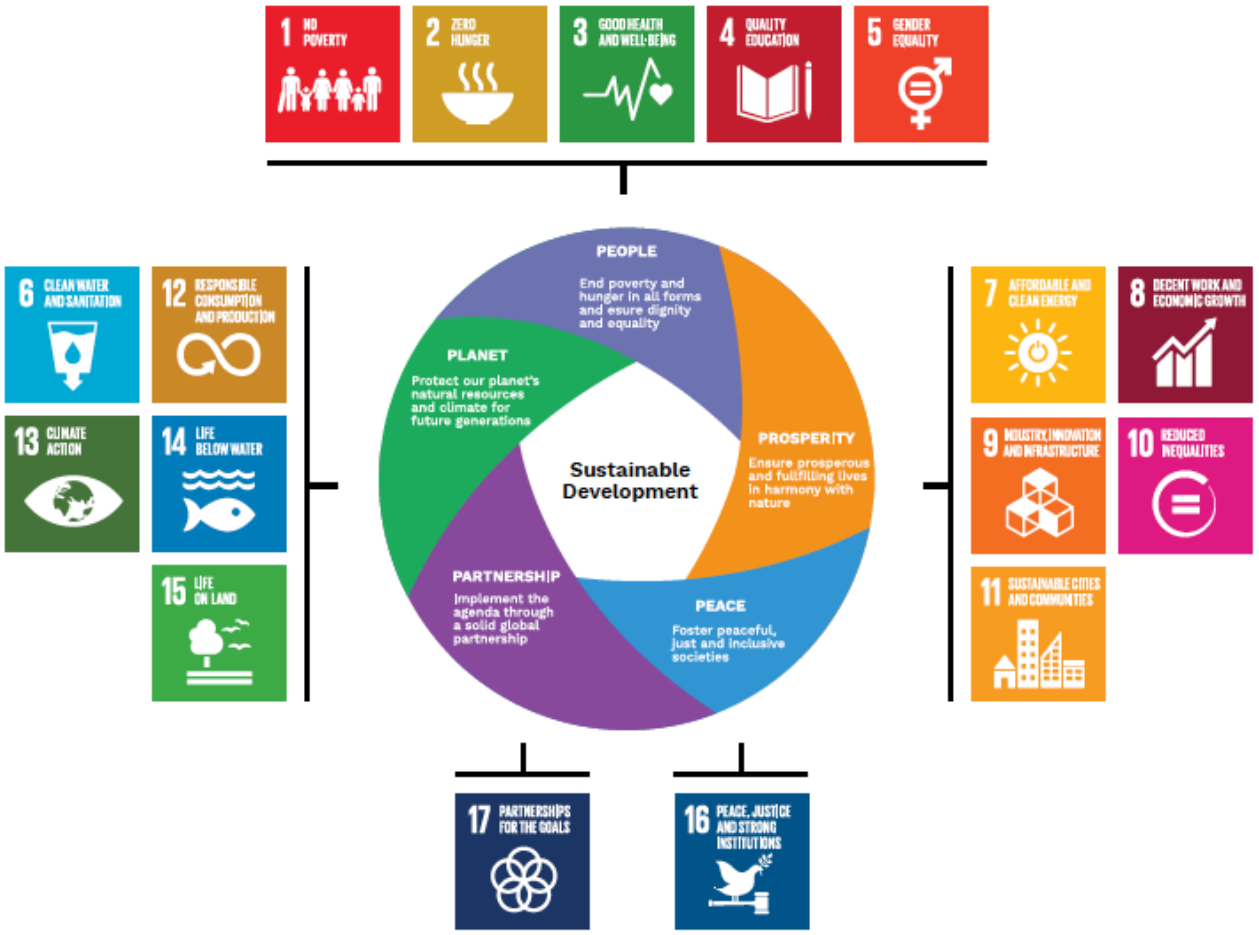

Fig 12. A visualisation of the five themes, or five 'P's' that the UN *Agenda 2030* (2015) 17 Sustainable Development Goals hopes to address: for the planet, people, prosperity, peace and partnership. (UCLG, 2017)

Fi

Useful for Carlow, and for Ireland, is the new UCLG (2017) *Learning Module 1:Localising the SDGs guide*. While designed for Local and Regional Governments, it also appears to be a significant information resource for cultural institutions developing sustainability policy (its presents education and awareness-raising information, and monitoring and review strategies[31)]. Such a guide may also give a wider social and political context for creative practitioners to understand how their local practices intersect with global concerns. Importantly, UCLG recognise a key factor to align local and regional planning toward SDGs 'will be to 'harness the power of culture to make the SDGs engaging' (Duxbury *et al.*, 2017, p.24). UCLG researchers, state:

> [t]here exist a myriad of activities that can be undertaken to raise awareness among the population and harness the power of local culture. Such activities include concerts, bike rides, campaign buses, fairs, events showcasing success stories, award ceremonies, and collaboration with well-known figures (e.g.: actors, musicians, sportspeople, writers, and photographers) or foundations that can act as ambassadors for the SDGs (*ibid*, p.25)

Importantly, since 2010, the UCLG's Agenda 21 for Culture Committee strongly promotes culture[32] as 'the fourth pillar of sustainable development[1]' (alongside environmental responsibility, economic health and social equity) (fig. 13).

Fig. 13. Cover of the landmark UCLG 2010 report.

However, understanding culture as the essential 4th pillar of sustainability to engage a wide public is not widely known in sustainable development or environmental policy spheres, either overseas or nationally. However, high-level arguments and research by UCLG and other leading cultural networks in the last decade, stress that 'culture ultimately shapes what we mean by development and determines how people act in the world.' (UCLG, 2010, p.4) Such a position is firmly supported in cultural policy leadership internationally[33].

In 2013, the foremost cultural networks (IFACCA, UNESCO, UCLG's Agenda 21 for Culture, Culture Action Europe [CAE], Network of European Museums Organisations [NEMO], International Music Council, ICOMOS – International Council on Monuments and Sites and others) united ahead of the UN's *Agenda 2030* adoption to develop a global campaign *The Future We Want Includes Culture* (IFACCA *et al.,* 2015). Representing 900 cultural organisations and thousands of citizens from 120 countries, the campaign and its Declaration called for culture to be comprehensively included in the post-2015 SDG Outcome Document. Signatories to the outcome document submitted to the 70th UN General Assembly reiterated that:

> [c]ulture is one of the four dimensions of sustainable development, and is as essential as its economic, social and environmental dimensions. Holistic and integrated development will only be achieved when the values of creativity, heritage, knowledge and diversity are factored into all approaches to sustainable development. This means guaranteeing the availability and accessibility of cultural infrastructure (such as, but not limited to, libraries, museums, theatres, community centres, arts education centres) and the implementation of long-term cultural programmes and projects. (IFACCA, *et al.*, 2015)

As culture was completely missing from the earlier MDGs Document, drawn up for the year 2000, this global campaign for culture's role to be prioritised in *Agenda 2030* recognises:

> that global expenditure on development over the next 15 years will be defined by the final goal document to be agreed by UN Member States in coming months. If culture is not mentioned, it will be extremely difficult for countries to elaborate policies and provide funds for projects that rely on culture's role as a driver and an enabler of sustainable development.' (*ibid.*)

UCLG researchers further detail how they see the cultural sector will respond in the coming decades in a recent report:

> [w]e believe that the key actions for local sustainable development in the next decades will be located in the interconnections among civic domains, interlinking concerns such as heritage, housing, physical planning, inclusion, mobility, culture, nature, resilience, and governance. Positive transformations will be generated through the interrelation and integration of these domains. In these approaches, the incorporation of cultural considerations will be key to ensuring that the paradigm of sustainability is meaningful to people, incorporating local histories and knowledges, resonating with local identities, and truly building from the aspirations of local communities.
>
> At the same time, culture must not be "made invisible" through integrative approaches. The distinctive features and benefits of cultural expressions, activities, and a diversity of approaches must be appreciated and nurtured, and culture and cultural heritage conserved and safeguarded through informed, intelligent, and sensitive cultural policies. (Duxbury *et al.,* [UCLG], 2016, p.9)

Recognising that culture has a major role in the implementations of SDGs is a live debate. During July 2017, Culture Action Europe (CAE), an umbrella organisation monitoring the European Commission's progress to establish culture's role in delivering SDGs across Europe, has seen some advances in general understanding for culture's role in sustainability, in the European Parliament (CAE, 2017[35]). However, in the European Commission's 'Communication on the Next Steps for a Sustainable European Future' (2017), culture's key role for societal change was again absent. Lobbying for culture's recognition is continuing for the 2nd working strand for European post-2020 policies[36].

Nevertheless, UCLG researchers Duxbury *et al.*, (2016) recognise this oversight and explain that for many in non-cultural policy development, the 'relationship between culture and sustainable development is not thoroughly understood, and the integration of culture within broader holistic urban planning and development continues to be an issue due to both conceptual and operational issues.' (p. 7) Importantly, UCLG researchers identify myths that routinely limit sustainability or planning policymaker's appreciation of culture's role in changing societal behaviour. They urge the use of evidence-based counter-narratives as means to operationalise and make visible culture's significant role (p. 11). I give an overview of these myths, as many are common to how people in Ireland regularly dismiss the value of culture.

UCLG researchers recognise 5 recurring myths limiting understanding of the importance of culture to change societal behaviour. The myths some erroneously believe about culture are that: 1) that culture is fixed and unchangeable, 2) or that local traditions are inherently the best and so must be respected and not changed, 3) or that culture reduces the pace of economic development, which must always be a priority above culture, 4) or that culture is a luxury that cannot compare to other local needs, and so, consequently, investment in culture should only be considered when other social needs are met, or that 5) culture should be left to the market and should only be invested in if there is an economic return.

UCLG researchers' counter-narratives are crucial to dismantle these limiting myths about culture's value. Summarising these counter-narratives the researchers discuss how history shows that thriving cultures always change over

time, and that current cultural identities are but a starting point. They remind us that the UN human rights framework mandates that new alternative ideas must be allowed to emerge and flourish, and point out if development is only understood in economic terms, it is neither effective or sustainable. Finally, they argue, if culture is viewed as a commodity or a "resource to attract investments and branding", only one dimension of culture's potential is being harnessed to the detriment of developing vibrant and life-sustaining communities (*ibid*, pp.12-13).

> **Cities use local cultural resources and creativity to inspire, catalyse, and drive social and economic change, enhancing local resiliency and development potential. Cultural actions and expressions can also catalyse environmental reclamation processes and inspire actions to improve environmental health and enhance social connections with the ecosystems of local places. Cultural activities and means for expression contribute to building capacities needed to achieve greater understanding and to generate transformative change in both urban and rural environments. (UCLG, 2016, p.10)**

The researchers also recognise operational challenges for accommodating culture in broader sustainability strategy which leads to more questions of how culture can be more integrated alongside other professions' contributions. While it is beyond the scope of this study to detail how these issues may be addressed, it is useful to keep in mind the four challenges the UCLG researchers have identified in limiting understanding of the value of culture (notwithstanding that in Ireland, a historic lack of cultural education and sector funding also hampers people valuing the importance of cultural activity). These researchers assess that culture may often not be included in sustainability policy because of:

1. LIMITATIONS DUE TO LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORKS, TARGETED POLICIES, BUREAUCRATIC SILOS, AND ADMINISTRATIVE RELUCTANCE
2. THE COMPLEXITY OF THE CULTURAL SECTOR AND THE CULTURAL FEATURES OF THE COMMUNITY
3. INADEQUACY OF INDICATORS, MEASUREMENT, AND EVALUATION OF PROGRESS AND IMPACTS
4. UNDERLYING ISSUES OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION, ATTENTION TO GENDER, AND OVERCOMING SEGMENTATION.

(*ibid*, pp. 14-15)

Importantly, the UCLG researchers recommend a number of key policy areas where culture can effectively promote local sustainability: 1) in programmes that develop local peace and social cohesion; 2) in cultural activities can foster entrepreneurial activity, creative goods, services and skills, generate income, employment and new businesses, although as discussed, supports must develop to offset the precarious nature of creative livelihoods; 3) in policy development where a 'cultural lens and assessment guide for all policy and development decisions can help identify and enhance local planning'; 4) in promoting cultural activities that promote citizenship and democracy at a local level, based on residency rather than national criteria — this is critical to support migrants, young people and women; and 5) by utilising local cultural and environmental heritage to examine and share valuable local memory, creativity and coexistence knowledge (pp.14-15).

The urgency to address the ecocrises that are unfolding indicates that the cultural sector, in Ireland and elsewhere, need to embrace and implement *Agenda 2030* and recent cultural policy research, even though political and international cultural debates continue. Looking at strategic Irish Art Council policy, there is currently a lack of detail in regards to eco-social sustainability, in both its *Making Great Art Work Three-Year Plan 2017-2019*

document and in the first ever national Irish cultural policy *Culture 2025- Éire Ildánach* (2016). As mentioned, in the latter there is little emphasis given that culture can significantly highlight our development of national sustainability. This lack of development is somewhat surprising as the Arts Council of Ireland co-funded a significant International Federation of Art Councils and Agencies (IFACCA) 2014 D'Art Report 34b on *The Arts and Environmental Sustainability: an International Overview*. The document was co-written by Alison Tickell, CEO and co-founder of the London-based art and sustainability charity Julie's Bicycle that through a partnership with Arts Council England is delivering a significant art and sustainability programme across the English cultural sector. Perhaps the Irish economic downturn, or a lack of knowledge of this area is hampering similar developments in Ireland. Also, as I write this document, there are significant reports on Ireland's poor climate change strategy from its present Government (Gibbons, 2017).

Scotland too, has a significant art and sustainability programme, Creative Carbon Scotland and dedicated staff, supported by Creative Scotland funding, which is encouraging to consider, for a nation of a similar population to Ireland. Creative Carbon Scotland Director Ben Twist, with considerable high-level cultural experience reports, however, that it was Scotland's clear national climate policy publicised throughout the country, that significantly influenced Creative Scotland's direction to develop art and sustainability policy and programmes (personal communication, November, 2016, Edinburgh). The delay and lack of priority given to Ireland's climate targets and general ecoliteracy in education and the stranglehold of the powerful agri-business lobby in Ireland has had significant effect in maintaining Ireland as a country little engaged with the unprecedented environmental concerns of this century (*ibid*).

However, it is important to note what legislative drivers are currently supported in Ireland. While this is not an exhaustive survey, Brian Sweeney from the Dublin-based energy company Evolved Energy Solutions, in conversation with Irish cultural festivals, noted key legislative drivers were: '*Ireland's National Energy Action Plan 2007 – 2020*, which has a 20% energy savings target in 2020 and aims to achieve a 33% reduction in public sector energy use [and] that large enterprises (250+ employees) must carry out an energy audit of their operations every 4 years.' (2015 http://www.juliesbicycle.com/latest/blog/8653-ee-music-workshop-dublin/ [Accessed 10 August 2017])

In summary, I believe the Creative Carlow Futures report information could contribute significantly to *Culture 2025- Éire Ildánach* (2016) (which is stated to be an evolving policy open to further contributions), and its sister Creative Ireland Programme. Such information would also appear to be highly relevant to the new *Framework for Collaboration: An Agreement between the Arts Council and the County and City Management Association*[37] (2016) strategy which also claims that:

> we believe the [Irish] arts, because they encompass a diversity of human experiences in a variety of forms, contribute directly to building cohesive and sustainable communities and to enhancing quality of life (p.2)

but which provides little strategic detail to support an effective national art and sustainability programme.

Furthermore, the information in this study could be a critical contribution from the culture sector to Ireland's first statutory *National Mitigation Plan* (NMP) published in July 2017 (fig. 14). For example, it may

inform the Irish Citizens' Assembly (part of the NMP's actions) "National Dialogue' invitation to Irish agencies and individuals in August, 2017 on '[h]ow the State can make Ireland a leader in tackling climate change' […] to engage the wider public on the issue of climate change' (The [Irish] Citizen's Assembly, 2017[38]) Second, it may inform the state's NMP 'proposals to establish regional climate action offices to coordinate Local Authority response to climate action' in 2018 (Irish Department of Communications, Climate Action and Environment, National Mitigation Plan, July 2017, p. 148)

In the next two sections, I briefly review England and Scotland's art and sustainability programmes. As both have established significant organisations and resources over the last decade, it is easy to imagine with Ireland's renowned creative sector, that if properly resourced and strategically directed, similar effective programmes could be delivered here to excite, engage and envision sustainability for Carlow's communities and elsewhere.

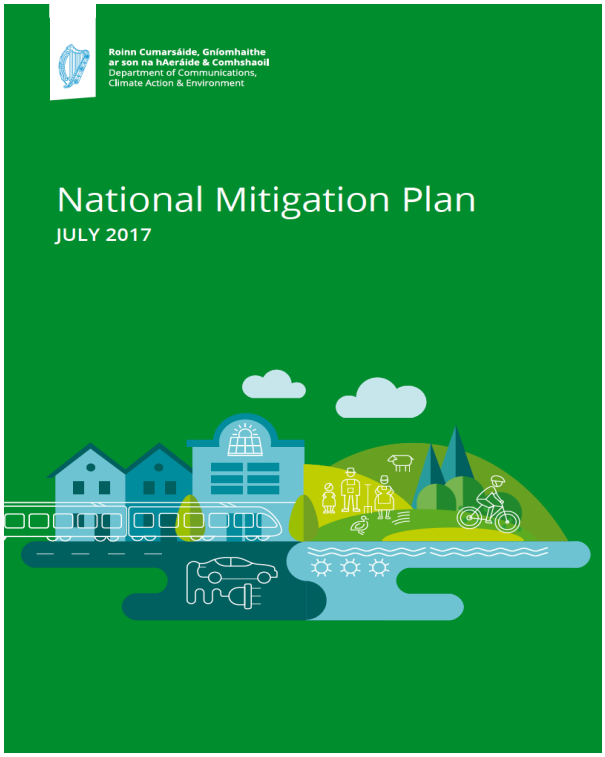

Fig.14. Ireland's first statutory plan to transition to a more sustainable future. Published July 2017, available at http://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/climate-action/topics/mitigation-reducing-ireland%27s-greenhouse-gas-emissions/national-mitigation-plan/Pages/default.aspx

Review of the Julie's Bicycle Art and Sustainability programme in England

3.2

"The power of the creative voice in amplifying the issue [of sustainability] is very strong"

Alison Tickell, CEO & co-founder Julie's Bicycle*

When every euro is important in cultural funding, it is striking to consider that Julie's Bicycle: Sustaining Creativity (JB), an initiative that grew from an English music festival engaged with climate concerns in 2007, has saved a significant £3.7m for the cultural sector. Most importantly, JB has helped the cultural sector reduce its carbon footprint by over 23, 000 tonnes CO_2. (JB's pioneering partnership with the Arts Council England has also provided substantial economic and environmental savings, see fig. 13). Energy audits and certification designed by JB, have now been adopted by over 3000 cultural institutions and organisations (including overseas). In addition, the breadth of programmes and resources developed by JB means that ideas and practices for sustainability have informed all areas of the creative community, which in turn, have engaged and inspired audiences and cultural policy-makers worldwide.

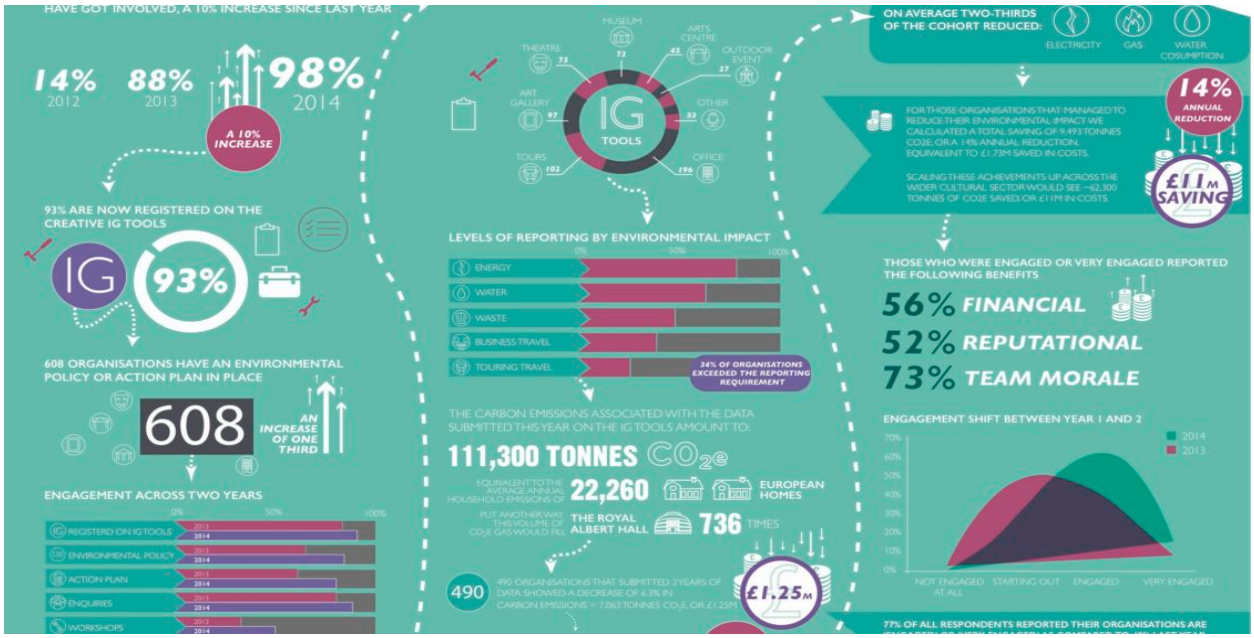

Fig. 15. Julie's Bicycle's mid-term 2015 financial and carbon saving for the English cultural sector since it partnered with Arts Council England. http://www.juliesbicycle.com/latest/news/5469-sustaining-great-art-mid-term-results-released-today/

Fig 16. An overview of the scope of Julie's Bicycle initiatives, from cultural sector energy saving to cultural sustainability policy development. See https://vimeo.com/169554048

JB's industry-recognised carbon calculators, its iG (industry green) tools, to identify and reduce creative industries energy and material costs appear essential for Carlow and Ireland, and interest from the Irish music and festival communities is already apparent; for example, Irish Green Councillor and sustainability coordinator for the Body & Soul festival, Claire Byrne, coordinated with JB and local energy specialists to present an 'Energy Efficient (EE) Music Culture' workshop in Dublin on 24 November 2015 (and similar to this report, concluding comments recognise the need for the Irish culture sector to become significantly engaged with sustainability (Julie's Bicycle, 2015)

Other key strands to JB's programme, and worthy of consideration for Carlow and Ireland, are the business models, support, and information resources JB has designed for each main art community: dance, design, fashion, festivals, film and TV, heritage, literature, museums, music, opera, orchestra, outdoor arts, theatre, venue and visual arts, (see http://www.juliesbicycle.com/resources)

JB has also pioneered cultural sustainability policy (and research) and has created a world-first strategy (now emulated in Scotland) that all organisations receiving Arts Council England funding (from 2012) must furnish an environmental report (fig x), which could be emulated in Ireland.

JB's mixed staff of artists, communicators, art policy-makers, energy analysts, and academics, also helps to identify and foster key partnerships with iconic and smaller cultural institutions, and find support from relevant institutions from the wider, public sector.

In summary, JB appear to be the key international organisation to learn from and to help inform a local and national art and sustainability strategy. Much more detail can be found on its website www.juliebicycle.com

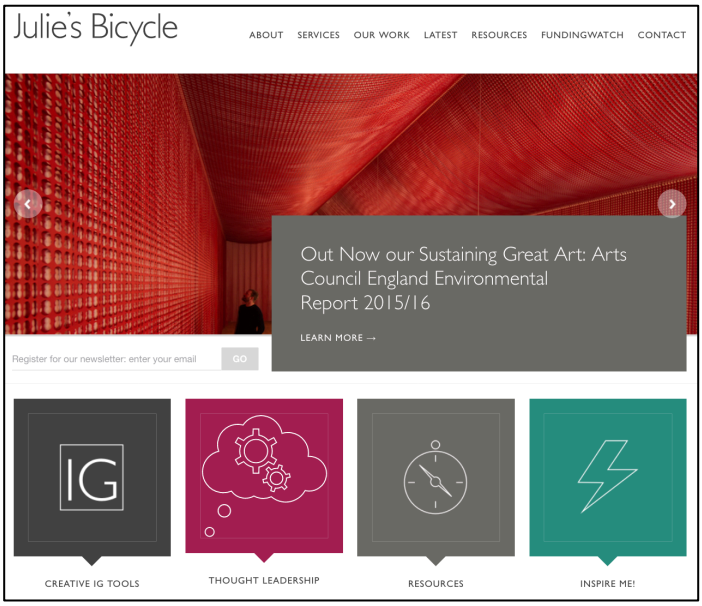

Fig. 17. The Julie's Bicycle website.

Review of Creative Carbon Scotland: Connecting Arts and Sustainability

3.3

> "Since Creative Carbon Scotland started the journey in 2011 to embed environmental sustainability within the arts and cultural sector in Scotland, the organisation itself has developed enormously. From aiming to help arts organisations to report their carbon emissions – no small task in itself but one which is well under way – we are now focusing on exploring the sector's role in transforming our society to address climate change. This is a much larger job but we believe that it offers great benefits for both the sector and society as a whole […] Finally, and crucially, [the cultural sector] also has a unique ability – indeed Brecht might say a duty – to imagine and experiment with alternative futures, question the status quo, see the world differently and explore the future with audiences and participants. Without the cultural sector playing its part in helping current and future society to move towards a more sustainable way of life, this essential shift will not happen."
>
> Creative Carbon Scotland (2017)

From 2011, key actors from the Scottish cultural sector have developed Creative Carbon Scotland as an effective art and sustainability programme to respond to national climate policy targets. Obviously informed by England's earlier established Julie's Bicycle, Creative Carbon Scotland (CCS) has developed similar strategy and programming strands to advise cultural institutions, cultural workers and develop sector policy on sustainability (fig. 18).

Since Scotland is a country with a similar population and cultural resources to Ireland, it is useful to reflect its key support and partnerships. CCS receives targeted funding from Creative Scotland (the Scottish Arts Council) and from the City of Edinburgh Council. CCS's founding partners include the Festivals Edinburgh, the Federation of Scottish Theatre, and the Scottish Contemporary Art Network, and it has sector support from Arts and Business Scotland, the Cultural Enterprise Office, the National Lottery and the Culture Republic agencies. Developing a strategy for Ireland would surely involve similar Irish organisations.

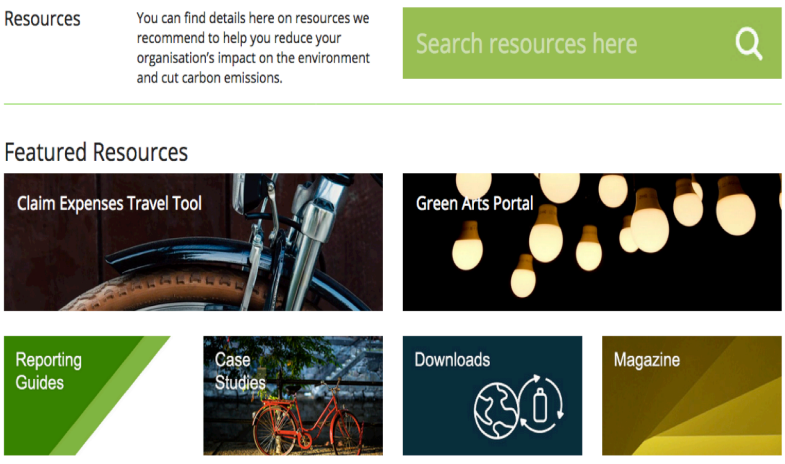

Fig. 18. Some of the featured resources for the culture sector that Creative Carbon Scotland has developed, there are many other projects, conferences, case studies and resources listed. Source: www.creativecarbonscotland.com/resources (2017)

CCS also encourage energy, waste, water and travel emissions reporting and are developing projected carbon management (future carbon accounting) for cultural Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) to reduce their energy costs and enhance their reputations as societal leaders for sustainability. Similar to England, since 2012, CCS works with Creative Scotland to assist Regularly Funded Organisations (RFO's) with mandatory carbon reporting to reduce their carbon footprints. The latest RFO 2015-2016 summary graphic shows the scale of increasing engagement from the cultural sector toward sustainability, as well as highlighting the improved financial savings and reduced environmental costs (Fig. 19)

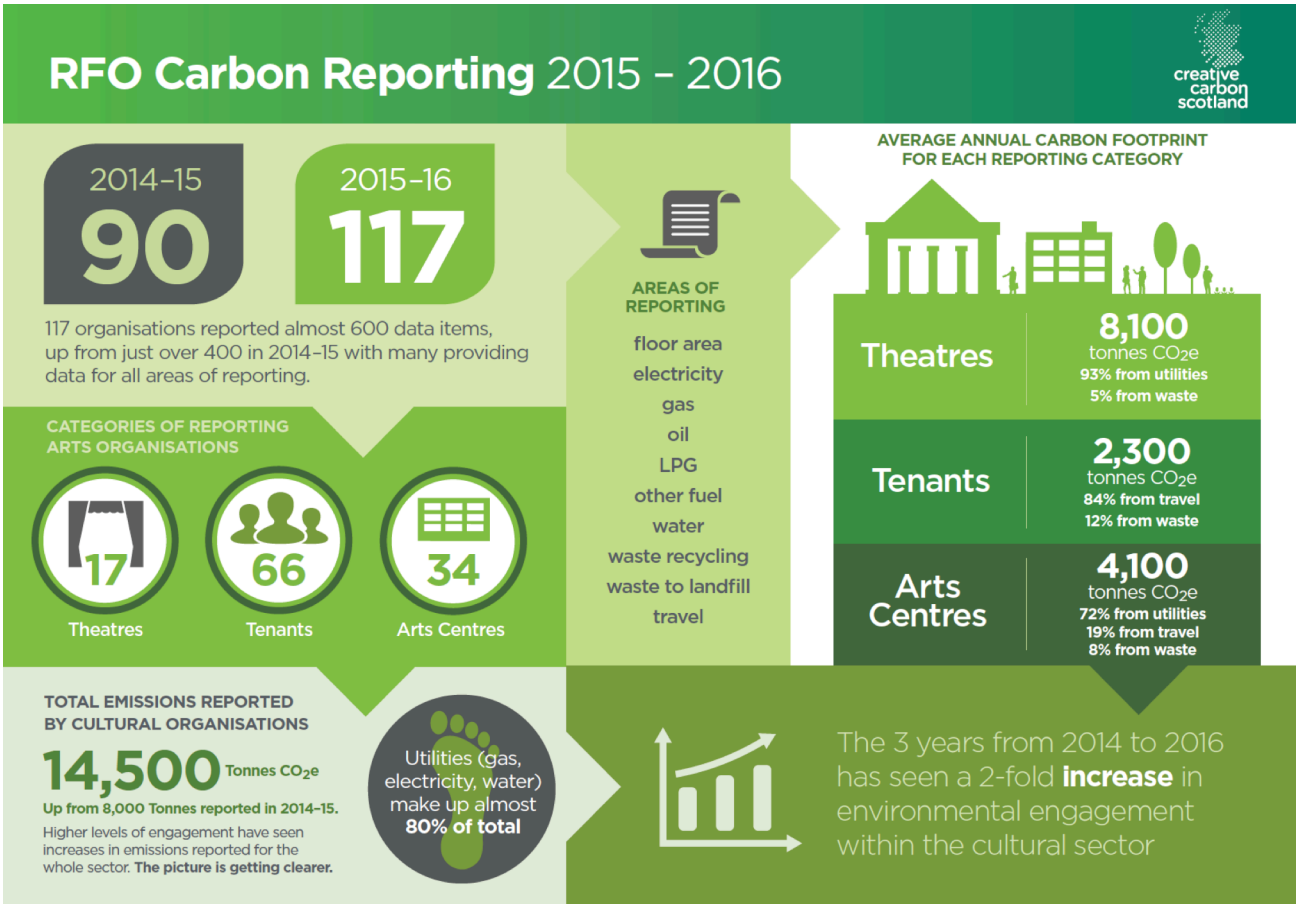

Fig. 19 Creative Carbon Scotland's RFO summary data. Carbon Reporting by Creative Scotland's Regularly Funded Organisations (RFOs) 2015–16 report, p.4.

Creative Carbon Scotland Director Ben Twist, reflecting on these figures, suggests the cultural sector is taking important first steps to lead the country toward greater sustainability (Twist, 2017). Twist also sees CCS, with its established partners, network and resources, will have a critical role in implementing the new Climate Change Act for Scotland, due in 2017.

Below is an overview of Creative Carbon Scotland's clients and activities to give an indication of what a fully-fledged, well-resourced art and sustainability programme may involve and support (Creative Carbon Scotland 2017):

‘Who Creative Carbon Scotland works with’

Creative Carbon Scotland works across the arts with individuals and organisations including:

- Artists, craftspeople, technicians and producers
- Visual art and craft galleries, studios and workshops
- Literature organisations, publishers and libraries
- Theatres
- Music venues
- Screen production companies and cinemas
- Touring companies
- National performing arts companies
- Festivals
- Arts agencies
- Funding bodies and local authorities

‘Creative Carbon Scotland’s Current work’

focusses on three fronts, believing that only by working across the realms of individuals, organisations and policy can real change take place.

Creative Carbon Scotland works with artists and other individuals who are interested in how environmental sustainability connects with their work, whether they work on their own or with or for larger organisations.

Creative Carbon Scotland provides Scottish arts organisations with training in carbon measurement, reporting and reduction. They support nearly 120 key organisations in mandatory carbon reporting to Creative Scotland, and work with Creative Scotland to develop their environmental sustainability policy for the organsiations they support. Many organisations use Creative Carbon Scotland’s counting tools and resources, including our the www.claimexpenses.com, which uses a web-based expenses claim system to track travel-related carbon emissions.

Creative Carbon Scotland works on policy and strategy with ‘influencing organisations’ which shape the landscape through their policies, their funding, the premises or resources they provide and the regulations or guidance they shape.

‘Creative Carbon Scotland’s Future work’

Creative Carbon Scotland are developing a programme of residencies, placing artists in both arts- and non-arts organisations, as we believe that the things artists know and they way they think and do things has a contribution to make to changing the way we organise our society which will help move it towards a more sustainable future.

They are developing an understanding of ‘metrics’ which connect raw carbon emissions to arts organisations’ activity, so that they can more effectively manage and reduce their environmental impacts.

In summary, I have only given a snapshot of all the activities, art conferences, art residencies, sustainability awards and strategies employed by Julie's Bicycle and Creative Carbon Scotland. Considering that Ireland is only starting to recognise the importance of public engagement for sustainability, as in its 2017 Citizen's Assembly call for a 'national dialogue' for climate, I would suggest further in-depth study of both of these organisations to assess what would be relevant to Ireland. For County Carlow, it may make sense to initially look to Creative Carbon Scotland for smaller scale initiatives although both organisations have an impressive range of experience, strategy and programming ideas.

+ Summary and Recommendations

4

In the last decade, there have been significant developments in England and Scotland's national cultural policy to foster cultural leadership in nation-wide dialogues about sustainable futures. This has resulted in international and local cultural research, strategic multi-stranded programmes, effective public partnerships and art education supports, which have fostered the cultural sectors in England and Scotland to engage the wider public toward sustainability.

My recommendations for County Carlow and Ireland's cultural policy developers builds from these examples and the research and teaching modules of the United Cities, Regional and Local Government (UCLG) Agenda 21 for Culture – Committee, and their efforts to translate the United Nation's Agenda 2030's Sustainability Goals for all nations (which Ireland recognises). As UCLG' cultural research confirms the critical role of culture to lead local social responses toward sustainability, I am highly convinced that County Carlow, and indeed, the Irish culture sector, could similarly partner with Ireland's science and sustainability sectors to lead crucial local and national dialogue about Ireland's future. Facts alone, as increasingly recognised in behavioural science, will not engage the hearts of citizens to change; it is creativity that is now seen as an essential component to inspire communities toward sustainability.

My key Creative Carlow Futures recommendations for County Carlow's art policy-makers, therefore, are as follows:

:

- to undertake a more detailed feasibility study with either Creative Carbon Scotland and/or Julie's Bicycle. This study would help to establish which strategies and creative programmes will be most relevant to engage Carlow's cultural institutions, cultural organisation and creative practitioners toward sustainability.

- while County Carlow will have its specific sustainability goals, the above research study could be used as a broad model for all counties across Ireland, in dialogue and partnership with the Irish Arts Council, Carlow Creative Ireland and the new partnership between the Irish Arts Council and the Irish County and City Management Association, and other relevant organisations;

- agree, as an urgent objective, given the scientific parameters of the unprecedented ecocrises and associated humanitarian issues, and with knowledge of international cultural policy research that confirms culture as the essential 4th pillar of sustainability, to contribute and support detailed sustainability policy and strategy to enhance the *County Carlow 2016-2021* Local Arts and Development Plan, and the national *Culture 2025 – Eire Ildanach policy,* and other relevant cultural policy;

- while the potential for the culture sector to lead a national dialogue is under-acknowledged and under-developed in 2017, nevertheless, it is important to stress partnership from the

culture sector and local authority arts offices as a necessity contribute to the State's 2017 National Mitigation Plan proposal to establish regional climate action offices in 2018, and to;

- explore the potential for partnership with third-level education institutions, sustainability organisations and leaders, eco-villages, and eco-art practitioners and eco-social art researchers, to communicate a programme of ecoliteracy for art workers, via an accessible, online learning platform (as in Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) to thereby offer immediate, accessible eco-education for the whole art sector; to include planetary boundary science, ethics and moral reasoning, eco-social art practice examples and research.

for County Carlow's art institutions and creative organisations:

- although not a legal requirement in Ireland, this report encourages local cultural institutions and creative organisations to explore and adopt energy and material audits developed by Julie's Bicycle and Creative Carbon Scotland; as a means to reduce energy and environmental costs, and thereby inspire Carlow communities with locally realised examples of sustainability.

and to Carlow creative practitioners:

- familiarise yourself with art and sustainability information for your creative discipline from the Julie's bicycle and Creative Carbon Scotland websites

- some may be interested in deeper, long term eco-social art practices; there are some recent publications, websites; also, the developing environmental humanities discipline can be a good source of critical information.

5 endnotes

1 Culture refers to the way we live in this world (UN, Mexico, 1982). Cultural activity is broad and can include traditions, the arts, sport, education, religious and spiritual beliefs and ways of relating to the natural world. In this report, culture is primarily associated with the arts, but sustainability values can be transmitted in all cultural spheres. Sustainability values in other spheres are to be encouraged but this is beyond the scope of this study.

2 Ecological art practice is a marginal field of contemporary art practice that I have been interested in since the late 1990s. Having a background in science research as well as contemporary art practice has underlined my interest in these practices. Such practices that navigate non-art spheres, like science, politics, social actions, radically challenge concepts of art practice, yet nevertheless are an increasingly important field of contemporary art practice.

2 See my practice and research based in South Carlow at www.hollywoodforest.com

3 Eco-social art practices (sometimes referred to as ecological art practices) weave artistic activity, life-world experience and non-art (often environmental, social justice and political) knowledge to bring together relevant and more life-sustaining values for specific communities and their environments. While still under-acknowledged in contemporary art, eco-social art practices offer important insights as to why cultural practitioners have a critical role for their communities to independently reflect on and inspire, envision and share more life-sustaining values in response to the unprecedented and growing eco-social challenges we face this century.

4 Wangari Maathai, a young Kenyan scientist and political dissident who, in the early1990s, was planting trees with some of Africa's poorest communities. She came to Britain to talk to activists after being arrested for trying to stop the destruction of Nairobi's largest park. Within half an hour she had probably changed the agenda for a generation of people who, until then, had barely considered human rights or the poor to be part of the environmental debate. Maathai was an emissary of the developing world, and spoke in horror about how western consumerism was devastating the world's remotest areas and poorest people. Those at the top of the pyramid, she said, were being blinded "by the need to acquire, accumulate and over-consume". I remember her saying: "They do not understand the limits to growth and they do not appreciate that they jeopardise the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs."

The message she brought was that any debate about the natural world should not just
be about science and parts-per-billion of obscure gases, or about genes or kilowatts, but must include developing countries and be rooted in justice, equity and the situation of the least advantaged. She went on to win the Nobel peace prize, and the planting of trees became a worldwide symbol of political hope and community regeneration. John Vidal, https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2016/dec/23/john-vidal-environmenteditor-greatest-job-on-earth

5 See www.culturefutures.org

6 Helping to understand the unsustainability of industrial culture as a whole and working out of various disciplines and perspectives, are writers, thinkers, educators, academics, and activists. They specifically explore the dissonance in contemporary industrial society that perpetuates the destruction of ecological systems. For instance, author Derrick Jensen in his many books, for example, *Strangely Like War: The Global Assault on Forests* (2004) to his latest *The Myth of Human Supremacy* (2016), comprehensively charts the eco-social violence and unsustainability of industrial growth culture.

7 Term from Sacha Kagan, see Kagan (2011).

8 See http://www.footprintnetwork.org

9 See environmental journalist John Gibbon's ongoing critique of the failure of Irish media and politicians to engage with these concerns at http://thinkorswim.ie

10 The 'Ecological Footprint', developed by the international award winning Global Footprint Network is a 'measurement of how much area of biologically productive land and water an individual, population or activity requires to produce all the resources it consumes and to absorb the waste it generates, using prevailing technology and resource management practices.' (http://www.footprintnetwork.org).

11 According to UN projection https://www.theguardian.com/global-development/2015/jul/29/un-world-population-prospects-the-2015-revision-9-7-billion-2050-fertility [Accessed 10 July 2017].

12 According to Wikipedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Holocene_extinction [Accessed 5July 2017].

13 http://www.huffingtonpost.com.au/2017/06/19/jane-goodalls-chilling-message-wehave-stolen-our-childrens_a_22489375/ [Accessed 11 July 2017].

14 A conclusion I reached at the end of my doctoral studies (Fitzgerald, 2017).

15 These quotes were re-printed in Dean Moore (2016).

16 We can witness moral reasoning of values arising (if rather belatedly) in the international fossil fuel #Divestment 'Keep It In the Ground' campaign (a joint initiative from 350.org climate justice campaign that has inspired students around theworld - *The Guardian* from 17 March 2015, see http://www.theguardian.com/environment/series/keep-it-intheground), and in the Roman Catholic (see Pope Francis' *Laudato Si* environmental encyclical, June 2015) and other churches' urgent calls for greater environmental stewardship (Dean Moore and Nelson, 2011).

17 Interestingly, ecofeminism and gender studies anticipated what has been only discovered recently in neuroscience. Ecofeminist Susan Griffin suggests the importance of practising more embodied knowledge in her highly original ecofeminist text, *Woman and Nature: The Roaring Inside Her* (1980). By switching from scientific to poetic writings of nature from paragraph to paragraph in her book, Griffin highlights the oppressive power relations of humanity toward the non-human world. She describes the dominant authorities of contemporary culture as patriarchal faiths and reductive science as major belief systems that have estranged us from relating responsibly to the vital and essential material world.

18 The research drew on sociology of the arts, environmental sociology, social geography, environmental education and extension, and sustainability science. 'Arising from the research, 10 refereed papers and book chapters have been published and numerous other articles and conference papers. The research was the first major study examining the arts and environmental sustainability in Australia. It led directly to the formation of the non-government organisation EcoArts Australis Inc.' See http:// www.ecoartsaustralis.org.au/research-and-resources/creating-inspiration-researchproject/

19 Increasing the empathy in audiences for their environments has been further extended in the doctoral research and practice of ecological artist Reiko Goto COLLINS (2012) *Ecology and Environmental Art in Public Place. Talking Tree: Won't you take a Minute and Listen to the Plight of Nature?* [thesis]: Doctor of Philosophy] Grays's School of Art, Aberdeen University.

20 This type of farm forest management is unsustainable in the long term (after 3-4 rotations) being both ecologically and socially limited, but for relatively quick economic returns monoculture, clearfell forestry remain prevalent in Ireland and many countries.

21 For a visualised mapping of the ecological art (eco-art) field see Linda Weintaub's (2012) *To Life! Eco-Art in Pursuit of a Sustainable Planet*. Kindle edition. Berkeley, Los Angeles, London: California University Press.

22 From analysing my and other's leading ecological art practices, I have developed an ecosophy theory- action research methodology to better articulate why and how complex and long term eco-social art projects develop and are maintained and to increase understanding of why such practices profoundly and necessarily, given the urgency of the ecological emergency, challenge conventions of contemporary art practice (Fitzgerald, 2017) See alsowww.hollywoodforest.com

23 'Artists and creative practitioners often live with a high level of vulnerability in precarious livelihoods. This has major implications for the diversity and democracy of artistic practice as many without family backing (both financial support and encouragement) may be excluded by their inability to live with such levels of vulnerability. Research suggests artists and creative practitioners often 'trade' present security for potential future success, which may never arrive.' (MMM, EXCHANGE, & new economics foundation (nef), 2013, p.19)

24 Former senior lecturer at the National College of Art and Design (NCAD), Dublin. Writer and art and ecology educator, and former Green Party economic spokesperson.

25 In September 2015, the United Nations General Assembly adopted *Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* for all countries. See https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/post2015/transformingourworld

26 See http://ec.europa.eu/environment/sustainable-development/SDGs/implementation/index_en.htm

27 View the Draft Pact at https://www.iucn.org/sites/dev/files/content/documents/draftproject-of-the-global-pact-for-the-environment.pdf

28 The International Union for Conservation of Nature' (IUCN) provides public, private and non-governmental organisations with the knowledge and tools that enable human progress, economic development and nature conservation to take place together.' Created in 1948, IUCN has evolved into the world's largest and most diverse environmental network. It harnesses the experience, resources and reach of its 1,300 Member organisations and the input of some 16,000 experts.' See https://www.iucn.org/About

29 France's first think tank.

30 UCLG (2017) Learning Module 1:Localising the SDGs. https://www.uclg.org/en/media/news/when-localizing-sdgs-shared-creative-and-participatory-environment and https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/learning_module1_localizing_the_sdgs.pdf

31 In its draft 2016-2022 Strategic Priorities https://www.uclg.org/sites/default/files/prioridades_estrat-eng-web.pdf, UCLG in a three-year partnership with the European Union (2015-17), sets out an international 'learning network' for local government to enhance

localised engagement with global sustainable development goals involving four key areas: local government learning, monitoring and follow-up, advocacy and implementation.

32 See http://www.agenda21culture.net/who-we-are/committee-on-culture
and
http://www.agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/files/documents/en/zz_culture4pillarsd_eng.pdf The mission of the Committee for 2011-2013 is "to promote culture as the fourth pillar of sustainable development through the international dissemination and the local implementation of Agenda 21 for culture".

33 Following the UCLG initiative, UNESCO also endorses the important role that culture has for sustainability in *The Hangzhou Declaration: Placing Culture at the Heart of Sustainable Development Polices* (UNESCO, 2013). The International Federation of Arts Councils and Cultural Agencies (IFFACA) has stated: 'The Hangzhou Declaration urges governments, civil society and the private sector to harness the power of culture in addressing the world's most pressing developmental challenges, such as environmental sustainability, poverty, and social inclusion.' This has been reiterated in the UNESCO Florence Declaration "CULTURE, CREATIVITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT. RESEARCH, INNOVATION, OPPORTUNITIES" (2014), an 'international forum to reflect on effective strategies for transformative change that place culture at the heart of future policies for sustainable development.'
http://en.unesco.org/system/files/Florence%20Declaration_4%20October%202014_EN_3.pdf

34 Cultural networks from across the world came together in 2013 to launch a global campaign calling for culture to be included in *Agenda 2030*. 'Why? Because the Agenda defined the key priorities for development and because global expenditure on development over the next 15 years had to be associated to these priorities. If culture was not mentioned, it would be extremely difficult for civil society actors, networks, cities and countries to elaborate policies and provide funds for programmes and projects that rely on culture's role as a driver and an enabler of sustainable development.' Culture' had been completely absent from the Millennium Development Goals document. We did not want to let this happen again.' […]

See the history of this campaign and the Declaration here http://culture2015goal.net/ See also the summary communiqué to the 70th UN General Assembly, CULTURE IN THE SDG OUTCOME DOCUMENT: PROGRESS MADE, BUT IMPORTANT STEPS REMAIN AHEAD (IFACCA et al., 2015) http://culture2015goal.net/wp-content/uploads/Documents/Document-September-2015-SDG_ENG-Final-DEF.pdf p.1

35 http://cultureactioneurope.org/news/a-sustainable-future-can-be-achieved-with-afundamental-cultural-change/

36 Full CAE July 2017 Statement
http://cultureactioneurope.org/files/2017/07/CAE_statement_Agenda2030.pdf

37 See
http://www.lgma.ie/sites/default/files/frameworkforcollaboration.pdf

38 See http://tinyurl.com/ychzjou7

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7 + Resources

Five Questions to ask yourself:

"What do you love?
What are your gifts? and,
What is the largest most pressing problem that you can help to solve using the gifts that are unique to you in all the universe,
and the fourth one would be,
What does your land-base need to survive,
and I guess the fifth one would be,
Are you willing to do it?"

Derrick Jensen, *The Dropping Knowledge Project*, 2006

Engaging with ecological concerns can be challenging conceptually and emotionally. The scale and speed of ecocrises may quickly invite overwhelm and confront many widely cherished attitudes of Western progress. As such, I first list some moral and spiritual resources as a basis for engagement with this topic.

Also, examining one environmental concern can quickly unfold numerous related concerns and the lack of media attention and education can undermine understanding, support and efforts. It is therefore important to recognise that an ecological worldview emphasises connections, a necessary shift from me to we! Similarly, joining others in networks and programmes can offer much support and learning. Such involvement can also help dislodge the outworn and often-limited concerns of the individual genius artist and the commercialism of the art market that often ignore our human-nonhuman communities' wellbeing.

The following is not an exhaustive list, please also consult the bibliography. The author can be contacted for more resources. The author also has developed a guiding eco-social art framework for longterm eco-social art practices, see www.hollywoodforest.com

Earth Ethics, Spirituality and Moral Reasoning

As an introduction, watch Kathleen Dean Moore's (2014) 'Questions for a Resilient Future'. [video] Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S6fMiCm-4dU See also Dean Moore, Kathleen and Nelson, Michael, P. (2011) *Moral Ground: Ethical Action for a Planet in Peril*. Kindle Edition. San Antonio: Trinity University Press and www.moralground.com

One Earth Sangha: expressing Buddhist and secular responses to climate change and other threats to our one home. [with online courses] https://oneearthsangha.org/

Pachamama (Mother Earth) Alliance: Bridging the Indigenous and Modern Worlds. Their *Game Changer Intensive* online course is a rich resource and well-established online courses with live group learning activity https://www.pachamama.org/engage

Vaughan-Lee, Llewellyn (ed.) (2014) *Spiritual Ecology: The Cry of the Earth.* Essays by Thich Nhat Hanh, Joanna Macy, Wendell Berry, Thomas Berry, Vandana Shiva etc. California: The Golden Sufi Centre.

Pope Francis (2015) *ENCYCLICAL LETTER LAUDATO SI' OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCISON CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME* http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html

Art and Sustainability Programmes and resources for creative institutions and practitioners:

- Julie's Bicycle: http://juliesbicycle.com/
- Creative Carbon Scotland: http://www.creativecarbonscotland.com

Art and Ecology practices and projects

The Dark Mountain Project: A network of writers, artists and thinkers centred on the *Dark Mountain* journal. Join us in search of new stories for troubled times. http://dark-mountain.net/

Harrison, Helen Mayer and Harrison, Newton (2016) *The Time of the Force Majeure: After 45 Years*

Counterforce is on the Horizon. Pretsel.

Neal, Lucy (2015) *Playing for Time: Making Art as if the World Mattered.* [Art projects and writings from the TransitionTown movement].London: Oberon Books.

Learning about Sustainability

Cultivate Living and Learning (Ireland), and Convergence programmes, from Cloughjordan Ecovillage www.cultivate.ie

The Principles of Sustainability, a series of videos https://vimeo.com/gregmoller from Prof. Greg Moeller of Idaho University, are a useful introduction to sustainability as a cultural activity for humanity's survival through history; sustainability is discussed in different sectors of modern life in regards to water, fossil fuels, transport, waste etc.

Re-Making Nature (2016) Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) about nature https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/remaking-nature

Resistance Radio podcasts –overview current of eco-social debates and key figures with writer, green activist, writer Derrick Jensen. http://resistanceradioprn.podbean.com/

Irish environmental networks and journalism

The Irish Environmental Network (IEN) https://ien.ie/ The IEN supports these groups in their valuable work through the distribution of core funding as well as providing help through training and advice.

Environmental, climate change journalism in Ireland
John Gibbon's www.thinkorswim.ie blog

A Carlow Arts Act Grant Award research study
by Cathy Fitzgerald, Ph.D. Visual Culture
August 2017