# CONVERGE
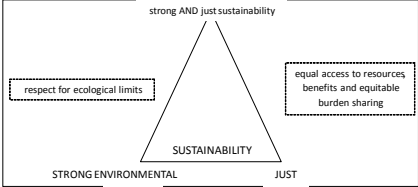
**CONVERGE Initiatives:**
**Contraction and Convergence in Practice**

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grïndependent Intézet

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK PROGRAMME

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## Framework and rationale for CONVERGE project research



strong AND just sustainability

respect for ecological limits

equal access to resources, benefits and equitable burden sharing

SUSTAINABILITY

STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL          JUST

▸ *"The literatures on human development and sustainable development ….have long been separate", and…*

▸ *"the majority of the sustainability discourse tends to neglect, if not outright ignore intragenerational equity issues"* (Hayward, 2006)

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## Two, largely separate fields

**STRONG (environmental) sustainability**

- limits to growth
- biophysical limits
- resource cap dialogues
- ecological footprint / overshoot
- is efficiency sufficient? and rebound effect debate

**JUST (social) sustainability**

- environmental justice
- just sustainability
- rights of future generations
- environmental debt
- human needs satisfaction
- happiness and well-being

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## Where does the CONVERGE project fit?

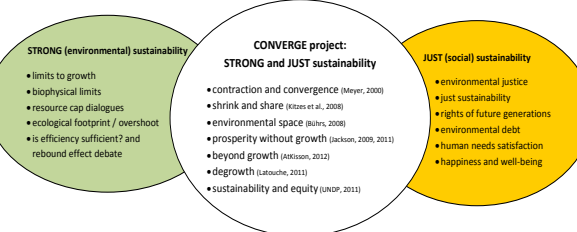**STRONG (environmental) sustainability**

- limits to growth
- biophysical limits
- resource cap dialogues
- ecological footprint / overshoot
- is efficiency sufficient? and rebound effect debate

**CONVERGE project:**
**STRONG and JUST sustainability**

- contraction and convergence (Meyer, 2000)
- shrink and share (Kitzes et al., 2008)
- environmental space (Bührs, 2008)
- prosperity without growth (Jackson, 2009, 2011)
- beyond growth (Atkisson, 2012)
- degrowth (Latouche, 2011)
- sustainability and equity (UNDP, 2011)

**JUST (social) sustainability**

- environmental justice
- just sustainability
- rights of future generations
- environmental debt
- human needs satisfaction
- happiness and well-being

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### What is sustainability in this framework?

▸ **'Prosperity without growth' definition:**
  *(in agreement with 'Shrink and Share', 'Environmental space', and 'Beyond Growth')*
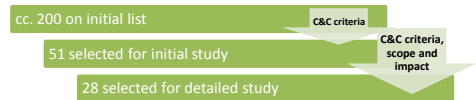
  *„The vision of sustainable development in terms of a strong, healthy and just society able to flourish within the ecological limits of a finite planet…"*

▸ Recent (2011) **Human Development report** by UNDP:
  Sustainability **AND** Equity

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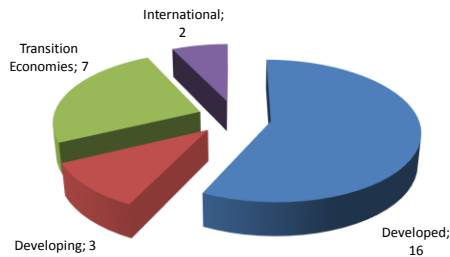### GreenDependent's work in CONVERGE: initiatives illustrating Contraction and Convergence

▸ Aim:
  ✓ Identify and analyze initiatives illustrating contraction and convergence from around the world, and
  ✓ Through them show how contraction and convergence works in practice (if at all)
▸ The aim was not to assemble a representative database of initiatives but to illustrate variety:
  ✓ Developed and developing
  ✓ Top-down and bottom-up
  ✓ Themes (carbon specific, faith based, agriculture, corporate, etc.)
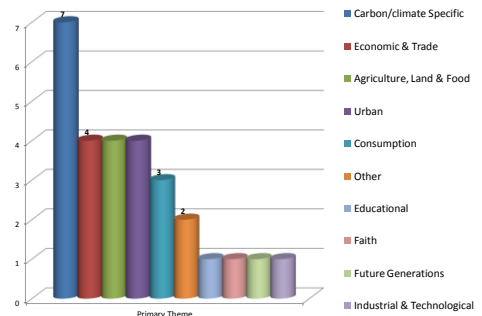▸ Number of initiatives studied:

| cc. 200 on initial list | C&C criteria |
| 51 selected for initial study | C&C criteria, scope and impact |
| 28 selected for detailed study | |

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### Overview of shortlisted initiatives: regions



International; 2
Transition Economies; 7
Developing; 3
Developed; 16

•Initiatives are from more than 10 countries
•International: ZERI, Voluntary Simplicity

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### Overview of shortlisted initiatives: theme



■ Carbon/climate Specific
■ Economic & Trade
■ Agriculture, Land & Food
■ Urban
■ Consumption
■ Other
■ Educational
■ Faith
■ Future Generations
■ Industrial & Technological

Primary Theme

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### Overview of shortlisted initiatives: governance type

3

14

11
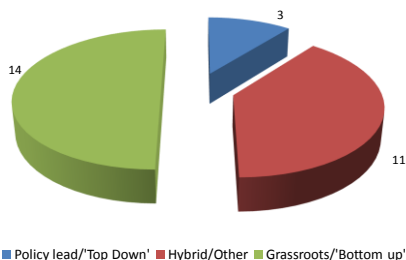
■ Policy lead/'Top Down'  ■ Hybrid/Other  ■ Grassroots/'Bottom up'

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### GreenDependent's Research

▸ Studying the initiatives from a variety of perspectives

   ▸ Themes/governance/beneficiaries and participants/scale/barriers/evolution, etc.

▸ Most importantly: contraction and convergence aspects

   ▸ An index was developed to evaluate the 'contraction' and 'convergence' elements of our shortlisted initiatives (based partly on Agyeman's "Just Sustainability Index").

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### Evaluating Contraction / Limits

▸ Contraction/Limits:

   ✓ **-1**: mention of limits but no attempt/action to reduce

   ✓ **0**: no mention and recognition of limits

   ✓ **1**: implicit recognition of limits

   ✓ **2**: explicit recognition of limits

   ✓ **3**: explicit recognition of limits + reduction targets

   ✓ **4**: explicit recognition of limits + reduction targets based on available (scientific) data

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### Evaluating Convergence / Equity

▸ Convergence / Equity

   ✓ -1: mention of equity/justice but no indication of activities

   ✓ 0: no mention

   ✓ 1: Implicit. No mention of equity/justice but initiative obviously works towards reaching them.

   ✓ 2: No mention of equity/justice in core mission statement. Limited mention elsewhere + activities.

   ✓ 3: Equity or justice mentioned and reference given to *either* intergenerational *or* intragenerational equity in core mission statement + activities.

   ✓ 4: Core mission statement relates to *both* intra- and intergenerational equity and justice + activities.

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## Example 1: Frank Water (UK)
### * corporate/non-profit *

▸ What is it about?
  - ✓ UK based charity (2005)
  - ✓ Focuses on sale of 'ethical' bottled water/water related products in the UK
  - ✓ profits go to fund new clean water facilities in villages in India
  - ✓ Aware of environmental sustainability issues and phasing out sales of bottled water in favour of free-fill scheme

▸ C&C elements

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**Frank Water**

Convergence scale / Contraction scale
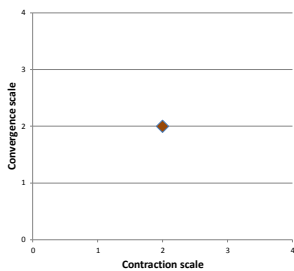
## Example 2: Covenant of Mayors (I, HI)
### * policy *

▸ What is it about?
  - ✓ European Commission Policy initiative
  - ✓ Each signatory city makes a voluntary commitment to reduce its $CO_2$ emissions beyond the target of 20% by 2020.
  - ✓ Requires that cities submit a Sus. Energy Action Plan
  - ✓ Measures typically involve local transport, public and private buildings, renewable energy sources and innovative technologies

▸ C&C elements

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**CoM Genoa and Reykjavík**

Convergence scale / Contraction scale
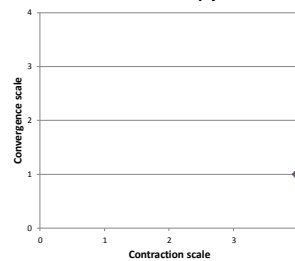
## Example 3: Fownhope CRAG (UK)
### * community *

▸ What is it about?
  - ✓ Carbon reduction group set up in 2007 – joining the network of CRAGs
  - ✓ Annual household carbon footprint
  - ✓ Community actions (awareness raising, renewables)
  - ✓ Community cooperative: energy generation from local biomass

▸ C&C elements
  - ✓ Contraction: carbon reduction targets, annual review
  - ✓ Convergence: link with Gambian community (jathropa project)

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**Fownhope CRAG**

Convergence scale / Contraction scale
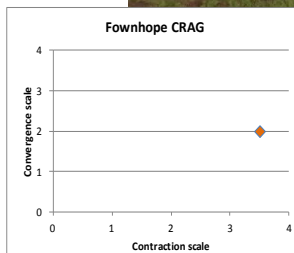
## More examples: the poster session

▸ 10 initiatives presented:
  - ✓ policy, community, faith-based, …
  - ✓ mainly from HU but also from abroad
▸ We're lucky to have representatives among us
  - ✓ They can present their work
  - ✓ You can ask questions
▸ And…: we'd be honoured to have your feedback (see sheet)
  - ✓ On 3 initiatives of your choice
  - ✓ From 2 points of views (strengthening / policy)
  - ✓ Either in ENG or HU
  - ✓ If you provide your name, we'll be sure to mention you!

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