

# The Converging World

| United Kingdom |



## OVERVIEW

The Converging World (TCW) is a UK-based charity set up in 2006 by John Pontin & Ian Roderick which seeks donations and loans from communities and individuals in the developed world to invest in verified renewable energy projects in developing countries. Profits made from these investments are channelled into initiatives that fund clean, sustainable and low carbon economic development.

## CONTEXT: THE PERCEIVED PROBLEM

The primary issue which is addressed by the initiative is that human development is being hindered by socio-economic problems caused in part by a lack of equity between nations and individuals. The Converging World explicitly seeks to alleviate such socio-economic development issues in the ‘developing’ world (such as lack of access to food, clean water, energy and education) through creation of redistribution mechanisms which provide assistance from communities in the developed world.

## INITIATIVE SOLUTION AND PROCESS

Donations and other support to poorer countries are provided by individuals and organisations in the UK who are actively engaged in reducing their carbon footprints and other environmental impacts. These organisations reduce their emissions and make donations to TCW. These funds are channelled into clean energy projects in the developing world and some of the profits derived from these projects are re-invested in further similar initiatives.

### TCW WORKS WITH THREE SIMPLE PRINCIPLES:

- Implement more renewable energy (e.g. support the building of wind farms in India);
- Support communities to adapt to climate change (some of the revenue from the renewable energy projects is donated to the community in the host country to support adaptation to climate change and help to break the poverty cycle);
- Reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions (TCW works in the UK to raise awareness about the current day impacts of climate change and helps people lower their own emissions).

The re-allocation of funds from richer to poorer countries helps to facilitate access to energy and to break the cycle of impoverishment.

## CONTRACTION AND CONVERGENCE ELEMENTS

### CONTRACTION:

While no specific contraction targets are proposed by this initiative for its activities, the explicit focus on reducing emissions in developed countries and providing access to green sources of energy in developing countries shows the focus of the initiative on contracting the carbon footprints of developed nations and greening the carbon footprint of developing nations through use of a redistributory mechanism. The CONVERGE project understands that ‘equity within planetary limits’ requires a decrease in the environmental footprints of some citizens and corresponding growth of others, in the most sustainable way possible.

### CONVERGENCE:

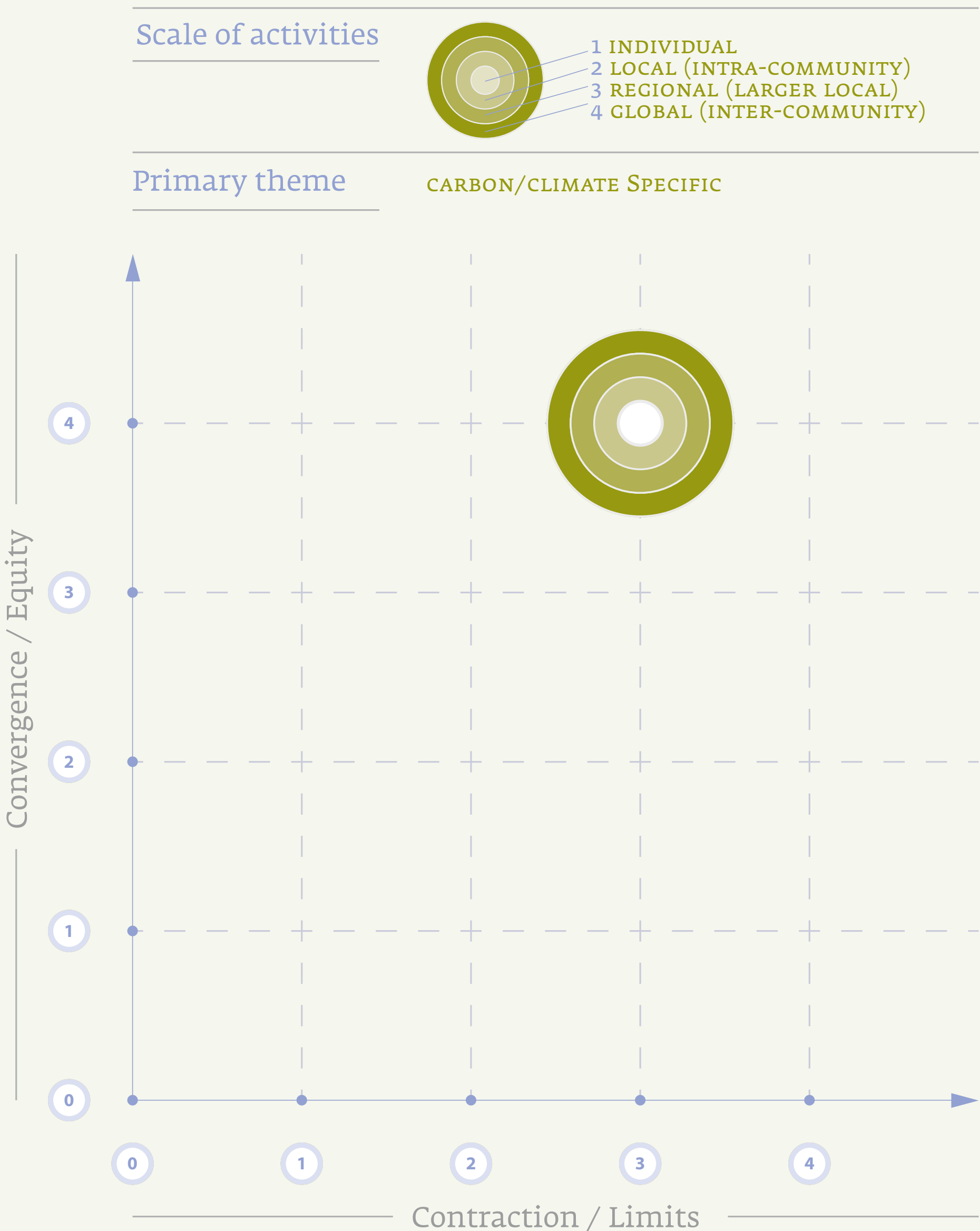
The Converging World initiative explicitly supports the idea of ‘convergence’: “*The Converging World’s contribution is to enable and fund community activity in the developing world and in the UK that will help move us towards a point at which everyone has access to the resources they need, within the limits of our planet’s capacity.*”<sup>1</sup> TCW thus has an explicit focus on promoting intragenerational and intergenerational equity (empowering individuals through access to environmentally-friendly energy sources of energy) as a means of promoting a more sustainable mode of development. Through awareness raising of their work in the developing world and soliciting donations from businesses and individuals in the UK, they contribute to closing the equity gap.

## CURRENT STATUS AND IMPACT

The Converging World currently operates two turbines in Tamil Nadu, which together produce over 8 million units (kilowatt hours) of electricity every year which is sold into the regional electricity grid.

## REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

1. Initiative website: <http://www.theconvergingworld.org/>
2. Short movies about the initiative: <http://dev.theconvergingworld.org/video>
3. Pontin, J. and Roderick, I. 2007. Converging World – Connecting Communities in Global Change. **Schumacher Briefing Series**, The Schumacher Society, UK. 80 p.



1. <http://www.theconvergingworld.org/Vision> (Accessed: 5th Dec 2011)