Position Paper

Sustainability in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region

ReGeneration 2030

Today Tomorrow Together

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Introduction

"Business as usual is no longer an option"

- ReGeneration 2030 Declaration

"Either we prevent 1.5 degrees [Celsius] of warming or we don't. Either we avoid setting off that irreversible chain reaction beyond human control or we don't. Either we choose to go on as a civilisation or we don't. That is as black or white as it gets. There are no grey areas when it comes to survival." - Greta Thunberg

We, the youth, are fed up. Tampering around the edges is not enough - we need to change the whole system.

For far too long, we young people have been excluded from the halls of power in which our future is decided. We have witnessed the escalating environmental crisis with horror and rage. As this paper maps out, this crisis has clear causes. Our current system pits powerful actors (such as corporations in pollution-heavy sectors) against necessary change. Many of our leaders are still in the grip of fairytales like infinite economic growth and ever-rising profits from which we will have to shake them awake. And there are possibilities to build a brighter world for all on the horizon, but we need to muster the courage to go there.

It's no longer cool to be unsustainable. Green advertising and environmental claims now sell products and win elections in our region. But not all measures are the same, and "greenwashing" is rife.

We decided to write this position paper at ReGeneration Week 2021, after learning about some of the major changes that need to happen in our region to power a just sustainable transition. Using the accumulated knowledge from years of our meetings, along with papers published by experts around the region, we wrote our own position paper on the biggest changes that need to happen.

Our aim with this Position Paper is to cut through the greenwashing and map out some of the most important changes that we need to push for. In the face of life-threatening delays and distractions, we need to be targeted: we hope to build momentum and strategy in our region's youths' demands for change. We will take these demands directly to power-holders in Åland and beyond. If you're also interested in a better future and an inhabitable planet, you are welcome to borrow this paper or use us as a springboard into your own prioritising. The stakes have never been higher - let's build a just and sustainable future now, while we still have the time.

– The Position Paper Working group, August 2022

Background

About ReGeneration 2030

ReGeneration 2030 is a youth movement for sustainability in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region. About 150 of us aged 15-30 meet annually in the Åland islands in the middle of the Baltic Sea at a gathering called ReGeneration Week to share knowledge and strategise. We also run education programmes online and bring the youth perspective to high-level political meetings in our region throughout the year.

Our Mission

We, the youth, believe that it is our mission to build a sustainable future. From bringing down apartheid in South Africa to winning voting rights for women in the UK, it's been young people at the front of movements for changing the world over. We can't wait for the leaders of the current system to dismantle it under their own feet: it's time to take matters into our own hands. That's why our mission is to mobilise a strong youth movement in order to bring about a just sustainable transition in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions.

Our Inspiration

We are particularly grateful to reports such as the Nordic Council of Ministers' "Toward Sustainable Consumption in the Nordic Region", Stockholm Resilience's "Nordic Food System Transformation Series", Stay Grounded's "Position Paper", and the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report as well as the work of Greenpeace, WWF Baltic, Sitra, Forum for the Future, Foodprint, Friends of the Earth and much other activist research from whom we have drawn inspiration from. We are continually grateful for UNEP's Anatomy of Action for sustainable consumption and production (SDG12) which provided the original inspiration and scheme for the 5-part Food, Move, Fun, Money and Stuff breakdown. We also call on our governments to ratify those agreements which ensure human rights for all, including but not limited to the International Labour Organizations' Convention on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples Rights.

Food

Situation report

Where are we now in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region?

Food is central to life. Food is not only a means of literal sustenance to our bodies: it also plays a significant role in our social lives, and our cultures and is a core gateway to our relationship with global and local ecosystems. Our current food system (meaning how we produce and consume food) overshoots far beyond planetary limits. For example, the production of the Nordic diet costs our natural environment 2.5-3 times as much as is sustainable. While the non-Nordic Baltic Sea region fares better, food production and consumption remain a key problem for the whole region. It's still possible but barely. Fixing our food systems is part of the puzzle. Our food system, as it is currently operating, will push global warming well above the 1.5 global limit set in the Paris Climate Agreement: in short, it threatens our very survival.

The impacts of this unsustainable food system are felt beyond the soil of our region: in fact, they are largely felt elsewhere. Whilst the global food system as a whole produces enough food to feed 1.5 times the global population, a disproportionate amount of it is transported to and wasted in richer regions like the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions. Meanwhile, people in countries producing most of our food still go hungry, replicating old colonial patterns and reinforcing poverty in the Global South.

While access to food is generally high in our region, many of us cannot reliably access healthy, nutritious, sustainable and affordable food on a day-to-day basis. Increasingly, people who struggle to make a decent living and lack stable employment are struggling to access the food that they need to survive.

Why is this happening?

What are the main problems? What's the big picture?

One of the major motors of our unsustainable food system is market reforms, including but not limited to the EU's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). Policies such as the CAP have concentrated land ownership and control of food production, both in our region and in the regions we import food from. The concentration of food production in the hands of a decreasing number of multinational corporations is an issue because our food system currently incentivises is profit-seeking over ecological, social and bodily health. These profits do not account for the expense of local producers and the natural environment.

The concentration of farmland into the hands of a decreasing number of corporations is linked to:

- Lower nutritional values: this happens because some of the least environmentally destructive food sources, such as legumes, have low profitability for local and international producers, whereas the production and sale of

environmentally intensive foods like **red meat** are some of the most profitable.

- The destruction of the natural environment: when short-term profit is placed over long-term viability, the natural environment suffers the cost. This can be seen in things like increasing pollution, soil damage, trawling for fishing, and the destructive use of destructive pesticides.
- Land enclosures: when farmland previously worked by families, communities or small farmers is forcibly bought up and communities are damaged or destroyed
- Erosion of food sovereignty: food sovereignty is when people can feed themselves and their communities reliably in the long-term, in a culturally appropriate and nutritionally healthy way. Taking control of farming out of the hands of local groups and into the hands of a decreased number of international food corporations is damaging food sovereignty in our region and in the regions that now grow much of our food. is decreasing food sovereignty both in
- Intense fossil fuel is used to transport food long distances for consumption (see "Move" section of this paper)

Another core factor making our current food system unsustainable is the overconsumption of red meat, particularly beef. In our region, we consume a lot of red meat (that's beef, lamb and pork); on average over 100g, a day is "consumed" per person (i.e cooked, even if some of that is later thrown away). This is notably far beyond nutritional recommendations, which recommend a maximum of 70g a day. Beef is highly environmentally degrading, particularly when we compare it to how much nutrition it provides. To bring it within planetary boundaries, we need to reduce meat and dairy consumption in our region by 70%. Research by the Nordic Council of Ministers suggests that food choice in the Nordic region is "inelastic", meaning it is difficult to encourage people to change (unlike, for example, modes of transport - see "Move").

Finally, a lot of the food that is produced does not get eaten. A lot of it is either wasted or burned. Food waste is one of the key problems in our broken food system and is directly related to many other issues in the global agriculture industry. It is estimated that as many as 30% of globally produced calories go straight to waste. Meanwhile, a lot of the food produced in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions is burned instead of eaten, raising carbon emissions and reducing the food pool for people. For example, In the EU as a whole, 62% of cereals produced are used as animal feed, 22% feed people, and 11% are used for industry and biofuel.

Aims

Where are we trying to get to in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions?

We aim to achieve food sovereignty in our region and support other regions in achieving food sovereignty as well. Food sovereignty is a concept developed by farmers based on the right of people to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and the right of communities to control the way food is produced, traded, and consumed. It could create a food system that is designed to help people and the environment rather than to generate profits for multinational corporations. The result of food sovereignty will be sustainable nutrition and food security for all.

Demands

What do we need to do to get there?

Ensure everyone in our region can access sustainable nutrition

- Connect **consumers and suppliers** at a local level using pre-existing community infrastructures, like schools, hospitals, faith centres, villages, and social media.
- Recognise the right to **food sovereignty** and **sustainable nutrition**.
- Support food production workers' **right to organise** and, through both words and actions, show **solidarity with unions** both in our region and in the regions exporting food to us.
- Safeguard **indigenous peoples' rights** to practise their traditional subsistence economies. Block attempts at land-grabbing and ensure **land rights** for indigenous people.

Stuff

Situation Report

Where are we now in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region?

The Nordic and Baltic Sea regions are global front-runners in thinking and talking about circular economy. Finland notably produces a lot of high-level knowledge on this topic, both on a governmental as well as on other levels. In terms of innovation, the Nordic and Baltic countries stand out in for example the field of service design and the prioritisation of wellbeing over profit. In a similar vein, modular designs like Fairphone and laws such as the one pushing for a universal charger in the EU are also good examples of movements in a sustainable direction, but they are often being held back by big profit-seeking companies.

The Nordic and Baltic Sea region also has some of the highest resource use (per person) in the world. We also have some of the most intense CO2 (per person) emissions rates in the world - this is especially true for the Nordic region, and less so for the Baltic Sea region. Despite circular economy roadmaps and initiatives, this problem is intensifying.

In the Nordic and Baltic Sea region, consumption-based emissions (such as the emissions generated to produce stuff like our phones and clothes) wipe out the progress we are making to transition to a low-carbon or carbon-neutral society. These emissions happen mostly outside of our region because the Nordic and Baltic Sea region consumes more stuff than we produce. Most of the CO2 related to our consumption of “stuff”, both in terms of its production and transportation, is emitted in places outside our region: often where our laws and regulations for sustainable production do not apply, and where it might be easier to, for example, pay workers inadequately and force local communities to live with the waste and pollution produced.

This pattern is common in richer regions of the world. Most materially wealthy countries outsource their resource extraction and CO2 emission to poorer regions of the world. The 2022 IPCC report 3 notes that this follows colonial lines.

Why is this happening?

What are the main problems? What's the big picture?

One of the primary goals of most government departments and organisations in charge of economic planning in our region is "maintaining economic growth". Some have it as their only primary goal. But it is now clear that we cannot have infinite economic growth on a finite planet. So-called "green growth" in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region will not be able to scale back emissions and resource depletion fast enough to keep the planet inhabitable, as evidenced in a report signed by over 11,000 scientists worldwide. The good news is that economic growth is also not inherently linked to human wellbeing. According to the World Happiness Report 2022, it is only one contributing factor to an individual's self-evaluated well-being, alongside things like personal health, freedom of choice and social support.

The problems associated with prioritising economic growth are replicated on an individual company level. Companies are required *by law* throughout the Nordic and Baltic Sea region to produce the highest value to their shareholders: not to society or the living environment. An economy or a company that is compelled to constantly grow is not ecologically sustainable, regardless of whether it has material circularity, because growth requires new inputs of both energy and material. Long-lasting design, maintenance, repair, reuse, remanufacturing, refurbishing, and recycling are rarely profitable because they reduce consumption and they are very rarely incentivised by tax breaks or rebates. This leads to supply chains that prioritise low cost and high profit, instead of longevity, sustainability, and wellbeing.

Finally, this problem is replicated at an individual product level. Improvements made to the inefficient design are bulldozed by the imperative to produce and consume *more* - take the lightbulb as an example. Since the 1960s, we have experienced considerable gains in the efficiency of lightbulbs in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions. But instead of simply spending less energy lighting our houses, we now find lightbulbs shoehorned into everyday products from refrigerators to trainer shoes to sell more. Without attention to our overarching economic system, circular economy activities can increase overall production, partially or fully offsetting their benefits.

To summarise, in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region we are seeing attempts to build a circular economy thwarted by an economic system that requires never-ending growth of material use and severely punishes attempts to maximise sustainability and wellbeing.

Aims

Where are we trying to get to in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions?

We aim to build an economic system in which we do not need to consume unsustainable amounts of stuff; where it is possible to share, repair, reuse and recycle as much stuff as possible; where the stuff that we do produce is done so sustainably.

Demands

What do we need to do to get there?

Facilitate circular behaviour and reduced consumption

- Support legislation to make **repairing, reusing, and recycling** compulsory in product life cycles through buy-back schemes, repair manuals, spare parts, and upgrades/updates.
- Designate **public spaces for repair**. These spaces could include bicycle tools, sewing machines etc., as has been implemented at the Oodi public library in Helsinki.
- Run public service **advertisements** on mainstream media channels informing people how to repair their products, aiming to enhance the public perception of repaired goods, i.e., upcycling.
- Replace **GDP growth** with a target that accurately reflects growth in human and ecological wellbeing, such as the **Genuine Progress Indicator**.

Money

Situation report

Where are we now in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region?

In the Nordic and Baltic Sea region, our governments' budgets are adding fuel to the fire of the climate disaster. What does this mean? Public money paid from the public purse to our governments is financing the climate crisis.

Governments are supporting the extraction of wealth from local workers to international firms - without supporting local communities. By selling off state assets, public institutions are being sapped of both resources and capability, right when we need them to challenge climate breakdown the most.

The Nordic countries are global leaders in divestment from fossil fuels; governments reducing how much money they invest in the coal industry, and encouraging private capital to also leave. For example, Denmark, Sweden and Greenland recently joined the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, pledging to end exploration for new oil and gas and wind down production of already-existing infrastructure. Sweden recently implemented its pledge to ban all new oil and gas production.

But we are yet to see the same divestment of funds in the rest of the destructive sectors, such as industrial farming and aviation. It gets worse: these investments in polluting industries are growing steadily every year. A Production Gap report published in 2021 shows that governments are on track to produce more than double the amount of fossil fuels that they currently do. In numbers, that means 240% more coal, 57% more oil, and 71% more gas - although the International Energy Agency said last year that in order to keep below the critical 1.5 degrees of warming, there can be no new fossil fuel projects anywhere in the world.

The latest vote on the EU taxonomy classifying nuclear energy and fossil gas as "green" (when the data is clear that they will lead to further emissions) sends the wrong message when investment in renewables could provide reliable, clean, green energy. Without a rapid and drastic change to our current system, nuclear and gas will grow even faster in the future, leading us to a deeper climate crisis than we are already seeing happening before our eyes.

Since 2012, public investment in our region has barely risen above zero. That means that government budgets have been, on the whole, falling. This is one of the core factors that grow inequality, depress wages, and exacerbate poverty. It also prevents our most powerful organisational units - the state - from being able to play its role properly in financing the low carbon sustainable future we

Our region has the tools to reverse these trends and invest the funds we need into both people and the planet. Public assets (all the stuff that local, regional and regional governments own) amount to more than we need to push through the sustainable transition in our region when we include multi-laterals, pension and sovereign wealth funds, and central banks. Existing public banks and investment organisations are well-positioned to invest in the sustainable transition. Public procurement processes are already well developed and could stimulate demand for green technologies and accelerate the transformation of energy-intensive industries.

Why is this happening?

What are the main problems? What's the big picture?

If you listened to the way that most government and company leaders talk today, you might think that we should only back investments or assets that immediately yield returns. But many of the investments that are needed to bring about a just sustainable transition will not bear fruit for decades, and the goods that they bring will not always be in the form of big profits. Instead, they will bring about non-monetary benefits in terms of human flourishing and planetary survival. Investment in a just transition is absolutely necessary and cannot be reduced to immediate profit or results. It is a question of saving our planet and creating a liveable future for everyone or letting the world burn in order to uphold the status quo.

As discussed previously, our region's financial institutions, like that of most of the globe, are currently wired the wrong way: they cannot see the benefits of sustainability and thus cannot reward them. Firstly, they are structured around short-term profits, quarterly or annual reporting and short-term goals. The system rarely encourages planning beyond 3 to 5 years in advance: politicians and governance board members serve limited terms, and organisational plans rarely span more than five years. Secondly, the sustainable transition in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region requires investments in projects that may not generate profits, but primarily produce social and ecological returns. Relying purely on and being motivated by profit cannot deliver this, even with all the greenwashing and creative accounting.

Aims

Where are we trying to get to in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region?

We want a Nordic and Baltic Sea region in which our financial systems encourage and grow societies in which people and the planet can flourish in the long term; a region in which destructive technologies cannot attract financial support and thus wither as a consequence.

Demands

What do we need to do to get there?

Financing and spending on the just green transition

- Prioritise **social progress** and **environmental protection** in government spending programmes, instead of the current focus on infinite growth and private profits.
- Create policies for financial institutions that outline they must prioritise **social progress** and **environmental protection** in their spending, including in regional banks such as the European Central Bank, above GDP growth.
- Support or make considerable local investments in **green infrastructure** (like public transport, retrofitting, renewable energy, and green jobs).

Fun

Situation Report

Where are we now in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region?

Whilst “fun” and “happiness” levels are not entirely quantifiable, researchers who try to put countries in the Nordic and Baltic region near the top of the list, with Finland and Denmark consistently topping “happiness ratings” charts. The level of happiness correlates with the wealth distribution of the region (with the Nordic region benefitting from greater wealth than the Baltics) and relatedly more environmentally destructive consumption systems (which are worse in the Nordics than the Baltics). Based on this data, it might be easy to assume that “fun” and “happiness” are something that we need high levels of consumption and private wealth to achieve, which would make a transition to a low-carbon economy boring.

It’s also not all fun and games for everyone. These happiness statistics can mask struggling and suffering. This is particularly true young people who are under increasing pressure to succeed through work, under work conditions that leave a lot less time for having fun and relaxing. In Sweden, for example, the number of young people signing off work for stress and burnout is rising sharply. Similarly, loneliness is also increasing, with 1 in 10 Swedish people saying that they do not have a single close friend.

Fun - the way we spend out free time, gain fulfilment, and seek happiness - is deeply connected to the current broken system that is destroying our planet and based on extraction and infinite growth, instead of a system that promotes overall wellbeing, safety, health, and joy to its citizens. Can we restructure our societies around wellbeing, and environmental restoration and have fun while we do it?

Why is this happening?

What are the main problems? What’s the big picture?

The good news is that, world-wide, factors like life expectancy, education level and overall happiness ratings are only very weakly correlated with high GDP and emissions. For example, studies suggest that the average Costa Rican is having a lot more fun that the average American, despite having just over half the financial resources.

Levels of happiness and fun in our region are likely to be associated with things like:

- High amounts of leisure time
- A strong welfare state that rewards care work and reproductive labour
- Strong state and community material support for arts and culture

...than all the stuff we consume.

In fact, the majority of the high emissions from leisure activities in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions can be traced back to private overconsumption. These, in turn, are linked to reductions in leisure time and a decline in publicly accessible shared leisure activities. Who has time to play sports with friends or tend to a shared vegetable garden when you are working all the time? While this is more pronounced in certain parts of our region than others, the overall trend can give us insights into the changes we can make to achieve our goals for people and the planet.

Aims

Where are we trying to get to in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions?

We aim for a region where our lives are rich in joy and fun, and having fun is decoupled from environmental destruction. Therefore, we aim for a Nordic and Baltic Sea region where private material overconsumption is uncommon; arts, culture and collective leisure opportunities are abundant and accessible; and leisure time is ample.

Demands

What do we need to do to get there?

Ensure access to low-carbon leisure

- **support all people to enjoy low carbon activities** for example:
  - by securing pleasant surroundings and places to enjoy leisure time.
  - by securing that youth and children get access to a hobby in connection with the school day.
  - **make leisure activities more affordable and accessible** for example by supporting workers with **leisure credit** for low-carbon activities (such as theatre, swimming pools and other shared leisure facilities).
- **Support community-building activities** by improving free (or low-cost) **shared leisure facilities through pre-existing community structures** like schools, youth centres, libraries, and communal spaces.
- Introduce **Universal Basic Services*** to ensure that no one is left behind for example because of homelessness or due to being jobless.

Move

Situation Report

Where are we now in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions?

Achieving rapid decarbonisation in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions will require an overhaul of the way that we move both long and short distances. Emissions from the transport sector account for 11% of all emissions globally and are set to double by 2050 if nothing changes. This global problem is particularly intense in the Nordic and Baltic regions: compared to each country's total emissions, are some of the highest in Europe. For example, Iceland's government aims to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 but is currently projected to miss this target by a long way - largely because transport emissions have been rising for decades. We cannot rely on technological improvements alone to save us. The Nordic and Baltic region has the potential to become a front-runner in green transport, but this will require a change to our whole transport system to get there.

The Nordic and Baltic Sea region is also home to innovative sustainable transport solutions, such as the mobility hubs implemented in Bremen City in Germany. In Breman, public transport is organised around 43 mobility hubs that easily integrate a range of different sustainable transport modes from trains to car-share options. Analysis from 2018 demonstrated that since the hubs were built in 2003, for every 1 shared car, there would have been 16 private cars otherwise. It also demonstrated that the reduction in emissions from cars is in large part due to having other sustainable transport options available for low or zero cost via the hubs. Other inspiring examples include Tallin city, which has entirely free low-emissions public transport.

Why is this happening?

What are the main problems? What's the big picture?

Some of the biggest sources of these high carbon emissions are:

Individual car use: despite increased fuel efficiency in vehicles, greenhouse gas emissions from cars in the Nordic and Baltic Sea region are still rising, contributing to climate collapse. A passenger car made in 2000 and used in Sweden will emit as much carbon ferrying people around as all the cumulative emissions to support the life (including transport, food, fun, stuff etc) of the average Indian born in the same year. Increasing car emissions also pollute urban areas, leading to asthma and other health problems for people living in cities. Since the middle of the last century, both cities and rural areas have been largely designed around individual car use.

Key barriers to reducing this include:

- Reliance on private, individual solutions that make car travel essential for many work and leisure activities
- High level of funding for research into and design around electric car solutions, which due to their high environmental impact can only ever be a partial solution

- The real cost of pollution is not accounted for in their production and consumption costs

Aviation: aviation is the most climate-damaging form of transport, and emissions from planes in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions are also currently rising. At a time when new aviation infrastructure threatens our very survival, the Nordic and Baltic region is flooded with new projects like airport expansions. While 90% of humans will never set foot in an aeroplane, flying is increasingly common in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions. The industry is riddled with false solutions that depend on non-existent technology or biofuels that endanger already precarious global food systems (see Food position paper).

Key barriers to overcoming this include:

- High social status of aviation for leisure (for example, a "weekend in Budapest" or "summer holiday in Greece" are heavily advertised and desired by many of us - but few have the time or money to make such journeys without flying).
- Extensive lobbying by airline companies on a national and international level to weaken or block climate legislation that might reduce emissions.
- High levels of greenwashing to both governments and the general public are based on false solutions such as Kerosene fuel, which requires technology that does not exist and is not projected to come into existence in the timeframe necessary.
- Similarly to cars, the real cost of pollution is not accounted for in their production and consumption costs.

Transport of goods: dragging stuff produced in one part of the world to the Nordic and Baltic regions, including shipping and freight transport, is a big part of our transport emissions and the damage done to ecosystems. Indeed, the emissions statistics for the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions are much higher when we take into account so-called "consumption emissions": emissions embedded in the goods and services that are produced elsewhere and consumed in our region. This is especially true for the richer part of our region, namely the Nordics, and rich individuals across the region in general. Therefore transforming how we make and use stuff will be key to making our transport system sustainable.

Key barriers to progress in the transport of goods include:

- It's cheaper to produce goods in places far away from our region (such as India or China) and import them.
- Our lifestyles and economy are based on high levels of consumption (see "stuff" sector) and similarly, many of the regions we import goods from ours.
- Nearly all goods transportation is currently powered by fossil oil or fossil gas.
- Similarly to cars, the real cost of pollution is not accounted for in their production and consumption costs of goods.

Public transport and sustainable solutions: collective transport is the fastest way to reduce emissions from both making our transport vehicles and moving them around. What does that mean in practice? It means that improvements in technology, like electric vehicles, need to be made shared if they are going to be part of the green solution. However, many low-carbon shared transport systems in our region have been dismantled over the last decades, while others remain prohibitively expensive for many locals.

Key barriers to progress in this area include:

- Historically low government investment in our region.
- The low cultural status of public transport.
- Lack of international cooperation on long-distance routes.
- Lack of locally sensitive solutions (for rural areas, for example).

Aims

Where are we trying to get to in the Nordic and Baltic Sea regions?

We aim for a region where sustainable and comfortable transport for both short and long-haul journeys (via train, bus and boat) are accessible to all, regardless of income or location. Where short-haul flights are increasingly for essential reasons only, such as medical flights, and the number of long-term flights taken is also drastically declining. Unlike the leaders of the current international transport industry, we don't aim to triple the number of goods we transport globally by 2050: we aim to reduce the amount of stuff we need to transport overall and be able to consume more of what is produced locally.

The transition to sustainable transport requires different plans in different geographical areas. What is useful and appropriate in the Åland archipelago will look very different to that of the centre of Riga city. Large-scale interregional cooperation is also necessary to enable sustainable long-distance travel accessible and effective is one of the keys to cutting down on CO2 emissions from aviation travel and pollution from maritime traffic in the Baltic Sea.

What do we need to do to get there?

Make green collective transport possible for everyone

- Invest in **sustainable public transport** for all so that everyone has the option of green transport locally. This should be **truly public transport,** meaning integrated within regions and cities and not producing competition over infrastructure such as rail networks.
- Support public and **collective transport options** for your workers and/or community.
- Integrate and improve the infrastructure and mobility services using **transport hubs locally** and **cross-border cooperation** at the regional level.
- **Oppose car-centric urban infrastructure** (pedestrian zones, bike lanes, bus lanes, etc.).

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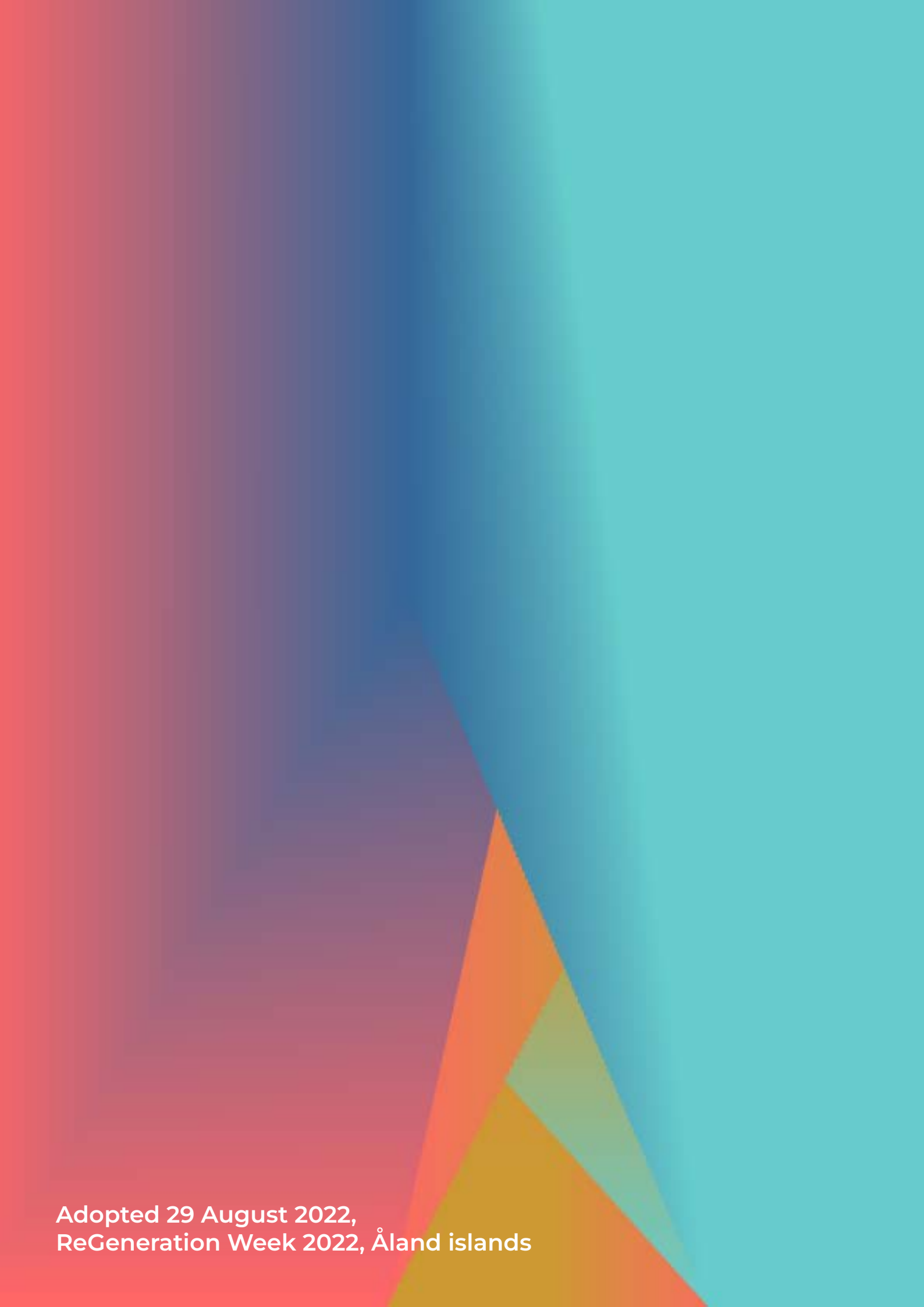

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