



The Anthropocene Transition Network Inc.

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The Anthropocene Transition Network Inc. (ATN) is an Australian-based intellectual and philosophical(?) initiative focused on the defining challenge of the 21st century: how humanity responds to the Anthropocene era. Where human activity has become a planetary force capable of destabilizing Earth's life-support systems.

Originally emerging from the Anthropocene Transitions Program at the University of Technology Sydney (UTS), the network brings together thinkers, writers, activists, educators, designers and community practitioners interested in systemic social transformation. ATN is not simply concerned with climate change in isolation, but with deeper cultural, economic and political systems driving ecological breakdown.

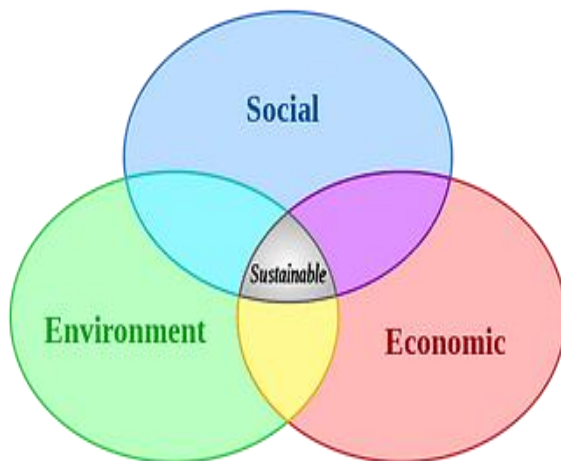
Its work explores how societies might navigate what it calls the "Anthropocene Transition" a turbulent period marked by ecological disruption, institutional instability, social fragmentation and the need for profound cultural renewal.

One of the more distinctive aspects of ATN's philosophy is its critique of mainstream sustainability discourse. While acknowledging the value of sustainability initiatives, the organisation argues that many current approaches remain trapped within the same economic and cultural paradigms that created the crisis in the first place.

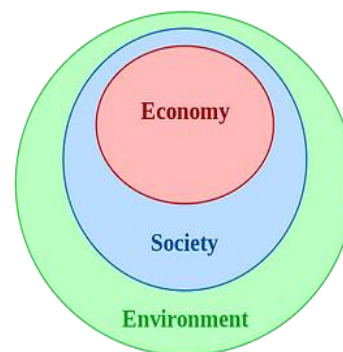
ATN questions whether incremental reforms alone are capable of responding to planetary-scale disruption. The organisation argues that concepts such as endless economic growth, extractive development and human dominance over nature are fundamentally incompatible with a stable Earth system.

Instead, the network advocates for a shift toward what it describes as "eco-mutuality", a mutually enhancing relationship between humans, Earth and its living creatures.

This framing moves beyond a human-centred view of environmental management and positions humanity as one interconnected part of a larger living system.



Weak sustainability



Strong sustainability

Beyond Sustainability

A recurring theme throughout ATN's work is the idea that periods of collapse and disruption can also create opportunities for renewal. Drawing on ecological theory and systems thinking, the organisation points to adaptive cycles observed in nature, where complex systems move through phases of growth, rigidity, breakdown and regeneration. ATN applies this thinking to human civilisation, arguing that modern industrial systems may now be reaching a point of systemic instability.

Rather than viewing collapse solely as something to avoid, the network explores how communities might prepare for "creative renewal" in the aftermath of breakdown, an idea influenced by Canadian political scientist Thomas Homer-Dixon and his concept of "catagenesis".

This perspective shapes much of ATN's emphasis on resilience, regenerative culture, localism, collaboration and adaptive social learning.

Areas of Work

ATN's publications and projects span a wide range of interconnected topics, including:

- ecological civilisation
- regenerative design
- systems thinking
- commons-based economies
- Earth-centred governance
- community resilience
- post-growth economics
- cultural transformation
- social learning networks
- localisation and distributed systems
- democratic renewal
- ethics in the Anthropocene

The network frequently draws connections between environmental crises and broader social issues such as political polarisation, inequality, institutional failure, resource conflicts and mental health pressures.

A core argument underpinning the organisation's work is that the Anthropocene is ultimately "a crisis of culture" as much as it is an ecological crisis.

Learning to Think Like a Planet

One of the organisation's most substantial discussion papers is *Learning to Think Like a Planet* by Kenneth McLeod. The paper argues that humanity must fundamentally rethink its place within the Earth system and adopt more holistic, transdisciplinary approaches to understanding complex global challenges.

The paper describes the Anthropocene as a historical turning point in which human systems and planetary systems have become inseparably intertwined. It critiques reductionist thinking and argues for a broader worldview capable of understanding interconnected ecological, economic and cultural processes.

McLeod writes that current political and institutional systems are increasingly "maladapted" to dealing with long-term planetary instability and argues that genuine transformation will require new forms of governance, economics and collective imagination.

The paper also introduces concepts central to the ATN worldview, including:

- eco-social resilience
- regenerative transitions
- commons-based collaboration

- distributed local systems
- adaptive social learning
- “cathedral thinking” — acting now for generations yet to come

The overall message is not one of technological optimism or apocalyptic fatalism, but rather a call for deep cultural adaptation and long-term collective responsibility.

Current Focus and Projects

ATN primarily operates as a knowledge-sharing and dialogue platform.

Current activities include:

- publishing essays, discussion papers and commentary
- promoting systems-thinking approaches to ecological transition
- fostering dialogue between academics, practitioners and communities
- highlighting regenerative and commons-based initiatives
- supporting conversations around post-growth and Earth-centred futures
- curating resources related to the Anthropocene Transition

The organisation’s website contains an archive of articles, papers and reflections from contributors working across environmental humanities, systems theory, philosophy, ecology and social transformation.

ATN also engages with emerging ideas around regenerative economies, localisation, cooperative governance and community resilience in response to increasing ecological and geopolitical instability.

A Different Kind of Environmental Conversation

Unlike many organisations that focus primarily on policy advocacy or conservation campaigns, ATN positions itself more as a cultural and intellectual transition project. Its work attempts to address deeper questions, including:

- What does it mean to be human in the Anthropocene?
- How should societies organise themselves within planetary boundaries?
- Can industrial civilisation transform itself without major systemic breakdown?
- What values and stories will shape the next phase of human culture?

This broader philosophical approach gives the network a distinctive voice within Australian environmental and systems-thinking circles.

Free Newsletter and Resources

ATN offers free access to essays, discussion papers and updates through its website, with visitors able to subscribe to newsletters and follow ongoing publications and events.

Further information and publications are available via: [Anthropocene Transition Network Inc.](https://www.anthropocenetransitionnetwork.com)
