

Open Letter to IFLA

Climate Change Action Plan Model

Craig Pocock

Over the last few months I have given the idea of creating an IFLA Climate Change charter a lot of thought. I reviewed the UIA Declaration on Sustainability and Cultural Diversity and found it word heavy, very open ended and unfocused, creating an unclear map on how to proceed.

In many ways, the UIA Declaration's open ended approach makes sense. Because of the complexity of the issues surrounding Climate Change and sustainability, it is hard to approach a charter at an "all encompassing" level without it becoming open ended and word heavy.

A tight, direct and explicit written charter that gives a clear road map of actions might potentially limit new approaches to Climate Change over time. So while there is a value to vagueness, it does not help individuals on the ground. For them the issue of Climate Change gets pushed to the side again.

I started writing a draft IFLA charter but it became clear to me that the first step should be to create a Climate Change action plan.

This needed to be detailed enough to start giving direction, but open enough to allow regional development depending on what core Climate Change issues were most significant to each region. I came to the conclusion that the action plan had to be visually based so that the complexity of ideas could be understood in relation to each other, and not a vertically word heavy document.

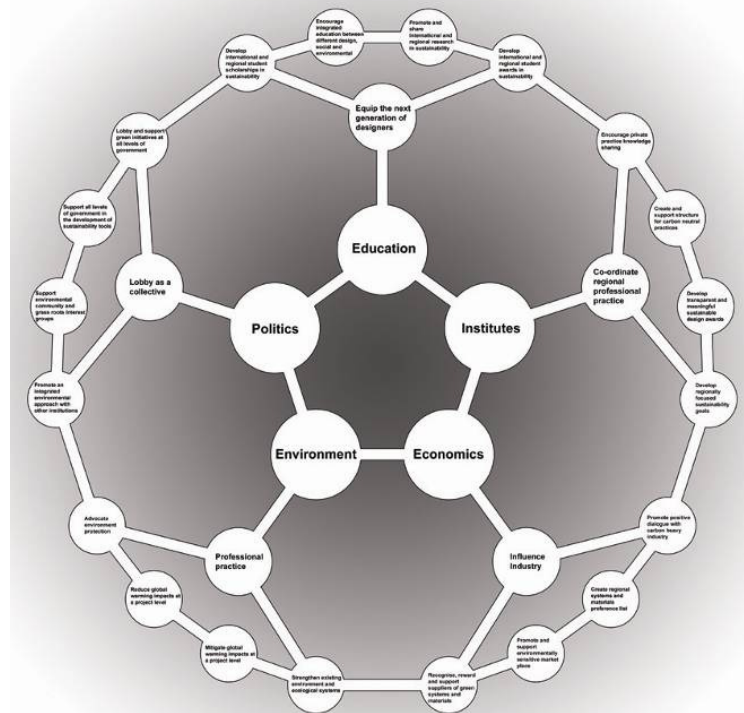
I started working on flow diagrams I but kept coming back to a more circular diagram that tended

with my blurry and tired eyes to look like a molecule, with ideas in circles connected with lines. At this stage I turned to carbon molecules and found that one of the most readily identifiable is the C₆₀.

C₆₀ is one of the molecules found in soot. It takes the "buckyball form discovered and made famous by R Buckminster Fuller, the writer of *Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth* and *Geodesic domes*.

It seems ironic that the Climate Change action plan could be based on the C₆₀ structure, and could be called the "soot plan" which has been one of the most readily identifiable forms of pollution since the Industrial Revolution. What is useful about creating a Climate Change action plan in the soot graphic form is that it allows for the following:

The diagram below shows the C₆₀ soot molecule as a means of creating an IFLA climate change action plan (The Soot action plan). The name is open for discussion.



IFLA Climate Change Action Plan
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- A fast, graphic understanding of core issues.
- There is no end point to the action plan, which can be continuously developed over time
- No one issue is weighed above another, allowing each regional landscape institute to take the "base" soot action plan and develop it for its own region. This caters for each region's unique environment. For example, the approach of the institute in New Zealand (NZILA) and the weighting of issues for its model would potentially be different from those of other regional

landscape institutes.

- You can link ideas, creating an understanding of the relationships and synergies between actions that are hard to show in the form of a word based charter document.
- The C₆₀ model gives you five directions which could be independently unplugged from the model, developed by an expert team and then re-plugged back into the model for everyone's benefit.

The Soot action plan was created as a starting point. It is not considered the end product, but a potential structure for addressing the complexity of Climate Change and the synergies between actions. I imagine that it will be discussed and developed as an ongoing process before an action plan was accepted. Once an action plan is identified, I believe it will then be the time to write the IFLA charter addressing Climate Change to support the action plan. I understand that this is not the order in which this is normally done but Climate Change I believe is too complex to use the “business as normal” model.

The final point I believe really needs to be addressed is this: If IFLA wants to make a significant positive impact on reducing global warming then it has to be willing to bring to bear its full weight on the issue. This may mean IFLA having to reconsider its role as an institute. As an international collective IFLA has considerable political and economic influence, which if used as a constructive tool could bring about the fastest positive change for Climate Change. We know that landscape architecture is a major client of international manufacturing (concrete, steel, copper, stainless steel, plastics, mined stone, timber), which is one of the most polluting sectors in the world, secondary only to agriculture.

If IFLA were to start meaningful dialogue with manufacturing about the issues of environmental impact of material production, and empower its individual members with the information to make informed decisions on material selection, it would achieve a significant impact on Climate Change. The traditional approach of strengthening education and research is a positive step, but IFLA can make a greater contribution by starting to use its collective buying power for positive change.

I hope this is helpful or will at least spark debate on the process and the role of IFLA and Climate Change. I have a range of further developed ideas on how to strengthen research, encouraging private practice to share information, creating transparent and meaningful sustainability design awards, how to approach industry, and so on. These can be developed once the base model idea has been considered by IFLA, and if found to be viable.

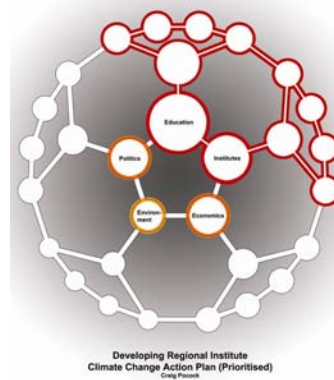
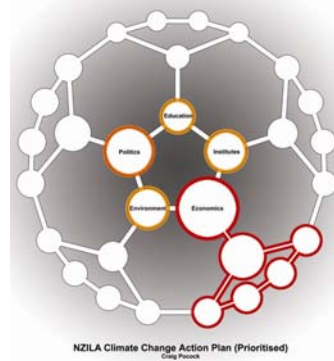
Kind Regards,

Craig Pocock
 director
 pocock design:environment limited
 +64 3 358 3040
 021 701 308

www.carbonlandscape.co.nz

(Please refer to the website above to find readable images of all diagrams and a five-slide PowerPoint presentation on how the model works)

The diagrams below show the base Soot action plan being developed for three different IFLA regional councils to suit their present environmental conditions.



The diagram below shows the Soot action plan being developed for New Zealand weighing the five core issues differently and how the issue of economics could be developed further than the base model shows

