

Moving beyond methods in support of transformative change

Panel session at the event [Pathways to sustainability: knowledge, politics and power](#)

8 December 2021 at 13.00-15.00 UTC

Speakers: Marina Apgar, Rose Cairns, Injairu Kulundu, David Manuel-Navarrete, Andy Stirling

In this session we engage with the current wave of embracing transdisciplinary and action-oriented approaches to sustainability, by asking whether sustainability research and in particular transformations research, requires a radical re-conceptualisation of methods? How might we shift away from methods as ordering, extracting, replicating and validating devices of the academy?

We reflect on 10+ years of thinking and practice around methods as vehicles for 'opening up' and 'broadening out' pathways to sustainability, including experiences and learning of the Pathways Network in using Transformations Labs.

Two strands of facilitated conversations as part of the [2021 STEPS Methods year](#) have centred experiential knowledge about 'methods as praxis' through:

- (i) facilitated virtual conversations (conversatorios in Spanish) of the Umbela-UNAM team in Mexico exploring different obstacles and approaches to transformations towards sustainability that originate from *polycultures* of knowledges and ways of knowing; and
- (ii) a virtual event series by ARIN-ACTS in Kenya exploring different aspects of decolonising methods in Africa, as how methods are applied to engage, challenge and shift power and what decoloniality of methods means to different actors and the ways in which funding flows promote or undermine decoloniality of methods.

An interactive panel will consider questions such as:

- What agency do we have to change the ways in which we think about methods?
- How might we recognise methods as relational and personal?
- How can we engage with mess and open-endedness in the research process?

Speakers

Co-chairs: **Marina Apgar & Rose Cairns**

Panel:

- [Injairu Kulundu](#) is a partner in the *Not Yet Uhuru! Collective* and Post Doctorate researcher at the Environmental Learning Research Centre at Rhodes University. She is currently collaborating with the Transforming Education for Sustainable Futures Research Network. She is a decolonial scholar, writer, musician and trickster practitioner that is learning how to alchemise binary based logics towards a paradigm of non- duality. She is interested in fugitive ways of re-imagining and re-sourcing the ambit and lived practice of decolonial love and a paradigm of peace.
- [David Manuel-Navarrete](#) (Associate Professor, School of Sustainability, College of Global Futures, Arizona State University) has researched the (un-)sustainability of agroforestry systems, coastal areas, agriculture frontiers, tourism enclaves, megacities, and other social-ecological and technological systems across Latin America. His current focus is on the unsustainability of the colonial onto-epistemologies promoted by Euro-centric academia. He is inspired by the Ecuadorian Amazon and its indigenous biocultures to advance horizontal ways of co-producing knowledge and action. He seeks collaborations that generate income locally, while fostering the

thriving of all rainforest dwellers. I also seek coalitions to challenge the primacy of Euro-centric techno-scientific materialism. Overall, my action-research promotes decolonization, consciousness-based transformations, and the bottom-up emergence of eco-centric and kin-centric economies towards global sustainability.

- [Andy Stirling](#), Co-director, STEPS Centre, and Professor of Technology Policy at the Science Policy Research Unit (SPRU), University of Sussex.