

Healthier, Happier Within Our Limits

Rebecca Burgess

Remember when the tide
turned?



Once undue monetary influence from a small sliver of the population was overridden; we were finally able to implement our long-held vision of what we knew was desperately overdue.

The extreme monetary accumulators were curbed through state and national tax policies and global cooperation between governments that put friction into international banking and tax havens.

Through the courts, municipalities, states and countries won a suite of legal battles that distributed oil company asset values and any remaining profits into resilient retrofits of our neighborhoods, with a focus on decentralized renewable energy. The costs of training and investing in our youth and many who sought livelihood transitions were fully covered, this yielded the largest mass mobilization of nature-based solutions we'd ever seen.



The Inflection Points

Our actions mitigated the heat, fire, floods and buffered us against the erratic temperatures we'd forced the planet into. By 2045, we had removed enough of the legacy load of carbon from the atmosphere that we were well on our way to fully restoring Holocene level temperatures, while simultaneously providing high road wages for our communities.

We disabled health insurance from investing our premiums in Wall Street, agricultural land holdings, real estate acquisitions, and private equity. It became abundantly evident the profit motive does not apply to this sector, and we established health care as a human right.

This combination of sharp political actions funded the implementation that allowed us to re-envision health as 'our context' and we understood it as an outcome of the society we had built. This shaped how we developed emissions free public transportation, a swath of agri-hood and greenbelt laden housing, short distance circular supply networks for food, clothing and medicine—that grew economic opportunities for all with a particularly strong uplift for rural communities.

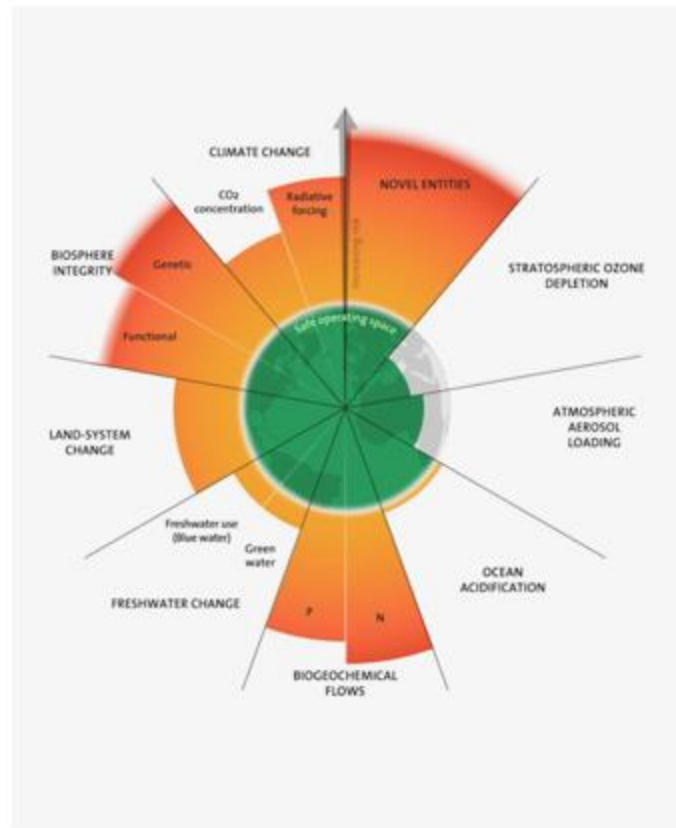


Politicians were given the space to restore their role as public servants; they had more time to listen to us all through our ability to communicate through tools once used and known as ‘social media’ which had been refashioned and focused on becoming tools to strengthen our civic engagement.

The Algorithms programmed to addict us, bomb us, hack and surveil us were redirected solely to advance medicine; robotic activity was limited to cleaning up the fossil carbon era—it did the dirtiest and hardest work, and left us to think for ourselves, caretake for those in need, tend to our families, the land, and create art.

By 2050, our decades of work to bring ourselves into a safe operating zone within the nine planetary boundaries created profound improvements in our mental and physical health. By addressing the overshoot in novel entity pollution, and biogeochemical flows we removed synthetic toxicity from our oceans, soils, air and fresh water, we cleaned up our food, fiber and material culture systems—we saw immediate precipitous reductions in chronic health conditions, and improvements in our children’s cognition, and significant increases in biodiversity- starting with surges in pollinators and bird populations. To bring our ‘Biosphere Integrity’ into balance we focused our time on implementing large scale forest, grassland, wetland and cropland restoration projects.

Each Life
Support System
in Overshoot
was
systematically
and
successfully
addressed and
brought into
safe operating
status



Exports from our farmland faced the laws of thermodynamics, we learned to stop exporting our water in the form of raw commodities.

California's consumption was largely internalized, and we shifted 90% of our dependency to circular placed based economies; this effort generated monumental shifts in watershed, marine ecosystem health throughout the Americas, Asia and the African continent where virgin materials had long been extracted from.

These actions reconnected us to the seasonal rhythms, tending, harvest, processing and use. With more of us engaged in land and water-based work within our regions, we re-gained common ground; what once polarized us around how to enhance, steward and restore was now practically understood with the nuance it always deserved.

Farmers, birds, and aquatic species throughout California are now thriving; the soils and hydrologic system has been restored.

By learning how to live within natural law, we redefined wealth. Instead of humanity and the species we share this planet with being forced through the eye of the evolutionary needle; we walked through an open door together.

AUTHOR BIO

Rebecca Burgess is the Founder and Executive Director, [Fibershed](#), and Chair of the Board for [Carbon Cycle Institute](#). From building regional networks of farmers and designers to driving investment into the restoration of fiber, natural dye, food, and material culture producing landscapes, Rebecca Burgess has been working to re-build climate beneficial economic opportunities from field to factory.