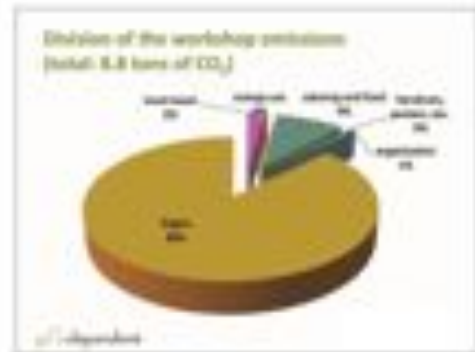


CONVERGE

The CONVERGE project is an interdisciplinary research project funded by the European Union. We recognize that resources are not equally distributed, and the annual draw-down of many resources exceeds the capacity of the planet to supply them. We explore the concept of equity in the light of biological planetary limits - with regards to the various sustainability challenges and positive sustainability initiatives the world is witnessing

www.convergeproject.org

During the CONVERGE project we have had meetings in Great Britain, Iceland, Hungary, Sweden, Czech Republic and have attended events, workshops and conferences all over the world. This pie chart shows the division of the carbon emissions that were incurred at a project workshop in Hungary last year.



We've been working really hard to reduce carbon emissions in the project events where possible :

- Lower carbon modes of transport are prioritised where possible to attend team meetings
- Where possible team meetings have been held alongside workshops to capitalise on travel already committed
- Team meetings have been held in a communal setting, sharing food rather than eating out, and sourcing food locally

The EU doesn't allow us to spend project budget on remediation so when we've had the opportunity, we've been able to raise donations from workshop participants to be used in legacy leaving activities. For the workshop in Hungary last year we were able to plant 50 native fruit trees in host town Godollo.

SUSTAINABLE RESEARCHING

Alice-Marie Archer of the Schumacher Institute for the event: Transdisciplinary Research on Sustainability in Europe - Generic Issues: Thursday 23rd – Friday 24th, May 2013

As participants in international collaborative research towards a sustainable future, we meet together regularly to move our work forwards. This face to face contact allows us to read the subtleties of our communication, to build trust and to find points of relating that are so important in transdisciplinary and transcultural working. But we know that the act of travelling to the far reaches of the Earth causes the very ecological damage we've challenged ourselves to tackle.



With the emergence of the internet and associated tools- and the exponential uptake of these globally - new ways for coming together in the virtual world exist that can reduce our dependence on resource intensive face-to-face events. The image above shows the conversation patterns arising from social networking site facebook in 2010. It demonstrates the capacity of this internet based tool to lubricate communication across the globe. "What really struck me, ... was knowing that the lines didn't represent coasts or rivers or political borders, but real human relationships. Each line might represent a friendship made while travelling, a family member abroad, or an old college friend pulled away by the various forces of life" - Paul Butler, Facebook. The image also demonstrates the 'gaps' - places where facebook use at least is less common place - putting aside China where RenRen is the equivalent site - great swathes of Africa, South America, Russia and so forth. A shift towards greater web-based communication won't be possible if the participants don't have dependable internet access.



However with one opportunity is unleashed a new challenge. There are non the less ecological repercussions incurred by shifting our efforts from real world to virtual interfaces. Many of the finite resources needed to make communication tech items come from unstable countries like the Congo where people work in poor conditions.

To date the CONVERGE project has raised funds to plant 300 trees - paltry in comparison to the emissions and other divergent activities of this project. But we remain convinced that its the right thing to do. Legacy leaving activities are a really important way to demonstrate that although the pursuit of knowledge is resource intensive, we are working towards a sustainable future. These provide a tangible promise to future generations and bridge the gap between theory and practice in sustainability.

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 mage by Joan M. Mas via
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