

Hallbarhet2009 Evaluation

Australia, February 6 – 13th 2009

Summary, question by question, from online evaluation survey

Responses have been listed in order from most frequently mentioned to least.



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Ratings of different aspects of Hallbarhet2009

2. to give us an overall sense of what worked well, please rate your experience with the following sessions during Hallbarhet2009							
	Disappointing	Not good	OK	Good	Excellent	N/A	Response Count
Pre-event information, including arrival pack and questions for contemplation	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	45.5% (5)	45.5% (5)	0.0% (0)	11
Large group events e.g. at UTS in Sydney, and at RMIT in Melbourne	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	27.3% (3)	63.6% (7)	18.2% (2)	11
Field visits to sites of interest e.g. dolphins in Port Stephens, Biodiesel plant, Pennyweight wines, Hume dam, CERES	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	36.4% (4)	45.5% (5)	18.2% (2)	11
Conversations with guest speakers e.g. Peter Garrett, Will Steffen, Ronnie from Wentworth group, Phillip Sutton from Greenleap, Bob Willard	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	90.9% (10)	9.1% (1)	11
Interactive sessions with guests e.g. Paul and the Being Integral group, Karl and the earthsharing game	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	18.2% (2)	54.5% (6)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	11
Engagement with local and Indigenous culture e.g. the tent embassy visit, the walk in Melbourne botanical gardens	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	27.3% (3)	72.7% (8)	0.0% (0)	11
Meals together e.g. when cooking together, or when going out	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	27.3% (3)	72.7% (8)	0.0% (0)	11
More relaxed components e.g. National Gallery in Canberra, Manly beach, walking together up Kosciuszko	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	0.0% (0)	45.5% (5)	45.5% (5)	9.1% (1)	11
Connecting with regional gatherings online in Thredbo	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	63.6% (7)	9.1% (1)	11
Dialogue cafe and planning sessions at the retreat in Thredbo	0.0% (0)	9.1% (1)	36.4% (4)	54.5% (6)	0.0% (0)	18.2% (2)	11

Three or four moments, images or interactions that really stand out in your memories of the Hallbarhet event.

- **Aboriginal experience at Tent Embassy**
 - witnessing the tenacity and perseverance of the individuals at the Tent Embassy and commitment to making their vision a reality; the aboriginal experience at the embassy camp; Indigenous tent embassy; the smoking ceremony at the Aboriginal Tent Embassy; The impromptu meeting at the Tent Embassy in ACT including the fire ceremony and listening to local residents; , Tent Embassy.
- **Network Dialogues (RMIT, UTS)**
 - The two network meetings - the one at UTS and the one at RMIT. It was great to interact with people working in and for sustainability and to see how FSSD might connect; our group disseminated throughout the Global Cafe event in Melbourne; the energy of meeting so many different networks together at RMIT in Melbourne.
- **Learning together with friends and peers**
 - Getting to know more of my fellow alumni friends: learning about their thoughts, professional career and personal life;) the persistence, patience, politeness, perseverance and respect of the group members in all the discussions; the all pervading sense of belonging in the group.
- **Winery**
 - the winery tour: listening the the owner explain how the sustainable path has also been a good business decision. I found it inspiring to see the little gems of people making sustainability happen as a part of their daily lives; Being so excited to hear the details (yields, methods) and history of the biodynamic/organic winery
- **CERES**
 - CERES: looking at what has been accomplished at that site, in terms of social fabric, and environmental awareness was pretty inspiring; Sitting at CERES and being freshly struck by the urgency and importance of what we are working on

- **Hiking, swimming, wildlife**
 - hike up Mt.K in Thredbo; swimming, walking and having good conversations in Thredbo; Sea kayaking, the dolphin cruise and all of the wildlife in Pittwater. Mt. Kosciuszko
- **Connecting with regional gatherings**
 - The regional gatherings connections; connecting with so many groups on Maretech during the retreat,
- **Goodbye at Botanic gardens** - The goodbye circle at the botanical garden in Melbourne
- **Swedish embassy** - Swedish Embassy with solar panels
- **Goran** - Goran's talk to us at the retreat
- **Acacia** - the joy in Acacia's face when I first met her (a battle won for the Snowy river that made front page of the Australian),
- **Barbara** - Barbara's insightful comments
- **Peter Garrett** - Barbara's insightful comments
- **Pizza with Will Steffen** - pizza with Will Steffen on the rooftop
- **Awkward moments**- Several times where conversations with guests were awkward/difficult, or really demonstrated the 'TNS' lens
- **Cooking together and food** - the joint effort in preparing all the meals at Thredbo; Lentils as Anything

Anecdotes or stories that represent the most significant change

- **Will Steffen's comments** - staying within the holocene carbon cycle really rung home and is a no-brainer and much more relevant than trying to argue over previous levels in geologic time
- **A Lama was talking to Li-Eri (Lao Tse's former name)** - about the ways people can adapt to the world: their preferred is letting each people follow their own wills, while she searches to have the most self intimate experience as possible, until the point that this, by becoming so great, expands from the person, influencing all the souls and bringing change.
- **Phil Sutton's answer to my question** - about how we have 2 jobs - the job we are paid to do and the job we must do to engage people's hearts where we encounter resistance, fear or ignorance.
- **We were on the bus to RMIT having just been at CERES**- Alaya stood up and shared her observation and request for us to be open, inquiring and engage with others who have different perspectives on sustainability. I thought this was a very strong thing to do, and that highlighted the capacity of us to lead as individuals in facilitating a more self-reflective and learning culture in our network.
- **After I spoke at the start of Thredbo** - I felt I had been very harsh but several people came and said they appreciated it and I was humbled by how sincere and kind everyone was. The main impression I came away with was how good the Hallbarhet people are at listening, remaining calm and professional and working through difficulties to achieve a resolution that everyone is pretty much okay with.
- **Smiling inwardly as I learnt to let go early on and trusted the collective group to bring it all together** - the event itself was testament to what can be achieved by the power of invitation and co-creation
- **"If not now, when?; if not here, where?; if not you and I, who?"**
- **standing around for the ceremony at the tent embassy, and the women took our places in our circle and the men were in the middle,** I really had a profound realization that in fact I do have a place in life, and in this group, and as a woman, working in the way I do and feeling what I do. I have been struggling as I watch male peers get more instantaneous respect and engagement in very microcosmal circumstances, trying to emulate that style of working but fighting it because it's not who I am. I suddenly felt valued in my natural role, and felt that the men needed us women and we women also need the men. we can work synergistically with respect, rather than bumping around and over one another. without articulated roles in our culture, this is more difficult, however I feel more confident and valued in my own role and self.
- **A reinvigorated commitment emerged to bring back to Mexico and the rest of Latin America what I've learned and worked on in the last 3 and a half years.** The trigger of such 'renewed' commitment was the discussion of the TNS-MSLS relationship, which I thought hadn't evolved in the last 2 and a half years, as well as the limited face-to-face time with my colleagues to learn more about their experiences post-graduation. Upon my return of the Whistler Reunion, all I could think of was how different these discussions could be if the group was in a different setting (i.e. Mexico). On top of the environmental challenges that Latin America faces, the cultural, social and political differences with Northern parts of the world represent a huge challenge, as well as a huge opportunity that I'd love show case and share with MSLS colleagues. That is how my idea to host the next reunion in my country came about.

High points

- **Specific experts / activities**
 - Phil Sutton, CERES, Wentworth group, Will Steffen, Tent Embassy; the retreat, the regional gatherings connection, the aborigine experience, visits to organisations, guest speakers; Meeting with leading sustainability practitioners, getting hands on with sustainability challenges; the biofuels plant, the wentworth group, the coal presentation with Joe Herbertson, the CSIRO visit
- **Connecting with friends and peers**
 - seeing familiar faces and new ones; connecting with Australia; the group, Goran; seeing everyone again, meeting new faces, instant comfort; connecting with everyone
- **Making it happen**
 - Working with such a great team to bring it together; the organisation pre-Hhallbarhet; learning the lesson in real time of how to truly engage people; pulling together the action plan.
- **The range of activities**
 - I thought it was especially important that we met with individuals across the spectrum, from coal mining interests to aboriginal groups, to academics to small business people
- **Food and locations**
 - the hostels, the food; Lentil as Anything, Thredbo,, native animals
- **Network dialogues**
 - network meetings; RMIT Dialogue

What really worked well

- **Fantastic agenda, logistics and (self-) organisation**
 - Fantastic agenda with all the people showing up; the event was exceptionally organized in terms of logistics. The range of sessions was intense and was very worthwhile; The self-organising model, all the logistics (hostels, food, appointments, etc); the dialogue cafes in the universities; Diversity of visits. Great locations. Really well-organised transport and food; Organisation by Scott was excellent - the timetable, guests, venues, costs, locations; Good length - any longer and people would have collapsed; much shorter and it would be difficult to justify in terms of expense, emissions and experience; The self organizing of the event. The schedule had no problems other than maybe too many items scheduled; the bus was great - I can't imagine having to deal with public transport for all that. the variety of types of events worked well - there was something for everyone. accommodation was good, as was the food; We had amazing access to key individuals and groups. There was a good mix of activities. It was largely co-created by a variety of people.
- **The people and relationships**
 - Great group who showed up; the ease at which everyone came together and there was a high level of trust among the group right away. Although at times there was tension and frustration, the group worked through it and came out the better in the end, dealing with it as a group. Humour worked well too!; Energy, trust & collaborative spirit that was fostered amongst the participants; The number of people worked out well.
- **The help we received**
 - all the help we received (Barbara, Jen, Jonas, BTH, etc);

Frustrations

- **Limited time, lack of depth**
 - Not enough time to hear experiences of graduated colleagues; the fact that the schedule was too tight, not enough time for digesting and relaxing and breathing; over scheduled at times - not enough downtime; We did not go deep enough into dialogue, thinking together, to take it to the next level. Felt like we were more rushed than being consciously engaged and reflective; Too Much Travelling, no time to reflect; I felt that many times when we just started to think together, we were cut off because of time; lack of daily check-ins - both for logistics and debrief - I felt like I was always struggling to have a big picture understanding of what was happening.
- **Tensions in what was planned/emergent**
 - Having to walk the line between constantly pushing the group to be more focused and professional (especially in relation to our interactions with guests) vs. realising that perhaps the schedule was too overloaded and people needed this 'slow time'; Perhaps a little bit of tension at Thredbo between the plan and the emergent needs; the retreat; I also found the overall presentation of the retreat frustrating because I felt a bit like I was being treated like a 'camper' - this is what we'll do next...instead of a totally open, co-creative time to let the group really create.
- **Technical, logistical issues**
 - Poor Internet bandwidth in Thredbo; video conference connection failing; bus trips took longer than expected
- **TNS-MSLS alumni relationship not evolving**
 - the TNS-MSLS alumni non-evolved relationship;

- **Questions going around in circles**
 - Some of our internal debates around providing direction for our group seemed to go in circles, but the experience of visioning for a group was still a worthwhile exercise in and of itself.

What could be done better

- **Reduce time pressure and more time for check-ins and check-outs**
 - More slack in time management; more unscheduled free/down time; more time for check-ins each day; More time to form and storm at the start, and to debrief and make sense at the end; Just allow more travel time; Double the travel time; Less travel and more time to connect with everyone on a more personal level. There was very little private, safe, one-on-one space provided; a fully guarded free day in the middle somewhere; try to spend two nights in the one place – it was hard to pack up and move so much
- **Improve distribution and performance of roles**
 - Clearly identify the roles of facilitators etc. and ensure they have the space to do what they need to to play that role; Reduce burden on one person to manage all transport logistics; sign people up to each do a little story or blog - I think more variety here would be good, and that takes more encouragement than an open request I think :)
- **Change the retreat focus and process**
 - Change the focus of the guiding question to allow more empty space for creativity, enjoyment, digesting, and insights; Improve the structure of the retreat; mandate respect to the facilitators and trust their process; have a retreat where people show up and there are 3 days of open space that the group can co-create what to do with;
- **Better communication of what is planned**
 - Better communication of the daily schedule more information on the speakers in the arrival/trip guide; I would suggest having one 'go-to' place for all information (like a whiteboard) so everyone knows what is happening when, and what we need to bring with us. I often felt like I didn't know what was happening, and announcements were often made without the whole group present.
- **Change how we connect with regional groups**
 - Be more intelligent about how we connect with regional gatherings to increase alignment, ownership, and avoid 'competition'; With more people we could design choices for options e.g. like field trip to Amsterdam – you could choose between visiting Kaos Pilots or the Fair Food people.
- **Nothing**
 - In all honesty, I have none - whoever came were the right people and whatever happened, happened :) Everyone gave everything they could to make it work and anything more would have required additional resources that we simply didn't have in terms of time, energy or expertise.

Significant contributions you made

- **Small group conversations**
 - Personal talks with alumni friends; In small group discussions and in one on one conversations; Close discussions with no more than 2-3 people at a time
- **Leading or influencing group dialogues**
 - Leading a world cafe discussion, comments throughout the reunion; by helping to articulate who we are as a network, and by shifting the focus to what was relevant to us at the Integral workshop; Various times during the retreat; Thredbo retreat in the last two days.
- **Organising and logistics prior or during the event**
 - The organisation prior to the gathering; planning prior; The planning and preparation before the actual event; Driving the bus; managing the finance and logistics; by supporting the webinars.

Where the group was co-creating something new

- **Organising and making the whole event happen**
- **The retreat, especially the last couple of days and the 'Open Space' sessions**
- **At external events (UTS, RMIT)**

Top four learnings for individuals

- **The dynamics and timing of group processes and co-creation**
 - Group dynamics can be challenging, even in the MSLS group, to someone who is in a vulnerable place; Really hammered home for me the power of co-creation, and how much 'letting-go' and confidence in the group that requires; this group requires a lot of free space to create without directions; as adults, we don't like being programmed too much - a bit of structure is good, too much and you get a revolt, or people just remove themselves; What it takes to create a transformational experience, and what mistakes you can make; to always radically over-estimate the time it takes to wrangle a crowd of people to do anything in order to hit the mark & minimise stress for everyone; really good work that involves moving to a new level of thinking & dialogue, requires a large chunk of time.

45 min. blocks are not enough to get good work done (for me) - open space requires at least half a day to a day, and 15 minutes for dialogue cafe rounds results only in a stressful 'brainstorm cafe' - not dialogue; Reflecting takes time - at least an hour - it's not something you can really trust to get done on a bus.

- **The time is NOW**
 - Change is happening all around us, but this still is not fast enough; The time to act is now; We need to REALLY act on climate change NOW. (I valued being reminded of that.); We need to get on with action STAT, the time for debate is over;
- **The power of networks and how to build them**
 - That sustainability networks are only as valuable as the connections they build to other people and networks, and their ability to invite participation; The significance of our individual and collective 'identity' in enabling or being a barrier; It is important to look for common ground, rather than identifying where we are different; The value of community, collective commitment and intent, and collaboration as a tool for scaling up; The question: How can SSD be communicated and discussed with environmental and sustainability movements/groups?; to meet people where they are at; How to have individual conversations that lead to collective buy-in and commitment to process or outcomes; Step back take a look at who you can leverage with in your community.
- **Listening and slowing down**
 - How to go slow to go fast; be more patient; listen harder; compassion and empathy are so important - especially of other cultures and ways of doing things/looking at things; relax;
- **Personal learnings about values and preferences**
 - Always hold strong to your values; I am looking for ways that I can be more humble and not trying to be or do what I can't be or do in the moment;
 - I value both the process and the outcome, and do not enjoy one at the expense of the other.
 - Persistence - this work is worth doing when supported by an incredible group of people!;
 - I can make a difference; If you commit yourself to achieving a goal, the sky is the limit;
 - in the moment I am now I can't really contribute much to the group
 - I don't do well without sufficient sleep.
 - To be more in touch with the indigenous culture of Australia

Top four learnings as a group / network

- **We don't need to be an organisation**
 - That many things we want to see accomplished in the future can be done in a self-organising way and not necessarily within in a predefined organisational structure; The regional gatherings illustrated that while members of the network share common values, expecting the network to act as a cohesive organisation will be problematic; we are part of a 'movement' and are best served by this orientation, as opposed to building an 'organisation'; we are unlikely to succeed at forming an 'organisation' with a more structured governing body (at least I think)
- **We can be/already are a real force, together**
 - We have nearly all the qualities of being a leading global action network; Our group is stronger than any one of us as individuals in terms of having a voice; that MSLS is already a far more powerful network than we give ourselves credit for; We need a bit more confidence in ourselves, the more we turned to others for answers the more we realized we hold the answers ourselves. We are not just a bunch of students, but collectively and individually we ARE already acting as change agents; We can ramp-up a lot (we SHOULD ramp it up!)
- **Know thyself**
 - prior to expanding it is necessary to establish a common ground, a basis, knowing who are we; I think we learned a lot about who we are - e.g. autonomous firesouls with great ideas who just bounce around and away from barriers and keep going; That is important to determine who 'we' are, before moving on.
- **Ask the right question first**
 - The importance of understanding boundaries, power and context when trying to ask and answer big questions; we have to clarify what do we want as a group; the question we were focusing maybe wasn't the right one yet. Maybe we should start from who are we, what moves and what unites us, and then how can we better serve the cause we stand for.
- **We have allies everywhere, and need to connect**
 - Through the range of organizations and individuals we met, I think it opened my eyes to better see the range of allies that both our group and us as individuals have available to us. Not just in Australia, but in each of our communities there are allies to be found; The change we seek for the future is going to require reaching out to everyone.
- **Our own paradigm/dogma as a barrier to connection**
 - How much our 'TNS lens' can be a barrier to connecting with others; passion is only part of the picture - we have to learn how to meet people where they are at and not come across with arrogance or as if we have the only answer to the problem; we diminish ourselves by maintaining exclusivity and need to be wary of preaching dogma - we need to always meet people where they are
- **No shortcuts to going together**
 - there is no shortcut to 'taking people with you' on the sustainability journey; That we can't make decisions for others; the group has a lot of differences and it is important to focus on what can we agree on; co-creation is more work

than just sending out surveys and emails

- **The power of co-creation**
 - The amazing power of co-creation to create an event like this; absolutely when you have trust - collaboration can be an incredible experience and model for how to productively work with one another to achieve a very high quality product
- **Value of diversity**
 - The value in the diversity we have within our group: disciplines, cultures etc; We can all contribute different things at different times
- **It's urgent, do it now!**
 - the urgency we feel as a group is echoed by many other groups and individuals; We thrive on action and now we need to make it happen.
- **Flexibility**
 - Flexibility in changing the plan when people are gathered and new things and needs emerge
- **Trust the process and let it emerge**
 - Trust the process. Create the space and let things grow out of it naturally; trust the process - it will work itself out in the end with support coming from unexpected sources
- **Being (ecologically) sustainable is tough**
 - even with all the attention and effort, we barely reduced our waste or carbon - the resources and systems required to bring us together are huge

Should be removed from future events

- **A chunk of the agenda**
 - one third of the amount of activities; If possible, travel; The discussions with the regional gatherings - each gathering had it's own agenda and was not closely linked to the gathering in Thredbo; so many meals with guests/rushed meals.
- **Specific activities**
 - National Gallery, Earthsharing game, Being Integral; change the timing of some of them and possibly re-prioritize if we did it again; Waldron's presentation.
- **Nothing**
 - none - good to have the variety

Were missing and should be added to future events

- **More personal reflection time, time to be alone and to have breaks**
- **More time with experts, including those from business management and psychology of change**
- **More time for exploring the potential of the group and maturing ideas**
- **Sharing experiences applying FSSD**
- **Hands-on project to work on**
- **Daily check-ins**

Facts about who responded

- 11 respondents completed 100% of the survey, up to 13 completed part.
- People travelled from between 600 and 20,000km to participate, mean over 10,000km
- 5 self-employed, 6 full-time employed
- Costing each person between \$700USD and \$3200USD to participate, the mean around \$1000USD
- Volunteered between 0 and 150 hours to make it happen, mean around 30 hours
- Every single one said (emphatically) that it was worthwhile

END

Appendices

Short version of the vision initially posted on website

The vision is a principled-definition of success:

- The positive ecological and social impact of this gathering will exceed the costs.
- As a collective we will generate artefacts of the experience that are to be distributed worldwide, and that reflect the leading edge of sustainability thinking and action.
- The connections, identities and profiles of individuals and networks will be strengthened.
- The gathering and its organisation will be held up as an example of how others can do it. It will be co-created, participant driven, exceed all expectations, and be low-cost.
- Evaluations and follow-up three and six months later will show sustained benefits for all.
- [And....?]

Benefits and Features from website and pdf sent out prior:

Benefits

- Gain insight into trends and developments across numerous related disciplines and sectors
- Gather information, tools and practical learning for applying MSLS content, from across the world
- Learn from top leaders, projects and technologies in Australia
- Re-connect with the passionate and wise people within our network
- Build *new* connections, linking to those with complementary knowledge and skills
- Learn how to apply *new* tools and processes that enhance the Master's programme content
- Contribute to the creation of a avenue for disseminating and sharing strategic sustainability
- Cook up ideas in the crucible for 'how we can create enough leaders in time...' through our networks
- Engage in real-life, local challenges in collaboration with colleagues from around the world

Features

- A week of workshops, presentations, forums and innovation-laboratories to explore and test systemic interventions to address compelling challenges.
- Experiential learning by touring the landscape on a seven-day journey that will cover Australia's unique landscape, feel the influence of the oldest continuous culture on earth, explore challenges and be surprised by solutions. Visits to Sydney, Canberra and Melbourne are included.
- Dialogues with leading international researchers, politicians, activists and business leaders.
- Site-visits showcasing the latest in sustainable technology, communities and business.
- A programme co-created by the participants, exemplifying the organising principles that will characterise the social systems of the future
- Concrete outputs including a book, websites, and broad event exposure through networks and media.
- Bargain price estimated at \$1250AUD including accommodation, meals, transportation (in Australia), and tourist sites. We are working to arrange subsidies available to maximise the diversity of participants. Travel to Australia is the responsibility of the attendee. Group flight discounts are available and regional coordinators will help arrange group travel to lower costs.
- The event will be made global-warming neutral through event projects, and the purchase of offsets. It will be made 'planet-positive' through the massive additional *positive* impact we will each have through acquisition of new skills and knowledge!