

Note to the reader: True, this should be better, and shorter. And indeed it will be one or both of these in due course, but for now this is what I have managed to cobble together by way of first presentation. If you are patient enough you should find pretty much all of what we have thus far here. So kind thanks for that patience and read on.

The No-Fault Grassroots World-Wide Sustainability Grant Program

(A better name might also be an idea?)

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1. Introduction ¹

“The wheel does not always have to be reinvented. It is not ideas that are lacking in development cooperation, but political will.” Those were the words of Gro Harlem Brundtland, director-general of the World Health Organization (WHO), and former Norwegian Prime Minister, in delivering a conflicting assessment of two decades of development policy. ²

Hmm. I seem to have heard that one before. And while I am sure that there is a great deal to it, it is my observation to the contrary that there are indeed a dearth of ideas for things, practices, approaches, policies, etc., that can take hold and actually work to advance the sustainability agenda. The rest, noble and moral as they may be, are simply wishful thinking, portentous scolding, or pure high profession. I think we can do better.

Let's try instead a thought about powerful motors for change that come from another source, this one quoted by Jakob von Uexkull, Founder and Chairman of the Right Livelihood Awards, in a note to UNESCO last year.

Sometimes, even if he has to do it alone, and his conduct seems to be mad, a man must set an example, and so draw people's souls out of their solitude, and spur them to some act of brotherly love, that the great idea does not die.

Fyodor Dostoyevsky, 'The Brothers Karamazov'

Now we're talking.

* * *

The Importance of “Pattern Breaks” ³

It's my theory that the only way to break out of our present mega-quandary of wretched unsustainability will be by “breaking pattern” in several significant ways. The numbers tell the story -- and good thoughts, moral suasion, and scolding will not do the job. I can promise you that. We need something stronger, more concrete and close at hand.

If sustainability and social justice are your concern, rather than wringing hands and calling for more doses of world treaties, world policing, 'world government' and the like, no matter how comforting and wise all that might sound, we can try something simpler while others worry about the planetary governance track.

¹ The materials in this first section were taken with editing and additions in the latter portions from the notes prepared for the acceptance speech by Eric Britton on the occasion of his being presented with the World Technology Network 2003 Award for Technology and Environment in New York City on 23 June 2002. (See <http://www.wtn.net>.)

² [D+C Development and Cooperation](http://www.dse.de/zeitschr/zeitschr.htm), No. 3, May/June 2000,. <http://www.dse.de/zeitschr/zeitschr.htm>

³ For more on this, see “The Vital Importance of Pattern Breaks” at http://www.partnerships.stockholm.se/feature_right.asp?IdNr=29

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We can start by looking around and see if there is anything already going on which might give us something solid to build on. And, if you are diligent, it turns out that there is an exploding universe of good examples of how to do better. Which, in my view, can help us get off on some interesting and perhaps even useful paths.

I suggest that we need a wake-up call and that we have in hand plenty of raw material to do just that. We need, in a phrase, to shock ourselves by getting to know about this exploding universe of good but for the most part well hidden examples of how to do better. To do this, I suggest we need to find, encourage and publicize ways to do large numbers of new and surprising and very different kinds of things that are working in specific places all over the planet, which can in turn set us off on new mental maps and in turn behavioral patterns.

The real trick is that modest first step – which is to recognize that our truly creative role in making this happen cannot be to attempt to “command and control” new patterns and projects, no matter how clever we may think we are and how much we learned in school. Rather we need to find out what is it that we can do to unleash the tremendous energies and intelligence that are already out there and working in our cities but in many ways being frustrated and thwarted by present arrangements. If, that is, you believe in people.

We received some splendid tuition on this recently as result of work done over the last year with an outstanding collection of no less than 228 innovative local project teams from 53 countries uncovered by the international jury of the Stockholm Partnerships for Sustainable Cities, many of which are succeeding in accomplishing an awful lot under tough conditions with very little money.

One small project cutting traffic congestion and accidents, and still getting people to work and school on time in Delhi. Another cleaning up local water supplies with low cost technology in the Palestinian Territories. A third teaching science to kids in remote areas with low cost distance learning tools. Programs trading guns for hand-cranked radios in war-torn Niger. Pocket parks in depressed East Bloc cities. Clown doctors cheering sick children in hospitals in slums of Brazilian cities.

In all 228 shining examples of local ingenuity, integrity and motivation. With tens of thousands more standing in the wings, just waiting for that first small guiding push.

All of which, if we take the time to look and learn, tells us what to do next.

2. The No-Fault Grassroots Proposal in Brief

1. This is a call for the creation of a world wide, 'no fault', zero-bureaucracy grants program
2. To provide one thousand high profile World Sustainability Grants to nominated local projects in cities and communities around the world.
3. To start in 2003 and run for full year as a "pattern break" demonstration
4. Projects do not apply; they are nominated by an established international network.
5. Each grant is for a flat\$10,000.
6. And supported by a high quality local and national media campaign.
7. Two thirds of all awards to go to projects and teams in the Third World.
8. Two thirds to be led by or oriented to serve the special needs and perceptions of women and girls
9. No conditions or requirements of award. No repayment.
10. Project teams invited to feed back information and results through an integrated, freely accessible web site (see <http://ngroups.com/stockholm>)

* * *

A world wide 'no fault' zero-bureaucracy grants program to support worthy local sustainability projects and teams in cities and communities around the world-- putting into their hands with little fuss a high-visibility media-supported prize and cash award of ten thousand dollars or euros. We have seen in many places that relatively modest amounts of money applied with the right light touch can do a great deal in many local project contexts.

The proposed award process is based on a trusted nomination, a quick review, and a cash award to the grant recipient, along with an invitation to cooperate by reporting succinctly via the web on progress, accomplishments and problems over the following year. That's it. There is no policing of the awards or the teams, no complicated administrative apparatus to keep track of what they are doing with the money, and no requirements to justify their performance.

If accompanied by a high quality media and presentation program, such a grant can also serve as a much needed local push for the project and the team behind it. Especially when the award comes from a high profile international program. These projects and teams are often working with limited if any local support or recognition, so turning this around is very much one of the main objectives of this whole program.

The entire process is to be mediated by the extensive informal international network developed not only through the Stockholm Partnerships program, but also the efforts and networks of the many groups and programs who are sharing information, contacts and works in this literally world wide network for sustainability. Most of the work on the network to get the job done will be provided by volunteers, on the understanding that when we get together on things like this we all move forward.

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Background

This project is an expression of faith in the ability of people and local groups to attack and solve their own problems, with a little help and encouragement from outside— instead of waiting for “government” to solve all their problems for them.

It is predicated on the notion that sustainability and social justice are more likely to be advanced palpably through efforts that take place from the bottom up than from the top down (or at least we would make the point that without these grassroots projects, there is no path to sustainability).

It is also a vote for good faith, good judgment, neighborliness and effective networking – as opposed to heavy handed administration, centralized planning, and remorseless policing.

This proposal is the direct result of work done over the last year with an outstanding collection of no less than 228 innovative local project teams from 53 countries, uncovered by the international jury of the Stockholm Partnerships for Sustainable Cities, many of which are succeeding in accomplishing an awful lot under tough conditions with very little money. (See www.partnerships.stockholm.se/ for details.)

The challenge now is to build on this experience and sell the world’s main aid agencies, governments and foundations on the idea that what is needed is an entirely new development stimulus pattern and process. In this case, a technology-mediated no-fault sustainability project machine.

One such world wide No-Fault demo as outlined here would cost a round \$10 million -- small change compared to most of the funded development projects going on today. To put this into perspective, it’s about what you have to shell out for a single urban highway interchange in your city. (As if you really need one more of those, that is.)

Then, when this works out over 2003 and the message begins to get through, the next step can be to turn it into a structured ten-year zero-bureaucracy, zero-control effort -- meaning that just one such program over the decade will lay the base for a total of ten thousand independent grassroots development projects -- projects that otherwise might never have come into existence. And all out there on the Net for all to see and learn from. And from there ten such programs running in parallel – why not, once the new pattern has been established? -- would bring about and support one hundred thousand new sustainability projects on line over the decade.

Might that make a difference? Might that help change the ways you and we think about all this? And the choices we make? We leave you to ponder that for yourselves. You and the World Bank and the European Commission and every government, company, financial institution, foundation and committed individual on this gasping planetary block.

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The core principles

- ? High Visibility Mega Program. The point of all this is to challenge, to change even, accepted thinking as to how we can make our planet, starting in the places we live, work and bring up our children, into a more sustainable and more socially just place. To get the point across, there must be something that sharply, egregiously even, defies the known thinking, paths and mechanisms. So we need hundreds, thousands of these things flowing out of a well oiled mechanism if we are to catch the attention of enough people and institutions to make a difference in the critical next decade ahead.
- ? No application– all projects nominated by our network (nominator thus goes on line for the program, Grameem Bank style)
- ? One size grant: \$10k –accompanied by a short list of suggestions, questions and requests (non-obligatory)
- ? Zero Program Management Costs: All money that comes in for the grants goes out for the grants. As to covering these costs, well we just have to be smart and diligent. But the 100% pass-through in itself has to be newsworthy and pattern-breaking.
- ? A first rate media support package. (We invite the grant recipient to help out with local media contacts, while we take care of the international side of things.)
- ? A net-mediated support network (of which award winners are invited to become a creative element). This network may consist of a hive of networks or programs – or a well organized portal to an ever-evolving array of information and support nodes.)
- ? Recipients invited to submit a short “final report”, led by original nominator, which goes on the web to become a resource and point of information and encouragement for others seeking ideas or help along these lines.
- ? The supporting web site will also provide an information point available for others (agencies, aid groups, foundations, individuals) looking for projects, programs and ideas they want to support.
- ? Eventually and if things work out, grant recipients will receive an invitation to become a nominator in turn in their country, region or area of competence.
- ? And would it not be splendid if we could pull the whole thing together into an annual, Nobel style award ceremony, of the sort that we have just so successfully had with the Stockholm Partnerships program? Perhaps with the City of Stockholm taking a lead role in this once again.

And then in a year we can look at what we have accomplished and take it from there.

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Why should it work?

1. The proposal is positive -- and it is action oriented.
2. It is attractive, easy to understand - and once you have it in mind does not require endless reflection or discussion to get straight.
3. It provides an unarguable way to achieve concrete, cost effective sustainability results in a very short time frame.
4. We have in hand the mechanisms both to make it work and to ensure that the impacts will be widely known and universally available
5. It is deeply challenging of the status quo - the pattern of stasis -- and hence worthy of attention and at very least public discussion and debate.
6. It promises to open up, based on striking near term results that serve as proof, a whole new paradigm of organization of action for sustainability and social justice
7. It provides a new shaping example of personal responsibility, community and democracy.
8. It shows great faith in people and their sense of enterprise (as opposed to large centralized, bureaucratized, intellectualized, lawyerized, even sovietized constructs along with their assumption of a basically sheep-like passive citizenry)
9. It does not require another international treaty or extensive negotiations and horse-trading in order to start to make its concrete contribution to sustainable development.
10. Nor does it require yet further research, more preparatory conferences, expert missions, staff build ups, investments in real estate, supplemental budgets, etc.
11. It's dead cheap given its potential impact
12. And finally, it can be put into motion with just one partner and decision point - a sponsor brave enough, wise enough, and responsible enough to back the 2003 program, and then just stand aside and let it happen.

3. Frequently Asked Questions

1. Why 'No-Fault' Grants? What's wrong with standard procedures?

The basic idea is that present dominant bureaucracy intensive, heavily constrained grant 'models' place an unacceptable pre-targeting, administrative, reporting and control burden on recipients -- and that these get in the way of the team's ability to make their fullest and best contributions. In the No -Fault program therefore, we intend to make things as simple as possible for each grant recipient, on the understanding that we have faith in (a) our ability to make the right choices in the first place - and (b) theirs to determine how best to spend this money. To this end, we are working to ensure that the application and reporting process are kept extremely light (without however neglecting the fact that we can take advantage of the carrot that this funding offers to encourage a certain amount of strategic rethinking on the part of the applying group, as well as offering a process of useful easy to do feedback, useful for them and others, as their program advances in an appropriately succinct, and 100% voluntary, framework via the WSCC or some other efficient knowledgebase). In short, the No -Fault Grants should be seen as a wonderful opportunity both for the recipient group and for others around the world with similar interests, and not as an irritating, distracting and expensive added administrative burden.

2. But without such administrative and accounting controls, how can you ensure you are going to get paid back?

Good point. They are not credit but in this case awards for outstanding effort, originality, relevance, impact potential, and activist citizen democracy. There is no requirement for financial reimbursement. The payback is in terms of three things that we are hoping to get as a result of our careful targeting of the awardees: (a) local sustainability impact; (b) a shining example for their community, city, country and region; and (c) via their willingness to share the lessons of their experience through the WSCC (or some other easily accessible, free) knowledgebase.

3. Can you give us some examples of the kinds of projects that you see as appropriate for these awards?

If you turn to the [Stockholm Partnerships](http://www.partnerships.stockholm.se/) site at www.partnerships.stockholm.se/ you will see 228 fine examples of the kinds of projects that we are on the look out for. (Indeed we intend to ask the Stockholm project teams to help us in identifying yet other projects in their geographic or competence areas of expertise for these awards if the program goes through.)

4. What are your selection criteria? Here are some of the kinds of things that we intend to be on the lookout for:

- **Source:** These must be locally inspired and led grassroots projects. (We intend however to be flexible in our interpretation of this criterion, and will definitely not be eliminating projects which are generated or supported by local government.)
- **Local Impact:** We are looking to highlight and support projects that give proof of being able to make a difference in their community in terms of their specific

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impacts on local environment, quality of life, citizen participation, increased ability of the community to solve its own problems, and social justice.

- **Propinquity:** Based on our 'propinquity theory' of project impacts, an effort should be made to find at least one worthy project effort in every one of the 192 countries that are presently members of the UN Family.
- **Third World:** Two thirds of the projects should come from low income countries, and we are interested as well to have strong representation of outstanding concepts and projects in three special geo-cultural target areas: the former East Block countries, Africa and the Islamic countries.
- **Women and Girls:** Likewise, we are hoping to target a strong majority of projects that either are lead by women or are strongly oriented to improving the education, health, economic and life circumstances of women and girls.
- **Replicability:** We will be on the lookout for projects that are capable of generating spread effects or serving as clear demonstrations of principles and approaches that can be implemented at low cost in other places.
- **The Fazal Criteria:** These, which we also intend to honor here, came up in the context of the Stockholm Partnerships jury deliberations, our friend and colleague, Anwar Fazal, Senior Regional Advisor of the UNDP's The Urban Governance Initiative (TUGI) and recipient of the 1982 Right Livelihood Award, popularly called the 'Alternative Nobel Prize', suggested that we give high points to projects which show signs of being especially
 - ✍ Ecologically sustainable
 - ✍ Culturally vibrant and diverse
 - ✍ Socially inclusive
 - ✍ Economically viable and productive
 - ✍ Politically participatory

5. Why so many projects?

The answer to that one is real simple. In order to be stimulated and become believers in our own powers to make a difference, we need to have examples of "best practice" close at hand. If someone tells me that in Tokyo or Zurich there are done wonderful things – but I am sitting in some small town in Uzbekistan or Mississippi – I will think "that's very nice, but they are of course Japanese or Swiss, and they have a lot of money, and they.. and they..." Which works quite nicely first to seal my mind and then to render me a passive as well as distant observer.

We need to have our examples close by if we are to give them credence. That seems to be a universal human trait, and that by the way is why in the Stockholm project we went to great pains to create what we called the "Stockholm Bouquet". With this in mind, the jury and the organizers selected a total of 60 projects from 41 countries and brought them for the first week of June to Stockholm to give them an opportunity to get to know and be inspired by each other.

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As important, the entire program set out to highlight leading examples from a broad range of places, from projects in Nepal and Niger to others in Europe and North America, over all the extremes of geography, wealth and human and environmental challenges.

But perhaps the one thing that was most striking in all this experience is the realization of the extent to which with this first 228 projects we were only starting to scratch the surface. We could see that these projects were working, that many of them could be improved if the means for better cross-learning could be found and put into place (the network), but above all that we needed to find ways to create and support many thousands if not more such initiatives.

Think of it this way. If we have our first one thousand projects up and working, this will mean roughly one project per six million plus people on the planet, Not bad as a start. But if we were able to get ten such programs going over the decade, we could if we were careful about our geography and other desired impact criteria, get that down to something closer to one of these great projects per 70,000 people. Hmm. We would surely be making progress.

On the other hand there is a site on the Net at <http://www.calle.com/world/> that identifies by name 2,880,532 world cities and towns, sorted by country and linked to a map for each. Which also gives us an idea of the dimensions of the challenge before us.

This is sustainability from the bottom up and an approach which places confidence in people and their ability to get together to make changes at the level of their own communities – which if we add them all up can make a real difference in planetary terms. That at least is the idea.

6. How are you ever going to find, reward and activate one thousand projects in close to two hundred countries in a single year without a huge budget and administrative machine behind you?

There are several important keys to making this approach work. Among them:

- **World Sustainability Network:** The projects are to be nominated by extensive existing international networks of people and groups with hands-on knowledge and sustainability experience. All participants in this network are ready to cooperate on a purely volunteer, collegial basis.
- **No Fault Applications:** Nominated projects are then invited to go to the WSCC knowledgebase and fill out the very short 'application form' which is being developed to provide the necessary decision frame. Projects will then be vetted by a small team of collaborators, whose basic orientation will be strongly positive (i.e., we are from the beginning geared to say yes and not no!)
- **'No Brainer' Awards:** Very important from this point of view. See below for advantages of a single award amount.
- **Self-Managed Knowledgebase and Voluntary Reporting System:** While care is required at the design stage, the goal of the database is to provide an easy, inviting framework for grant recipients to report at periodic intervals on their accomplishments, problems, and recommendations for other teams in similar situations.

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7. What is the reasoning behind the idea of a uniform “No-Brainer” \$10,000 award, without taking into consideration the specific needs of each project?

We have chosen this amount based on our observations in the field and in the knowledge that ten thousand dollars can go a very long way if the right ground work has been laid. In some situations we anticipate that this money will be used to permit the project team to add some needed expansions, to take care of a specific problem or unexpected surprise, or simply to be used across the board in order to do a better and perhaps bigger job. In a number of cases, the grant may be used by a local team to lay the groundwork for a much larger project that needs funds and structured inputs to get right. (Indeed, we intend to draw the various project profiles to the attention of funding sources, agencies, and foundations around the world, in the hope that they will review the inventory and spot specific projects and groups with ideas that are worthy of much more extensive support.) Finally, we decided that for the purposes of administration, given our targeted zero overheads approach, it would simply not be possible to make the kinds of fine tuning judgments that would be needed to provide a meaningful match of award and specific need. Moreover, we see the grant as an award, an international recognition of the quality of the project and the team behind it. Not as the project's banker.

8. What happens when a given project team does a poor job or otherwise wastes your hard-earned money? Is not some form of control needed to ensure at least minimal levels of performance.

There are no control or policing procedures. Again, the entire project is based on the proposition that we have faith in our sources and our good judgment. And moreover that we should not be trying to tie the hands of the people on the spot with some type of old (20th century) 'critical path' kind of thinking. Thus, we simply do our job to make strong nominations, hand them the money, offer them the possibility of using a 'slim reporting' feedback system on the web, and then just stand back and let them get on with it. We also are confident that public exposure (media relations are an important part of the No Fault package) and peer pressure will go a long way to ensure performance.

9. You mention 'implicit consultancy help'. What is that supposed to mean?

After years of looking at and working local projects of this sort in a huge range of circumstances, one of the things that strike us most is the extent to which all too few of them turn out to be robust enough to survive for very long. This is not to say that their goals are not laudable, nor that they are not able to make real contributions. Rather it is a cautionary note that more often than not their chances for longer term survival are most often not all that good. Many turn out to be 'inadequately thought out and constructed' from both a longer term management and financial survival point of view. Thus, one of the things that we are trying to do is to design an 'application and reporting format' that it encourages more self-questioning and reporting on these important aspects of each submitted project and team - itself already a salutary process to the extent that it focuses attention on strategic aspects that often are neglected in the face of competition from the hundreds of operating details and considerations which require just about all of the team's available time, resources and attention

10. How is this aspect of the program going to work?

For starters, we have seen from experience the actual process of a team's entering their project for consideration can be useful experience in itself for them in a number of ways.

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For one, this process pushes the applying team to make a sharp, fully current statement concerning their m.o., accomplishments and plans. (We have seen that often they are so engaged with the exigencies of the day to day operational problems and mere survival, they may have lost sight of some of these more strategic matters. This thus provides them with a good incentive to take the time to take stock.) In this same spirit, we feel that if we get it right at our end, they will start to give more attention to some of the more fundamental 'good practices' which in our view are needed to ensure the 'durability' and long term survival and success of activities in this sector (including provision for continuing support and finance). (Section to complete)

11. Media Program?

Yes, we have found based on our experience that one of the most important contributions that a high profile international award can make to a project is to give it greater value in its own city, country and community. Very often, local projects tend to get overlooked by the media, and by the government and other offices and institutions that could do a great deal to help them achieve their objectives. For these reasons, we intend in each case to give careful attention to the task of ensuring that the awards are widely reported, and that the news filters down in all cases to the local media. (This is in fact quite a tough challenge and it requires real communications skills. Thus, we are on the lookout for volunteers to give a hand in this important end of the program. And if a collaborating partner group with these skills and capabilities were to come in and offer to help us with this, we would welcome them with open arms.)

12. Is this an original proposal?

Yes and no. Certainly anyone who is familiar with such admirable and effective projects as Grameen Banking, Deutsche Bank Microcredit Development Fund and a whole raft of focused microcredit programs, the UNDP's GEF Small Grants Programme [SGP], and more recently the GrameenPhone concepts will spot many parallels. We have kept our eye on these projects and approaches for some years now and feel that they have blazed an important path. Indeed, we are hoping eventually to work with as many of them as we can in order to identify worthy projects and places for our no-fault grants. But even if we were nothing but an exact unthinking clone of one or more of these other programs, believe us! there is plenty of work to do for all available hands. And if you look carefully here, you may note that ours is perhaps just a bit different.

13. Are funds already available for this project?

Not yet. The goal at this point is to get the underlying idea out into the public view in order to see if it can be developed in a way that will 'sell itself'. For now our immediate target is to see what can be done through our network and relationships to get visibility for this idea in Johannesburg. Then once the World Summit has closed its doors, we intend to build on all that we have learned in the meantime and continue to push both for sponsorship and for more active volunteer participants and an improved overall work plan and toolset.

14. What are the proposed operational expenses of this program?

That depends on who undertakes to do it. If it is a foundation, aid program or international agency that picks up the lead, they will have their own practices.

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If on the other hand, the funding sources were to ask The Commons to execute, it would be our goal to organize to do this with **zero management costs**. That is to say, if funds are put at our disposition to make these grants, we would undertake to put all of it into the hands of the targeted local groups and projects. There would of course, no matter how well we managed to gear up via 21st century technology working tools to do the job, a fair amount of development and management cost implied. But we would undertake to cover all of these costs ourselves or through other channels. The important point here is that 100% of the donated funds should get into the hands of those who need and deserve them.

15. Are you planning any major changes or improvements in the program?

You bet we are. We see this as a cumulative group learning process, and we are at this point right on the leading edge of the curve. And while we here are continuing to work to detail and refine the project/process - which is, by the way, rather more complex and ambitious than it may at first glance appear - we are above all reaching out to friends and colleagues around the world and asking them to join in this process. This web site is one of those instruments of communications and exchange.

16. You say you have a dozen overarching reasons why this No-Fault proposal should stand out in the diversity, noise, and tumult of the Johannesburg Summit?

Thirteen actually:

0. The proposal is positive -- and it is action oriented.
1. It is very attractive, easy to understand - and once you have it in mind does not require endless reflection or discussion to get straight.
2. It provides an unarguable way to achieve concrete, cost effective sustainability results in a very short time frame.
3. We have in hand the mechanisms both to make it work and to ensure that the impacts will be widely known and universally available
4. It is in a number of ways deeply challenging of the status quo - the pattern of stasis -- and hence worthy of attention and at very least public discussion and debate.
5. It promises to open up, based on visible, striking near term results that serve as proof, no less than a whole new paradigm of organization of action for sustainability and social justice
6. It provides a new shaping example of personal responsibility, community and democracy.
7. It shows great faith in people and their sense of enterprise (as opposed to large centralized, bureaucratized, intellectualized, lawyerized, even sovietized constructs along with their assumption of a basically sheep-like passive citizenry)
8. It does not require another international treaty or extensive negotiations and horse-trading in order to start to make its concrete contribution to sustainable development.
9. Nor does it require yet further research, more preparatory conferences, expert missions, staff build ups, investments in real estate, supplemental budgets, etc.
10. It's basically simple
11. It's dead cheap given its potential impact

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12. And finally, it can be put into motion with just one partner and decision point - a sponsor brave enough, wise enough, and responsible enough to back the 2003 program, and then just stand aside and let it happen.

17. Can it be done?

I recently had an opportunity to discuss this idea with several representatives of institutions who could rather easily make something like this work -- and one of the first questions that came to their lips was: "Nice idea perhaps, how will we ever manage all that? We simply are not geared to handle this many projects. Not even a fraction of that!"

That's a terrific question, and also one that this group is remarkably well equipped to answer. Here are a few first thoughts to get us going on this:

- A. It will clearly have to be a very different process (*So let's get uncomfortable*).
- B. It will have to have a built-in and very steep learning curve (*Read "feedback intensive" reporting and management systems, which we here know all about*).
- C. And it will have to have the means to tie the whole thing together.

We will not need "more research", "more conferences", or to wait for some next election. We will not need a building, lots of staff, and an important budget for making the whole thing work, break pattern and get on the road to sustainability.

We will need to refine the concept and get that first hundred leading edge groups and proponents of sustainability behind us, and of course those first sponsors. But with that in hand there is nothing that gets in the way of our getting those first one thousand grants into the hands of deserving projects and groups over the course of 2003. And then in a year we can look at what we have accomplished and take it from there.

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4. Invitations to anyone who might want to lend a hand

Here are a few things that we invite you to pitch in with if you have a mind to:

- ? Criticize vigorously and help us improve and variously firm up all aspects of this proposal
- ? Once the proposal is in decent enough shape, start to work your networks for support in any of a number of forms.
- ? If you have the expertise or turn of hand, help in the media program.
- ? Ditto in terms of organization and administration.
- ? Help us find the person, foundation or whatever who will be willing to back this program (or some significant piece of it). My guess is that we need to give out at least 100 grants in Year One for this to have its necessary minimum impact, but as you can see I am even more comfortable with the idea of a base of one thousand for 2003, with more if additional funding pops up (or more support programs.. for instance support to bring the ten (??) selected teams to participate in a "Stockholm Bouquet" award ceremony once a year?

[? Now, click here to participate in the Johannesburg Survey and make your voice heard.](http://www.ngroups.com/stockholm/index.php?body=suggestion)
(<http://www.ngroups.com/stockholm/index.php?body=suggestion>)