

# P / REFERENCES OF DESIGN

## TRAINING STRATEGIC TRANSITION DESIGNERS: ACTION MODES AND SCALES, SKILLS AND POSTURES.

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TAMING ENTROPY: SYSTEMS DESIGN FOR CLIMATE AND CHANGE

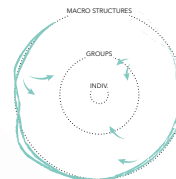
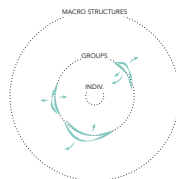
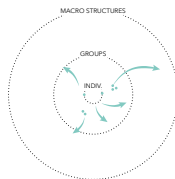
This contribution takes as its starting point the three ways envisaged by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC, 2018) to address the global climate crisis: mitigation, adaptation and resilience. We propose to consider them as three action modes, in order to draw a typology of agendas and leverage points for designers, whether they address changes in practices, organizational forms or worldviews. These three scales served as a basis to envision a master's-level educational program inspired by the Transition Design framework (Irwin & al., 2015; Tonkinwise, 2015). This visual presentation is an opportunity to explain the epistemological and methodological choices made, aiming to train conscientious, responsible and interdisciplinary designers.

## 1. A Typology of Agendas for Strategic Transition Designers

REGIMES (AS ACTION MODES) (IPCC, 2018)	Mitigation [of climate change]	Adaptation	Resilience
	"Human intervention to reduce emissions or strengthen greenhouse gas sinks."	"Process of adjusting to the current or expected climate and its consequences, so as to attenuate its detrimental effects and exploit its beneficial effects."	"Capacity of social, economic and environmental systems to cope with a change, respond or reorganize [...] while keeping a capacity to learn and transform."
DESIGN AS	Problem-solving	Strategy and tactics	Learning process
DESIGNERS' AGENCY	Working with the existing	Changing trajectories	Living change
MODES OF INTERVENTION	Immediate and situated response	Accompanying transitioning entities	Radical imagination

## 2. Levers and Dynamics of Change

TYPE OF CHANGE ADDRESSED	Practices (micro level)	Organizational forms (meso level)	Worldviews (eco-systemic level)
LEVERAGE POINTS	Approaches, methods, techniques, behaviors	Knowledge, decision making, structures	"Deep leverage points" (Meadows, 1999): systems/critical thinking, representations, sensemaking (Weick, 1993; Duchek, 2019)
OUTCOMES	Designers shape things with minimal negative impact	Designers participate in the reshaping of sustainability-oriented systems	Designers reveal the obsolescence of unsustainable patterns and behaviors



## 3. Designers' Skills and Postures According to Their Intervention Scales

This typology highlights the need for designers to constantly adjust their posture, if they are to act as transition strategists. Awareness of systemic **intertwinement**, and a focus on **links** rather than things are necessary skills to navigate between complex scales (Le Moigne, 1999). Ideally, a **paradigm shift** at the ecosystem level would naturally lead to sustainable organizations and shapes. But in reality, while the **deepest leverage points** have the power to question and possibly transcend existing mindsets, they are particularly delicate to handle (Meadows, 1999; Woivode & al., 2021). Hence, "the Transition Design approach can be compared with Chinese **acupuncture**", based on close observation, precise interventions, but also patience and reflection "in order to understand how the system is responding" (Irwin, 2018).

The diagram opposite shows how the four pillars of Transition Design (**vision, action, posture and change**) combine in our educational program. The progression is **spiral-shaped**, as the expected development of skills is not chronological but related to the handling of scales. In 2024, as we launch this master's program, we are relying on this **reflective pathway** to develop young designers' ability to position themselves according to each context they will be working on.

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