

HAPPINESS: TOWARDS A NEW DEVELOPMENT PARADIGM

Report of the Kingdom of Bhutan

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Steering Committee

The Steering Committee provides close guidance and direction to the Secretariat and the International Expert Working Group.

International Expert Working Group

The International Expert Working Group is comprised of 71 eminent international contributors with a wide range of expertise.

Secretariat

The Secretariat's role is to coordinate all activities related to the NDP initiative and the preparation of reports for submission to the United Nations.

Note

While this report draws on the many contributions of the International Expert Working Group, it is not a complete representation of all their views. Ultimate responsibility for the contents of this report lies with the NDP Steering Committee and the Secretariat who have prepared the report.

Foreword

This report marks a milestone in Bhutan's involvement in the worldwide endeavour to define a new global development agenda. After initiating the General Assembly Resolution 65/309 titled *Happiness: Towards a holistic approach to development* in July 2011, that was adopted by consensus, Bhutan hosted a High-Level Meeting on Wellbeing and Happiness at the United Nations Headquarters in New York in April, 2012.

That meeting, attended by more than 800 governmental, international, scholarly, business, religious, and civil society leaders in turn requested the Kingdom of Bhutan to convene an expert working group to frame a new development paradigm. In July 2012, with reference to Bhutan's own experience of pursuing a holistic, sustainable and inclusive development process aimed at promoting human happiness, His Majesty the King of Bhutan established the Steering Committee for the New Development Paradigm and an International Expert Working Group to undertake that task. This report draws from many contributions made by that multi-disciplinary expert group as well as the Steering Committee.

The time has never been more opportune to re-orient the goal of development towards genuine human happiness and the wellbeing of all life. There is a growing global consensus on the need and urgency for such a holistic new model. We have the knowledge, means, and capacity to chart this new path, and nations and communities worldwide are already blazing the trail. It is our sincere hope that this report will provide a modest contribution to this noble global endeavour to map a course for human society that will fulfil humankind's highest aspiration.



Jigmi Y. Thinley
Chairman
Steering Committee for the New Development Paradigm

Acknowledgements

We first extend our humble expression of special gratitude to His Majesty the King, Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, whose vision and support have guided our work and enabled us to fulfil this task.

This report was prepared by the Secretariat on behalf of the Steering Committee. It draws on many insights and contributions from members of the International Expert Working Group (IEWG) in background papers, e-mail exchanges, individual written submissions and discussions at IEWG meetings in New York on October 5, 2012 and in Bhutan from January 27 to February 2, 2013. We are deeply grateful to these eminent experts for the time, knowledge, research and writing they have contributed.

We are particularly grateful for funding support from DANIDA, the United Nations Development Programme, the UN Country Team in Bhutan and the United Nations Volunteers programme, and the Government of Belgium without which the consultations, research, administrative support and production of this report would not have been possible. We are also grateful to the Tourism Council of Bhutan for providing financial and logistic assistance for the first meeting of the IEWG in Thimphu, Bhutan.

Executive Summary

The Kingdom of Bhutan is honoured to offer this report as a contribution to the growing global conversation on a transformative post-2015 development agenda. The report is inspired by Bhutan's development approach based on the philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) and proposes a New Development Paradigm (NDP) with societal happiness as its guiding vision. Such a holistic view of development has the potential to transform humanity's relationship with nature, restructure our economies, change our attitudes to food and wealth, and promote caring, altruism, inclusiveness and cooperation.

In the new paradigm, genuine happiness is understood to arise from a deep abiding sense of harmony with the natural world, of compassion, contentment and joy. It also acknowledges that basic needs like clean air and water, good health, decent living conditions, knowledge, peace, security and justice, meaningful relationships and other dimensions of wellbeing are essential preconditions for human beings to flourish and achieve true happiness.

The new development framework presented is not intended to be dogmatic or static. Rather, Bhutan wishes to contribute to the search for a genuinely different paradigm – a process that will require exploration of unorthodox approaches that challenge the fundamentals of the current paradigm in search of a better way to live and flourish on our planet. This new paradigm is envisioned to emerge and evolve through a dynamic process of global conversation, participation and constant feedback.

A different vision for development – premises and principles

The universal human goal to pursue happiness and the existence of planetary boundaries are the two fundamental premises of the NDP. The current model, based on the doctrine of limitless growth has resulted in the destructive attempt to use the earth's finite resources to satisfy infinite wants. The envisaged new paradigm differs in essence from the existing one by making sustainability of life on earth the top concern and recalibrating development to ensure that life – of humans, other species and the earth itself – is valued and prioritised.

The transformation towards a different vision for development begins with the recognition of the complexity and interrelatedness of human reality. The principles of this new paradigm are: 1) transformation in what we value; 2) reconsideration of the purpose of development;

3) re-orientation of humanity towards service; 4) recognition of our interconnectedness; and 5) an ethos of cooperation.

The need for a new approach

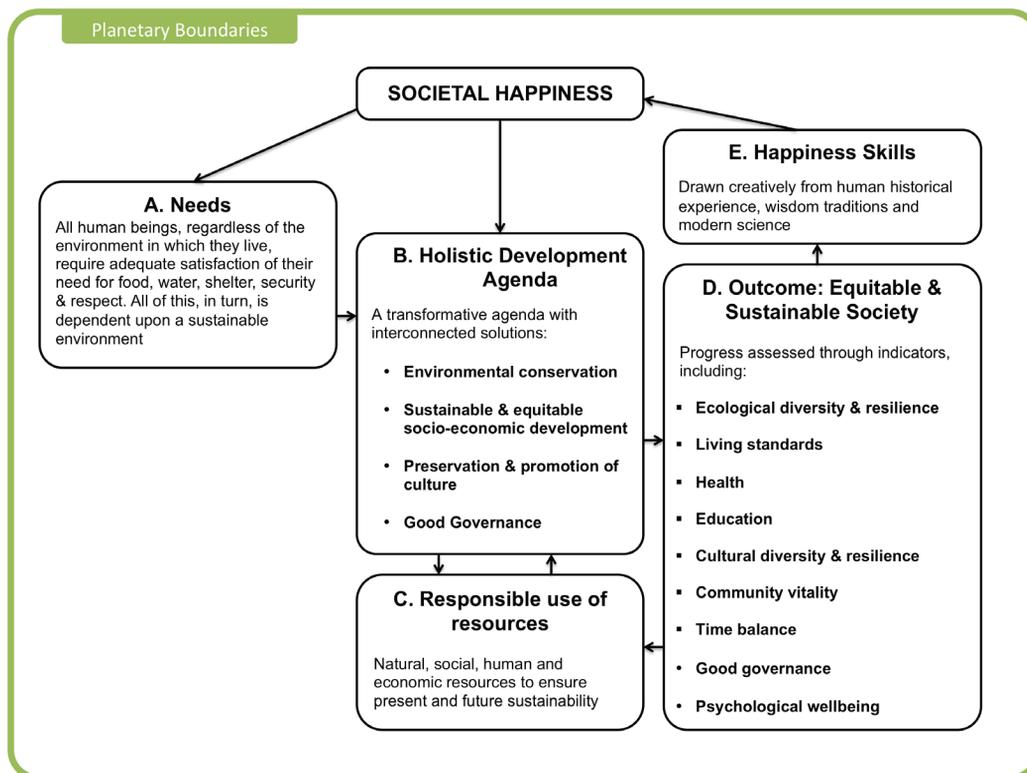
Now more than ever, the need for a different development approach is highlighted in ecological, social and economic crises: ecosystem degradation, potentially catastrophic climate change, excessive consumption of the affluent and extreme poverty on the other end, and growing inequalities both between and within nations. Underlying all these crises is the lack of a holistic view that would focus on causes instead of symptoms, and the inadequacy of the architecture of global governance to address these problems.

The use of gross domestic product (GDP) as the central measure of progress in the current growth-based paradigm has serious limitations. GDP only measures and aggregates marketed economic activity and does not distinguish between those activities that create benefit and those that signify decline in wellbeing, nor does it include activities that are outside the market, such as unpaid work. To properly assess wellbeing outcomes, a more integrated measurement system that balances the ecological, social, economic and cultural dimensions of development is needed.

Towards a new development paradigm - a proposed model

Bhutan offers a new development paradigm model as a basis for exploring alternative approaches to development. In this NDP model, the vision of societal happiness is taken as a wider lens to view human progress within planetary limits, thus fulfilling the needs of *all* humans rather than the “wants” of just a few. Having this more accurate focus on real needs, it is possible to detail a holistic development agenda. The four pillars of GNH are proposed as core dimensions of this agenda, namely environmental conservation, sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, preservation and promotion of culture, and good governance. To achieve these goals, policies for the responsible management of natural, human, social and economic resources are needed to ensure present and future sustainability.

The NDP framework sees societal wellbeing as the desired outcome of these structures and policies, and proposes wellbeing conditions be assessed according to the nine domains currently used in Bhutan’s GNH Index: ecological diversity and resilience, living standards, health, education, cultural diversity and resilience, community vitality, time balance, good governance, and psychological wellbeing. The NDP model recognises that happiness skills as personal tools for transformation are necessary to translate these wellbeing outcomes into the experience of human and societal happiness.



Challenges for the new paradigm

The challenges related to realising and adopting a new development paradigm can be divided into three categories: the first is substantive – how to define the NDP and its key dimensions and characteristics; the second is related to process – how the NDP will be developed in the near future; and the third challenge concerns implementation – how to adopt and apply the NDP in practice. Notwithstanding these challenges, the necessity and potential of pursuing the proposed new paradigm is clear. A business-as-usual trajectory that has led to a crisis-ridden world is no longer tenable. The proposed new paradigm offers a brighter and more uplifting future with potential for experientially rich, decent, healthful and fulfilling lives for all.

A transformative agenda for societal happiness - future options

While the on-going post-2015 consultations have already yielded numerous reports and recommendations, the new development paradigm offers a unifying framework and a higher purpose for development with a transformative agenda. The beginning point for societal

transformation is a new story – one where interdependence is recognised, humans are co-operative, the economy serves the people, and wellbeing and prosperity are possible within planetary boundaries.

This transformative shift requires a synergetic and multi-dimensional approach. Change, education, and re-education must take place on multiple levels simultaneously: individual, community, organisational, national and international; and in the spheres of formal, non-formal and informal education. Beyond new policies and mechanisms, altered mind-sets and behaviour are necessary to catalyse a new paradigm.

As a step towards a more holistic, sane and just approach to development, Bhutan proposes that:

- ◆ **Happiness** be adopted as the overarching goal for the future development of the post-2015 development agenda.
- ◆ **Wellbeing and happiness** be considered for inclusion in the suggested Sustainable Development Goals.
- ◆ Relevant UN research institutes and independent researchers take up the task of elaborating the details and mechanisms of the proposed new paradigm for global application.

As much as Bhutan hopes to contribute to the global effort to chart a new approach to human development guided by the higher vision of wellbeing and happiness, the intention is also to learn from good practices from around the world and to bring this vision more directly into Bhutan's own economy and society.

This will be the work of a generation, at least. It is time to begin.

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Women playing *khuru* in Gelephu, Bhutan. It is a traditional Bhutanese sport of throwing darts, often played only by men.

Photo Credit: Sangay Tshering

Abbreviations

CBS	Centre for Bhutan Studies
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNH	Gross National Happiness
GNHC	Gross National Happiness Commission
GNP	Gross National Product
IEWG	International Expert Working Group
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NDP	New Development Paradigm
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OWG	Open Working Group for Sustainable Development Goals
RGOB	Royal Government of Bhutan
SC NDP	Steering Committee for the New Development Paradigm
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SDSN	Sustainable Development Solutions Network
SNDP	Secretariat for the New Development Paradigm
UN	United Nations
UN SG	Secretary-General of the United Nations
WHO	World Health Organisation
WTO	World Trade Organisation

1 A Different Vision for Development

When we accept that this is a world of people all alike, of families all alike, of communities all alike – of countries facing the same challenges – of human beings ultimately seeking the same thing – then we will truly be in a position to foster well being, security and happiness.

- His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, Address at the Madhavrao Scindia Memorial Lecture titled *Changing World and Timeless Values*, India, 2009

Bhutan's perspective

At the beginning of the 1960s, Bhutan emerged from more than half a century of relative isolation from the world outside the kingdom. To all intents and purposes, it had missed the wars and the social movements, the liberations and the oppressions, the ideologies and the often-ferocious debates that characterised the first part of the 20th century, particularly the period between the two World Wars and the ensuing Cold War. The period after the Second World War, especially the 1960s, was a time of great intellectual ferment, discussion and experimentation in the field of development. We listened to all of this as carefully as we could, and we compared what was being said and done globally with the values that had come to define us in our own minds and experience as a culture and as a nation.

On the one hand, development was seen as a national and a human necessity, and we pursued it as best we could. On the other hand, we felt considerable unease over both the means and the objectives of the various types of economic development that we observed outside our borders, and that we ourselves were adopting. In 1979 His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, the Fourth King of Bhutan gave expression to this unease by declaring that Bhutan is more interested in Gross National Happiness (GNH) than in Gross National Product (GNP).

Societal progress must achieve physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing as a condition for the fulfilment of human potential and for genuine happiness in harmony with nature

Especially by the late 1980s, we saw that unease begin to appear elsewhere as well. The dominant growth-based development model had maximised productivity, increased income and consumption, created prosperity at least for some, and made life longer, easier and more comfortable - for those able to exploit its potential. But it had also reached its ecological, social, cultural and economic limits and there was growing agreement globally that the world and humanity now needed a development vision that could guide society towards higher and more meaningful advancements.

Now more than ever, the world is faced with the worrying consequences of ecosystem degradation, potentially catastrophic climate change, diminishing cultural diversity and a fundamentally flawed economic system. Unconscionable inequities, indebtedness, disempowerment of local communities, political instability, and conflict are some of the many other problems that make clear the need for a change in direction.

Bhutan's own development approach, guided by the philosophy of GNH, looks at the prevailing problems as symptoms of a single malaise. It considers all these problems as being rooted in the refusal to accept the obsolescence of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP)-based model, which served its purpose well at the time it was needed. Bhutan's path is founded on a clear understanding and acceptance of a higher and reasoned purpose for development that goes beyond the short-term economic and material wellbeing of human beings and that takes into account the interdependent nature of life on earth. It is guided by the belief that development or societal progress must achieve physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellbeing as a condition for the fulfilment of human potential and for genuine happiness in harmony with nature.

However, applying the GNH philosophy in practical terms in its own development process is a difficult challenge because Bhutan still has to function in a GDP-based world. To take just one example, Bhutan pledged at the Copenhagen climate summit to remain a net carbon sink in perpetuity, but global greenhouse gas emissions will still melt its glacial lakes and cause grievous flooding in its vulnerable valleys.

And so, we have come to realise that we cannot achieve our GNH vision alone, and have humbly asked the global community to share our vision and join Bhutan's effort to forge a new development path. Fortunately,

we are far from alone in this recognition and determination.

Parallel global initiatives

On 20 June 2012, at the United Nations (UN) Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio +20), the Prime Minister of Bhutan stated:

Sustainable development means survival. It is about how we, as a species, must live within the bounds of what nature can provide. Sustainable development is not a choice. It is an absolute necessity. It is neither an ideal beyond the reach of the poor nor a threat to the rich and affluent. And we have no time to waste over arguments of who must bear the guilt for our predicament. When we have, in varying degrees and with growing efficiency, stripped Earth of its remaining capacity to support life, there will be no judge or jury to separate the rich from poor, the north from the south, or the more guilty from the less.

The Secretary-General (SG) of the UN has expressed similar sentiments. In his address to the high-level meeting on the State of the World Economy and Finance at the UN headquarters on 17 May 2012, Ban Ki-moon stated:

The old model is broken. We need to create a new one . . . In this time of global challenge, even crisis, business as usual will not do . . . It is time to recognize that human capital and natural capital are every bit as important as financial capital. It is time to invest in people . . . Clearly we must unite around a shared vision for the future - a vision for equitable human development, a healthy planet, an enduring economic dynamism.

The UN system is working with governments, civil society, academia, and other partners to identify a post-2015 development agenda. This new development agenda is further linked to the 2012 UN Conference on Sustainable Development, “Rio+20”, after which the intergovernmental Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals (OWG) was created. Eleven global thematic consultations together with national consultations in nearly 100 countries, including Bhutan, have been conducted so far. Results from these global consultations and inputs from online and offline platforms, such as the MY World survey, have fed into the Report of the High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda advising the UN SG on the new global development framework beyond 2015. Several other reports have been submit-

Bhutan hopes to contribute both to the UN's post-2015 development agenda and to the worldwide recognition of the need for new societal solutions to the emergent crises of sustainability

ted to the UN SG, including the UN Sustainable Development Solutions Network (SDSN) report, the UN Global Compact report, and the UN Development Group report.¹

Putting wellbeing at the core of the post-2015 development framework through measuring and accounting for wellbeing and sustainability is high on the agenda of many international organisations and individual countries.² The final post-2015 development agenda with concrete goals will be agreed and adopted through intergovernmental negotiations by Member States of the UN. This negotiation phase aims to be an inclusive and transparent process, including inputs from civil society, academia, businesses and other stakeholders.

Bhutan has initiated the drafting of a New Development Paradigm (NDP) as part of this worldwide effort now under way to define a new global development agenda to guide society after the end of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which sadly still leave many countries short of achieving the basic socio-economic standards for a decent life. The Kingdom of Bhutan is honoured to join this important global effort to chart a new and equitable path for human society in harmony with nature.

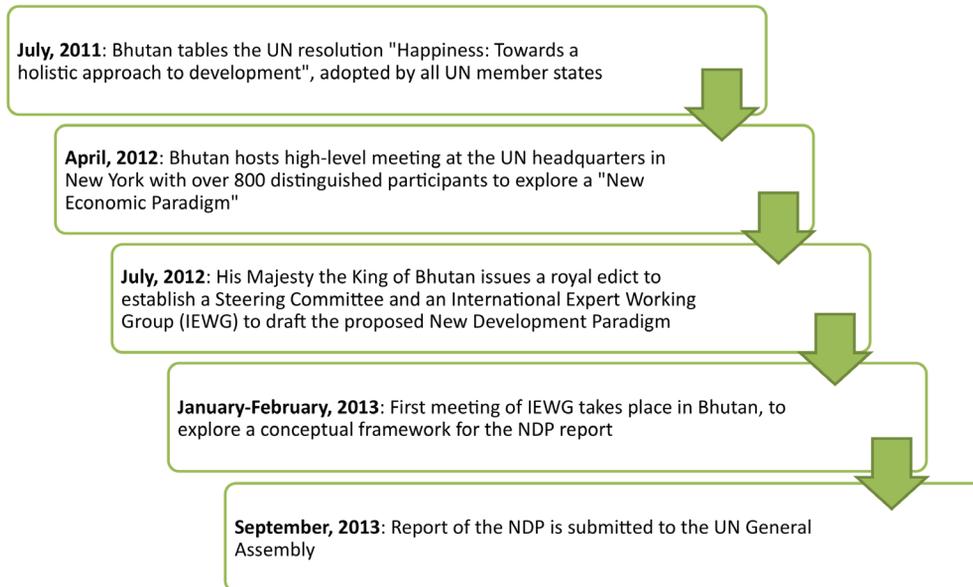
In follow-up to UN Resolution 65/309 titled *Happiness: Towards a holistic approach to development* initiated by Bhutan, co-sponsored by 68 countries, and adopted by consensus in July 2011, the Royal Government of Bhutan (RGOB) hosted a High-Level Meeting on *Wellbeing & Happiness: Towards a New Economic Paradigm* on 2 April, 2012 at United Nations headquarters in New York. This meeting requested that Bhutan convene an expert working group to elaborate the details of a new paradigm with human happiness and the wellbeing of all life forms as the ultimate goal, purpose and context of development.

¹ UNDP. 2013. *The Bhutanese Voice – The Future We Want for All: Well-being and Happiness*. The Post-2015 Development Agenda. National Consultations Report. May 2013; UN. 2013a. *A New Global Partnership: Eradicate Poverty and Transform Economies Through Sustainable Development*; Sustainable Development Solutions Network. 2013. *An Action Agenda for Sustainable Development*. Report for the UN Secretary-General; UNDG. 2013. *The Global Conversation Begins – Emerging Views for a New Development Agenda*.

² See for example: Council of the European Union. 2013. *The Overarching Post-2015 Agenda – Council Conclusions*; OECD. 2013. *Beyond the Millennium Development Goals: Towards an OECD contribution to the post-2015 agenda*.

Subsequently on 28 July 2012, His Majesty the King of Bhutan issued a *Kasho* (Royal Edict) to establish a Steering Committee (SC) and an International Expert Working Group (IEWG), to help frame a new development paradigm (NDP) based on Bhutan's effort to pursue a holistic, sustainable and inclusive development process aimed at promoting human happiness with a clear set of progress indicators.

Figure 1. The process of the New Development Paradigm initiative



In presenting this proposed model for a new development paradigm, therefore, Bhutan hopes to contribute both to the UN's post-2015 development agenda and to the worldwide recognition of the need for new societal solutions to the emergent crises of sustainability. Bhutan is grateful that the GNH-inspired vision of development has resonated in many places, as citizens and organisations worldwide engage in a common search for sustainable solutions to our current crises and for a higher purpose for development and human progress.

The ability to think creatively and act boldly in finding new solutions to these crises depends upon a clear understanding of what a paradigm is. A paradigm is a constellation of concepts and assumptions that structure

We envision the new paradigm emerging through a dynamic process of global conversation, participation and constant feedback

how we see the world. It is not the same as our perceptions of the world; it is the framework that shapes our perceptions. Paradigms are also a structure for our future. By extrapolating from our present paradigm, we develop expectations about the future, and within the paradigm we formulate policies to achieve the future we want. Thus, a paradigm defines and limits the future that we can imagine. The proposed new framework is an attempt to view the world and development through a new and broader lens to address the emergent problems that cannot be solved in the current paradigm.³

However, the proposed new framework offered here is not intended to be dogmatic or static. Rather, we hope to contribute constructively to the search for a genuinely new paradigm – a process that will require exploration of unorthodox approaches that challenge the fundamentals of the current paradigm in search of a better way to live and flourish on our planet. We envision this new paradigm emerging through a dynamic process of global conversation, participation and constant feedback, and continuing to improve and evolve as we humans deepen our understanding of our role on the planet.

Bhutan's vision for a new development paradigm

The premise

Bhutan's proposed new paradigm rests on two fundamental premises:

- 1) The universal human goal to pursue wellbeing and happiness.

We define happiness as a deep abiding sense of harmony with the natural world and with our fellow beings that is characterised by compassion, contentment and joy. This is a societal vision at the core of true human development and is not just a private yearning. The foundation and precondition for pursuing happiness is wellbeing that includes good health, economic security, knowledge, peace and physical security, justice and equality, vibrant communities and

³ Mancall, M. 2013. *Towards a New Social Contract: The Old Paradigm and the New*. Background paper for meeting of the International Expert Working Group, Thimphu, Bhutan, January and February, 2013.

meaningful relationships, and the wellbeing of all life forms.

- 2) The existence of planetary boundaries and the gravity of current ecological realities.

The planet and its resources are finite. This is a fact. Scientists, the UN and the world now recognise that our development to date has been unsustainable, and that we are consuming resources far faster than they can be replenished. It is clear that future development must take place within planetary boundaries and that we must recalibrate our activities to ensure sustainability.

The new paradigm differs in essence from the existing one by making the sustainability of life on earth the top concern and recalibrating development to ensure that life – of humans, other species and the earth itself – is valued and prioritised. The new paradigm is necessary simply because the current system, based on the doctrine of limitless growth and on the insatiable desire for ever-increasing wealth and status, has resulted in the self-destructive attempt to use earth's finite resources to satisfy infinite wants.

The approach to transformation

The journey towards a new paradigm has to begin with the recognition of the complexity and interrelatedness of our reality. The process of our transformation from the current to the new paradigm must harmonise and reconcile seemingly contradictory choices such as short-term and long-term goals, individual and collective goals, and growth and sustainable goals. For instance:

- ◆ *The new model must serve to prevent as well as to cure.* In order to change current realities, it is necessary both to treat the prevailing societal malaise while simultaneously creating the new order of society. In practical terms, this requires long-term as well as short-term goals, which may necessitate very different approaches and types of change. For example, while consuming in a more environmentally friendly manner is a step in the right direction, it is actually a short-term goal with only limited reach. The longer-term goal must be to curb consumption habits to conform to planetary limits. This far-reaching shift must be led by those whose wealth and income are already substantial, so that those who are hungry or living in poverty

The new paradigm differs in essence from the existing one by making the sustainability of life on earth the top concern and recalibrating development to ensure that life - of humans, other species and the earth itself - is valued and prioritised

may increase their consumption to sustainable levels.

- ◆ *Transformation must be both internal and external.* The transformation of our values, mind-sets and psychology should reinforce the change in the outer conditions of wellbeing and their institutional structures. Otherwise, systemic changes will remain in conflict with internal values and vice versa, resulting in gridlock and even intensifying unresolved tensions.
- ◆ *Perspectives must be both eco-centric and anthropocentric.* Both are necessary for human beings to survive and flourish within planetary boundaries. As human survival depends on nature, solving problems for humanity requires a basic orientation to nature.
- ◆ *Appropriate technological solutions must be embraced in harmony with traditional wisdom.* The world was more sustainable before industrialisation and the world is more technologically advanced today. Thus, it is important to learn from wisdom traditions while utilising technological advancements to find sustainable solutions.

Principles of the new paradigm

Bhutan's proposed new paradigm rests on several principles:

1. *Transformation in what we value.* As His Majesty the King of Bhutan said, "Gross National Happiness has come to mean so many things to so many people, but to me it signifies simply development with values". We must value life - the life of all humanity and all living beings - over acquisitiveness and profit. We must also recognise the difference between needs and wants, and value *needs* over wants.
2. *Reconsideration of the purpose of development.* In recent human history, development has been defined largely in terms of industrialisation, increased production, income, consumption, and accumulation of wealth. Instead, we must manifest development through nurturing the broader conditions for happiness and wellbeing of all life on earth - the ultimate state of being and a true measure of human progress. Adequate economic security is one of those conditions but by no means the only one.

3. *Reorientation of humanity towards service.* This has two meanings. First, we have focused production largely on the provision of material goods, rather than considering the services those goods provide. As a result, we are inundated with goods that often quickly become obsolete and need to be replaced. A new development paradigm will recognise, for example, that we do not necessarily need a car; we need to get from one place to another. Second, orienting ourselves towards service also means seeing our work in terms of its purpose and benefit to society. Our work as teachers, labourers, artists or businesspeople should truly *serve* the needs of society as well as being a source of livelihood to ourselves.
4. *Recognition of interconnectedness.* We, the human species, are completely interconnected with our natural world and with each other. The phenomenon of globalisation and the devastating impacts of economic activity on the living biosphere (through climate change, resource depletion, species extinctions and more) have made our mutual interdependence more widely obvious than in any prior generation. Since none of our actions occur in a vacuum, recognising the causes and consequences of our actions and of our daily economic activity is essential if we are to co-exist with our fellow beings. This includes fostering awareness in our educational institutions, media and elsewhere on where, how, and under what conditions our daily products are produced and disposed.
5. *Ethos of cooperation.* Finally and most importantly, in order for us to make the required transformation, an ethos of cooperation and unity must replace the current obsession with competition and sectarian division. A task as monumental as actual adoption and practical implementation of the proposed new paradigm will require a recognition that our own separate interests will only be served by cooperation, collaboration and integration of our efforts at every level.

Principles of the new paradigm are:

- 1) transformation in what we value;
- 2) reconsideration of the purpose of development;
- 3) re-orientation of humanity towards service;
- 4) recognition of our interconnectedness; and
- 5) ethos of cooperation

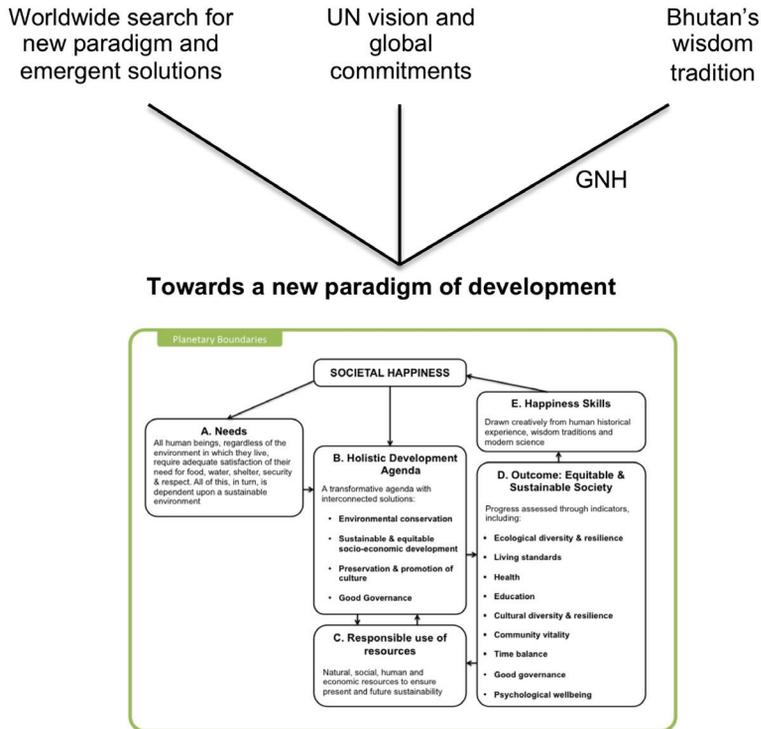
Our own separate interests will only be served by cooperation, collaboration and integration of our efforts at every level

Proposed working model of the New Development Paradigm

A new development framework, inspired by GNH, would first identify the explicit needs that development must address towards achieving wellbeing and societal happiness. It would also examine and learn from the underlying causes and conditions that have led to the current crises and the concomitant failure to meet those needs. From this, the new model can propose the necessary structures, policies and regulatory mechanisms to conserve nature, attain inclusive and sustainable socio-economic development, promote and preserve culture and strengthen good governance. To achieve these goals, such a framework would then suggest policies for the responsible management of natural, human, social and economic resources to ensure present and future sustainability.

The new paradigm envisages societal wellbeing as the desired outcome of these structures and policies and proposes these outcomes be assessed according to nine domains: ecological sustainability (including the wellbeing of non-human species and life forms), living standards, health, education, culture, community vitality, time balance, good governance, and psychological wellbeing, each with specific progress indicators. Conscious processes and skills are needed to transform these wellbeing outcomes to the higher state of human happiness at both individual and collective levels. These happiness skills can be drawn from sources like human historical experience, wisdom traditions and modern science. In turn, the degree of societal happiness will determine the evolving needs of development.

Figure 2. Convergence of global efforts towards a new paradigm



In the following section we first consider why a new approach to development has become such an urgent necessity. We then illustrate the proposed framework for the NDP in the third section, presenting examples of new paradigm principles in practice in Bhutan. After discussing multifaceted challenges for the NDP in the fourth section, the concluding section outlines the promise and the imperative of taking the new paradigm forward.

2 The Need for a New Approach

The purpose of development should be to create the conditions for people to adequately satisfy their needs while protecting the wellbeing of all life forms. This in turn would provide the basic opportunities required for human beings to realise their full potential. But far from doing this, development according to the dominant paradigm of unrestrained growth has led to worldwide ecological, social and economic crises that have resulted in failure to fulfil even basic needs like planetary survival as well as in massive inequities and injustices.

Shortcomings of GDP as a measure of progress

Since GDP is not an indicator of wellbeing, it cannot effectively be used to inform policy-making. Simon Kuznets, a Nobel Prize winning economist and the architect of GDP, himself noted that to assess the welfare of a nation it is necessary to ask not how much the economy is growing, but **what** is growing.⁴

The rationale for a new paradigm begins with an acknowledgement of the failure of the old paradigm that relies on unrestrained economic growth and GDP as the central measure of progress. GDP only measures and aggregates marketed economic activity and does not therefore distinguish between those activities that create benefit and those that signify decline in wellbeing. For example, an oil spill increases GDP because money is spent cleaning it up, although it obviously detracts from society's wellbeing. Similarly more crime, more sickness, more war, more pollution, more fires, storms and pestilence can all make GDP grow because they can increase marketed activity in the economy. In fact, the very depletion and degradation of our precious natural assets to feed market demand frequently shows up as economic gain.

GDP also leaves out many activities that do enhance wellbeing but are

To assess the welfare of a nation it is necessary to ask not how much the economy is growing, but *what* is growing

⁴ Hayward, K. and Colman, R. 2012. *The Economic Value of Voluntary Work in Bhutan*. Monograph No. 2, 2012 National Statistics Bureau: Thimphu.

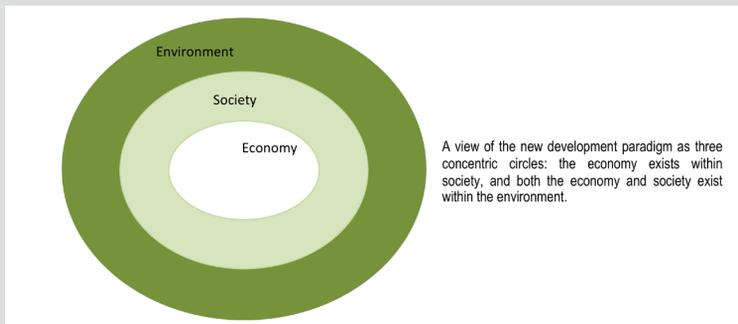
outside the market. For example, the unpaid work of parents does not show up in measures of economic activity or growth. But if these same parents decide to work outside the home to pay for childcare or hire someone to cook and clean for them, GDP increases. Similarly, voluntary work appears nowhere in the GDP, though it contributes to society and the economy, and strengthens democracy through civic engagement.

Box 1. A sustainable relationship

Conventional economic theory sees the human economy as a closed system in which firms produce and households consume. But the human economy is not a closed system. It serves broader societal goals, and exists as a sub-system within, and completely dependent upon, an encompassing ecosystem that provides vital life-support services to the human economy.

The energy and matter that enter the human economy from the ecosystem also return to the ecosystem, partly as waste. The capacity of the ecosystem to absorb that human waste, as well as compromised resource and energy flows from the natural world, and irreversible changes in natural ecosystems like climate change and species extinction, in turn all seriously imperil the functioning of human economies.

In the proposed new development paradigm, therefore, the economy is seen as a subsystem of the society whose broader wellbeing it must serve, while human society is a subsystem of an encompassing ecosystem. This model is also different from the co-equal legs of the “three-legged stool” or “triple bottom line” reporting model that gives economic, social, and ecological measures equal status.



Instead of relying solely on undifferentiated income growth as its basis, meaningful prosperity in the new paradigm is understood as the capabilities that people have to flourish, within the limits of a finite planet. Capabilities transcend material concerns, and include more intangible dimensions such as a sense of identity, strong social networks, and the

Thriving communities are the basis for shared prosperity

ability to participate meaningfully in society. Such wellbeing conditions cannot exist in isolation, as individual prosperity is linked intrinsically to the communities in which these individuals live. Thriving communities are therefore the basis for shared prosperity. Thus, development itself can be understood as mutually supportive changes in communities – small and large, place-based and virtual – that contribute to the wellbeing of all species including humans.⁵

Ecological crises

The material scale of human activity is rapidly approaching – or already exceeds – the safe operating space for humanity on earth. The evidence of this manifests in global sustainability concerns such as:

- ◆ Increasing human populations with growing per capita consumption levels that are fast approaching, or already exceed, planetary boundaries;
- ◆ Highly entropy-increasing technologies that deplete the earth of its resources while producing unassimilated wastes, poisoning the air, water and land and generating climate change; and
- ◆ Land conversion that destroys habitat, increases soil erosion, and accelerates loss of species diversity, and which, coupled with resource extraction and waste emissions, decreases the ecosystem services that support humanity.⁶

The Stockholm Resilience Centre’s Johan Rockström and his team have identified nine “safe boundaries” within which humanity needs to operate. “Boundaries” here mean specific points related to a global-scale environmental process beyond which humanity should not go.

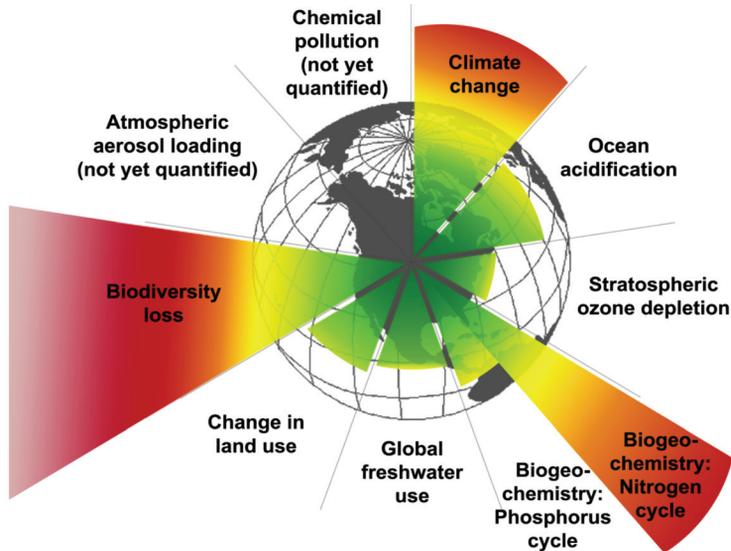
According to Rockström et al., the nine areas that most clearly demonstrate the need for well-defined planetary boundaries (see Figure 3 below) are: (1) climate change, (2) biodiversity loss, (3) excess nitrogen and phosphorus production, (4) stratospheric ozone depletion, (5) ocean acidification, (6) global consumption of freshwater, (7) change in land use for agriculture, (8) air pollution, and (9) chemical pollution.

⁵ Jackson, T. and Victor, P. 2013. Short background contribution by IEWG members to this report.

⁶ Costanza, R., Wilkinson, R., Pickett, K., and Kubiszewski, I. 2012. *Why Now?* Background paper for the International Expert Working Group meetings in Thimphu, Bhutan, January and February, 2013.

Rockström and colleagues estimate that humanity has already transgressed three of these boundaries (in the areas of climate change, biodiversity loss, and nitrogen production) and is rapidly approaching several others.⁷

Figure 3. Planetary boundaries by Rockström et al. 2009.



With the global economy locked into the assumptions of our present consumerist and growth-based development paradigm, remedial policy responses to date have been local, partial and inadequate. Earlier discussions and policy responses tended to focus on symptoms of environmental damage rather than basic causes, and policy instruments tended to be somewhat improvised rather than carefully designed for efficiency, fairness and sustainability. For example, in the 1970s, emphasis centred on end-of-pipe pollution which, while a serious problem, was actually a symptom of the way expanding populations and inefficient technologies fuelled exponential growth of material and energy use, and simultaneously threatened the recuperative powers of the planet's life-support systems. A new development paradigm must clearly focus on causes rather than symptoms.

A new development paradigm must clearly focus on causes rather than symptoms

Economic and social crises

If the ecological dimension of the current crisis is clearly unsustainable,

7

Rockström, J. et al. 2009. A Safe Operating Space for Humanity in *Nature* 461: 472-475.

If everyone were to consume at the current levels of affluence, we would need four more planets to provide the necessary resources.

We need a billion people to live in extreme poverty if we are to maintain the lifestyles of the affluent without creating even more damage to our planet

so are the economic and social dimensions. Our world is still unacceptably divided between the haves and the have-nots. Despite the progress made in achieving many of the MDGs, 1.2 billion people still remain below the extreme poverty line, with an income of US\$1.25 or less a day; one out of eight people go to bed hungry; and major disparities in access to basic services between rural and urban areas persist⁸.

Increasingly, we also live in a world of growing within-nation inequality. More than 80 percent of the global population live in countries where income gaps are widening. Large income gaps *between* nations drive unsustainable and increasingly problematic international migration; large income gaps *within* nations foment political instability and conflict.⁹

Social scientists Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett have produced empirical data that show strong links between income inequality in rich countries and a whole range of health and social problems. Inequality damages the social fabric of the whole society – the effects are biggest among those lower on the social ladder, but the disadvantages of greater inequality are experienced to a lesser extent even among the better off. Indeed, countries with bigger income differences between rich and poor seem to suffer a general social dysfunction. They are less cohesive, community life is weaker, and people trust each other less.¹⁰

Poverty alleviation alone, however meritorious, cannot effectively reduce the widening inequities between and within nations. Poverty is only one side of the present equation of unfair distribution. At the other extreme is the excess consumption that is rapidly depleting resources, generating massive wastes, spewing carbon into the atmosphere, and destroying the ecological life support systems that sustain us. Thus:

- ◆ 20% of the world's people presently consume 86% of its goods while the poorest 20% consume just 1.3 %.
- ◆ The richest 20% use 58% of all energy and the poorest 20% less than 4%.
- ◆ 20% produce 63% of the world's greenhouse gas emissions while the

8 UN. 2013b. *The Millennium Development Goals Report 2013*. New York: United Nations.

9 Milanovic, B. 2011. *The Haves and the Have-Nots*. New York: Basic Books

10 Wilkinson, R. and Pickett, K. 2009. *The Spirit Level: why more equal societies almost always do better*. London: Penguin.

poorest 20% produce only 2%.¹¹

- ◆ 12% of the world's people use 85% of the world's water.¹²
- ◆ The richest 20% consume 84% of all paper and have 87% of all vehicles, while the poorest 20% use less than 1% of each.

Given the reality that we live on a finite planet with limited resources, we cannot alleviate the extreme poverty of 1.3 billion of our fellow global citizens without curbing the excess consumption of more than a billion more.

Humanity is already consuming resources and generating waste 60 percent faster than the planet can regenerate, absorb and sustain. If everyone were to consume at the current levels of affluence, we would need four more planets to provide the necessary resources. Put another way, we now need a billion people to live in extreme poverty if we are to maintain the lifestyles of the affluent without creating even more damage to our planet.

A crisis of governance

Underlying all these crises is a crisis of governance. Nation states are increasingly interdependent, through the international movement of capital, goods, services, technology, information and people. Economic globalisation has been supported by reduced regulation of international trade, and the removal of tariffs and tax barriers. Supporters of globalisation see it as a contribution to raising world GDP and increasing economic growth. Critics point to its impact on rising inequality and social disruption, environmental degradation, and continuing poverty as companies strive to remain competitive in the global market by seeking out low-wage locales with minimal environmental and safety regulations. The architecture of global governance has been inadequate in addressing these pervasive issues.

A strong critique of globalisation points to the rise in power and autonomy of multinational corporations over nation states and international institutions. In many cases, such corporations can even override national laws instituted through democratic processes. Policies generated in

¹¹ World Bank. 2011. *Levels and Trends in Child Mortality*. UN Interagency Group for Child Mortality Estimation.

¹² Merrifield, M., Merrifield, S., and Mitchum, G. 2009. An anomalous recent acceleration of global sea level rise. *Journal of Climate* 22: 5772-5781.

The architecture of global governance has been inadequate in addressing pervasive issues of rising inequality, social disruption, environmental degradation and continuing poverty

this way are antithetical to the goal of developing in a way that is sustainable, democratic and equitable. Too often they reflect the dictates of a few powerful actors rather than a broad consensus.

Economist Herman Daly has described how international competition and trade lowers production costs by externalising them, rather than by improving efficiency. Within richer nation states, production costs include workplace safety, minimum wages, welfare, social security, medical and accident insurance, and restrictions on the length of the working day, on child labour, and on pollution. With globalisation, the shift of production from high- to low-cost nations that lack such controls or welfare provisions lowers the moral and ethical standards of production, thereby increasing exploitation and child labour, weakening human rights, and escalating environmental damage. The costs are compounded by the environmental impact of transport.¹³

In short, given the limitations of GDP as a measure of progress, as well as the interconnected ecological, economic, social and governance crises facing the world, the need for a new approach to development is irrefutable.

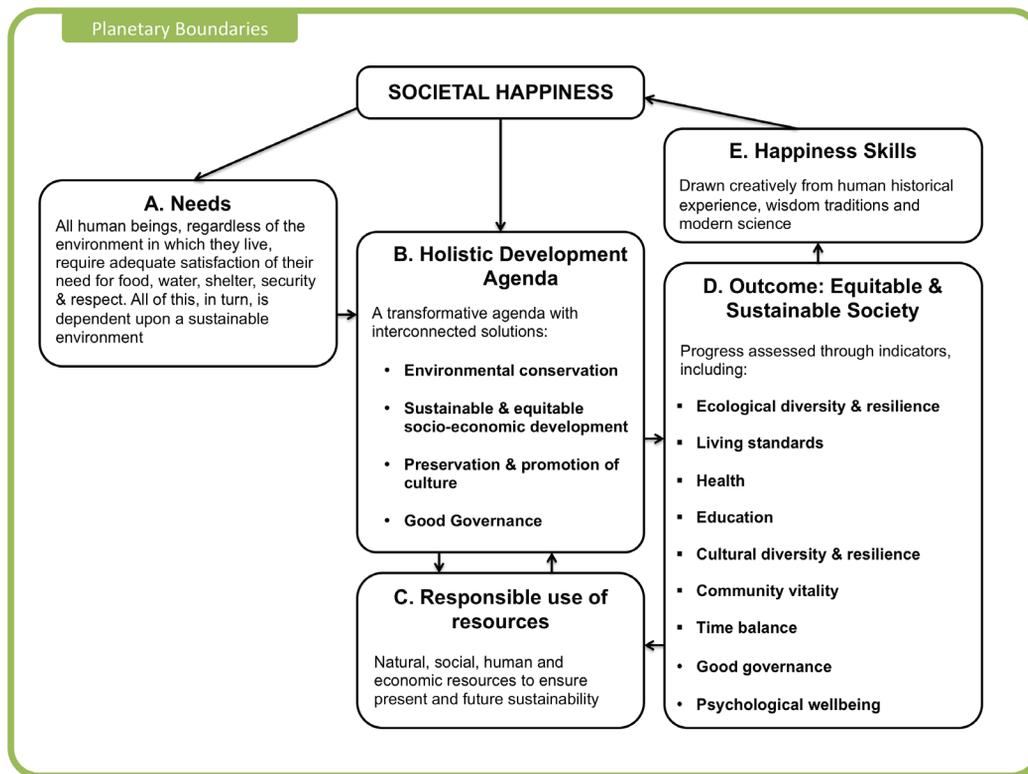
¹³ Talberth, J., Cobb, C., and Slattery, N. 2007. *The Genuine Progress Indicator 2006: A tool for sustainable development*. Oakland, CA: Redefining Progress.

3 Towards a New Development Paradigm

The proposed new development framework begins with a vision of societal happiness, which offers both a collective goal for humanity transcending all ideologies and a wider lens through which to view human progress. This ultimate goal can only be realised when the needs of all humans are fulfilled rather than only the “wants” of a few – within planetary boundaries.

With this more accurate focus on real needs, we are able to detail the kinds of mechanisms that can help conserve nature, attain equitable and sustainable socio-economic development, promote culture, and ensure good governance. To achieve these goals, the framework recognises that policies must draw on available natural, human, social and economic resources, which then have to be managed sustainably and responsibly to ensure this wealth remains available for use by future generations.

The framework sees societal wellbeing as the desired outcome of these structures and policies, and proposes this be assessed and measured according to nine interrelated dimensions currently used in Bhutan’s GNH Index. It recognises that certain skills and processes are also needed to transform these wellbeing outcomes to the higher goal of human happiness, which in turn will enhance satisfaction of the needs identified as the basis of development. This proposed framework is illustrated below in Figure 4, briefly explained in Box 2 and followed by a more explicit description of its components.

Figure 4. Proposed New Development Paradigm model¹⁴

Box 2. Explanation of the NDP Model

(A) **Needs** are here defined as including:

- ◆ Decent living standards including subsistence and shelter for humans and other life forms
- ◆ A healthy environment that supports human and non-human life
- ◆ Good health
- ◆ Knowledge and understanding
- ◆ A sense of belonging to and participation in communities and cultures
- ◆ Balanced time use, to allow for leisure, creativity, and community work, alongside paid work
- ◆ Free participation in decision-making and trust that those in power act for the common good

- ◆ Psychological wellbeing, including contentment, joy, and care and affection for others

These basic needs are currently not met by the conventional development paradigm, due to the multiple ecological, economic and social crises now afflicting the planet. These crises are, in large part, spawned and generated by the present paradigm itself.

(B) A **Holistic Development Agenda** is therefore required to meet and satisfy these needs. The necessary institutional structures, policies, accounting and measurement systems, and regulatory mechanisms of such a balanced and holistic approach may be grouped into four categories - the pillars of Bhutan's GNH model - and are offered here as potential core dimensions of a proposed new development model:

- ◆ Environmental conservation
- ◆ Sustainable and equitable socio-economic development
- ◆ Promotion of culture and values
- ◆ Good governance

(C) The **resources** refer to the natural, human, social, and economic assets on which society must draw to meet basic needs, establish the systems, and implement the policies of the new development approach.

(D) The desired **outcome** of the new development approach is **societal wellbeing**, which meets basic needs and in turn provides the essential conditions and prerequisites for pursuing human happiness.

These desired wellbeing outcomes, which are all measurable, include the domains of a healthy, diverse and resilient natural environment, decent living standards, physical and mental health, education, vibrant cultures, community vitality, balanced time use, good governance and psychological wellbeing.

If this model is found to be useful in supporting new approaches to development, interested policy-makers may then wish to explore the mechanisms and measures most applicable in their own regional, national or community contexts.

(E) However, these key wellbeing outcomes and conditions, while they provide vital opportunities, do not automatically translate into the ultimate goal of development - namely human happiness through a sense of connectedness, harmony, and union with nature, community, other beings and the world. An individual may have virtually all the required conditions and opportunities and still be miserable, while someone with fewer advantages may be far happier. **Conscious skills, processes and practices** are therefore required to transform wellbeing opportunities into the experience of *human and societal happiness* which in turn influences the fulfilment of needs.

A healthy environment is essential not only for humanity's survival but also for the wellbeing of all life forms

(B) Proposed dimensions of a holistic development agenda

The four pillars of GNH proposed as core dimensions of this holistic development agenda are: environmental conservation, sustainable and equitable socio-economic development, preservation and promotion of culture, and good governance. These dimensions are inextricably inter-related for the delivery of equitable and sustainable wellbeing outcomes.

Environmental conservation

A healthy environment is essential not only for humanity's survival but also for the wellbeing of all life forms. Structures, mechanisms, principles and policies required to conserve nature's resources and ecosystem services include, among others:

- ◆ Application of the precautionary principle;
- ◆ Investment mechanisms to repair past damage and to support green spaces, appropriate technologies, renewable energy development, and sustainable infrastructure, agriculture, and business practices;
- ◆ Establishment of governance mechanisms for the global commons, including the atmosphere and oceans, to take immediate and effective action to reverse climate change, biodiversity and resource loss, the depletion of fish stocks, species extinctions, and other threats;
- ◆ Incentives and penalties to reduce carbon and non-renewable resource use, prevent further depletion or degradation of renewables, reduce pollution and waste, and reward sustainable farming practices, responsible soil and land management, and protection of ecosystem services.

Sustainable and equitable socio-economic development

Socio-economic development that depletes resources at the expense of other species and future generations is unsustainable. Similarly, inequitable development that benefits only a few and excludes the vast majority cannot bring societal happiness. Socio-economic development must therefore:

- ◆ Be fully aligned with nature
- ◆ Use natural resources equitably (since they are the common property of all beings)

- ◆ Be based on equity between groups, genders and generations, and in the distribution of power.

In sum, the new development paradigm recognises that the wellbeing of each individual depends upon the wellbeing of all.

Sustainability can be supported through conservation measures such as those suggested above, while greater equity can be promoted through systems such as cooperative ownership, social safety nets, poverty alleviation, fair trade rules, technology transfer, full employment policies, work sharing, and mechanisms to limit excess consumption, unearned income, and private capture of the common wealth.

Sustainable agriculture and its products are the very basis of our survival and health. The NDP approach recognises that responsible food production, distribution and consumption are vital components of equitable and sustainable development.

Promotion of culture

Cultures, languages and indigenous knowledge systems worldwide are disappearing at an even faster rate than species. The principle of sustainability applies to cultures as well as to ecosystem services and economic development. The new development paradigm asserts the right of cultures as well as all life forms to survive and thrive, and recognises that their loss would impoverish humankind. However, as noted by Ura et al. “culture is not static but is also a dynamic concept constantly evolving and continuously challenged by external forces and by internal cultural and social change”.¹⁵ While nurturing and safeguarding distinctive cultural forms, discarding harmful cultural practices contrary to global ethics is a part of this social change.¹⁶

Methods of cultural promotion include:

- ◆ Integrating indigenous knowledge and local languages into educational curricula;
- ◆ Strengthening local economies, community networks, social supports, and extended family ties;

¹⁵ Ura, K. et al. 2012b. *An extensive analysis of GNH index*, Thimphu: Centre for Bhutan Studies.

¹⁶ UNESCO. 2010. *The Power of Culture for Development*. <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0018/001893/189382e.pdf>

Inequitable development that benefits only a few and excludes the vast majority cannot bring societal happiness

The new development paradigm asserts the right of cultures as well as all life forms to survive and thrive, and recognises that their loss would impoverish humankind

Responsible, transparent and accountable government in the public interest as well as active, informed citizen participation are essential

- ◆ Supporting the arts and creative commons;
- ◆ Using new technologies to promote cultural industries;
- ◆ Nurturing the values, wisdom, and practice of spiritual traditions.

A holistic education system that fully incorporates and gives expression to the values of the new development approach is critical. This holistic education is only possible if teachers themselves have gone through a transformative learning experience.¹⁷

Good governance

The new development approach acknowledges that responsible, transparent and accountable government in the public interest as well as active, informed citizen participation are essential to achieve the needs and policy directions outlined above.

Good governance is based on the twin principles of justice and equity:

- ◆ Among different societal groups;
- ◆ In the distribution of life's necessities and in satisfaction of human needs;
- ◆ In decision-making processes that affect nature, future generations and the disadvantaged.

The promotion of good governance includes: improving people's access to public services; enhancing citizens' democratic participation in planning; decision-making and electoral processes through decentralisation; holding free and fair elections; respecting the freedom of media; and strengthening the rule of law by mitigating corruption and ensuring the independence of the judicial system.

¹⁷ Sterling, S. 2011. Transformative Learning and Sustainability: sketching the conceptual ground. *Learning and Teaching in Higher Education* 5, 2010-11.

Box 3. Bhutan's GNH journey – some examples for the NDP

- ◆ The four pillars and nine domains of GNH is a framework that Bhutan has found useful in setting targets in its five-year development plans, and it intends to expand that target-setting function over time as it continues to clarify and hone its own development priorities.
- ◆ A GNH Survey based on a wide spectrum of wellbeing conditions provides more comprehensive evidence to policy-makers to foster informed decision-making, integrating social, economic and environmental objectives.
- ◆ GNH Accounts that make explicit the value of non-market goods and services like those provided by the ecosystem, voluntary work, and other productive assets is being considered as a possible framework for the national accounting system.
- ◆ GNH Policy Screening Tool is used to assess policies, projects and programs. Any proposal that fails this test and demonstrates serious risks to ecology, culture or local communities is sent back to relevant agencies for amendment to ensure harmonization with the GNH principles.
- ◆ Successful transition from absolute monarchy to constitutional democracy, with His Majesty the Fourth King having charted this course as far back as the early 1980s. The gradual yet deliberate decentralisation of decision-making began at the district level in 1981, then at the village-block level in 1991. Executive powers of the throne were devolved to a council of ministers in 1998. Soon after, the drafting of the country's constitution began and nation-wide consultations were held before its adoption in 2008. The transition to parliamentary democracy with the first elections in 2008 has provided the platform for wider public participation in decision-making.
- ◆ The tradition of *Kidu* or welfare provision for the people is a royal prerogative and enshrined today in the constitution as a fundamental responsibility of His Majesty the King. The monarchs have always provided land and other forms of welfare for the most vulnerable sections of society such as children, elderly, disabled and sick people.
- ◆ The Constitution of Bhutan mandates that at least 60% of the country remain under forest cover in perpetuity and currently, 72% is under forest cover. Presently, 50% of the land area is under complete environmental protection with provision for wildlife corridors. Organic farming and other forms of resource conservation are widely promoted. Bhutan has also committed to remain a net carbon sink in perpetuity.
- ◆ Free health care and education is provided with rural health clinics and schools throughout the country.
- ◆ The civil service provides 21 days of paid bereavement leave at times of death of immediate family members. This allows civil servants opportunity for grieving, and time to conduct necessary ceremonies including funeral and final rites for loved ones. It is also a period during which family and friends come together to support each other. This contributes to improved wellbeing conditions in terms of community vitality and time use.

(C) Use of resources in the New Development Paradigm

Resources available to society to meet basic needs refer to the natural, human, social and economic assets on which society must draw to establish the systems and implement the policies of the new development approach.

Conventional accounting systems cover only investment in and depreciation of economic (produced) assets like buildings, machinery, transportation infrastructure, and other human artefacts and services. However, the new development approach rests on an integrated “full cost” accounting system, which also accounts for:

- ◆ **Natural resources:** The natural environment, its biodiversity, and the ecosystem goods and services that are necessary for survival, climate regulation, habitat for all species, water supply, food, fibre, fuel, recreation, cultural amenities, and the raw materials required for all economic production.
- ◆ **Social and cultural resources:** The web of interpersonal connections, social networks, cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, trust, and the institutional arrangements and values that facilitate human interactions and cooperation, and contribute to social cohesion, vibrant communities, good governance, and the human need for belonging.
- ◆ **Human resources:** Human beings and their attributes, including physical and mental health, knowledge and other capacities that enable people to be productive members of society. This involves fulfilling employment as well as free time for family, spirituality, learning, creativity or other personal pursuits.

Each of these resources is as subject to depreciation as produced or manufactured assets. For example:

- ◆ Natural resources are depleted when forests are over-logged, air polluted, soil and water sources degraded, or the atmosphere overloaded with carbon.
- ◆ Social resources are diminished when social inequality, alienation, isolation and crime increase, and when social networks disintegrate as often happens in rural-urban migration.
- ◆ Human resources depreciate when rates of diabetes, stress, depres-

sion, suicide and other physical and mental health ailments rise, when skill and knowledge levels decline, or when free time is squeezed out by overwork.

The prudent, sustainable, and responsible use of all these resources is therefore required to ensure that they do not depreciate in value, and that future generations also enjoy the benefits they provide.

(D) Outcome: Equitable and sustainable society - Bhutan's experiment

Social performance can best be evaluated using indicators of the health and wellbeing of people, nature and living communities.¹⁸ What is measured and counted not only reflects societal values but directly influences which issues have priority on the policy agenda of governments. Such measures also provide early warning signals that allow timely remedial policy action before crises develop. An important step towards a new paradigm is therefore the replacement of narrow economic performance indicators based on economic growth alone, with comprehensive indicators of living metrics to focus attention on the health and wellbeing of critical living systems.

Bhutan's GNH Index is one such experiment in creating a balanced assessment tool for measuring the wellbeing conditions and outcomes of a society in a more comprehensive way than is possible through conventional GDP-based measures. Other multidimensional measurements of progress are being explored by countries, non-governmental groups and international organisations around the world.¹⁹

The GNH Index is a work-in-progress and is critically reviewed as it is applied in policy-making and practices. Nonetheless, it helps provide a useful first step in assessing the country's progress in realising the outcome of equitable and sustainable wellbeing and in fulfilling the needs of nature, people, community and the economy. GNH together with its Index is "a dynamic concept that must respond constantly to real challenges in the political and material world"²⁰ in order to be effective.

¹⁸ Korten, D. 2013. *The Pursuit of Happiness: A New Development Paradigm*. <http://livingeconomiesforum.org/new-development-paradgm>.

¹⁹ For example: Happy Planet Index, www.happyplanetindex.org; Genuine Progress Indicator (GPI); OECD Better Life Index, <http://www.oecdbetterlifeindex.org>

²⁰ Mancall, M. 2007. Introduction in The Centre for Bhutan Studies. 2007. *Rethinking Development - Proceedings of Second International Conference on Gross National Happiness*, pp. xi-xxxiv. Thimphu: The Centre for Bhutan Studies.

An important step towards a new paradigm is the replacement of narrow economic indicators with comprehensive indicators of living metrics

Figure 5. Nine domains of the GNH Index



The GNH Index is composed of the following nine domains that are intended to be reviewed and updated to reflect changing social conditions:

Ecological diversity and resilience. Human life and economic activity depend upon a healthy global ecosystem which can be fostered, for example, through provision of protected areas, wildlife corridors, outlawing of cruel farming practices and shifts to organic agriculture. The GNH Index currently uses four indicators to assess ecosystem health according to levels of pollution, urban development, wildlife diversity and peoples' felt level of environmental responsibility.

Since the GNH Index is based on survey data, however, it does not adequately assess ecosystem health comprehensively. It is acknowledged that additional objective indicators are required. These would focus on, for example, the impact of human activity such as deforestation, soil depletion, loss of biodiversity, overharvesting of commercialised species and other unsustainable practices; and on assessing levels of air and water pollution, greenhouse gas emissions and carbon sequestration, forest cover and age, species diversity, depletion of water resources, and more.

Living standards. The GNH Index, as currently constituted, focuses on household income, assets and housing quality, and also enables assessments of income distribution, poverty, economic security and other key economic outcomes. The approach to these economic indicators, however, differs markedly from current GDP-based measures. They focus on outcomes rather than inputs like economic growth that frequently

widen the gap between rich and poor, exacerbate social inequities, and may improve living standards for some segments of the populace at the expense of others.

Health. Conceptions of health have long ago moved beyond the simple absence of disease and measures of life expectancy to include many other determinants of health that are reflected in the other GNH domains. For example, a report of the World Health Organisation calls for an entirely new approach to development that includes improving daily living conditions (e.g. investment in early child development and social protection across the life course), and reducing the current inequitable distribution of power, money and resources.²¹

Education is seen as the “glue” that joins all nine GNH domains. For example, a healthy natural environment requires ecological literacy; a healthy population requires health and nutritional literacy; a vibrant culture requires knowledge of indigenous languages, traditional arts and crafts, and so on. Thus, dimensions of the education domain go well beyond the conventional assessment of years of formal education and formal educational attainment, to include some aspects of societal knowledge and of life-long learning.

Cultural diversity and resilience. The instrumental value of culture is discussed in terms of four dimensions in the GNH framework: language and its symbolic and identity significance; art and artisanal skills; socio-cultural participation; and *driglam/namzha* (the way of harmony), a uniquely Bhutanese dimension referring to the role of dress, consumption habits, attitudes and body language in expressing and generating social harmony.

Community vitality. Empirical studies identify community as one of the most significant determinants of wellbeing. The GNH Index indicators cover seven major aspects of community wellbeing: family vitality, safety, reciprocity, trust, social support, socialisation and kinship density.

Time use and balance. While conventional measures of progress focus almost exclusively on paid work time, the GNH Index values all dimen-

What is measured and counted not only reflects societal values but directly influences which issues have priority on the policy agenda

²¹ WHO 2008. *Closing the gap in a generation: Health equity through action on the social determinants of health*. Commission on the Social Determinants of Health. Geneva: World Health Organisation.

sions of an individual's time, including unpaid household and voluntary work and leisure time. To this end, a comprehensive Time Use Survey assesses temporal perspective (orientation toward past, present or future), work/leisure balance, workplace task versus social time, orientation toward clock or event time, the general pace of life, attitudes toward silence, idle time, waiting, leisure and other elements of time use.

Good governance enables the translation of all the above domains into policy that effectively realises these intended wellbeing outcomes. Good governance includes transparency, accountability and freedom from corruption. It also includes the degree of participation, engagement, inclusion and enabling of local actors; the degree of power sharing in and capacity to influence political and economic institutions; freedoms of expression and media; and programs to promote restorative justice and other legal and judicial reforms.

Psychological wellbeing is often included as the mental health dimension of population health in many existing quality of life measures and indicator systems. Because of its declared intent to create conditions for human happiness, however, Bhutan has chosen to define psychological wellbeing as a separate domain in its GNH Index to include measures of subjective wellbeing that attempt to gauge the degree and strength of engagement, positive relationships, meaning in life and personal autonomy.

The aim of such multi-dimensional outcome assessment is to enable government and the larger society to identify performance gaps, to see whether the priorities they have set and the solutions they have employed in the new paradigm are on track, thus supporting effective policy decisions and responsible allocation of resources.

Limitations of GNH Index

The GNH Index is not without its limitations. The Index is not intended to be a measurement of happiness, but is “meant to orient the people and the nation *towards* happiness” by improving their conditions.²² However, the Index is often misinterpreted as a direct measure of happiness, which can be misleading.

²² Ura, K. et al. 2012a. *A short guide to Gross National Happiness Index*, Thimphu: Centre for Bhutan Studies.

As with any new attempt at multi-dimensional social assessment, there are still a number of technical and methodological challenges with the GNH Index, including: difficulties in interpretation of its mathematical formulae and in the communication of its policy-relevant results to policy and public audiences; questions about the way results are correlated to reach comparative conclusions among regions and groups as well as about data robustness at those levels; and the wording and choice of particular questions, as well as a range of other issues.

Nonetheless, these are seen as “teething problems” in the early phases of what is a highly ambitious effort to measure the country’s progress holistically. Certainly it can be argued that the very effort to measure progress comprehensively already makes the GNH Index a far more inclusive tool than limited GDP-based growth measures and related economic data.

A second form of assessment is a national accounting mechanism that goes beyond current systems that define a nation’s wealth in purely material, manufactured and financial terms. Like the GNH Index, full-cost accounting is still an experiment in Bhutan to provide a more accurate appreciation of our wealth. This comprises the value of natural resources and the life-sustaining ecosystem services they provide; human assets like health, knowledge and skills; and social and cultural assets like the strength of social networks, safe and dynamic communities, and indigenous language and knowledge systems.

**GNH Index is meant
to orient the people
and the nation
towards happiness**

Box 4. Applying the new paradigm to policy-making

The holistic approach to development suggested here is not only conceptual or theoretical. It can directly impact the direction of development and offer practical options in spheres that are currently not explored fully by planners and policy-makers.

The new development paradigm can improve planning capacity –

- In the short term to:
 1. Set more inclusive and wide-ranging development goals and targets that harmonise social, economic, and environmental objectives;
 2. Provide more comprehensive and accurate evidence to policy-makers to enable informed decision-making;
 3. Provide a policy-screening tool to identify linkages and trade-offs among development options.

These applications to development planning can be implemented without delay and require only a shift in view and baseline information already available widely.

- In the medium term to:
 1. Send early warning signals that trigger preventive remedial action before crises develop;
 2. Enhance capacity to assess which existing programmes are working and which are not;
 3. Provide clear objective criteria to hold governments accountable.

These functions require more in-depth reconsideration of the overall direction of a nation's development based on assessments of trends over time.

- In the long term to:
 1. Provide a unifying societal force based on agreed and inclusive goals, purposes, objectives, and overall direction of development;
 2. Reverse existing destructive trends and crises by valuing natural, human, and social resources;
 3. Re-structure the economy by creating financial incentives and penalties (and hence pricing goods and services), to encourage sustainable activities that contribute to wellbeing and discourage activities that undermine wellbeing.

These outcomes reflect systemic and structural shifts that will occur as a result of methodical adoption and implementation of the new development paradigm.

(E) Happiness skills

The holistic development agenda cannot in and of itself engender societal happiness. What it can do is shape the material and other necessary conditions that are conducive to a society whose members have the best opportunity to pursue their full human potential. This is not just a theoretical construct as there is now reliable empirical evidence demonstrating that opportunities for wellbeing, life satisfaction and happiness are greatly enhanced when people:

- ◆ Live in safe neighbourhoods where they trust their neighbours rather than in high crime areas where they are afraid to walk the streets at night;²³
- ◆ Have ample economic security to provide the necessities of life to their families rather than live in poverty-stricken straits with the perpetual stress, anxiety, and uncertainty of acquiring food, shelter and clothing;
- ◆ Are healthy rather than physically or mentally sick or disabled;
- ◆ Have clean air to breathe, safe water to drink, green spaces for recreation, and healthy natural resources to provide the necessities of life on earth, rather than live as “environmental refugees” in a world of depleted and degraded resources;
- ◆ Are knowledgeable rather than ignorant;
- ◆ Have strong social networks and a sense of belonging to culture and community.²⁴

Policies in the NDP are designed to produce these and other wellbeing outcomes. Thus, the necessary conditions are provided to enable human

The inner transformation of our own mindsets and behaviours is as important for happiness as the transformation of the outer conditions of wellbeing

²³ See for example: Middleton, J. 1998. Crime is a public health problem. *Medicine, Conflict and Survival*, 14, 24-28; Macintyre, S. & Ellaway, A. 2000. Ecological approaches: Rediscovering the role of the physical and social environment. In Berkman, L.F. and Kawachi, I., eds. *Social epidemiology*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 332/348; Sampson, R.J. 2003. Neighborhood-level context and health: Lessons from sociology. In Kawachi, I and Berkman, L.F., eds. *Neighborhoods and health*, pp. 132-146. New York: Oxford University Press; De Jesus, M. et al. 2010. Associations between perceived social environment and neighborhood safety: Health implications. *Health & Place*, 16 (5), pp. 1007-1013.

²⁴ International Expert Working Group. 2013. *Report on Wellbeing & Happiness: Contributions towards Bhutan's NDP Report by IEWG members of the Wellbeing & Happiness Working Group*; Thimphu: Secretariat for the New Development Paradigm; for example Falk, I., Golding, B. and Balatti, J. 2010. *Building Communities: ACE, lifelong learning and social capital*. An Anthology of word portraits reporting research conducted for the Adult, Community and Further Education Board, Victoria. Melbourne: Aris.

Bhutan's culture has a rich tradition of profound wisdom teachings and meditative practices, designed to realise our inseparability from our world and from our fellow beings

beings to pursue their potential far beyond the material acquisitiveness of the current paradigm.

And yet all these conditions are only *means* rather than *ends*. Without the knowledge, skills, and ability to achieve their potential, a person may have all the conditions listed above and more, and still be miserable. The inner transformation of our own mind-sets and behaviours is as important for happiness as the transformation of these outer conditions of wellbeing.

Personal tools for transformation

Conscious processes and skills – drawn creatively from human historical experience and wisdom traditions, spiritual practices and modern sciences (like neuroscience, positive psychology, behavioural and ecological economics, etc.) – are needed to enlarge our sense of a common humanity sharing a common fate in the world.

Bhutan's own culture has a rich tradition of profound wisdom teachings and meditative practices, designed to realise our inseparability from our world and from our fellow beings, as the path to genuine happiness. These methods have been tried, tested and found effective over hundreds of years, and passed on from one generation to the next. More recently in modern science, they have been shown to contribute to the physical, emotional and mental wellbeing that underlie the psychological experience of happiness.²⁵

The practice of mindfulness is one of the most important of these methods. It is a “happiness skill” designed to help practitioners realise their full potential and develop the true insight that comes from a sense of oneness with the world. Mindfulness is a behavioural technique involving the cultivation of non-judgmental, non-reactive, metacognitive awareness of present-moment experience which trains the mind to remain focused, aware of the causes and effects of actions, and to be resilient to change.²⁶ Regular mindfulness practice has now been proven

²⁵ See for example: Brown, W. B. & Ryan, M. R. 2003. The benefits of being present: mindfulness and its role in psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, Vol. 84, No. 4, 822-848; Ricard, M. 2003. *Happiness: A guide to developing life's most important skill*. Little, Brown and Company: New York; Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche. 2007. *The Joy of Living*. New York: Three Rivers Press; Pace, T.W.W. et al. 2009. Effect of compassion meditation on neuroendocrine, innate immune and behavioral responses to psychosocial stress. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*, 34 (1): 87-98.

²⁶ Kabat-Zinn, J. 1990. *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the wisdom of your body and mind to face stress, pain, and illness*. New York: Delacorte.

in many studies to contribute to health and wellbeing in various ways, including supporting immune functioning, concentration, and longevity; improving social relationships; increasing workplace productivity; reducing stress, depression, and anxiety; and contributing to pro-social citizenship.²⁷

Other happiness skills include loving-kindness, compassion-meditation and the conscious practice of gratitude, empathy, and patience. These skills can all be cultivated through well-tested practices, and can help shift the effects of the hyper-individualism that characterises much of modern behaviour. They have also been demonstrated to lead to an increased capacity for altruism towards others and a higher sense of self-worth. Altruism, according to Matthieu Ricard “. . . is no more a luxury but a necessity. We must have the insight to recognise its potential and have the audacity to say so”.²⁸ Survey data correlating high levels of volunteerism and community service with higher levels of life satisfaction, meaning and happiness confirm these findings on the value of altruism.²⁹

Importantly, for the development of the new paradigm, these and related skills combine to build the capacity for citizenship, and hence for engagement in processes of social change, that help people develop “not just better goals, but better means as well”.³⁰

Evidence also shows that these skills further support the sense of autonomy, relatedness, and competence which psychologists report are components of individual happiness and wellbeing and which lead to

Happiness skills support the sense of autonomy, relatedness, and competence which lead to meaningful pro-social engagement - the foundation of citizenship and collective happiness

²⁷ See for example: Davidson, R. J., Kabat-Zinn, J., Schmacher, I., Rosenkranz, M., Muller, D., Santorelli, S. F., et al. 2003. Alterations in brain and immune function produced by mindfulness meditation. *Journal of Psychosomatic Medicine*, 65: 564-570; Miller, J. J., Fletcher, K., Kabat-Zinn, J. 1995. Three-year follow-up and clinical implications of a mindfulness meditation-based stress reduction intervention in the treatment of anxiety disorders. *Journal of General Hospital Psychiatry*, 17(3): 192-200; Teasdale, J. D., Segal, Z. V., Williams, J. M., Ridgeway, V. A., Soulsby, J. M., Lau, M. A. 2000. Prevention of relapse/recurrence in major depression by mindfulness-based cognitive therapy. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*, 68(4): 615-23.

²⁸ Ricard, M. 2013. Short background contribution by IEWG member to this report.

²⁹ See for example: Luks, A. and Payne, P. 1991. *The healing power of doing good: The health and spiritual benefits of helping others*. New York: Ballantine; Post, S.G. 2011. *The Hidden Gifts of Helping: How the Power of Giving, Compassion and Hope Can Get Us Through Hard Times*. John Wiley & Sons. UNV. 2011. *State of the World's Volunteerism Report: Universal Values for Global Well-Being*. United Nations Volunteers

³⁰ Lappé, F.M. 2013. Living Democracy: the “How” of the World We Want. Short background contribution by IEWG member to this report.

meaningful pro-social engagement³¹ – the foundation of citizenship and collective happiness.

Conversely, reliable research now shows that individuals who focus their lives on wealth, image, social status, and other materialistic values promoted by a consumerist society are much less satisfied than those less attached to such material values. Strong individualism and a selfish lack of concern for others and for global issues are characteristics found among those who prioritise external values and consumerism. In scientific studies, consumerist beliefs are generally correlated with higher levels of suffering, lower levels of happiness, fewer pleasant emotions, and tendencies towards depression, anxiety, headaches, and other physical ailments.³² That people get greater and more sustained pleasure when they do something for others than for themselves is increasingly confirmed in happiness research.³³

Even the most progressive development models fail to join the external conditions for wellbeing with the skills required for transforming those conditions towards higher human potential. The new paradigm, on the other hand, acknowledges *both* components as essential dimensions of happiness.

³¹ Deci, E.L. and Ryan, R.M. 2000. The “what” and “why” of goal pursuits: Human needs and the self-determination of behavior. *Psychological Inquiry*, 4, 227-268.

³² Kasser, T. 2003. *The High Price of Materialism*. Boston: MIT Press.; Kasser, T. 2008. Can Buddhism and consumerism harmonize? A review of the psychological evidence. In *International Conference on Buddhism in the Age of Consumerism*, Mahidol University, Bangkok.

³³ Aknin, L., Dunn, E., & Norton, M., 2012. Happiness runs in a circular motion: Evidence for a positive feedback loop between prosocial spending and happiness. *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 13, 347-355.

4 Challenges for the New Development Paradigm

The challenges related to articulating, developing and adopting a new paradigm can be divided into three categories: the first is substantive - how to define the NDP and its key dimensions and characteristics; the second is related to process - how the NDP will be further developed in the near future; and the third challenge concerns implementation - how to adopt and apply the NDP in practice. A few examples of such challenges are outlined below although this is far from an exhaustive list.

Substantive challenges

At the substantive level, questions arise on how key elements of the new paradigm are interpreted. These include:

Defining a “new” paradigm. An important question is what distinguishes the new paradigm from the current one. Is the aim progressive reform within the current growth-based framework or a fundamental paradigm shift based on different premises, goals and values? If the latter, the new framework needs to be differentiated from other models that may well use the language of sustainability and equity but are actually variants of the present system.

Defining “happiness”. Often the term happiness is misunderstood or trivialised as a “feel-good” notion that has no import in the face of so-called hard realities. In this report, happiness is described as arising from a sense of connectedness with nature, communities and the world, and as stemming from service to others. And the condition for happiness is wellbeing - of humans and other species. While the aspects of happiness are not easily measurable, the conditions of wellbeing are. Communicating this complex understanding, however, will be challenging.

Are happiness and sustainability compatible? As IEWG members have noted: “An important challenge for the NDP is to address the perceived tensions between happiness and sustainability. These tensions relate to

Happiness is described as arising from a sense of connectedness with nature, communities and the world, and as stemming from service to others

trade-offs between individuals and society, short-term and longer-term goals, present and future generations, and human and nonhuman welfare . . . People can, after all, benefit from unsustainable behaviours and policies . . . sometimes (even) from ecological destruction.”³⁴

Defining the parameters and dimensions. Major debates can be expected about the various parameters and dimensions of the new paradigm, for instance: whether to adopt an eco-centric or anthropocentric approach; whether the monetary valuation of non-market variables highlights or diminishes their value; whether the notion of “green growth” is compatible with NDP values or not; and whether change happens primarily through internal transformation or by changing external conditions – or both.

Process challenges

There will also be challenges in the on-going process of building the new paradigm and creating a coherent, inspiring and practical blueprint for the world’s reflection and adoption. These include:

Excessive diffusion. The process agenda could be so broad and wide-ranging that it becomes unmanageable, failing to prioritise effectively and to address essential issues in depth. This is a danger when attempting to span subjects as diverse as renewable energy, cooperative ownership, sustainable agriculture and fiscal reform, to name just a few. The question remains: What will give clear *coherence* to the new paradigm and seamlessly join what could otherwise become disparate and disconnected parts?

Over-generalisation. There is also the risk of falling into the opposite trap of settling for too broad and generalised a philosophical agreement that provides no practical guidance for policy-makers. Further work on a new development paradigm must go beyond sweeping conceptual generalisations and broad brush-strokes if it is to provide a workable alternative.

Excessive specialisation. A truly holistic and trans-disciplinary approach could be undermined by excessive specialisation. Even with a broad common vision that unites various disciplines and sectors of society, the

habitual tendency of specialists to speak their own “language” and to use their own jargon will be a challenge to synergetic action.

Engaging differing views effectively. The new paradigm challenges many core assumptions of the dominant paradigm. The change in mind-sets and behaviour that the new approach requires can only begin by engaging in respectful dialogue and integrating compelling evidence from many different disciplines.

Wider communication. A report alone will not catalyse real change and a new policy agenda. Research on the dimensions of a new development paradigm has to be accompanied by wider communication and engagement with civil society, business, academic, spiritual and indigenous groups, and citizens everywhere.

As IEWG member Tariq Banuri, said: “Our key challenge will be to integrate (the) different streams and approaches effectively and to make all the horses run together rather than arguing which one to ride on . . . to produce a clear and coherent map of how the different dimensions of the new paradigm are truly integrated . . .”³⁵

Implementation challenges

Proposing a new paradigm is easy compared to the magnitude of challenges facing its actual adoption and implementation. These include:

The culture of consumerism. IEWG member Richard Heinberg has said: “Consumerism is not merely a lifestyle preference; it is the basis of the current economy”³⁶ and further, Clovis Cavalcanti observes that it will be “difficult to convince ordinary people not to consume as they do.”³⁷

The risk of expropriation. There is a real risk that “new development paradigm” language will be taken over and even misappropriated. The language of “sustainability”, for example, has been widely misused to support business-as-usual scenarios, as when timber companies cut down old-growth forests and replant them with mono-species plantations,

Research on the dimensions of a new development paradigm has to be accompanied by wider communication and engagement with civil society, business, academic, spiritual and indigenous groups, and citizens everywhere

³⁵ Banuri at IEWG meeting in New York, the October 5, 2012

³⁶ Heinberg, R. 2013. Short background contribution by IEWG member to this report.

³⁷ Cavalcanti, C. 2013. Short background contribution by IEWG member to this report.

A business-as-usual trajectory that has led to a crisis-ridden world is no longer tenable

claiming to be sustainable by replacing as much fibre as they extracted.

Existing infrastructure. Power plants that are designed to run on coal, suburbs that necessitate car ownership (and hence reliance on fuel), and massive shopping malls that reinforce the culture of consumerism are just a few examples of how the existing built infrastructure can perpetuate the present system simply by its built existence. Although the prevailing infrastructures may not be optimal or functional in the new paradigm, enormous resources have been spent to build them and even more will be needed to dismantle or convert them. Thus, the nature and magnitude of infrastructural transformation required and their associated costs may restrict how and how much a new paradigm can be adopted.

Resistance to change. As IEWG member William Rees notes: “Once fully entrenched, socio-political paradigms are virtually impermeable to new data, better understanding and reasoned analysis if the latter undermine (their) core premises and values. Societies may therefore become highly resistant to significant change. And because of systemic lags, they can exist for extended periods in denial of the emerging biophysical hazards and growing social tensions . . .”³⁸

But the biggest challenge to implementation of a new paradigm will be the difficulty of changing socio-economic power structures. As Rees goes on to say: “We must recognise that our vision is in direct conflict with the goals of the economic and political mainstream . . . and that there will be tremendous ‘pushback’ against the NDP.”³⁹

Notwithstanding these challenges, the necessity and potential of pursuing the proposed new paradigm is clear. A business-as-usual trajectory that has led to a crisis-ridden world is no longer tenable. On the other hand, the proposed new paradigm offers a brighter and more uplifting future with potential for experientially rich, decent, healthful and fulfilling lives for all.

³⁸ Rees, W. 2013. Short background contribution by IEWG member to this report.

³⁹ Rees, W. 2013.

5 A Transformative Agenda for Societal Happiness

Realising the new paradigm will not be easy. But *difficult* is not the same as *impossible*. Humans are not prisoners of a fixed nature; we have options and powers to avoid the fate we seem to be racing toward. Laws that describe human political, social and economic development are themselves the creation of human beings. And because the institutions and policies that currently endanger our survival are human created, they *can* be transformed if we wish to do so.

This will be the work of a generation, at least. It is time to begin.

The numerous consultations for the post-2015 development agenda have already yielded significant recommendations from multiple actors including national governments, international agencies and civil society groups. The themes of inclusive social and economic development, environmental sustainability, peace and security, as well as a host of crosscutting issues like climate change, equity and poverty, are all critical concerns requiring urgent attention. However, at some point, a fundamental question needs to be asked: *What is the ultimate purpose of all these efforts?* We must recognise that none of these — no matter how important each one is — are ends in themselves, but essentially means to creating the necessary conditions for a higher purpose to development. Without such clarity of purpose, well-intentioned efforts at addressing local and global problems will remain sectorial, short-term, issue-driven and concerned solely with humankind's physical survival and material conditions.

Bhutan, inspired by the principles of GNH, offers the proposed NDP to the global community as a unifying framework for a more transformative agenda. In a world that contains so many different cultures rooted in rich and varied traditions and modern experience, the definition of a state of happiness that all human beings can accept or strive for is perhaps beyond our ability. But the preconditions for happiness are well

A compelling and unifying story is vital to begin the societal transformation we seek. This story would portray human nature as being cooperative, the purpose of the economy as serving people, and the ultimate vision of development as societal happiness

within our means to define and to achieve. These include justice, dignity, equity, security (social, political and economic) and basic needs like food, clean water and decent shelter.

A new narrative

A compelling and unifying story is vital to begin the societal transformation we seek. This story would portray human nature as being cooperative, the purpose of the economy as serving people, and the ultimate vision of development as societal happiness. This unifying story is, in fact, more accurate.⁴⁰ A new lexicon is also required if we are to move from the language of perpetual growth to stories grounded in reality and “aligned both with human nature and the laws of wider nature”.⁴¹ The scientific understanding that life can exist only in community and that wellbeing and human happiness depend on living in dynamic, adaptive, evolving balance with nature, is the moral and conceptual foundation for the new paradigm.⁴²

The understanding of interdependence and cooperation underpins the logic of altruism on which Bhutan’s GNH development philosophy is based. Promoting altruism and compassion not only in personal life, but also in education and society at large, is seen as a more useful strategy for progress than the current competition-based ethos. Altruism and compassion must feature in the new narrative for progress and development as they provide the impetus to move to the next level of cooperation and add the “voice of care” to the “voice of reason” in the economic field.⁴³

Partnership for change

Bhutan fully realises that we ourselves have yet to make meaningful progress toward these transformative changes. We also realise that, in the long term, such progress calls for cooperation and collaboration of the nations and peoples of the world through institutions and policies in which all will share.

40 Korten, D. 2013.

41 Lappé, F.M. 2013.

42 Korten, D. 2013.

43 Ricard, M. 2013; Snower, D.J. 2012. Opening address to the Global Economic Symposium, Rio de Janeiro, October 16, 2012, quoted in Ricard, M. 2013.

As recommended in the report of the UN SG's High-Level Panel of Eminent Persons on the Post-2015 Development Agenda:

A renewed global partnership will require a new spirit from national leaders, but also - no less important - it will require many others to adopt new mind-sets and change their behaviour. These changes will not happen overnight. But we must move beyond business-as-usual, and we must start today. The new global partnership should encourage everyone to alter his or her worldview, profoundly and dramatically. It should lead all countries to move willingly towards merging the environmental and development agendas, and tackling poverty's symptoms and causes in a unified and universal way.⁴⁴

The shift to the proposed new paradigm will require change on multiple levels simultaneously – individual, community, organisational, national, and international. Transformative education and re-education in formal, non-formal, and informal spheres is necessary to facilitate wider participation in the decisions that affect our common fate. If individual and institutional transformations are to lead to lasting change, they must combine to form a new social movement that acknowledges the voices, perspectives and suggestions of engaged citizens everywhere. New decision-making frameworks would place wellbeing and happiness central to policy-making so that the economy and other institutions serve the people, not the other way around.⁴⁵

As Albert Einstein observed: “We can’t solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them”. Therefore, the new mind-sets and changed behaviour envisaged for such a transformational agenda require much more than just new policies and mechanisms but equally, if not more importantly, a “revolution of the imagination”.⁴⁶

The shift to the proposed new paradigm will require change on multiple levels simultaneously - individual, community, organisational, national, and international

44 UN. 2013a.

45 Max-Neef, M. 2013. Short background contribution by IEWG member to this report.

46 Mancall, M. 2013. Contribution to this report.

Box. 5 Change agents in Bhutan – some examples

In Policy and Planning: Gross National Happiness Commission

In 2008, the Planning Commission was renamed the Gross National Happiness Commission (GNHC). This government agency is responsible for the overall formulation of Bhutan's development strategies and coordination of activities, policies and programmes, as well as aid management. One of its key responsibilities, among others, is to ensure that GNH is embedded firmly in Bhutan's policies, and that proper coordination is undertaken to ensure effective implementation of plans and programmes.

In recent years, the GNHC has started to assess policies with the GNH policy-screening tool that draws on the GNH indicators, to ensure they meet ecological, social, cultural, economic and governance criteria. Examples include the mining policy, decision not to join the World Trade Organisation (WTO), among others.

In Research: The Centre for Bhutan Studies

The Centre for Bhutan Studies (CBS) has been at the forefront of GNH-related studies. In addition to hosting and/or facilitating five international conferences on GNH that have generated vast scholarship on the subject, it has carried out one pilot survey in 2007 and two nationwide surveys on GNH in 2008 and 2010. The GNH Index was then developed in fulfilment of a government mandate to develop a Bhutan development index. The GNH policy-screening tool, adapted and currently used by the GNHC, was also developed.

In Civic Action: Civil Society Organizations, private initiatives and others

Bhutan has seen the formation of over 30 civil society organisations in recent years. Their initiatives include: improving the living standards of rural communities; promoting organic agriculture and local self-reliance; nurturing a culture of democracy by expanding public discourse; engaging youth; supporting education; promoting entrepreneurship; and providing animal welfare in Bhutan. While these organizations may not refer to GNH explicitly in their stated mission and goals, they express it in their objectives and through their actions.

In addition, some schools in Bhutan have initiated programmes like Green Schools for Green Bhutan, where students make their immediate environment greener and more conducive to learning; the *School Agriculture Programme* where they produce their own vegetables; and the *Design for Change Initiative*, an urban-rural youth exchange program to share ideas for recycling and other sustainable habits. In some rural schools, older students accompany the younger ones during monsoon season when the conditions of roads and swollen streams make getting to school and back dangerous. Such simple and endearing initiatives by individuals and small groups are good examples of how the shift in paradigm can occur at a very fundamental level.

Conclusion

As a step towards shifting our collective perceptions and mind-sets towards adopting a more holistic, sane and just approach to development, we propose that:

- ◆ **Happiness** be adopted as the overarching goal for the future development of the post-2015 development agenda
- ◆ **Wellbeing and happiness** be included in the suggested Sustainable Development Goals
- ◆ Relevant UN research institutes and independent researchers take up the task of elaborating the details and mechanisms of the proposed new paradigm for global application

We offer this proposed new paradigm based upon reflection on our own experience because we believe that the challenges of Bhutan's development do not differ markedly from those of other nations and peoples. As much as Bhutan hopes to contribute to the global effort to chart a new approach to human development guided by the higher vision of wellbeing and happiness, the intention is also to learn from good practices from around the world and to bring this vision more directly into Bhutan's own economy and society.

. . . for my nation, today GNH is the bridge between the fundamental values of Kindness, Equality and Humanity and the necessary pursuit of economic growth. GNH acts as our National Conscience guiding us towards making wise decisions for a better future. It ensures that no matter what our nation may seek to achieve, the human dimension, the individual's place in the nation, is never forgotten. It is a constant reminder that we must strive for a caring leadership so that as the world and [our] country change, as our nation's goals change, our foremost priority will always remain the happiness and wellbeing of our people – including the generations to come after us.

– His Majesty Jigme Khesar Namgyel Wangchuck, King of Bhutan, Address at the Madhavrao Scindia Memorial Lecture titled *Changing World and Timeless Values*, India, 2009.

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Annex: Biographies of the IEWG

The members of the International Expert Working Group (IEWG) were invited to submit short individual statements to help inform this report. These statements are available on the Secretariat's website at www.newdevelopmentparadigm.bt. While the report draws on these individual statements as well as other contributions from IEWG members, it may not be a complete representation of all their views.

1. **Sabina Alkire** directs the Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative, at the University of Oxford. In addition, she is a Research Associate at Harvard and Vice President of the Human Development & Capability Association. Her research interests include multidimensional poverty measurement and analysis and welfare economics and she has published works including *Valuing Freedoms: Sen's Capability Approach and Poverty Reduction*.
2. **Gar Alperovitz** is currently the Lionel R. Bauman Professor of Political Economy at the University of Maryland, and a former fellow of Kings College, Cambridge University; Harvard University's Institute of Politics; and the Institute for Policy Studies; and was a guest scholar at the Brookings Institution. He is author most recently of *What Then Must We Do?*
3. **Tariq Banuri** was formerly Director of the Division for Sustainable Development and Head of Office of the Conference Secretary-General for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (Rio+20) and has broad experience on the interface between policy, research and practical actions on the realisation of the goal of sustainable development.
4. **Iлона Boniwell** is the program leader for the first Masters Degree in Applied Positive Psychology, the first postgraduate degree in positive psychology in Europe. She authored *Positive Psychology in a Nutshell*, founded the European Network of Positive Psychology and is the vice-chair of the International Positive Psychology Association and a co-founder of Personal Well-Being Centre.
5. **Isabelle Cassiers** is Senior Professor in Economics at the LSE-UCL and Research Associate at the Belgian Fund for Scientific Research. She is also Member of the Royal Academy of Belgium, Class of Technology and Society, and of the College of Global Studies in Paris (Collège d'études mondiales). Since 2006 she coordinates an interdisciplinary research group on "Redefining prosperity".

6. **Clóvis Cavalcanti** is a Brazilian ecological economist. He is a senior researcher at the Institute for Social Research, the Joaquim Nabuco Foundation in Recife, Brazil. He has also been an organic farmer since 1976.
7. **Anthony Charles** is a Professor of Business and Environmental Science at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, Canada. Working at the interface of research, education and community capacity-building, his focus is on governance, management and socio-economics of environmental and natural resource systems. He leads the international Community Conservation Research Network (CommunityConservation.net) which is highlighting how the combination of local-level environmental stewardship, livelihood sustainability and supportive policy can shape a positive global future.
8. **Robert Costanza** is currently Chair in Public Policy at the Crawford School of Public Policy at The Australian National University and is Editor-in-Chief of *Solutions* magazine. He has founded, directed, or been a senior fellow at several major research institutions and has served on numerous research and policy bodies in the US and internationally. Dr. Costanza's research has focused on the interface between ecological and economic systems, particularly at larger temporal and spatial scales.
9. **Herman Daly** is Emeritus Professor at the University of Maryland School of Public Policy, and from 1988 to 1994 was Senior Economist in the Environment Department of the World Bank. He combines limits-to-growth arguments, theories of welfare economics, ecological principles, and the philosophy of sustainable development into a model he calls "steady state economics". He was a co-founder and associate editor of the journal *Ecological Economics*.
10. **Richard Davidson** is the William James and Vilas Professor of Psychology and Psychiatry, Director of the Waisman Laboratory for Brain Imaging and Behavior and Founder and Chair, Center for Investigating Healthy Minds, at the Waisman Center, University of Wisconsin-Madison. He has won numerous awards, was named one of the 100 most influential people in the world by Time Magazine in 2006 and was author of the 2012 New York Times best seller, *The Emotional Life of Your Brain*.
11. **John de Graaf** is a filmmaker and producer of more than 40 television documentaries. He is the co-author of *Affluenza: The All-Consuming Epidemic* and *What's the Economy for, Anyway? Why It's Time to Stop Chasing Growth and Start Pursuing Happiness*. He is Executive Director of Take Back Your Time, co-founder of the Seattle-based Happiness Initiative, senior well-being advisor to Earth Economics, and a board member of Earth Island Institute. He has taught at The Evergreen State College.
12. **Ed Diener** is the Joseph R. Smiley Distinguished Professor of Psychology at the University of Illinois. He was the president of the International Society of Quality of Life Studies, the Society of Personality and Social Psychology and the International Positive Psychology Association. Diener has edited a number of publications, including *The Journal of Happiness Studies*.

13. **Junko Edahiro** is a social entrepreneur, environmental journalist, and Founder & President of the Institute for Studies in Happiness, Economy, and Society. She is also Chief Executive of an environmental NGO, Japan for Sustainability.
14. **Joshua Farley** is a Fellow of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics and a Professor in the Community Development and Applied Economics faculty at the University of Vermont. He is co-author with Herman Daly of *Ecological Economics, Principles and Applications* (2010).
15. **Bruno S. Frey** was formerly Professor of Economics at the University of Constance and was Professor of Economics at the University of Zurich from 1977 to 2012. He has also been Distinguished Professor of Behavioural Science at the Warwick Business School at the University of Warwick, UK since 2010. He is the author of numerous books, including *Happiness and Economics* (with Alois Stutzer).
16. **Daniel Gilbert** is a Professor of Psychology at Harvard University. His research on “affective forecasting” examines the mistakes people make when they attempt to predict their hedonic reactions to future events. He has won numerous awards for his research and teaching, and his book *Stumbling on Happiness* (2007), spent 25 weeks on the New York Times best-seller list.
17. **Enrico Giovannini** became the Italian Minister of Labour and Social Policies. He teaches statistical economics at Rome University. He was President of the Italian Statistical Institute (2009-2013) and the Director of Statistics and Chief Statistician of the OECD (2001-2009), where he designed and implemented a thorough reform of the statistical system and launched the Global Project on the “Measurement of Progress in Societies”. He chaired several statistical bodies to the UN and the World Bank.
18. **Basudeb Guha-Khasnobis** is the Senior Economics Advisor for UNDP Bhutan and Nepal. He has held positions in teaching and research at numerous development and economics institutions around the world. His research concerns development economics from an interdisciplinary perspective and he works with scholars from all other social sciences and beyond. He is the author of 10 books and over 50 articles in professional journals.
19. **Anil Gupta** is Professor at Indian Institute of Management. For his unique work analysing indigenous knowledge of communities and building bridges to science-based knowledge, he received the *Padam Shri* - one of the highest civilian honor awards in India and the Pew Conservation Scholar Award. He is the founder of Honey Bee Network, SRISTI.org, GIAN, and National Innovation Foundation.
20. **Richard Heinberg** is Senior Fellow-in-Residence at the Post Carbon Institute and is widely regarded as one of the world’s most effective communicators of the urgent need to transition away from fossil fuels. He has authored ten books, including *The Party’s Over*

(2003), *Peak Everything* (2007), and *The End of Growth: Adapting to our New Economic Reality* (2011), which makes a compelling argument that the global economy has reached a fateful, fundamental turning point.

21. **John F. Helliwell** is Senior Fellow of the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research and co-director (with George Akerlof) of CIFAR's program on Social Interactions, Identity and Well-Being. He is also Professor Emeritus of Economics at the University of British Columbia, a member of the National Statistics Council, and an Officer of the Order of Canada. He also co-edited *World Happiness Report 2013*.
22. **Johannes Hirata** is Professor of Economics working on the intersection of ethics and economics. His main interest is the role of happiness for truly good development. In 2011, he published a book titled *Happiness, Ethics and Economics*.
23. **Tim Jackson** is Professor of Sustainable Development at the University of Surrey and Director of the Sustainable Lifestyles Research Group. During the 1990s, he pioneered the development of adjusted measures of economic wellbeing for the UK and for Sweden. From 2004 to 2011 he was Economics Commissioner on the UK Sustainable Development Commission. His best-known publication is *Prosperity without Growth – economics for a finite planet* (2009) which has been translated into 16 languages worldwide.
24. **Ashok Khosla** is one of world's leading experts on the environment and sustainable development. He is Chairman of Development Alternatives, a social enterprise dedicated to sustainable development. He is Co-Chair of the UN's International Resource Panel and member of the China Council, and was, until recently, President of IUCN and the Club of Rome.
25. **Julia Kim** is a physician and public health researcher with program, policy, and advocacy experience in the areas of international health and development. Within the UN, she has focused on addressing the linkages between health, equity, and sustainable development, and on developing consensus on measuring health, wellbeing and sustainability. She is a Senior Program Advisor to the GNH Centre, Bhutan, and a member of the Presencing Institute – a global community that sees the integration of mindfulness-based practices as a core capacity of 21st-century innovation and leadership.
26. **Ida Kubiszewski** is Senior Lecturer at the Crawford School of Public Policy at Australian National University and founding managing editor of *Solutions* magazine. Previously, she was an Assistant Research Professor at Portland State University. She is co-founder of the Encyclopedia of Earth. She was recently invited to be a UN negotiator on climate change for the Dominican Republic. She has published dozens of refereed journal articles, including the first assessment of the economic value of Bhutan's ecosystem services.
27. **Bill McKibben** is prolific author of books on the environment, beginning with his ground-breaking *The End of Nature* (1989), which is the first book for a general audience

on climate change. He organised 1,400 global warming demonstrations across all 50 U.S. states on April 14, 2007, described as the largest climate change campaign in U.S. history, and he founded the grassroots climate campaign 350.org and authored *Deep Economy: the Wealth of Communities and the Durable Future*.

28. **David Korten** is the author of *Agenda for a New Economy: From Phantom Wealth to Real Wealth*, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*, *The Post-Corporate World: Life After Capitalism*, and *When Corporations Rule the World*, among others. He is board chair of *YES! Magazine*, co-chair of the New Economy Working Group, founder of the Living Economies Forum, founding board member emeritus of the Business Alliance for Local Living Economies and a member of the Club of Rome. His current work centers on defining and advancing a new economy grounded in the design principles of healthy living systems.

29. **Frances Moore Lappé's** first book *Diet for a Small Planet* in 1971 began a life focused on the roots of world hunger and its solutions through "living democracy." She has since authored or co-authored 17 other books and is co-founder of the Institute for Food and Development Policy. With her daughter Anna Lappé, she now co-leads the Small Planet Institute in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

30. **Robert Levine** is a Professor of Social Psychology at California State University and spent last semester at the Institute of Advanced Study at Durham University in the UK. He is President of the Western Psychological Association. Levine studies differences between cities and cultures in time and time use and how these differences affect wellbeing. He is the author of the book *A Geography of Time*.

31. **Hunter Lovins** is a Professor of Sustainable Business Management at Bainbridge Graduate Institute and Bard College. She is an international consultant in sustainable business practices and is President of Natural Capitalism Solutions. She has over 40 years' experience in energy, economic development, and change management, and has led delegations to the Johannesburg Summit, and the Kyoto, Montreal, Copenhagen, and Cancun climate change conferences. She is author or co-author of 14 books, including the best-selling *Natural Capitalism: Creating the Next Industrial Revolution*.

32. **Manfred Max-Neef** is Director of the Economics Institute at Universidad Austral de Chile and an economist in the fields of international development and ecological economics. His most important books are: *From the Outside Looking In: Experiences in Barefoot Economics*, *Human Scale Development*, and *Economics Unmasked: from Power and Greed to Compassion and the Common Good*. His work seeks to counter the logic of economics with the ethics of wellbeing. He has worked for several UN Agencies and is the recipient of numerous awards and honorary doctorates.

33. **Jacqueline McGlade** has served as Executive Director for the European Environment Agency (EEA) since 2003, enhancing EEA's role as key provider of the knowledge base to support policy-making, improve implementation of EU environment and climate policies, and become the leading source of environmental information in Europe. She has

worked extensively with a wide and prolific range of European and international organisations concerning environmental and climate policy.

34. **Michel Masozera** completed his Ph.D. in Natural Resources with specialisation in Ecological Economics at the University of Vermont in 2009. He specialises in biodiversity conservation, protected areas management and sustainable development in the East African region. He has served as the Coordinator of the community conservation and outreach program, Director of the Nyungwe Forest Conservation Project (PCFN) and Rwanda Country Director for the Wildlife Conservation Society. Dr. Masozera is a member of the Ecosystem Services Partnership and the Society for Conservation Biology and a former President of the African Section of the Society for Conservation Biology.
35. **Thaddeus Metz** is Humanities Research Professor at the University of Johannesburg. He is a leading figure on philosophical approaches to what makes a life meaningful and the related values. His book, *Meaning in Life: An Analytic Study*, will be published in 2013.
36. **Jørgen Birk Mortensen** is Professor Emeritus at Institute of Economics, Copenhagen University. He is also former chairman in The Danish Economic Council (1998-2006) and is a member of The Danish Environmental Economic Council. He has conducted research and teaching in environmental, natural, and energy economics for more than 25 years.
37. **Mohan Munasinghe** is Chairman of the Munasinghe Institute of Development (MIND), Colombo; Professor of Sustainable Development at SCI, University of Manchester, UK; Institute Professor at the Vale Sustainable Development Institute, Federal University of Para, Brazil; and Distinguished Guest Professor at Beijing University, China.
38. **Toni Noble** is a leading educator/psychologist in student wellbeing & positive school communities. Her government projects include Australia's Safe Schools Framework, the Safe Schools online Hub and a national research project on Student Wellbeing. She is co-author of the award-winning *Bounce Back! Wellbeing & Resilience Program*. She is Adjunct Professor at Australian Catholic University and has a National citation for her outstanding contributions to Teacher Education. Through education she believes we can capture the hearts and minds of young people for the new development paradigm.
39. **Greg Norris** teaches and researches in the field of Life Cycle Assessment at Harvard University. The field of Life Cycle Assessment was in the past entirely focused on the art and science of assessing negative “footprints” of the global supply chain which prompted Greg to birth “Handprinting”, a quantitative method for assessing and growing our positive impacts on the planet and her people, as individuals, families, communities and organisations.
40. **Evgeny Osin** is currently an Associate Professor in Psychology and a Senior Research Fellow of the Positive Psychology and Life Quality research laboratory at the National Research University Higher School of Economics in Moscow, Russia. His research interests include meaning, eudaimonia, psychological well-being assessment, personal autonomy, and balanced time perspective. Among his current projects are a new approach to eudai-

monic happiness in collaboration with Ilona Boniwell, and a cross-cultural study of time perspective in a team led by Philip Zimbardo.

41. **Shigeru T. Otsubo** is a Professor of International Development Economics and the director of Economic Development Policy & Management Program at Nagoya University, Japan. He has taught at Stanford University and served as an economist for the UN, the World Bank, the governments of Japan and Indonesia. Otsubo has also been a Visiting Fellow at JICA Research Institute, preparing to launch a set of macro-development research projects, including a vision study for the post-MDGs era.
42. **Thangavel Palanivel** is Chief Economist for Asia and the Pacific at the Regional Bureau for Asia Pacific, UNDP, and has 20 years of research and program management experience. He has taught and conducted research at several universities internationally and has published several papers and monographs on macroeconomic modeling and forecasting, development economics (poverty and income distribution) and environmental economics.
43. **Jonathan Patz** is Professor and Director of the Global Health Institute at the University of Wisconsin in Madison. He co-chaired the health expert panel of the US National Assessment on Climate Change and was a Convening Lead Author for the United Nations/World Bank Millennium Ecosystem Assessment. For the past 15 years, he has been a lead author for the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, in which capacity he shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the IPCC and Al Gore. He served as Founding President of the International Association for Ecology and Health and co-editor of the association's journal *EcoHealth*.
44. **Kate Pickett** is Professor of Epidemiology at the University of York, UK. She is a social epidemiologist, whose research focuses on the impact of inequality on health and social outcomes. With Richard Wilkinson, she was awarded the 2013 Solidar Silver Rose Prize. Together they founded The Equality Trust and wrote *The Spirit Level* which won the 2011 Political Studies Association Publication of the Year Award, the 2010 Bristol Festival of Ideas Prize and was chosen as one of the top ten books of the decade by the New Statesman. It is now available in 22 languages.
45. **Rosimeiry Portela** is a Senior Director for the Betty & Gordon Moore Center for Science and Oceans at Conservation International. Dr. Portela's research focuses primarily on nature's provision of ecosystem services (ES) and their contribution to human wellbeing. She also supports the development and application of decision-supporting tools designed to enhance understanding and measurement of spatially explicit flows of ecosystem services and their contribution to economies. She is currently working on research associated with the integration of environmental and economic information into national accounting systems.
46. **William Rees** is Professor Emeritus and former director of the School of Community and Regional Planning (SCARP) at UBC in Vancouver, Canada. A human ecologist and ecological economist, he is best known as the originator and co-developer (with his former

student, Dr. Mathis Wackernagel) of ecological footprint analysis. His recent awards include a Pierre Elliott Trudeau Fellowship, and the 2012 Kenneth Boulder Award in Ecological Economics and 2012 Blue Planet prize (with Dr. Wackernagel).

47. **Matthieu Ricard** is a Buddhist monk who has lived in the Himalayan region for the last forty years. He earned a Ph.D. degree in cell genetics at the Institute Pasteur under the Nobel Laureate Francois Jacob. He is the author of several books including *The Monk and the Philosopher*, *The Quantum and the Lotus*, *Happiness: A Guide to Developing Life's Most Important Skill* and *Why Meditate?*
48. **Kristin Vala Ragnarsdottir** is Professor of Sustainability Science at the Institutes of Earth Sciences and Sustainability Studies, University of Iceland and Distinguished Fellow at the Schumacher Institute UK. Her trans-disciplinary studies include studying soil within the Earth's critical zone, developing frameworks and processes for sustainable communities and evaluating how long natural resources will last. She was President of the Schumacher Society UK and is the current Vice-Chair of the Balaton Group. She is scientific advisor to the Ecological Sequestration Trust UK, TreeSisters UK, Health Empowerment Through Nutrition UK and Icelandic Association of Organic Consumers.
49. **Debra Roberts** is passionate about Africa, Africa's biodiversity, and the future of Africa's cities. Trained as a biologist, she has spent the last thirty years working as a researcher and then a local government practitioner in the field of urban conservation planning, and more recently, climate change adaptation in Durban, South Africa.
50. **Juliet Schor** is a Professor of Sociology at Boston College, and best-selling author of *The Overworked American: The Unexpected Decline of Leisure*. Her most recent book is *Plenitude: The New Economics of True Wealth*. She studies trends in working time and leisure, consumerism, the relationship between work and family, women's issues, and economic justice and is a co-founder and co-chair of the Board of the Center for a New American Dream, a national sustainability organisation.
51. **Martin Seligman** is currently Zellerbach Family Professor of Psychology and Director of the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania. He is well known in academic and clinical circles and is a best-selling author of many works on positive psychology, learned helplessness, depression, and on optimism and pessimism, including the best-selling *Authentic Happiness* (2002).

Alejandro Adler works with Dr Seligman and is a doctoral student from the Positive Psychology Center at the University of Pennsylvania. Alejandro is representing Professor Seligman in the IEWG as well as actively contributing to IEWG efforts and initiatives, including drafting chapters for the IEWG *Report on Wellbeing & Happiness*.

52. **Shantum Seth** is a teacher, social development worker and a man of peace with Indian roots and a unique world experience. He is an ordained teacher (Dharmacharya) in the Zen lineage of the Venerable Thich Nhat Hanh, and the foremost guide to the sites associ

ated with the Buddha and is an advisor to the Government of India's Ministry of Tourism and Culture.

53. **Vandana Shiva** holds a Ph.D. in Foundations of Quantum Theory, and is a philosopher, environmental activist, eco-feminist, and author of many books and dozens of scientific articles. She is a prolific award recipient and pioneered the organic movement in India, founding Navdanya, India's largest organic fair trade network and is currently assisting Bhutan's transition to organic agriculture. She also founded and directs the Research Foundation for Science, Technology, and Natural Resource Policy in New Delhi and is Associate Editor of *The Ecologist* magazine.
54. **James Gustave (Gus) Speth** is Professor at Vermont Law School and Distinguished Senior Fellow at Demos, a nonpartisan public policy research and advocacy organisation. He co-founded the Natural Resources Defense Council, was founder and president of the World Resources Institute, and served as administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (1993-1999) and chair of the UN Development Group. His books include *The Bridge at the Edge of the World: Capitalism, the Environment, and Crossing from Crisis to Sustainability* (2009).
55. **Paul Israel Singer** is currently head of the National Secretariat of the Solidarity Economy in the Ministry of Labor and Employment of the Brazilian government. He is an economist and was a university professor for a large part of his life. He is the author of numerous works on labor economics, development, local community and urban economics and, over the past ten years, the solidarity economy.
56. **David Suzuki** is a geneticist who was profoundly influenced by Rachel Carson's book *Silent Spring*, which showed that what scientists do in a lab, such as developing and testing biocides like DDT, can not mimic the real world, which is far more complicated and where everything is connected. He had a second career in communication, trying to show the impact of science and technology on society and the biosphere.
57. **Neil Thin** is a social anthropologist who lectures on happiness, sustainability, and international development at the University of Edinburgh. He has published several books on development and wellbeing, including *Social Progress and Sustainable Development* (2002) and *Social Happiness: Research into Policy and Practice* (2012).
58. **Peter Timmerman** is a Professor in the Faculty of Environmental Studies at York University in Toronto. He works on environmental philosophy and ethics, including religion and ecology, and is currently involved in two projects, one on the ethical foundations of ecological economics, and the other on "the language and imagination of the long term," in climate change, nuclear waste, and the planetary future.
59. **Jean Timsit** is a retired international business lawyer, now working as a painter and photographer. Since 2006, he has explored GNH and happiness studies as both an artist and an intellectual. He created Project +, a multidisciplinary research group on happiness, which is working at the moment on the interaction between outside and internal living

conditions and how those are conducive or not to happiness. He recently published a first book on the subject titled *Felicitators*.

60. **Yukiko Uchida** is Associate Professor at the Kokoro Research Center, Kyoto University, and a commission member of happiness research in the Cabinet Office of the Government of Japan. She has investigated culture and happiness from a cultural psychology perspective.
61. **Álvaro Umaña** is Senior Research Fellow of the Environment and Development Initiative Center for Central America. Dr. Umaña was the first Energy and Environment Minister of Costa Rica from 1986 to 1990. He received international recognition for his contributions to nature conservation and achievements such as the creation of the National Biodiversity Institute (INBio) and has had extensive academic roles.
62. **Wenceslao Unanue** is an economist and a psychologist. He is Professor at Universidad Adolfo Ibáñez Business School in Chile, PhD Researcher at University of Sussex in the UK, Advisor at Instituto del Bienestar's and the Country Representative for the International Association for Research in Economic Psychology.
63. **Karma Ura** worked with Bhutan's Ministry of Planning before becoming the first Director at the Center for Bhutan Studies (CBS). Now serving as CBS President, he has been at the forefront in promoting and deepening a national and global understanding of Bhutan's Gross National Happiness (GNH) development philosophy and in measuring the nine domains of GNH in two national surveys in 2007 and 2010. He was a member of the Drafting Committee of Bhutan's first Constitution and is a renowned scholar, historian, writer and painter, and a member of the Steering Committee for the New Development Paradigm.
64. **Ritu Verma** is an anthropologist, international relations expert and civil engineer who has been at the forefront of research on culture, land, political-ecology and disconnects in development and science. With 20 years of experience in East and Southern Africa and the Himalayas, she is a visiting senior research fellow at the University of Sussex, and worked as senior researcher at CIAT, PLAAS, and Head of Division at ICIMOD where she led the international conference Bhutan+10 with the Royal Government of Bhutan and research on socio-cultural dimensions of GNH.
65. **Peter Victor** is Professor in Environmental Studies at York University and Chair of Ontario's Greenbelt Council, a member of the Board of the David Suzuki Foundation, the New Economics Institute, and the Centre for the Advancement of a Steady State Economy. He is the author of *Managing without Growth, Slower by Design, not Disaster* and has worked for over 40 years in Canada and abroad in the area of ecological economics.
66. **Mathis Wackernagel** is President of Global Footprint Network, co-creator of the Ecological Footprint, and a Visiting Professor at Cornell University. He has authored or contributed to numerous peer-reviewed papers, reports and books on sustainability including

Our Ecological Footprint: Reducing Human Impact on the Earth (1996) and the bi-annual *Living Planet Reports* (WWF).

67. **Ernst von Weizsäcker** is a climate policy expert, co-chair of the United Nations International Panel for Sustainable Resource Management, and Co-President of the Club of Rome. Previously, he was Dean of the Californian Bren School of Environmental Science and Management and President of the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment and Energy and has served in the German Parliament, chairing the Environment Committee. He is lead author of *Factor Five*, on making energy productivity a key element of climate mitigation policies.

68. **John White** is Emeritus Professor of Philosophy of Education at the Institute of Education, University of London. He is also a member of the Editorial Board, *Journal of Philosophy of Education* and Honorary Vice-President Philosophy of Education Society of Great Britain. He is also an active member of the Humanist Philosophers' Group, BHA and the New Visions for Education Group.

69. **Richard Wilkinson** is Professor Emeritus of Social Epidemiology at the University of Nottingham Medical School and Honorary Professor at University College London and at the University of York. Working initially on health inequalities, he has played a formative role in international research on the social determinants of health and the societal effects of income inequality. With Kate Pickett he was awarded the 2013 Solidar Silver Rose Prize. Together they founded The Equality Trust and wrote *The Spirit Level* which won the 2011 Political Studies Association Publication of the Year Award, and the 2010 Bristol Festival of Ideas Prize. It is now available in 22 languages.

70. **Eric Zencey** is a Fellow of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics at the University of Vermont, and is currently visiting faculty in urban planning and design at the Sam Fox School of Visual Art and Design of Washington University in St. Louis. He is a member of the board of GNHUSA and writes frequently for *The Daly News*, a publication of the Center for the Advancement of the Steady-State Economy.

71. **Xing Zhanjun** is a Professor of Psychology and the most important advocate and researcher of well-being indices in China. He is director of the Research Center for Quality of Life and Public Policy at Shandong University and is director of the Research Institute of NBSC at Shandong University.

ABOUT THE NDP INITIATIVE

Bhutan's New Development Paradigm (NDP) initiative is part of the worldwide effort to help define a new and more viable post-2015 global development agenda. The NDP is grounded in the principles of Gross National Happiness – the unique vision of human development first proposed by the 4th King of Bhutan, His Majesty Jigme Singye Wangchuck, in the early 1970s when he declared that “Gross National Happiness is more important than Gross National Product.”

Gross National Happiness (GNH) proposes that responsible development is characterized by the right balance between equitable and sustainable livelihood, ecological conservation, good governance and a dynamic and thriving culture. This, in turn, fosters the sense of sufficiency and contentment which promotes harmony and connectedness with nature, others and ourselves - the essence of true happiness. The human aspiration for happiness transcends all the dividing contours of society and has the power to unite all of humanity.

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The Kingdom of Bhutan is honoured to offer this report as a contribution to the growing global conversation on a transformative post-2015 development agenda. The report is inspired by Bhutan's development approach based on the philosophy of Gross National Happiness (GNH) and proposes a New Development Paradigm (NDP) with societal happiness as its guiding vision. Such a holistic view of development has the potential to transform humanity's relationship with nature, restructure our economies, change our attitudes to food and wealth, and promote caring, altruism, inclusiveness and cooperation.



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