DEEP TRANSITIONS FUTURES

SUPPORTED BY JAMES ANDERSON + BAILLIE GIFFORD & CO

Crowdsourcer

Summary of results and insights

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Background

The crowdsourcing initiative was launched as part of the Deep Transitions Futures scenario work. The aim of the initiative was to critically scrutinize the three future worlds and to review them from various social and geographical contexts. Therefore, the crowdsourcer was disseminated amongst five key audience groups (civil society, academia, business, government, the media) from all regions of the world.

The crowdsourcer asked respondents to indicate their preferred future world, the niches they thought were most relevant to bring this world about, and how these niches and worlds would play out in their local contexts.

The crowdsourcing campaign ran from mid-December 2021 to the end of February 2022 (2.5 months in total). We received a total of 45 complete responses of which 78% of respondents shared their demographics with us.

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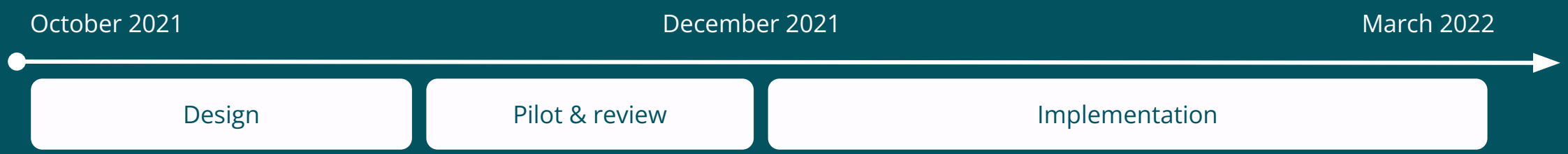
Timeline



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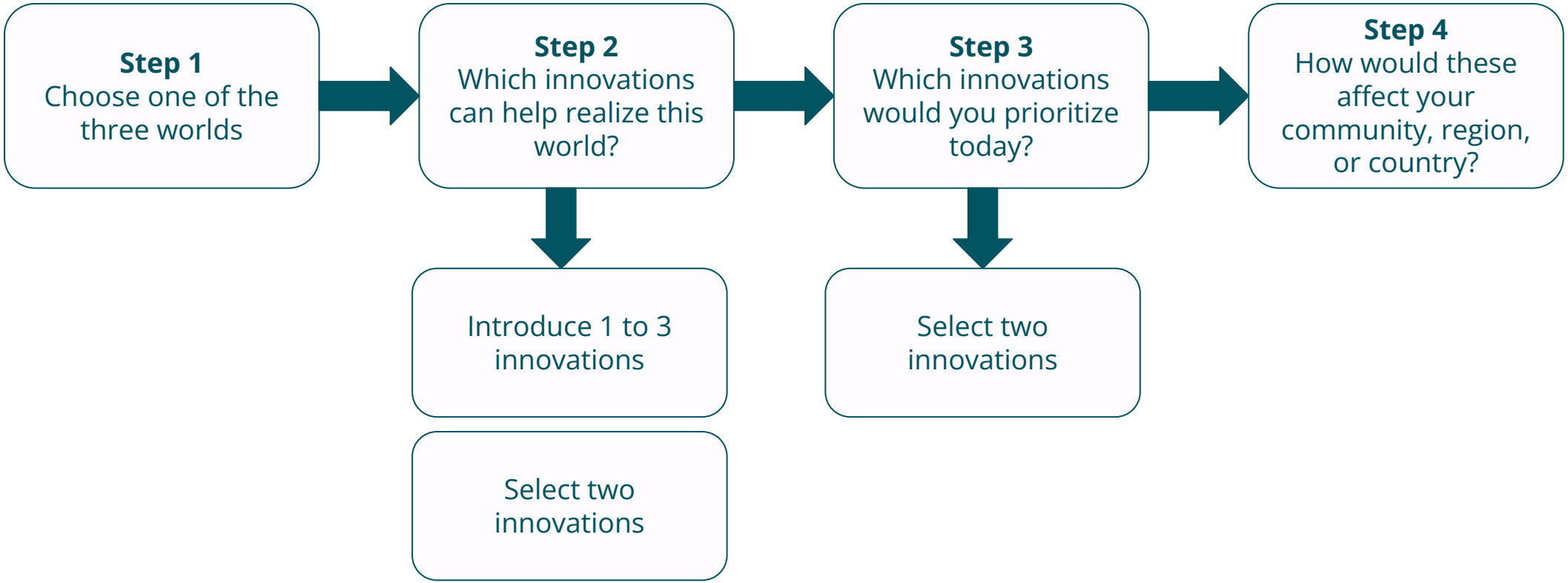
Crowdsourcer structure



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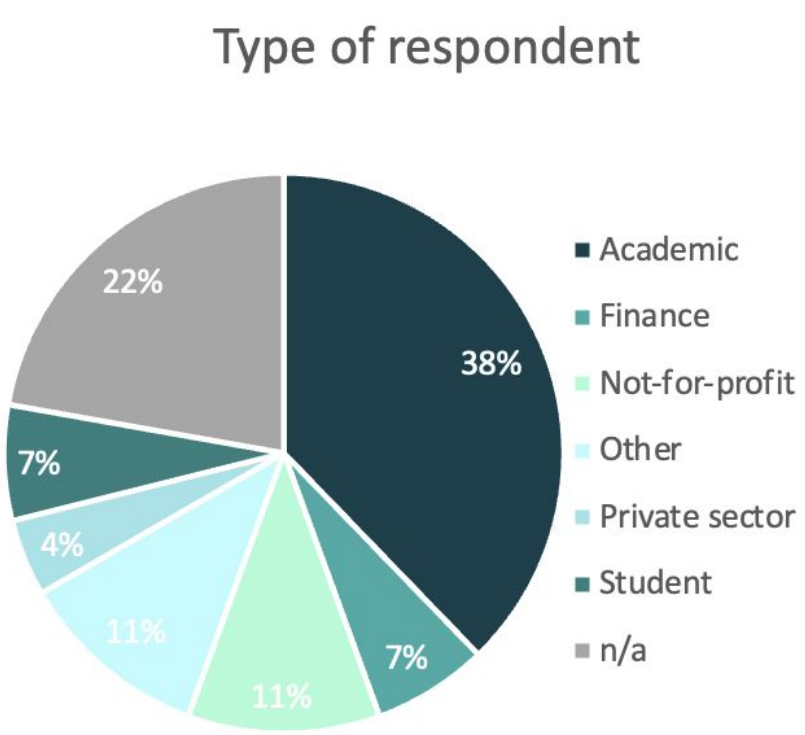
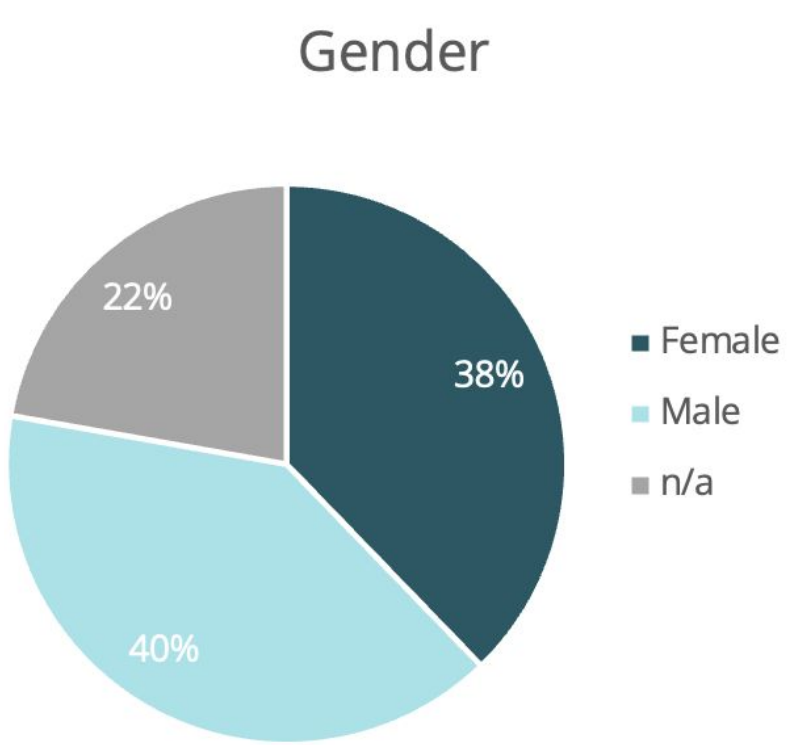
Initial input

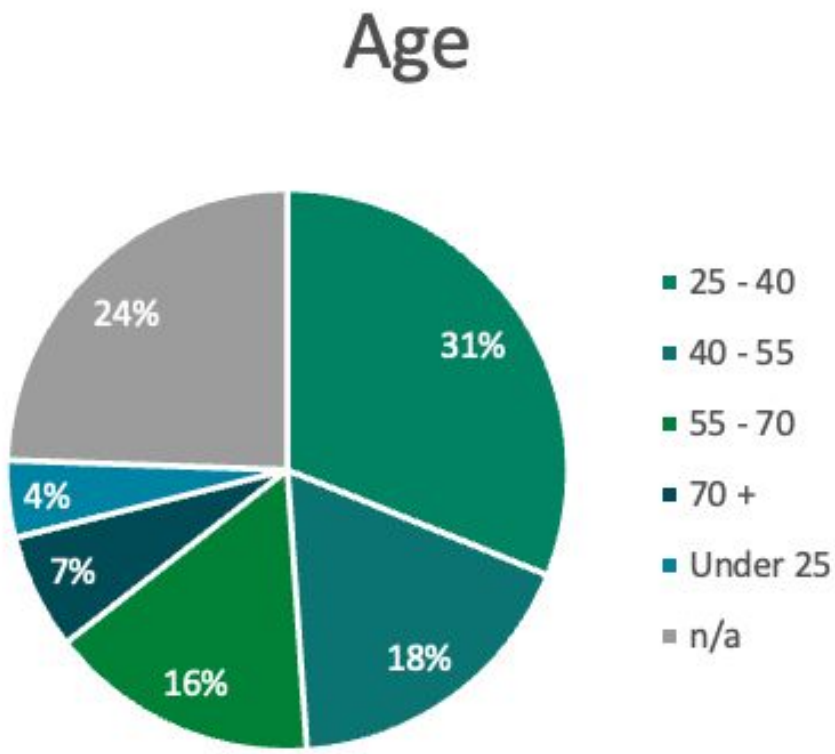
A set of 18 niches was initially input into the crowdsourcer, to enable selection by respondents. This list is taken from the niches identified during session 2.2, and represent potential niches relevant to all three worlds.

Urban farming and vertical farming
Mycoculture - mushrooms as protein
Perennial Agriculture
Regenerative Agriculture
Four day work week
Synthetic biology
Carbon capture and storage
Living off-grid and off-grid energy
Distributed generation and smart grid
3D printing and fablabs
Fossil fuel-free construction industry
Blockchain
Valuation of ecosystems service
Agroforestry
Hyperloop for public transport
Slow street
Working from home
Community retrofitting of public spaces

Type of respondent

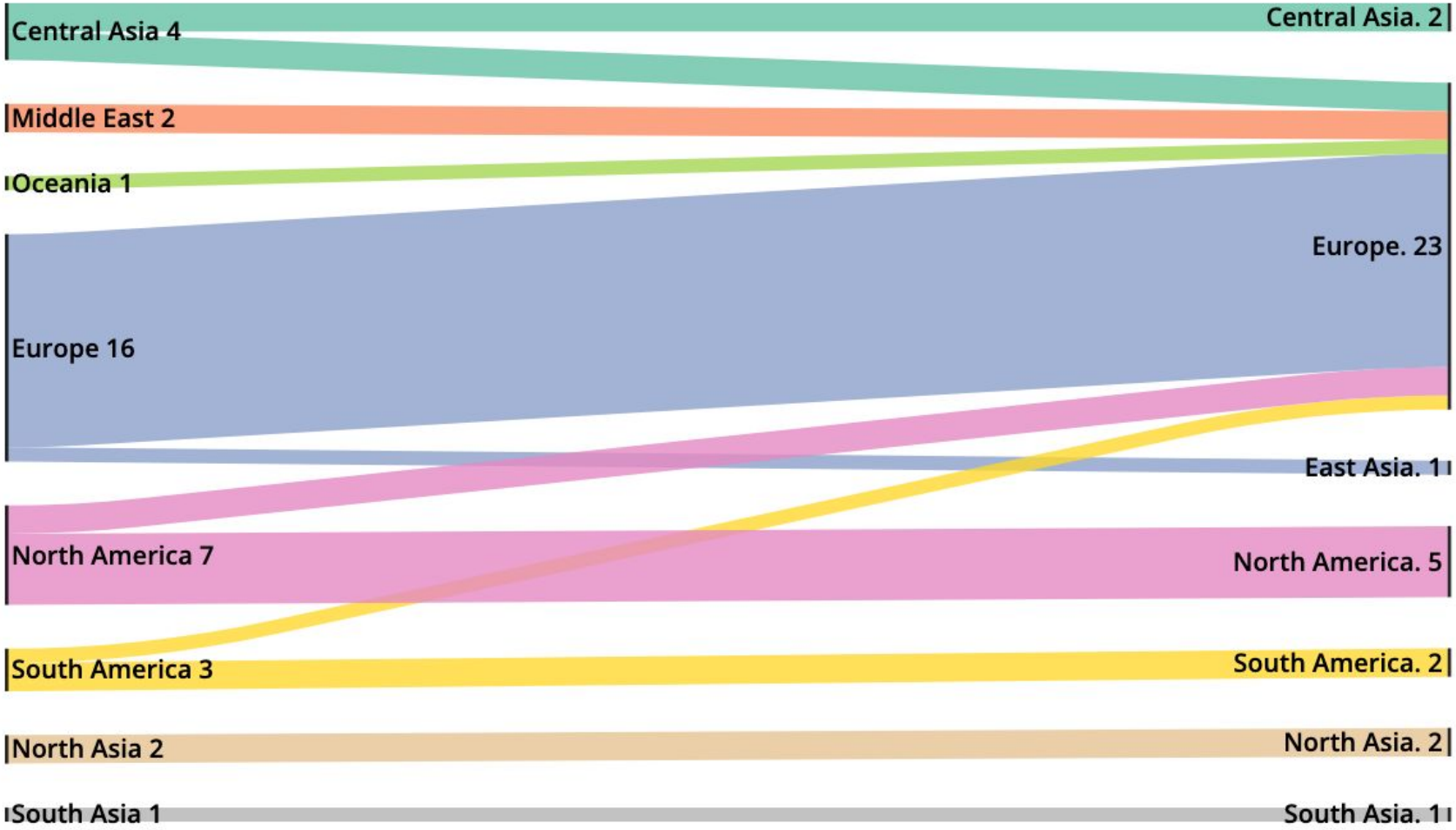






Total responses (28.02.2022) = 45

Region of respondents (where they grew up/ where they live now)



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Reading Futurescaper graphs

Before reviewing the output from the Deep Transitions Futurescaper crowdsourcer, get acquainted with how Futurescaper visualizes participant data about changes and their impacts.

We have used two different visual diagrams from the Futurescaper visualizations.

- **Force diagram** – systems map of nodes and interconnections
- **Circular** – circular graph with priority indicated with larger, hotter nodes

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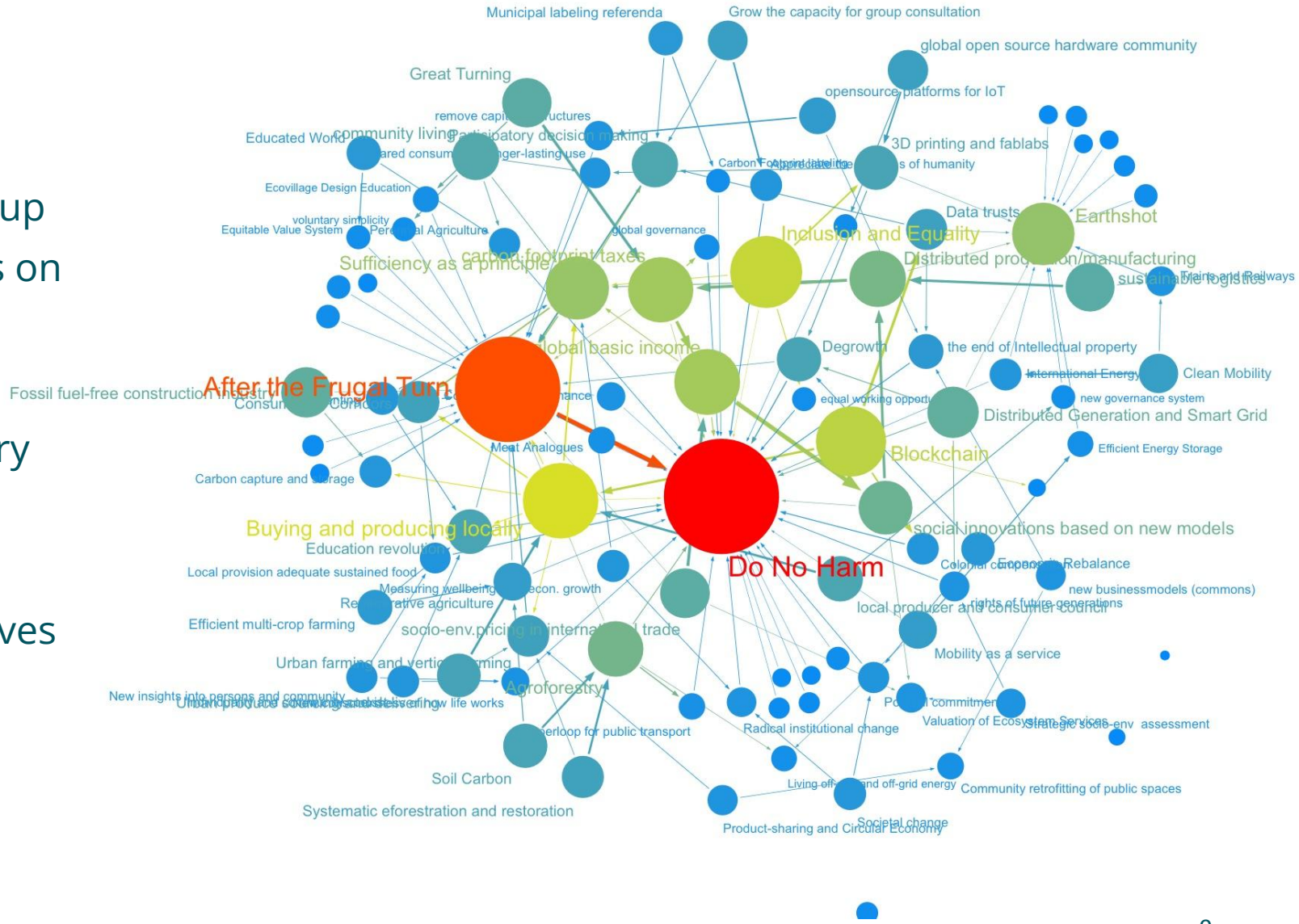
FORCE

- Displays influence maps built up from crowdsourcer responses on changes and impacts, or from ‘cause – change – impact’ specifications during data entry
- Emphasises interconnections
- Visual depiction a web
- Dynamic and interactive – moves as cursor touches nodes



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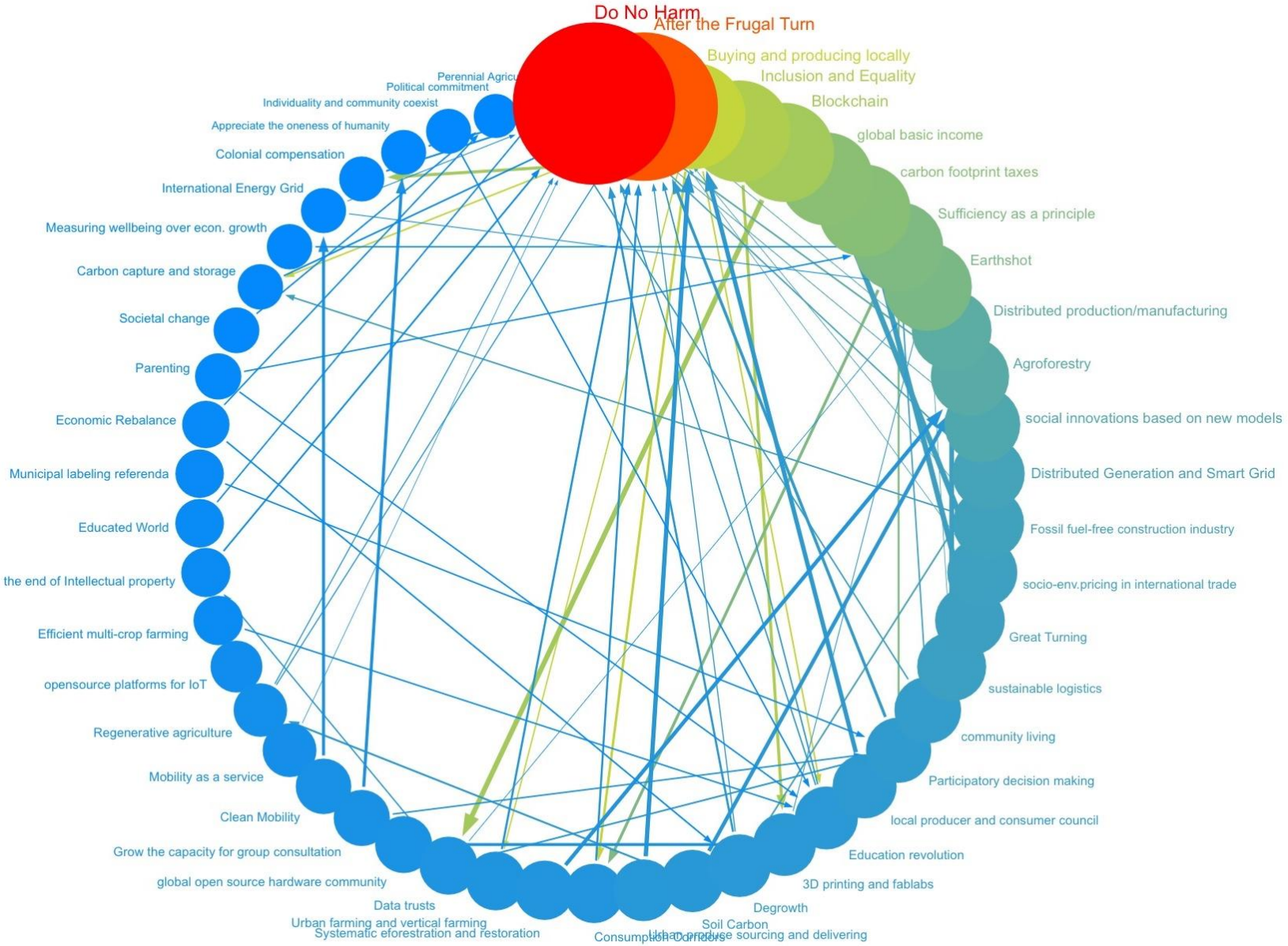
CIRCULAR

- Illustrates relative priority of a chosen set of nodes via easily read graphic, includes basic interconnections across included nodes
- Emphasises priority (highest score)
- Visual depiction circular – highest priority node at the ‘noon’ position, with nodes decreasing in priority clockwise
- Not dynamic – static map



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Four Data Filters

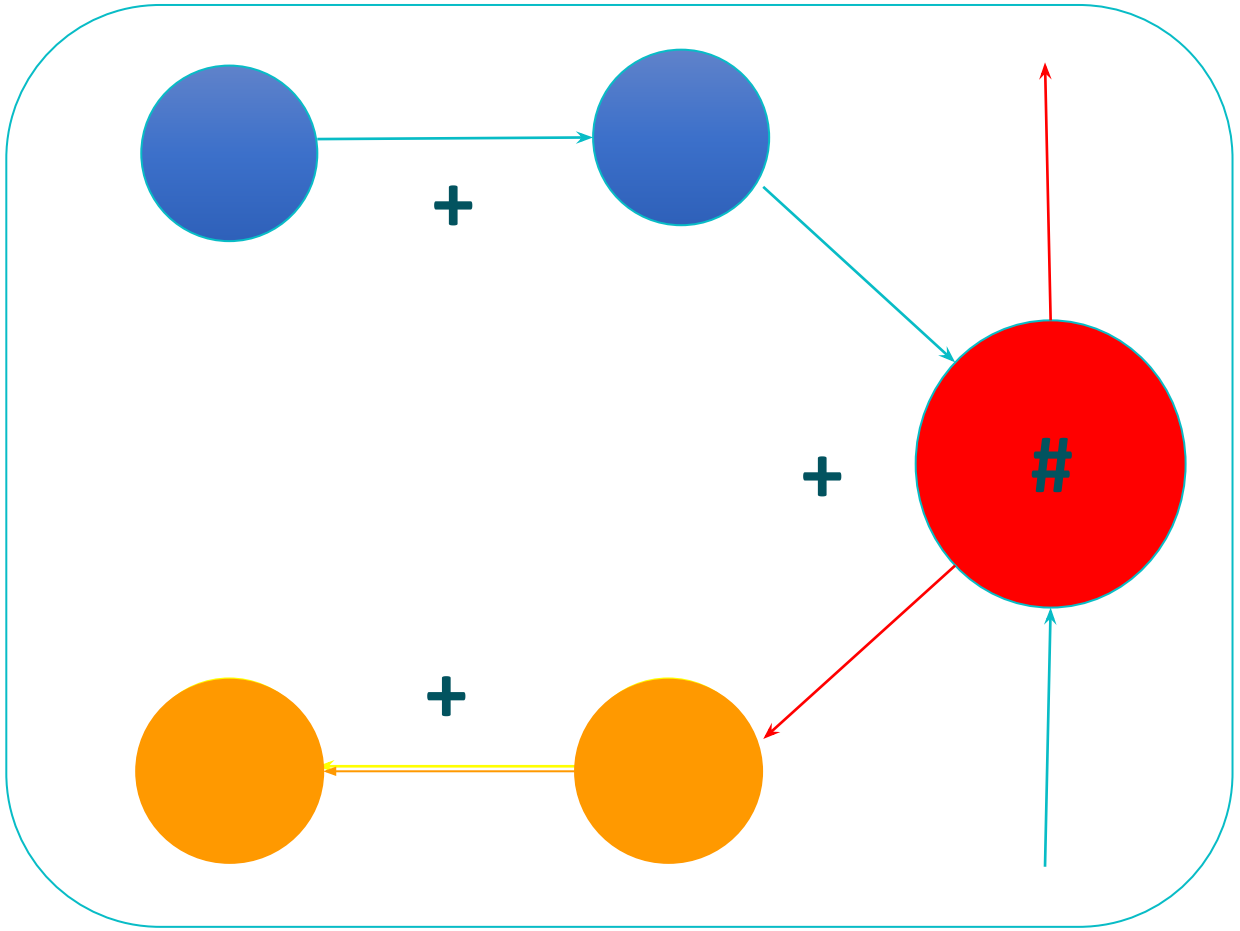
Before reviewing the output from the Deep Transitions Futurescaper crowdsourcer, it is also useful to understand the different filters that can be used to highlight factors and how they interconnect.

- **IMPORTANCE** – focus on how often it's mentioned, and how interconnected it is
- **CAUSE** – focus on how often it's mentioned, and how much change it drives
- **EFFECT** – focus on how often it's mentioned, and how influenced it is by other change

Remember that the Futurescaper crowdsourced asks participants to choose the future world they think most desirable, and then to suggest niches needed to drive the change to create that world, and what needs to be done today to create those niches. Participants' suggestions and choices create the visual landscape of interconnections and priorities. What you see is a system map of what they think is important and drives change.

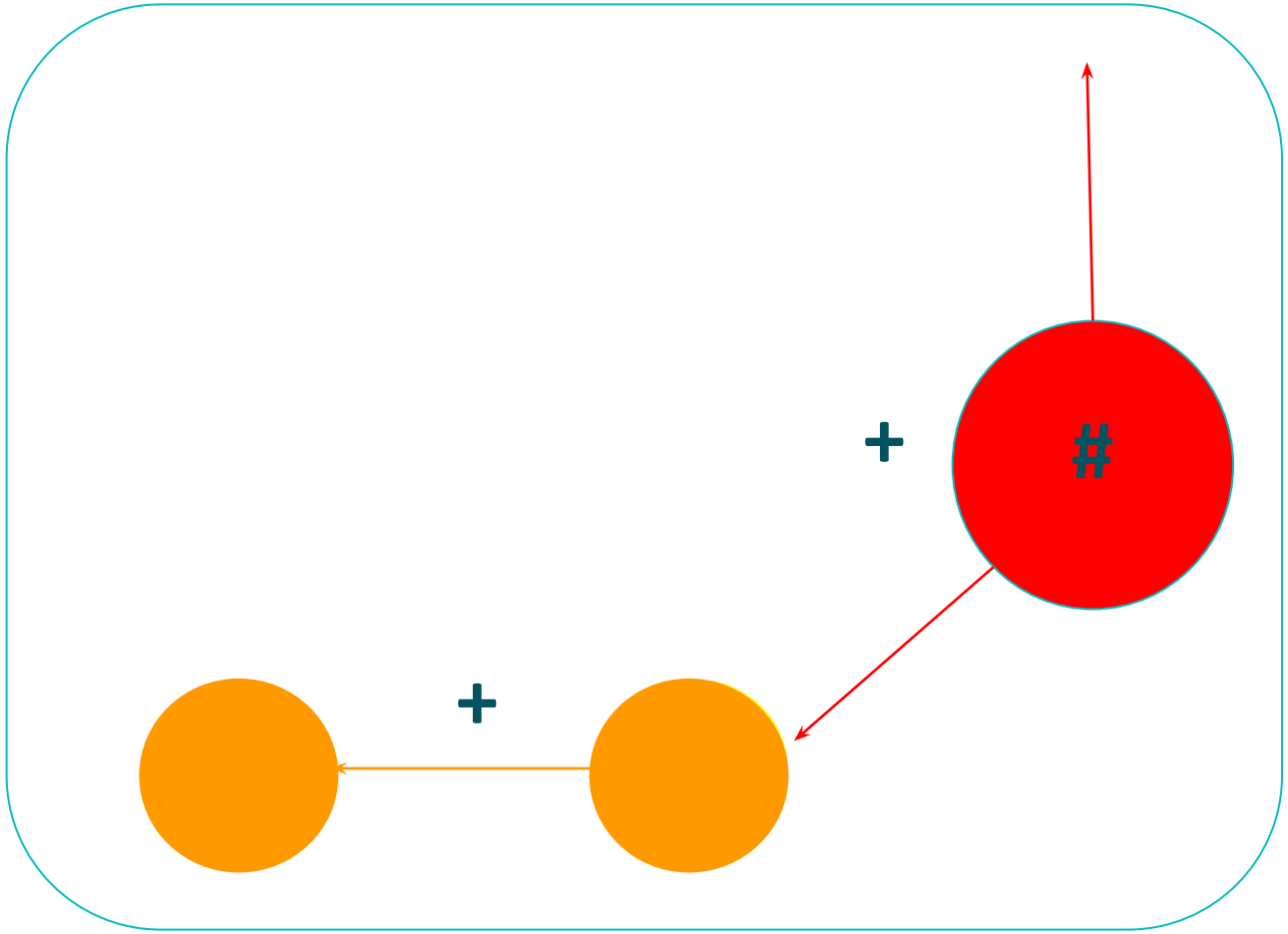
IMPORTANCE

- Compares how often this factor was mentioned (sum of the stories it's in) PLUS the number of outgoing links WITH onward impact chains AND the number of incoming links WITH incoming impact chains.
- It is a measure of how pervasively the factor is interconnected with, and thus could affect, the entire system of factors.
- This is the *default* filter



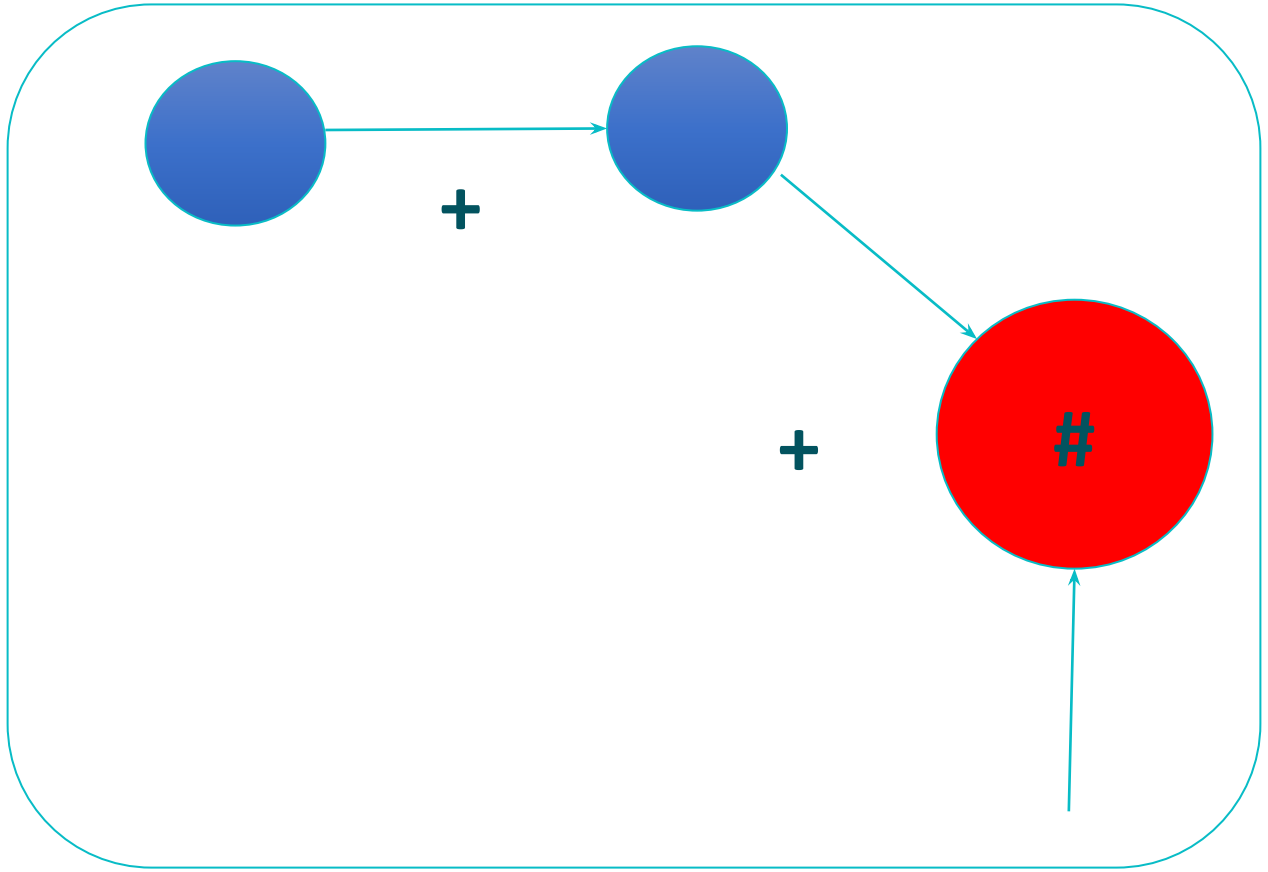
CAUSE

- Compares how often this factor was mentioned (sum of the stories it's in) PLUS ONLY the number of outgoing links WITH onward impact chains.
- It is a measure of how many other factors in the system the particular factor could influence.



EFFECT

- Compares how often this factor was mentioned (sum of the stories it's in) PLUS ONLY the sum of incoming links and size of incoming impact chains.
- It is a measure of how many other factors in the system could influence the particular factor.



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Basic Priorities

Responses as of 28 February

Crowdsourcer participants ranked *Do No Harm* the most important desirable world, followed closely by *After the Frugal Turn*; *Earthshot* was a distant third. One interesting outcome was that participants felt that *After the Frugal Turn* was itself strongly connected as influencing *Do No Harm*.

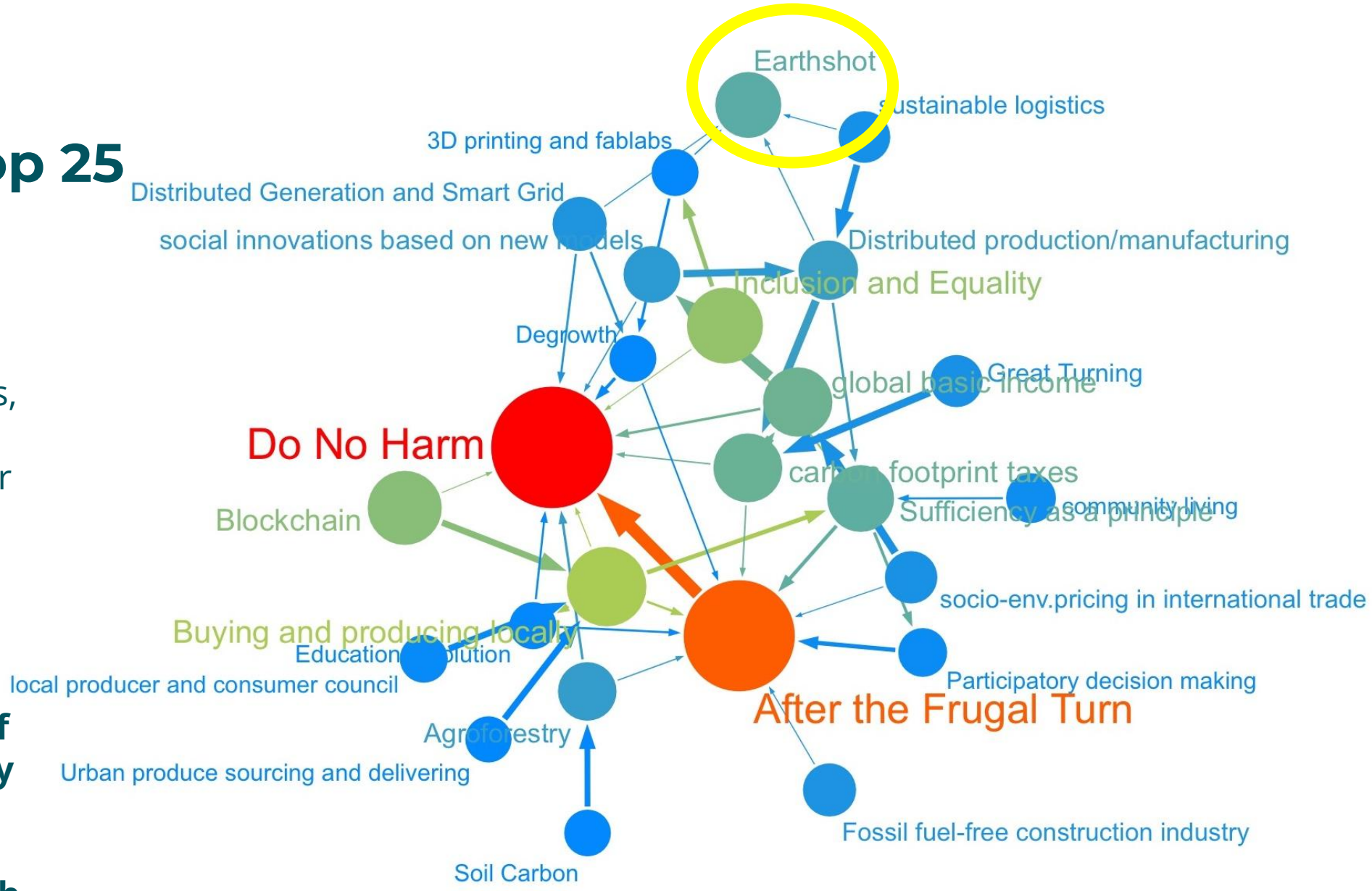
***Causes* - that is, potential *niches* contributing to realizing these desirable worlds - highlighted the need for *buying and producing locally*, policies emphasizing social justice - *inclusion and equity; global basic income; carbon footprint taxes; sufficiency as a principle* - and also new business and production approaches like *blockchain*; *distributed production/manufacturing*; and *agroforestry*.**

***Effects* - the outcomes of the emerging niches / changes identified - included the three desirable worlds themselves, and also the increase in *sufficiency as a principle; participatory decision-making; buying and producing locally; carbon footprint taxes; an education revolution; urban farming and vertical farming;* and *degrowth*.**

Importance Top 25

This graphic depicts Futurescaper's **initial** visualisation of the key factor inter-connections suggested by participants, sized and coloured by ***importance*** – the number of mentions, and the number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

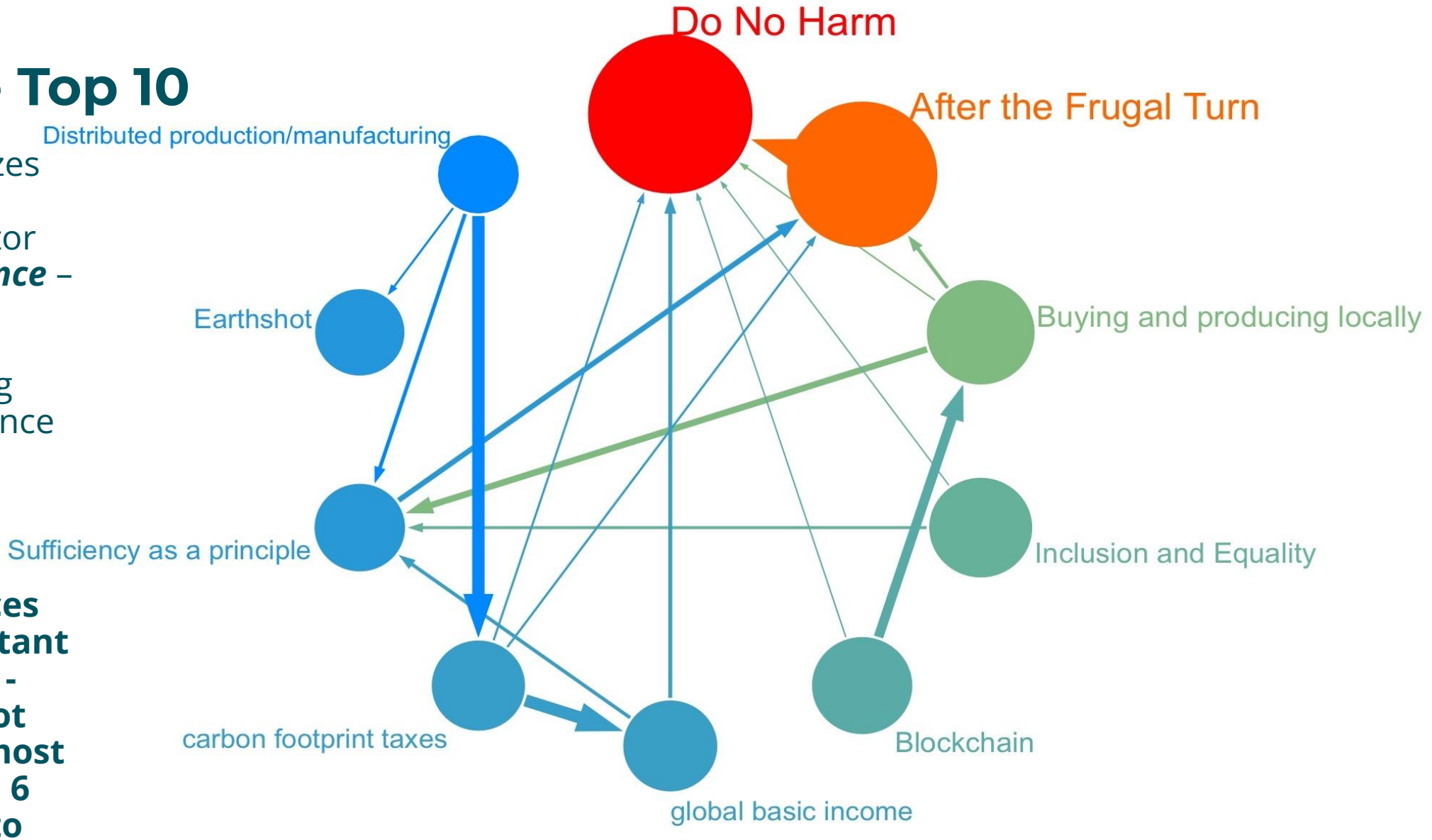
Note the prominence of *Do No Harm*, followed by *After the Frugal Turn*. Participants ranked Earthshot (circled) much lower.



Importance Top 10

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of factor priority by ***importance*** – the number of mentions, and the number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

This highlights participants' choices of the most important worlds and niches - note that Earthshot ranks only ninth most important, behind 6 niches necessary to drive change.



Causes Top 25

This graphic depicts Futurescaper's visualisation of the key factor inter-connections suggested by participants, sized and coloured by ***cause*** – number of mentions, and number of outgoing influence links and onward chains.

This system map emphasises niches and causal pathways participants chose as critical to driving change. Explore the interconnected paths.

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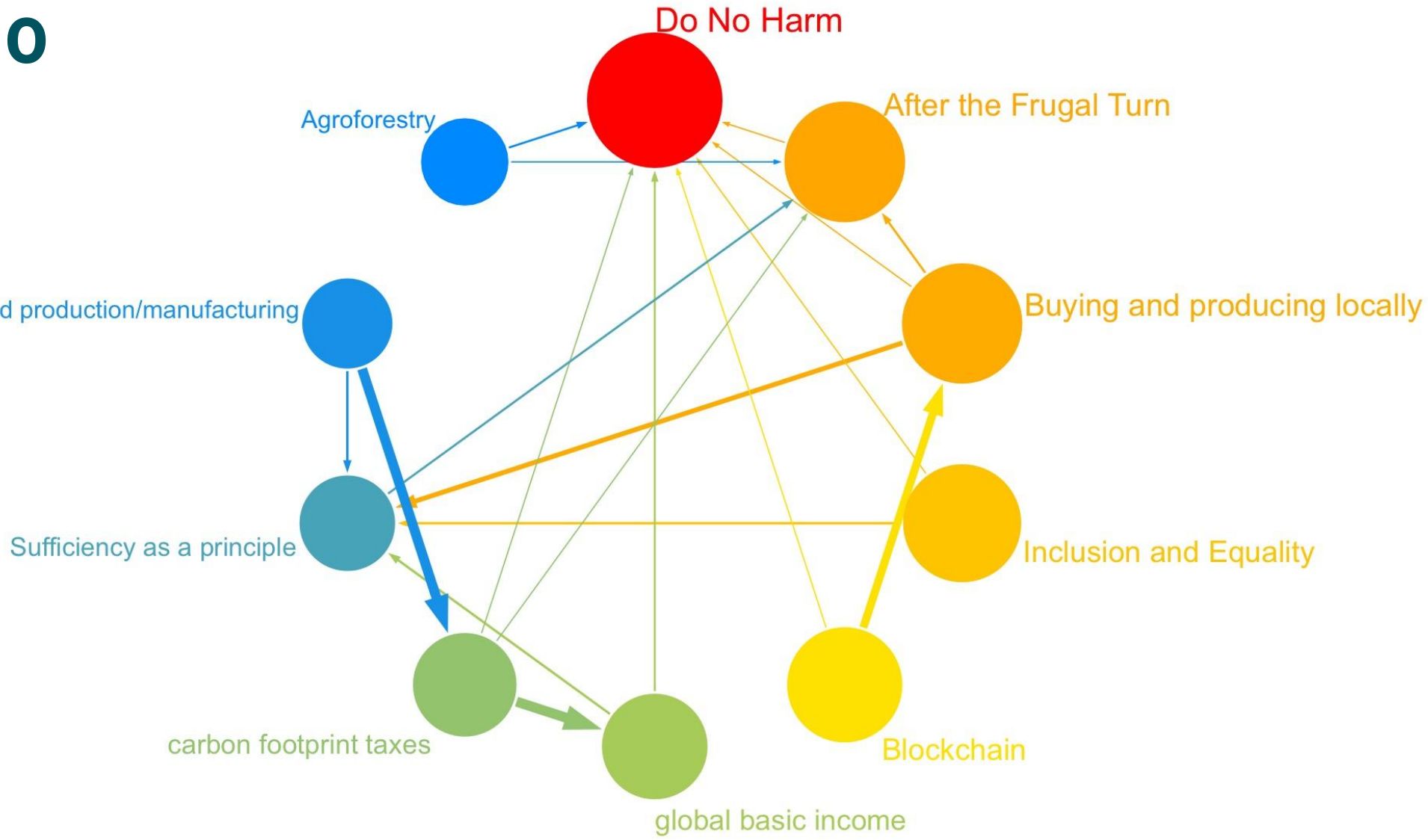
Causes Top 10

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of factor priority by ***cause*** – number of mentions, and number of outgoing influence links and onward chains.

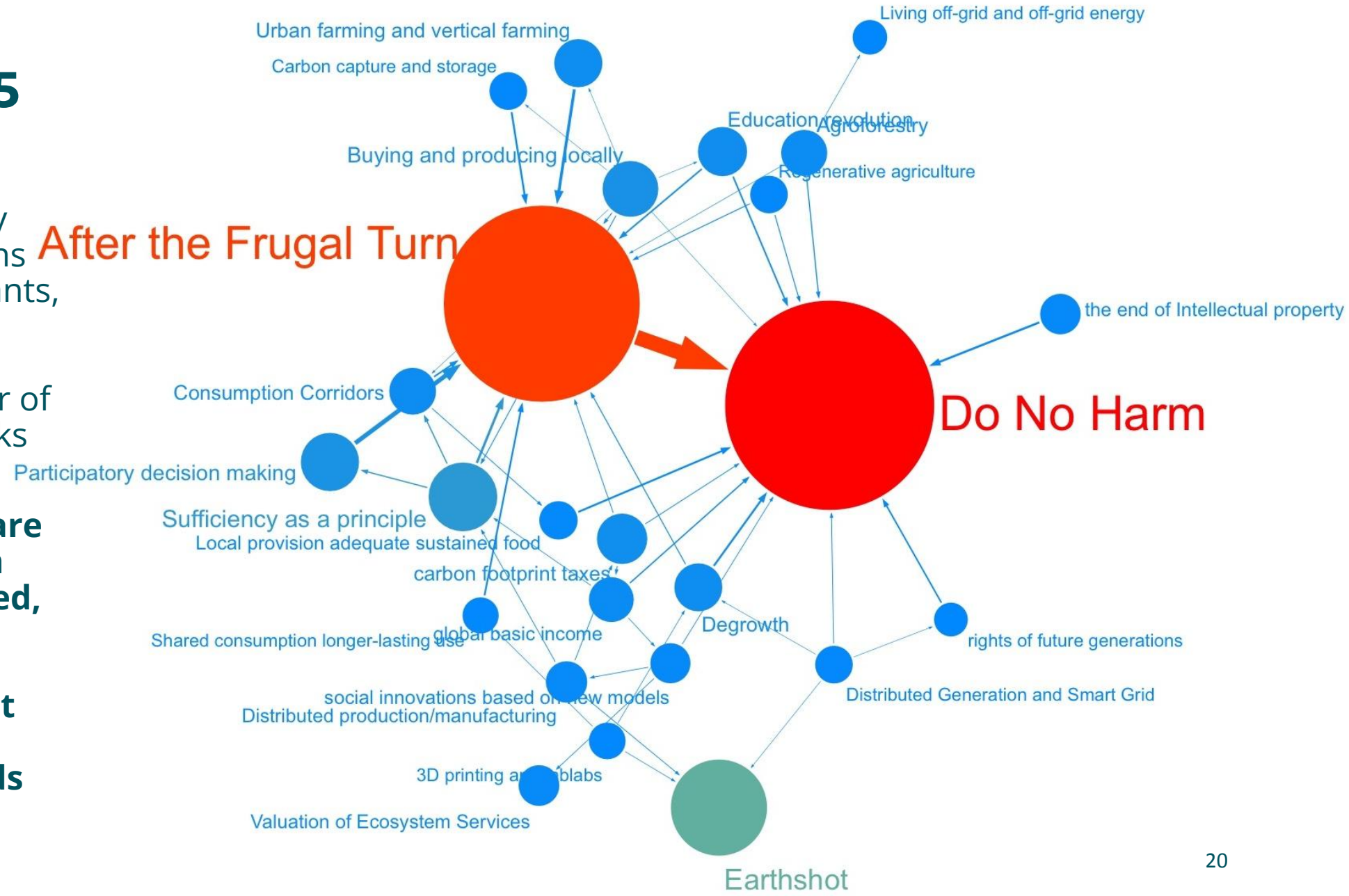
This highlights participants' choices of niches necessary to drive change - note that *After the Frugal Turn* is itself a priority change to drive emergence of *Do No Harm*. Consider how these priority niches are causally linked.



Effects Top 25

This graphic depicts Futurescaper's visualisation of the key factor inter-connections suggested by participants, sized and coloured by ***effect*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming influence links and onward chains.

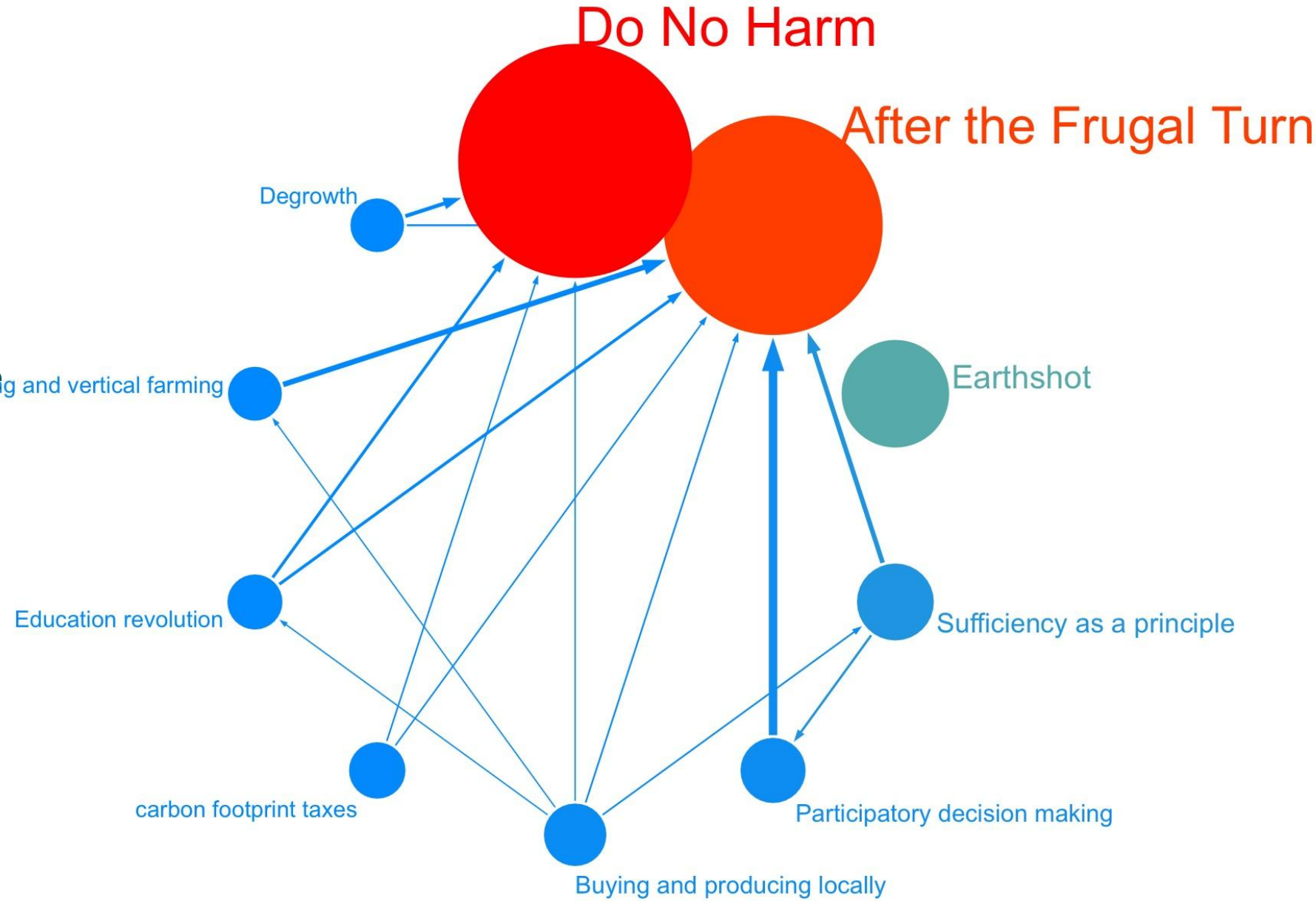
As the three worlds are meant to result from the changes suggested, they are the priority 'effects' - explore the paths of changes that participants thought drove change towards the worlds.



Effects Top 10

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of factor priority by ***effect*** – number of mentions, and number of *incoming* influence links and onward chains.

Again, the desirable worlds are the key effects - what this also shows is how, for example, sufficiency as a principle, urban and vertical farming, and the education revolution are also driven by niches like buying and producing locally.



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Comparing Desirable Worlds

Responses as of 28 February, prioritized by importance

Focussing on the three desirable worlds as outcomes, the Futurescaper graphic visualizer can depict the top ten niches participants suggested as necessary to drive change toward each world. Remember that the larger the dot and the warmer (more towards the yellow-orange-red end of the spectrum) its colour, the more often it was mentioned or chosen by respondents, and the more interconnections it has.

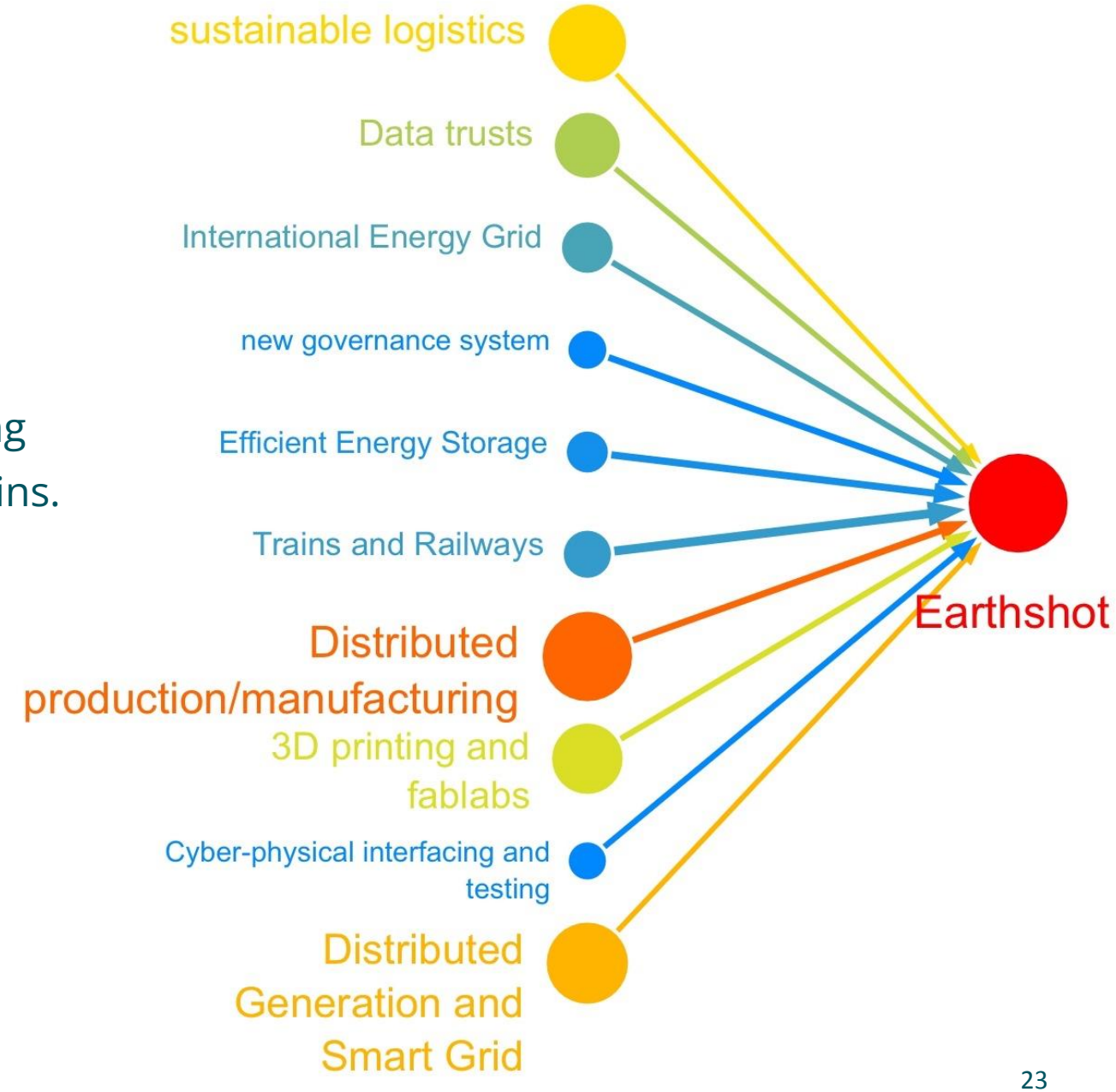
Earthshot - *the top five necessary niches are infrastructural:* distributed production / manufacturing; distributed generation and smart grid; sustainable logistics; 3D printing and fablabs; and data trusts.
After the Frugal Turn - *the top five necessary niches are key behavioral and policy shifts:* buying and producing locally; carbon footprint taxes; sufficiency as a principle; fossil fuel-free construction industry; and socio-environmental pricing in international trade.
Do No Harm - *the top five highlight value, behavioral, and policy shifts:* After the Frugal Turn; buying and producing locally; inclusion and equality; blockchain; and carbon footprint taxes.

Earthshot

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of the top 10 *causes* (changes) needed to create *Earthshot* by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

The top five highlight key infrastructural innovations:

- Distributed production / manufacturing
- Distributed generation and smart grid
- Sustainable logistics
- 3D printing and fablabs
- Data trusts

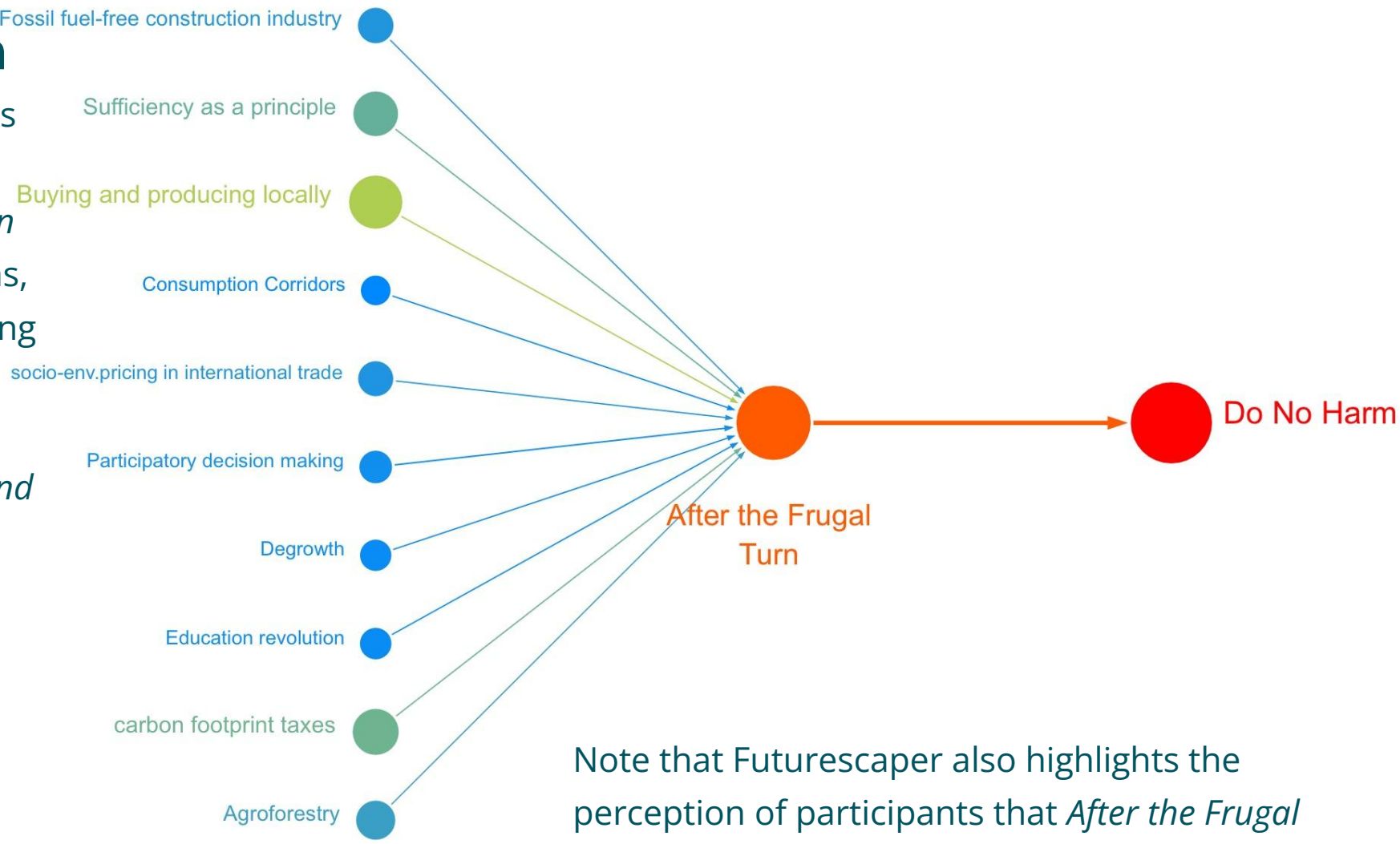


After the Frugal Turn

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of the top 10 changes needed to create *After the Frugal Turn* by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

The top five highlight key behavioral and policy shifts:

- Buying and producing locally
- Carbon footprint taxes
- Sufficiency as a principle
- Fossil fuel-free construction industry
- Socio-environmental pricing in international trade



Note that Futurescaper also highlights the perception of participants that *After the Frugal Turn* itself is a driver for *Do No Harm*.

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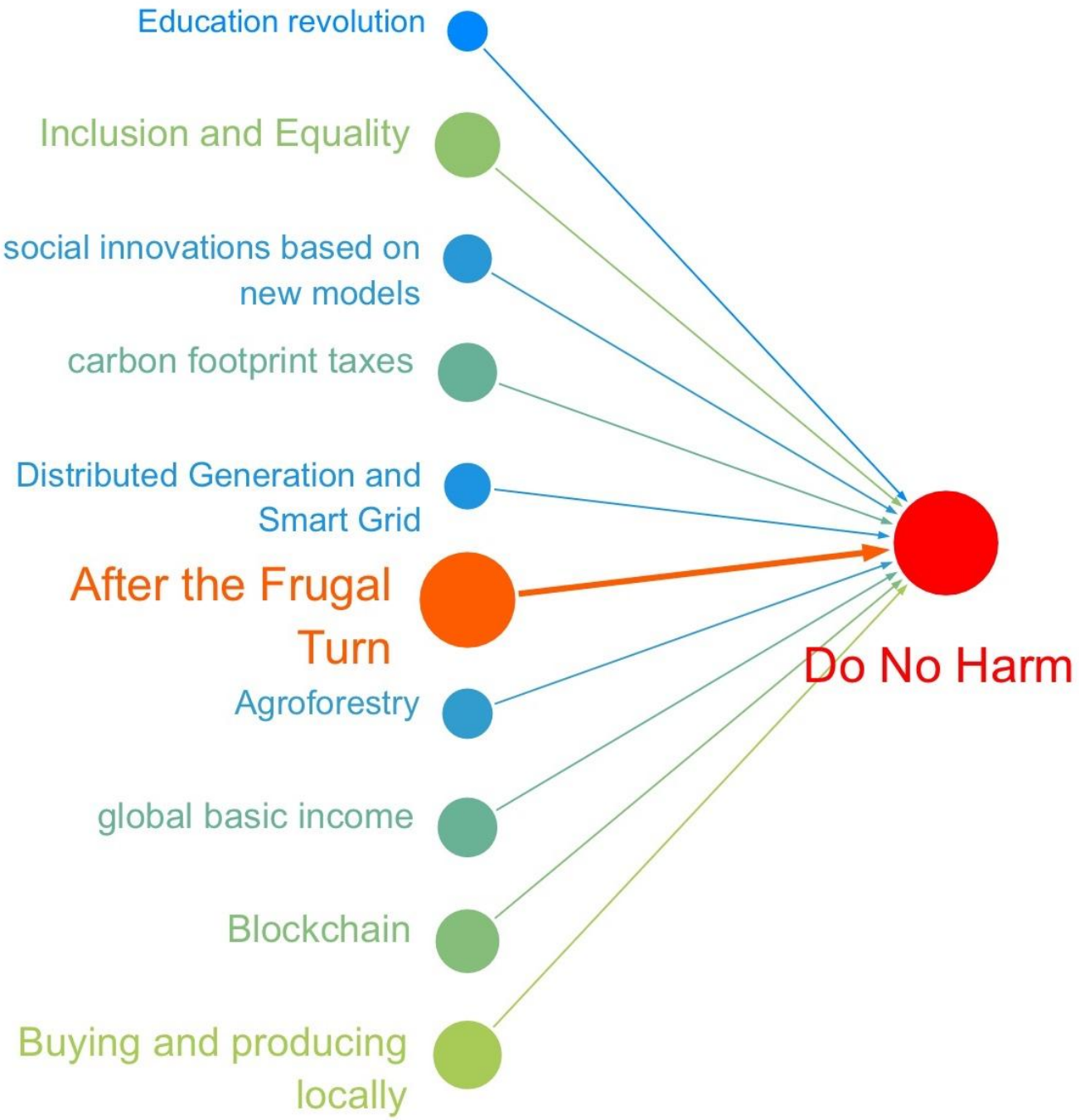
Do No Harm

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of the top 10 changes needed to create *Do No Harm* by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

The top five highlight value, behavioral, and policy shifts:

- After the Frugal Turn
- Buying and producing locally
- Inclusion and equality
- Blockchain
- Carbon footprint taxes



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Comparing Food – Energy - Mobility

Responses as of 28 February, prioritized by importance

The three graphic visualizations that follow focus on the three socio-technical systems of *Food*, *Energy*, and *Mobility*.

Each graphic depicts Futurescaper's visualisation of the key factor interconnections suggested by participants relevant to a particular socio-technical system for all three desirable worlds, sized and coloured by *importance* – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

Note in particular the 'shared nodes' that connect - that is, drive change towards - two worlds together.

For ***Food***, *After the Frugal Turn* and *Do No Harm* are interconnected by **three** nodes: buying and producing locally; meat analogues; and regenerative agriculture.

For ***Energy***, *After the Frugal Turn* and *Do No Harm* are interconnected by **three** nodes: regenerative agriculture; degrowth; and carbon footprint taxes. *Do No Harm* and *Earthshot* are interconnected by **two** nodes: distributed generation and smart grids; and international energy grid.

For ***Mobility***, *After the Frugal Turn* and *Do No Harm* are interconnected by **one** node: degrowth.

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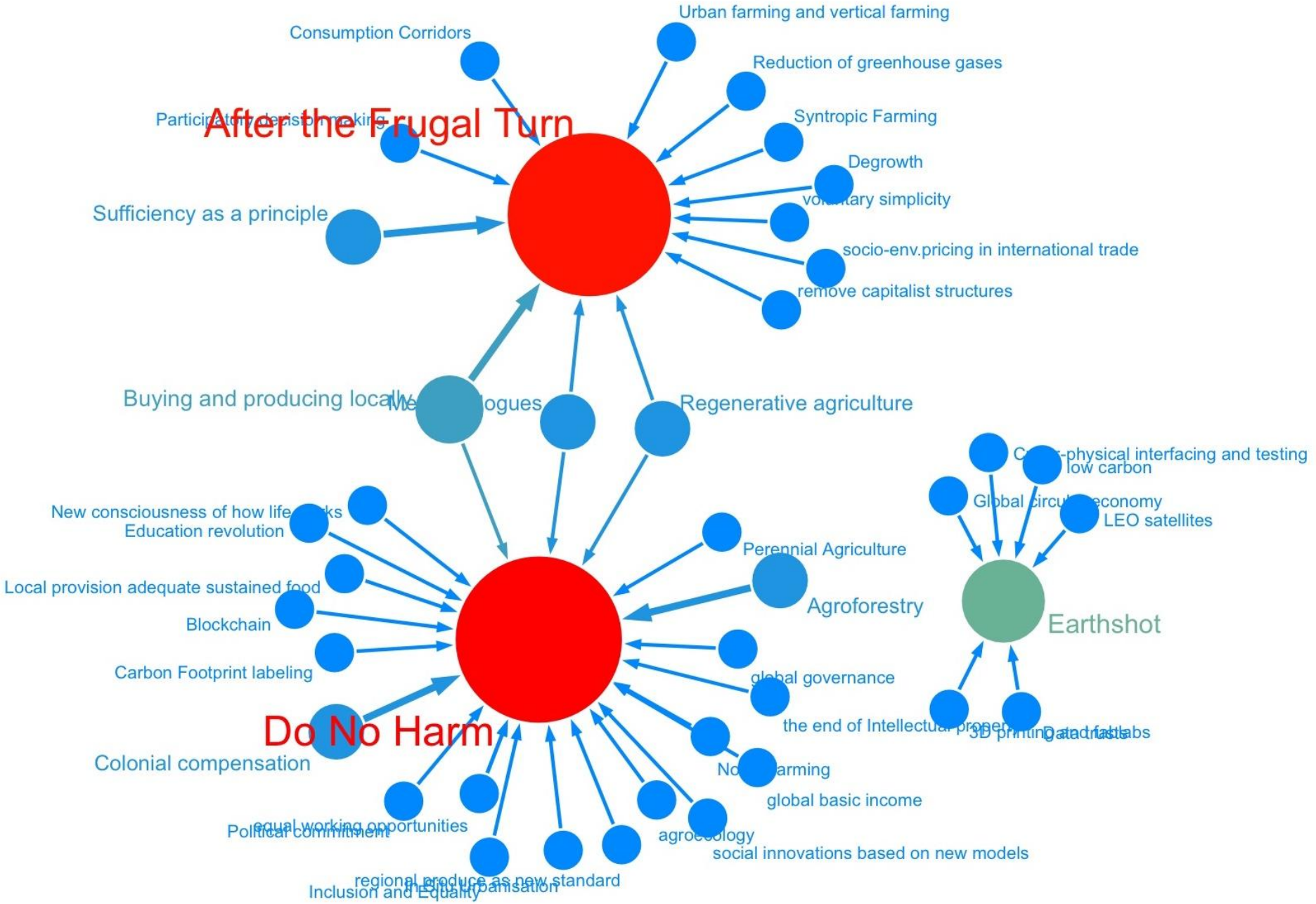
Food

This graphic depicts Futurescaper's visualisation of the key factor inter-connections suggested by participants relevant to *Food* for each desirable world, sized and coloured by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.



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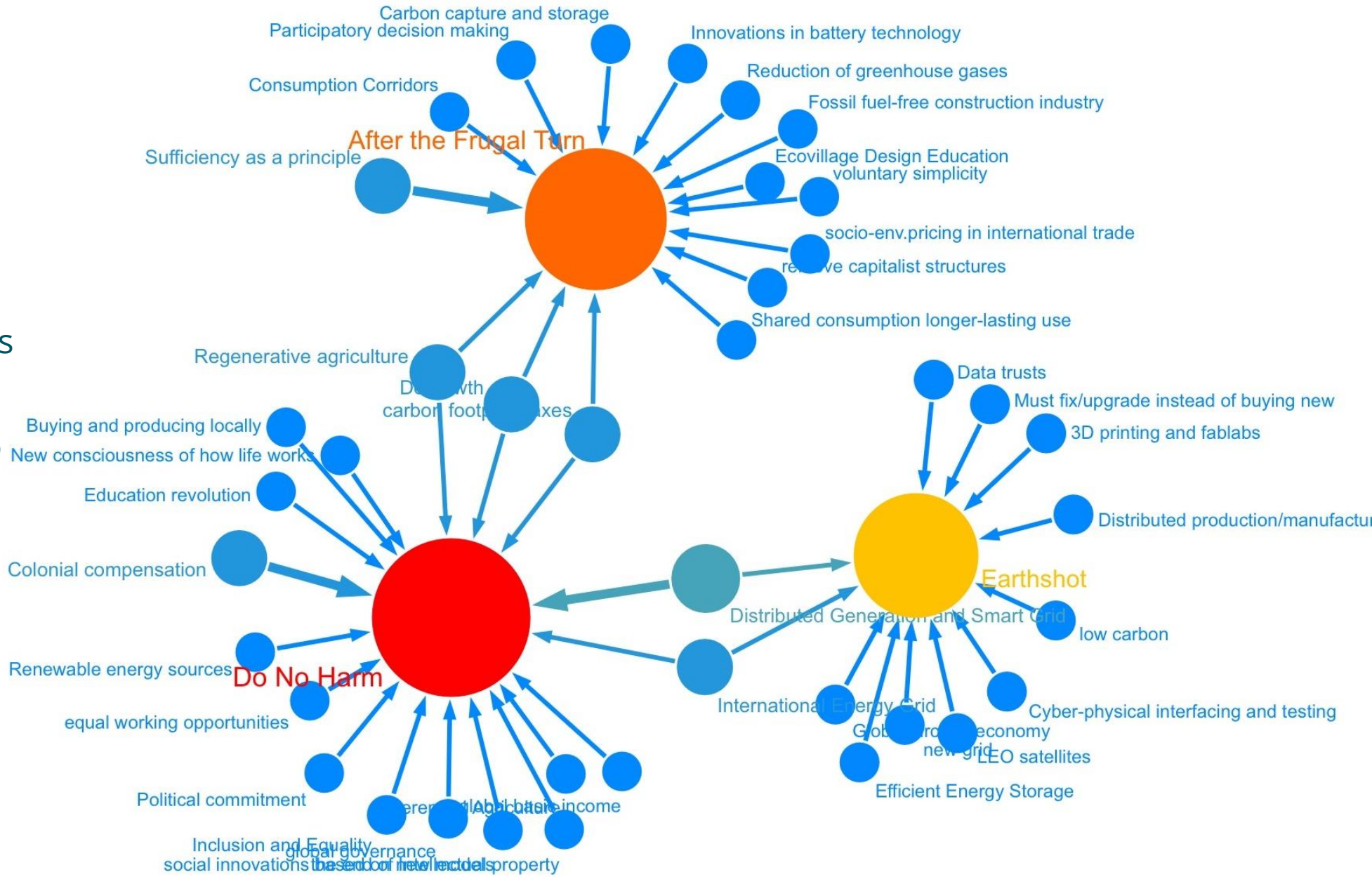
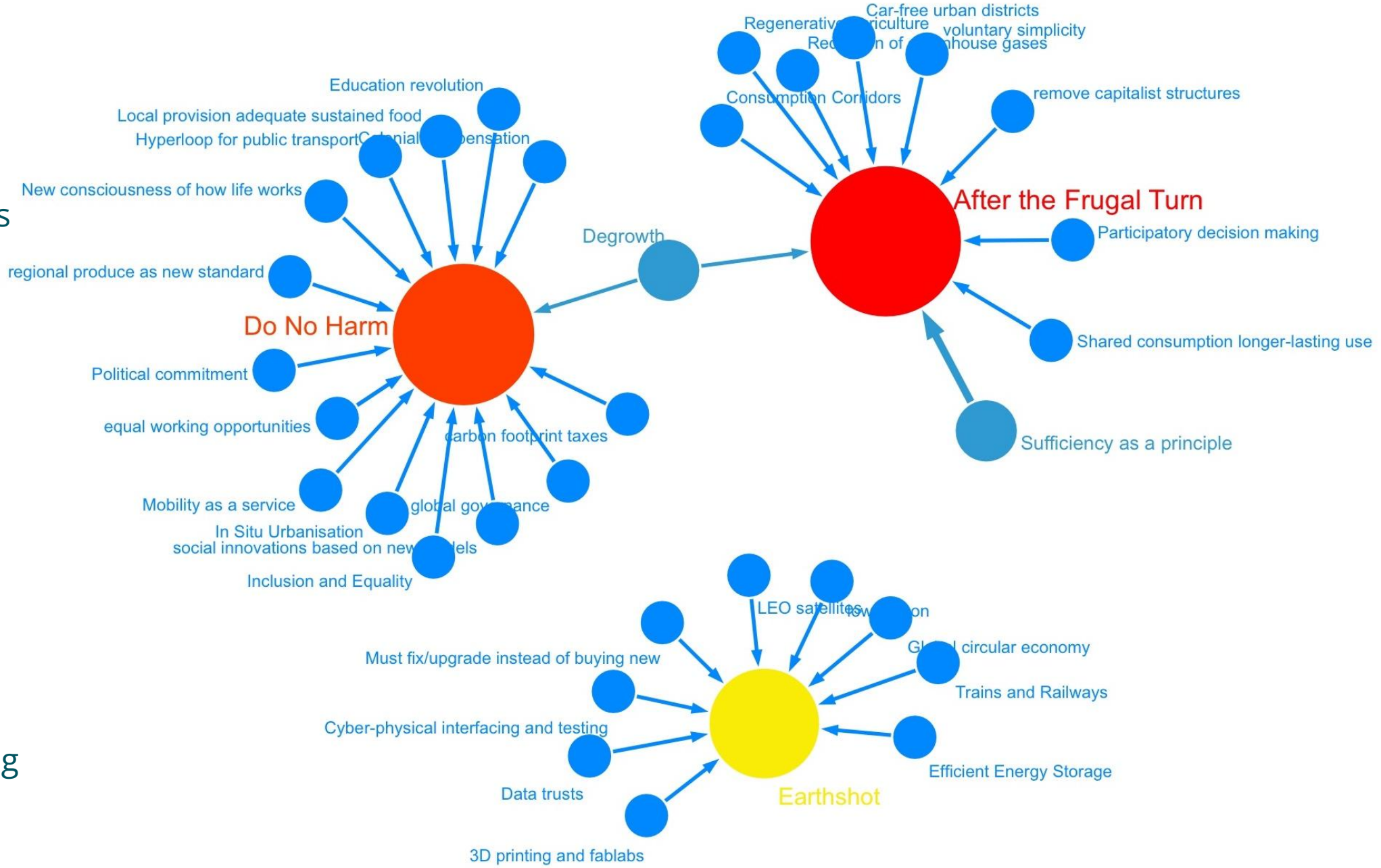
Energy

This graphic depicts Futurescaper's visualisation of the key factor inter-connections suggested by participants relevant to *Energy* for each desirable world, sized and coloured by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.



Mobility

This graphic depicts Futurescaper's visualisation of the key factor inter-connections suggested by participants relevant to *Mobility* for each desirable world, sized and coloured by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.



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Comparing Respondents

Responses as of 28 February, prioritized by importance

Futurescaper allows comparison of the priorities between different categories of respondents. As an example, the that follow compare perspectives of men with women, and respondents from the Global North with respondents from the Global South.

For respondents identifying as male, the top three non-world factors highlight both innovations and shifts in economic behavior: [use of] blockchain; buying and producing locally; and fossil fuel-free construction industry. For respondents identifying as female, the top three non-world factors highlight value and policy shifts: sufficiency as a principle; socio-environmental pricing in international trade; and community living. Where men included all three desirable worlds in their top ten elements, women included only *Do No Harm* and *After the Frugal Turn* - no *Earthshot*.

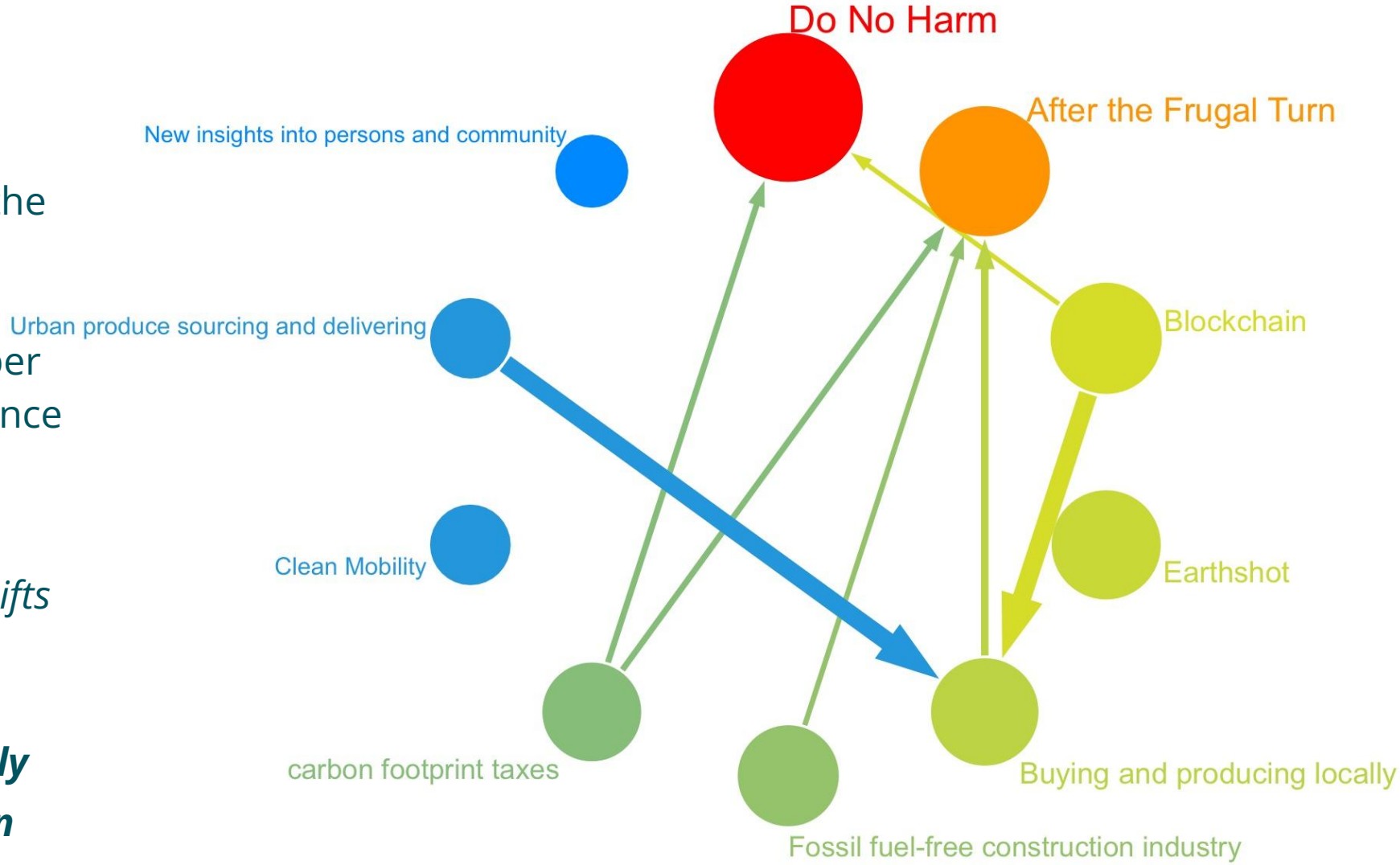
Respondents identifying as Global North and Global South prioritise the worlds and the niches required quite differently, as the two system maps illustrate. Global North respondents prioritise *Do No Harm* and *After the Frugal Turn* before *Earthshot*, but *Earthshot* is still clearly important - whereas for the Global South it is barely on the map. The Global South respondents identify longer causal paths to *Do No Harm* and *After the Frugal Turn*, connecting them at the niches of efficient multi-crop farming and systematic reforestation and restoration, where the Global North respondents interconnect those two worlds only at buying and producing locally, and sufficiency as a principle.

Men Top 10

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of the top 10 entries from male respondents by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

The top three non-world factors highlight both innovations and shifts in economic behavior:

- ***Blockchain***
- ***Buying and producing locally***
- ***Fossil fuel-free construction industry***



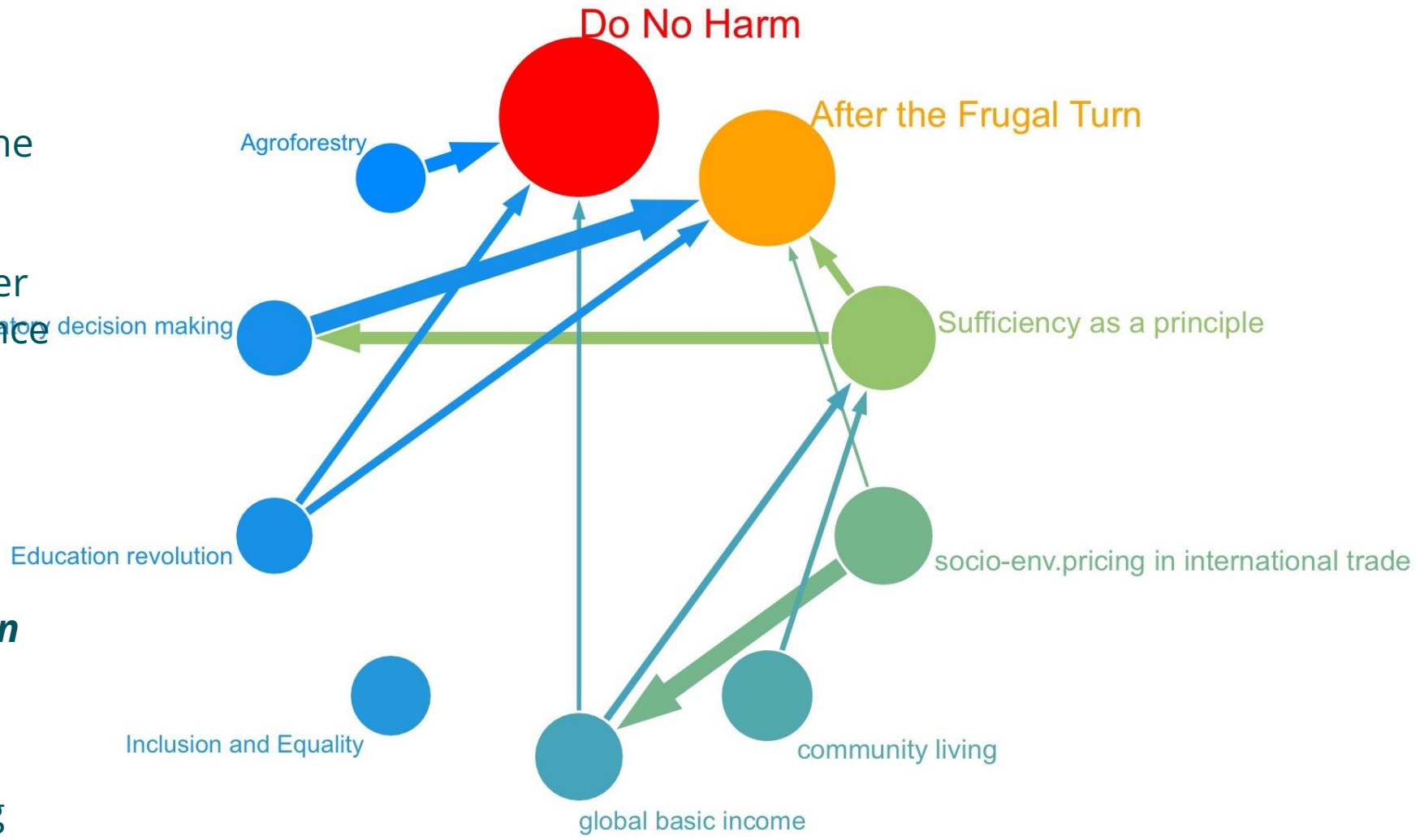
Women Top 10

This graphic visualizes Futurescaper's computation of the top 10 entries from female respondents by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

The top three non-world factors highlight value and policy shifts:

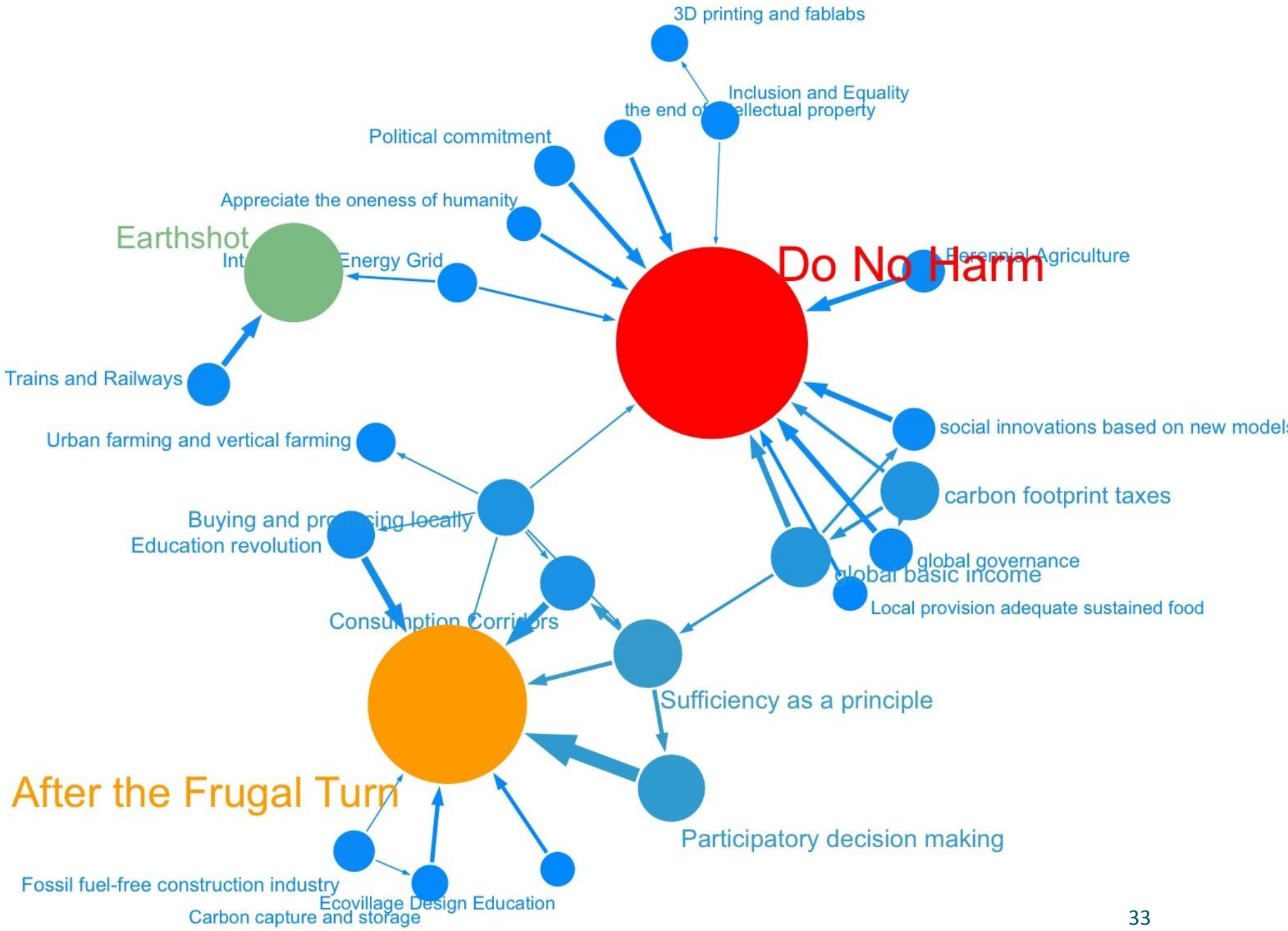
- ***Sufficiency as a principle***
- ***Socio-environmental pricing in international trade***
- ***Community living***

Note that *Earthshot* is not among the top 10 factors.



Global North

This graphic visualizes the system interconnections of elements suggested from respondents in *Europe, North America, and North Asia* by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.



Global South

This graphic visualizes the system interconnections of elements suggested from respondents in *South America, the Middle East, and Central Asia, South Asia, and Oceania* by ***importance*** – number of mentions, and number of incoming and outgoing influence links and onward chains.

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Qualitative results

Respondents were given the option to add descriptions to their niches. This section presents a selection of quotes obtained from the crowdsourcer that showcase the type of thinking of respondents.

There were three qualitative questions: describes the niches you have entered, comment how different niches interact together and lead to change, and describe how these niches and futures would play out in your local context.

These answers were optional and not all respondents filled them in (41/45). The full set of responses is available on the Yoda folder.

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Description of niches

Product-sharing and Circular Economy:

“By making each and every urban pockets and periphery self sustaining, it is important to create edible cities. It not only helps to maintain urban food chain but also helps to control urban microclimate.”

Economic Rebalance

“We have to reduce our constant desire to buy new and improved 'things'. We must reduce consumption.”

Strategic socio-env assessment

“I am referring to institutions/mechanisms that represent the interests of future generations in the political processes. This is a way to include long term concerns into the policymaking processes.”

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Description of niches

Community living

“To diminish our ecological footprint, we need live simpler lives, with less consumerism and more sharing of resources in communities.”

New insights into persons and community

“Not so much an "innovation" as a dawning realization that the best of what we are now learning entails a fundamental reassessment of most of what we who are Modern Techno-Industrial (MTI) peoples and cultures take for granted about who and where we are, the game of life that we are playing and (1) just how badly we have come to play it and (2) how our MTI form of civilization keeps us from knowing and being known by reality at all adequately. This changes everything. It is a deeper realization than your grasp on the need for a "deep" transition.”

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How do these niches interact?

"By understanding how life works on the planet through ***education that empowers individuals to become critical thinkers, people might understand that individuality is an important but partial view: we are all linked, between ourselves and with other species.*** *Although it would be a regress to force community values only – since they are the base of lots of abuse of underprivileged groups, who are traditionally called to sacrifice their interests for the community – the current individuality pledged in Western civilization is unreal and causes real harm to other places and species. We need to embrace this complexity to move forward."*

"I've already stated that ***the need of the poor*** *(e.g. farmers being forced into intensification by market forces, which translate demand for cheap products, again by many who are poor) i****s in my opinion the strongest driver of environmental destruction; the other is the lack of awareness of the (remote) social and environmental cost of consumption.*** *While this may not necessarily be translated into monetary terms (which are biased by default), the fact that consumers (in the aggregate) are not forced to bear the true cost of overconsumption is an obvious fallacy in the economic system."*

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How would these innovations affect your community, region and country?

“Shared consumption in any area will let people interact and cut down over-production. The interaction between people will even help mental health issues especially in terms of isolation and anxieties. Plus if the privileged people start thinking about taking the train or bus and not their suv as well as start living in smaller houses or share their gardens for farming it will help the community. My sister for example has 10 chicken in her backyard for her community. If you do the same with fruits and Vegs I belive at least in my hometown there can be a huge change towards a more conscious food consumption."

“I live in a country, in which policymaking is characterized by short-term concerns.
The development of institutions representing the rights of future generations can greatly affect the content and the way policymaking is made.”

DEEP TRANSITIONS FUTURES

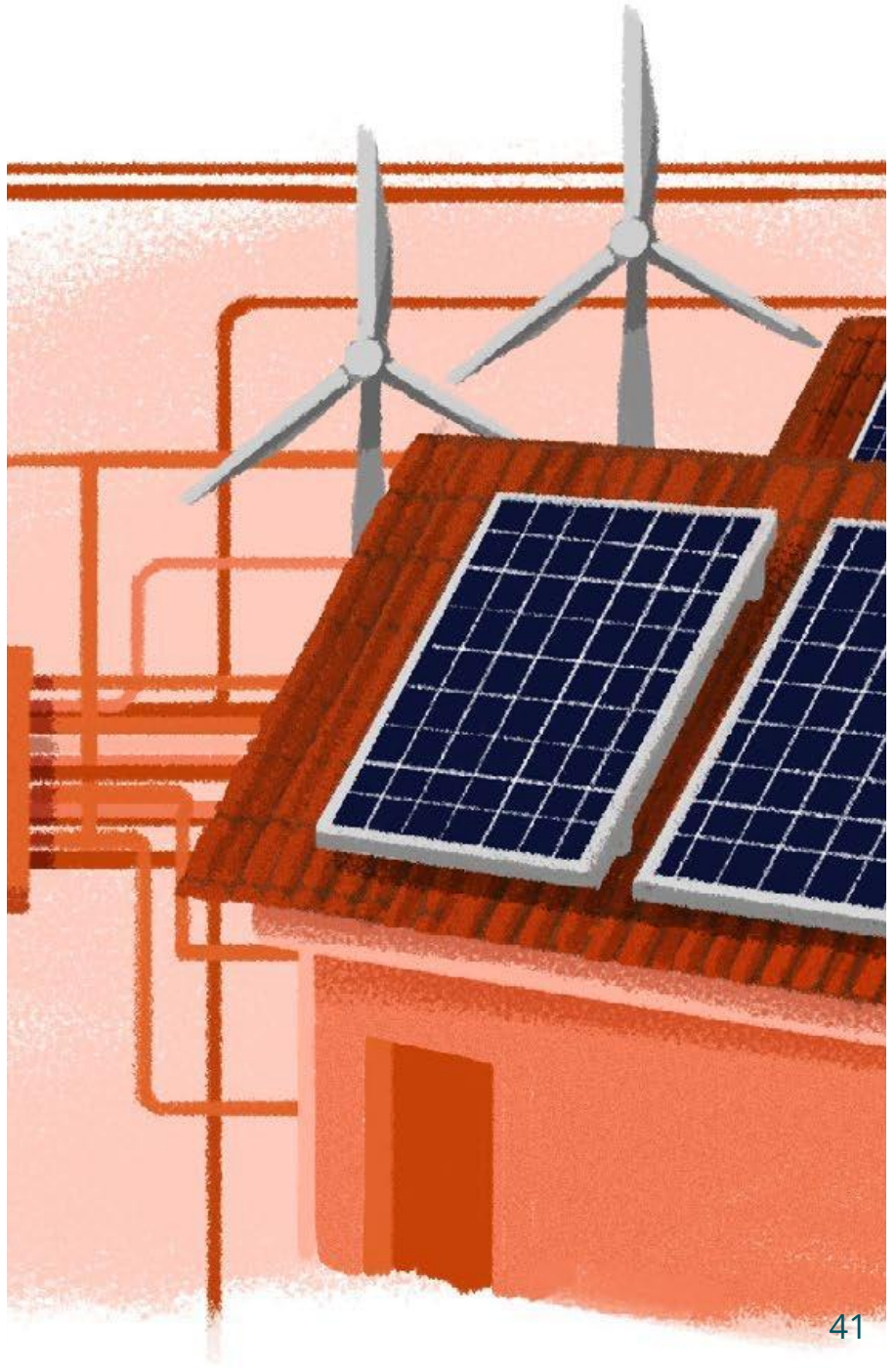
How would these innovations affect your community, region and country?

*"Political commitment could facilitate the **development of public policies that actually limit capitalist accumulation and favor the emergence and spread of new and old ways of living that are more sustainable and community-led**. This could change power relations that nowadays favor accumulation by a few and prevents social innovations from flourishing. In Brazil (my country), political commitment would be able to protect indigenous and traditional communities from being invaded, could change policies that promotes the big agribusiness in favor of small peasants, land distribution, agroecology, ecovillages, etc."*

*"Essentially the opposite of 'Divide et impera'. **Political engagement and sense of community go hand in hand.** They can perhaps be achieved through a sense of equality that could replace the current cynicism that goes with the rat race brought about by the inequality of competitive capitalism and (in my country at least) ridiculous daily politics.*

In Summary

These quote illustrates that respondents to the survey focused on social and political innovations more than technical ones. They stressed the importance of political commitment at all levels to drive the transformations required to achieve these worlds.

In line with the higher preference for the *After the Frugal Turn* and *Do No Harm* worlds, respondents put emphasis on the role of community action and solidarity in achieving transformational change.

Overall, these snippets give us some insights into how an external audience understands the aims and process of Deep Transitions, and how they think about it from their own perspective.