CONCLUSION: THE MĀNOA MASHUP METHOD

1. Helps us ‘use the future’ and
2. it facilitates transdisciplinary futures literacy (novelty & complexity)
3. Enables creative interactive engagement about radically different futures from radically different perspectives.
4. Generates outputs that embody systemic change and complex systems futures.
5. Is a process and tool with which to generate vivid, bold, hopeful stories to help navigate the Anthropocene challenges.
The Anthropocene: A new geological epoch where human activity is a dominant force shaping ecosystems at global scales

CHALLENGES OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

Growing evidence that current trajectory unsustainable

- Many ecosystem services are degrading or insufficient for projected future demand e.g. climate regulation, fresh water
- Massive inequalities: wealthiest 20% account for 77% of private consumption; poorest 20% account for 1.5% of private consumption

THESE CHALLENGES HAVE LED TO MANY DYSTOPIAN STORIES OF THE FUTURE
SEEDS OF GOOD ANTHROPOCENES INITIATIVE

Explore and develop narratives around what different good Anthropocenes might be like
* Specifically from a southern African perspective

Seeds = way of thinking/doing, an institution or technology; exists at the margins

Linked to a global initiative to scope positive & possible futures
* Regional, place-based workshops
* Online campaign (www.goodanthropocenes.net)

UNDERLYING PREMISE

Meeting the “Anthropocene Challenge” may require a change like the shift from Medieval to Industrial times

Fundamental shift in underlying worldviews, assumptions and values that shape individual choices and societies
VISIONS OF A GOOD ANTHROPOCENE WORKSHOP

NORMATIVE SCENARIOS THAT HAVE TO TRANSCEND AND OVERCOME ‘AMBIENT’ / GENERIC FUTURES

- 23 participants from southern Africa made up of an equal mix of scientists, artists, change-agents and social/policy people, split into 4 groups with a mix of group work and plenary sessions.
- Each group builds a scenario of the Good Anthropocene starting from southern African seeds, resulting in 4 scenarios as final output.
- Each group starts off with, and works with different seeds.
- Participants work in the same groups throughout the 3 days.

(INNOVATIVE) METHOD

- Adapted the Mānoa scenario building method and combined it with the Three Horizons framework.
- Mānoa underlying rationale is based on working with existing trends, or weak signals, and to extrapolate their effects into the future. It is a method that maximizes difference from the present.
- Suitable for creativity, innovation and transformational thinking.
- Added a session where people introduced themselves, got their assumptions out in the open, emphasized the value of asking questions, being accepting, being open, and expanding dialogues rather than closing them down.
FUTURES WHEELS

VERGE impact

Mature state

Seed

What does
this mean?

Implication?

2nd order implication

3rd order implication

2nd order implication

3rd order implication

VERGE impact

2nd order implication

3rd order implication

3rd order implication

2nd order implication

What does
this mean?

Implication?
• 2nd Horizon; an intermediate space in which the first and third horizons collide. This is a space of transition which is typically unstable and messy.

• It is characterised by clashes of values in which competing alternative paths to the future are proposed by actors. How to navigate this is a critical issue.
COMMON THEMES

Decentralization & strong citizenry

Connectedness & empathy

Post-consumerism

Eco-centric values
RISKS

Technology

Inward-facing communities

Reinforcing existing inequalities

Avoiding collapse

OUTCOMES

1. Interactive engagement about radically different futures from radically different perspectives.
2. Outputs that embody systemic change, transformation and complex systems futures.
3. A tool with which to generate vivid, bold, hopeful stories to help navigate the Anthropocene challenges.
4. Form of sensing & meaning-making (not modelling the future)
5. Learning how to anticipate different futures
6. Creating spaces for co-learning and cross-sector collaboration
7. Fostering a network of change agents
8. Learning to find out what novelty means and what underlying values are driving the need to innovate
KEY LEARNINGS

1. The need to capitalise on diversity to push boundaries
2. The importance of the imagination for transformative thinking and finally
3. The importance of creating a space that enables a participant to engage with complexity.

OTHER APPLICATIONS

1. Repeating process and methods using European ‘seeds’
2. Ditto, but with ‘seeds’ (bright spots) of good governance in Africa
3. ???

QUESTIONS / DISCUSSION

Ex Africa semper aliquid novi

Find the workshop report at www.goodanthropocenes.net