



The Global ARC

Global Action Research Center

Bridging Sustainability Solutions Worldwide

Vision

The Global ARC envisions a world where global knowledge and learning is pooled in ways that empower people to work together successfully across diverse boundaries for sustainability, community well being and the common good.

Mission

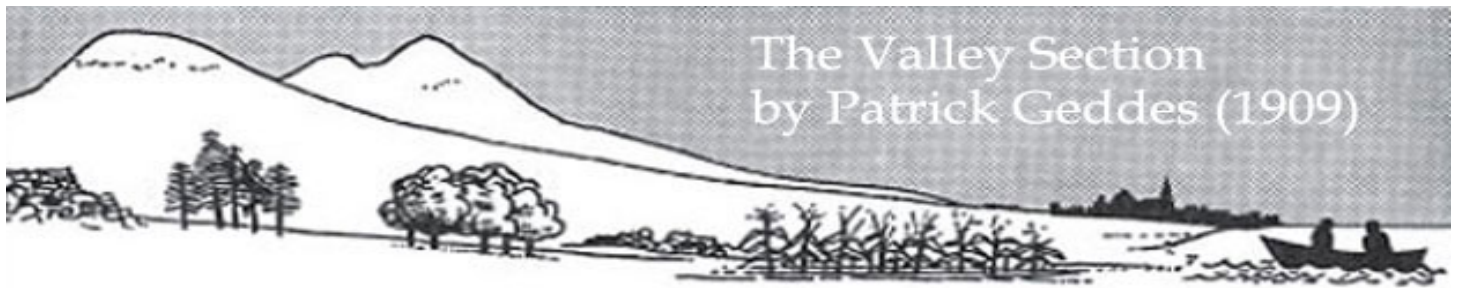
The Global ARC builds alliances, knowledge networks and tools—in partnership with progressive community-based planners and social entrepreneurs—to generate sustainability solutions and healthy living conditions, locally and globally, while eradicating root causes of poverty and environmental degradation.

A Knowledge Network for Progressive Planning and Sustainability

The Global ARC's Knowledge Network is a relational database and social networking platform for progressive community-based planning and sustainability solutions. It is designed for planners (academic and professional), as well as community-based organizations, social entrepreneurs, and others from both the public and private sectors who are civically engaged (at local, regional, national, and/or global levels) in efforts to create sustainable and healthy communities. The Knowledge Network provides a collective, purpose-driven, web-based resource in which sustainability solutions can be linked, integrated and cross-fertilized across otherwise fragmented disciplinary domains. The Global ARC's Knowledge Network has both broadcast and harvest features. The *broadcast* feature puts out for public consumption a diverse set of strategic aims and curated knowledge geared to promoting/enabling progressive community-based planning and sustainable development. The *harvest* feature pulls in critically constructive and creative input from contributors worldwide via social networking technology. As a Center, The Global ARC will facilitate efforts to ramp up the most promising solutions by designating them as "Action Research Challenges" (ARCs). ARCs are a way to focus energy on exemplary place-based sustainability projects that have the potential to be scaled up.

Journeys of the Global ARC

ARC Journeys bring participants right to the heart of what we do and what we promote. The Journeys are field-research learning tours that function as story generators and networking catalysts for harvesting/bridging sustainability opportunities and solutions worldwide. Journey's of the Global ARC: (1) identify serious problems of unsustainable development for purposes of inspiring learning and action (2) share exciting success stories from the field—in real time —by harnessing the power of multimedia, internet connectivity and social networking technologies, and (3) build new partnerships, knowledge commons and bridges that link solutions together holistically. The Journeys are a snug fit into the mission of The Global ARC which strives to foster action research, open dialog and globally-minded planning around the world.



Outlook Tower

The Global ARC functions as an “Outlook Tower” in so far as it offers a vantage point (digital Global Wall) from which one can survey and comparatively assess sustainability solutions worldwide. Patrick Geddes (1854-1932) created the Valley Section figure at the top of this page. Geddes was a Scottish urbanist and biologist. He was among the first to place city and town planning in its larger bioregional context. Geddes pioneered methods for integrating geographical, ecological, historical and cultural factors in globally-minded, regionally-based and holistic approaches to city and town planning. His diagram of a valley region showing urban and rural development in the context of their hinterlands is thus a fitting image for the Global ARC. Geddes underscored the importance of an “Outlook Tower” as a way to gain a holistic perspective of a community’s development prospects. Source: Welter, Volker. 2002. *Biopolis : Patrick Geddes and the city of life*. Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press.

Business Model (Services)

The Global ARC provides a range of services and resources. Services include grant writing, support for social entrepreneurship/impact investing, training and leadership workshops, and learning journeys. Resources we are building include planning and decision support tools, multimedia for storytelling and science communication, publications, process models for knowledge-action collaboratives, and a Knowledge Commons Grid designed to elevate the quality and impact of local, regional and global planning worldwide.

The Larger Context

The Global ARC was created to help researchers and community-based organizations advance sustainability in light of four mega-trends:

1. Culture change in research universities is increasing the value of civically-engaged scholarship and transdisciplinary collaboration;
2. New modes of knowledge production/networking enable sustainability solutions to be propagated in culturally and biogeographically sensitive ways across boundaries and local-global scales;
3. The globalization of human-environment interactions, risks and disasters raises the stakes/motivation for collective action on the world stage; and
4. Mounting institutional stresses worldwide is sharpening the societal push/urgency for change in the face of increasingly complex problems.

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