

“

Ashoka has launched one key environmental innovation after another worldwide...”

FRED KRUPP

Executive Director, Environmental Defense Fund

[Ashoka] Fellows have saved millions of acres of rainforest.”

FORBES

[Ashoka’s vision] represents a radical departure from a world in which, for millennia, elites have been telling everyone else what to do.”

THE NEW YORK TIMES

Ashoka has launched hundreds of the world’s most historically powerful environmental entrepreneurs. It also multiplies their impacts by enabling them to imagine and act together—and with great social entrepreneurs in every other field. What an amazing contribution to our work for a healthy planet!”

DAPHNE WYSHAM

CEO, Methane Action

A SPECIAL POWER FOR CLIMATE

IN TODAY’S EVERYTHING CHANGING REALITY,

Every class of decision-making needs constant redesign. Survival requires each redesign to maximize environmental good. This requires social entrepreneurs. And the special power of their working together through Ashoka.

LOGGERS
Forest Friends

3 TRILLION CHEESEBURGERS
Jobs, Healthy Oceans


MARKET COMPETITION
Forest Ally

FIXING FIRES
Goats



ASHOKA: EVERYONE A CHANGEMAKER
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A helicopter is shown in flight, moving from the upper left towards the center. It is dropping a red seed pod, which is suspended by a thin line. The background is a soft, hazy sky. In the lower portion of the image, there is a dense forest of evergreen trees, rendered in a painterly, slightly blurred style with various shades of green and blue.

A hugely important but easy action you can take to give our planet a chance is to help your friends and the influencers you know see the solutions. The big, pattern-changing solutions that actually work.


For the planet and humanity to survive, humans must shift from our ancient exploitation mindset to a new architecture of humanity/nature mutuality where every decision seeks environmental gain. This requires many pattern changes.

Where will you find these solutions? Look first to the world's leading social/ climate entrepreneurs. They have the same entrepreneurial power to create new systems and sectors as the Carnegies of business. However, they are driven from deep within to serve the good of all -- and therefore so is their work. (Seeing and caring about all the factors is a great competitive advantage.) With no need to capture a market, they typically work through broad, decentralized and -- as a result -- open, society-wide and therefore hugely powerful movements.

This paper introduces you to four of the many Ashoka Fellows who are entrepreuring climate solutions the world needs. You will enjoy and probably want to help spread their ideas. You'll also appreciate their values, their creativity, and their amazing ability to move the world.

You will also sense something else. Their ideas are very different. And yet they fit together.

Here you are sensing Ashoka's special power at work. The members of the Ashoka community, which includes most of the world's leading social entrepreneurs, trust one another. We are all defined by the same purpose: To ensure that every human has the power to give, which means, in today's everything-changing world, being a changemaker. We therefore collaborate easily within and across fields and at all levels. And in myriad teams of teams combinations. Moreover, our ability to entrepreneur together is growing fast. **Join us!**

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Bill". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail on the letter "l".

Bill Drayton

Ashoka: *Everyone a Changemaker*



LOGGERS: Forest Friends



Ashoka Fellow
Silverius (Onte) Unggul

After decades of massive deforestation, symbolized by Singapore and Malaysia being engulfed for weeks on end in smoke clouds, an Ashoka Fellow from Indonesia's Sulawesi island has so aligned the interests of poor loggers and the forest that both now have futures.

Despite decades of effort and many different advocacy and awareness campaigns, deforestation in Indonesia has accelerated. A central cause of this failure is that many illegal loggers simply don't have an alternative way to make a living.

To truly understand the problem, Ashoka Fellow **Silverius (Onte) Unggul** went undercover in an illegal logging community, sleeping by the riverbanks with the workers in order to convince them to join the effort to preserve the forests. Onte soon realized that he would only succeed if he had profound empathy for the loggers' needs: Loggers are not purposely destroying forests; they are simply desperate to support their families.



Photo by CIFOR

ORANGUTANS NEED ONTE TO SUCCEED

“On the island of Sumatra...we watched in silence as the two orangutans, a mother and her child, prepared themselves for an encroaching rainstorm...The mother... led her child toward the canopy and into a nest she had built earlier that day.

Then, collecting vines and leaves, she wove an umbrella out of the foliage and held it devotedly over her daughter....

[Ashoka Fellow] **Panut Hadisiswoyo**...told me that his goal is to give orangutans on Sumatra a place to flourish. He also hopes that, through community development, he can instill pride and awareness about the animals in rural communities — to help create a group of grass-roots orangutan guardians.”

The New York Times



“Unggul...helped the [two men] turn this unlikely corner of the sprawling archipelago into a small ecological triumph with epic possibilities.”

CONDÉ NAST



“[Onte’s organization] is an Indonesian association of NGO activists, business practitioners, academics, media affiliates, and leaders of indigenous peoples, fishers, and farmers. Together they are working toward sustainability, sovereignty, and integrity.”

skoll

MAKING LOGGERS ALLIES

Where others gave up, Onte saw an opportunity. Through data-driven community forestry cooperatives in 27 of the country’s 34 provinces, Onte changed the incentives – turning illegal loggers into champions of sustainable forestry.

Onte set out to demonstrate that it was possible to make a living and protect nature. Leveraging the Forest Stewardship Council’s sustainable forestry certification, he and his team created the first building blocks of Indonesia’s sustainable forestry industry. They convinced illegal loggers in heavily forested regions to pool their interests and build sustainable forestry cooperatives. Soon they realized that their individual cooperatives would have much more power if they banded together. Onte calls this coming together “social conglomeration.” Somewhat akin to the “new mutualism” coming up in the West, it will likely prove an attractive model for communities across Indonesia, a culture that values collaboration.

IMPACT BREAKOUT

Indonesia’s government recently announced that it would give out permits for others to manage state-owned lands for the first time. Soon Onte’s community logging cooperatives will be managing 59,400 hectares of these sensitive forest land ecosystems—a precedent-setting and magnetic model that secures good livelihoods to struggling families and shifts the balance of power in favor of forest habitat preservation.

The business world has noticed that collectivism can solve pressing environmental problems while supporting livelihoods. One indicator that Onte’s approach is gaining speed is that he was recently appointed by Indonesia’s Chamber of Commerce as its Chair for Environment and Forestry. This is the first time in the history of the Chamber that a social entrepreneur has occupied this post. He also represented Indonesia at the recent COP26 Conference in Glasgow, gaining an international platform to continue advocating for empathy-based solutions to climate change.



Healthy Oceans, Jobs, and Three Trillion Cheeseburgers



Ashoka Fellow
Bren Smith

Like Onte, Ashoka Fellow **Bren Smith's** life purpose is to change how humans deal with giant ecosystems. Indeed, the biggest: the oceans. His goal is also to shift from pillaging to collaboration.

His regenerative free farming techniques dramatically change what is produced, how it is grown, the economics, and everyone's mindsets. And it works.

PBS recently highlighted Bren in their admired NewsHour segment "Brief but Spectacular." In it they interview key innovators across sectors on their new ideas and impact.



A BRIEF BUT SPECTACULAR! TAKE ON MAKING A LIVING PLANET

Aired on November 9, 2021

Bren Smith has spent his life on the water. After seeing firsthand the harsh effects of commercial fishing on the climate, he wanted to find a more environmentally friendly way to do what he loved. In 2013, he founded the non-profit GreenWave to teach regenerative ocean farming techniques to fishermen across the world.

Bren Smith, Executive Director and Co-Founder, GreenWave: "You know, I grew up in a little town in Newfoundland, Canada, the most eastern point of all North America. And all I ever wanted to be was a fisherman. Those were my heroes. So, at age 14, I dropped out of high school and headed out to sea. This was the late '80s on the Bering Sea, and it was the height of industrialized fishing. We were tearing up entire ecosystems with our trawls. Most of the fish I was catching was going to McDonald's. I was right at that peak of one of the most unsustainable forms of food production on the planet, producing some of the most unhealthy food on the planet.

And that's where I began to realize, if I'm going to make a living on a living planet, if I'm going to die on my boat one day, we need to change our relationship to the ocean.

Regenerative ocean farming has been around for centuries. The first regenerative ocean farmers were indigenous folks in the Pacific Northwest building clam walls. But I think the time has come because the climate economy and the challenge of climate change is demanding that we change the plate, right, that we shift things around. And instead of being like, oh, what do we want to eat, it needs to shift to, what can we grow? What can the Earth provide at this moment? And the oceans are one of the key answers to that. We really need to trade knowledge in order to build this, because growing food underwater is really hard. I can't see the crops I grow. I can't swim. And my soil turns over 1,000 times a day.

The way we're going to counter that is by thousands of farmers working together, collaborating together around the country and around the world.

Regenerative ocean farming is using Mother Nature's technologies to bring life back to the ocean and grow food.

We're growing things that can't swim away, and you don't have to feed. So, that means you don't need pens. You don't need to use antibiotics and pesticides and fish feed to grow these





“Ocean farming isn’t just about food. It’s about transforming an entire workforce, transforming fishers into restorative ocean farmers. My job has never been to save the seas; it’s to figure out how the seas can save us.”

BREN SMITH, GRIST MAGAZINE

things. You’re just allowing your shellfish and seaweed to soak up what’s in the water, soak up carbon, sunlight, things like that, in order to grow, which makes it zero-input food, making it **hands down the most sustainable form of food production on the planet.** When you think of the farm, think of an underwater garden, where you have a rope scaffolding system below the surface held down by anchors. And from there, we can grow all our different crops. We can grow seaweed vertically downwards, next to mussel socks, oyster cages in the bottom, and clams down in the mud. And it’s all below the surface, right? You come out to the farm and you just see some buoys. And that’s so important.

Our oceans are these beautiful, pristine places. And we need to keep them that way. There’s a lot of ocean out there, and if you were to take less than 5 percent of U.S. waters and farm with regenerative ocean farming, according to the World Bank, you would create

the protein equivalent of three trillion cheeseburgers and 50 million jobs.

If you want to rebuild the middle class, if you want to address the harms of globalization, bring production home, grow good local food, our waterways are an incredible way to do it. And I think that’s what brings so many people to this space, but also gets me sort of excited when I wake up at 4:00 every morning.

I can be part of the puzzle of addressing the biggest crisis we have ever faced as humanity. My name is Bren Smith, and this is my “Brief But Spectacular” take on making a living on a living planet.”

Photo by julian mora on Unsplash



MARKET COMPETITION: Forest Friend



Ashoka Fellow
Nicole Rycroft

One of the forest’s most powerful friends is the informed and organized consumer. Ashoka Fellow **Nicole Rycroft** is bringing this power to bear through the competitive dynamics of different parts of the economy.

One of her earliest successes—and a most powerful modeling of her approach—was persuading the creator of the Harry Potter books to print only on Forest Friendly paper, thus preserving 40,000 trees.

She and her organization have since extended her influence to many other sectors, including textiles. Here's how she described the process a year ago:

“There are 150 million trees that disappear into rayon and viscose fabrics every year. Much of that comes from high carbon, high biodiversity value forests – some of the most ancient and endangered ecosystems on the planet. That is slated to double within the next eight to ten years. In Canopy’s work with the clothing sector, CanopyStyle, we now have 320 brands formally on board. They represent about \$580 billion



in annual revenue. It’s brands like Amazon, Target, H&M, Zara, Levi’s, and then luxury designers like Gucci and Stella McCartney, and everything in between.”

NICOLE RYCROFT
Forbes

Canopy helps producers that have innovated effective ways to use recycled fabrics and agricultural residues like straw gain market share. And, by this spur, she presses for the use of these materials with others. **The result is a global alliance of companies imagining and spreading new forest friendly purchasing practices.**

Continuing her work to shift business practices toward sustainability, in 2020 Nicole launched a drive to transform the giant packaging supply chain. She brought 104 brands with about \$71 billion in revenues together to press for new, sustainable packaging solutions across the economy.

So far, her work has improved the purchasing practices of more than 750 major companies worldwide, and her reach is growing rapidly. Nicole’s approach demonstrates that market competition can become nature’s friend.



FIXING FIRES:

Goats



Ashoka Fellow
Oriol Vilalta

In the summer of 2021, wildfires raged across the planet, destroying homes and ecosystems—the result of and contributing to climate change.

Ashoka Fellow **Oriol Vilalta** has built a global community that generates and implements new ways of both preventing and better managing fires. The most effective idea so far: goats.

As a child, Oriol witnessed homes and forests burn to ashes during the 1994 Berguedá fire – the first major fire in Catalonia, Spain. Deeply affected, he enlisted as a volunteer firefighter as soon as he could.

After the loss of a fellow firefighter and friend, Oriol launched the Pau Costa Foundation (PCF) (named for his friend). It is powerful because it is a global collaboration of changemakers focused on fires. Fires of all types and stages. Fires everywhere. Its members bring listening, expertise, experience, and ideas. They include researchers, engineers, fire fighters, and civilians.

The network's information and ideas are available publicly—which enables anyone to join and contribute.

Oriol works hard to encourage interchange and to build the network. Instead of acting alone, he encourages active members to become “Ambassadors.”

Because face-to-face is important, PCF has connected experts in thirty countries with over 2,500 specialists

through over 500 conferences, exchanges, and TV programs.

The more the network comes alive, the more ideas it conceives, refines, expands, and then continues to adapt. As a result, the ideas save lives, protect nature, and change how everyone thinks. In fact, PCF is changing how fires are perceived and addressed around the world.

“More than a firefighter, Oriol has become a translator of the language in which fires are expressed and has woven a huge network of knowledge around his dictionary.”

EL PAIS SEMANAL

PCF members have co-created over 50 innovations that reduce fire risks. The most successful program is Rebaños de Fuego, or “Fire Flocks,” which incentivizes ranchers to graze their sheep and goats in forest



areas vulnerable to fire. **By eating flammable dry underbrush, these animal “firefighters” create natural firewalls.** This approach is sustainable, plus it financially supports ranchers. A great added benefit: They can market their meats and cheeses to conscious consumers with a “Fire Flocks” label. **Fire Flocks has expanded into the U.K. and parts of California.**

When seconds count, a cross-border fire can be fatal – yet there are few universal standards for this situation.

For example, if a wildfire moves from Portugal to Spain, firefighters don't have a shared protocol to collaborate; not even fire truck hoses are compatible. In response, PCF is creating standard operation plans for neighboring regions to collaborate quickly.

Oriol also influences fire prevention policy at the local and international level. For example, the Tuscan and Irish governments have implemented PCF's fire prevention methods.



“The Pau Costa Foundation is among [the]...strongest promoters of fire prevention solutions.”

BLOOMBERG