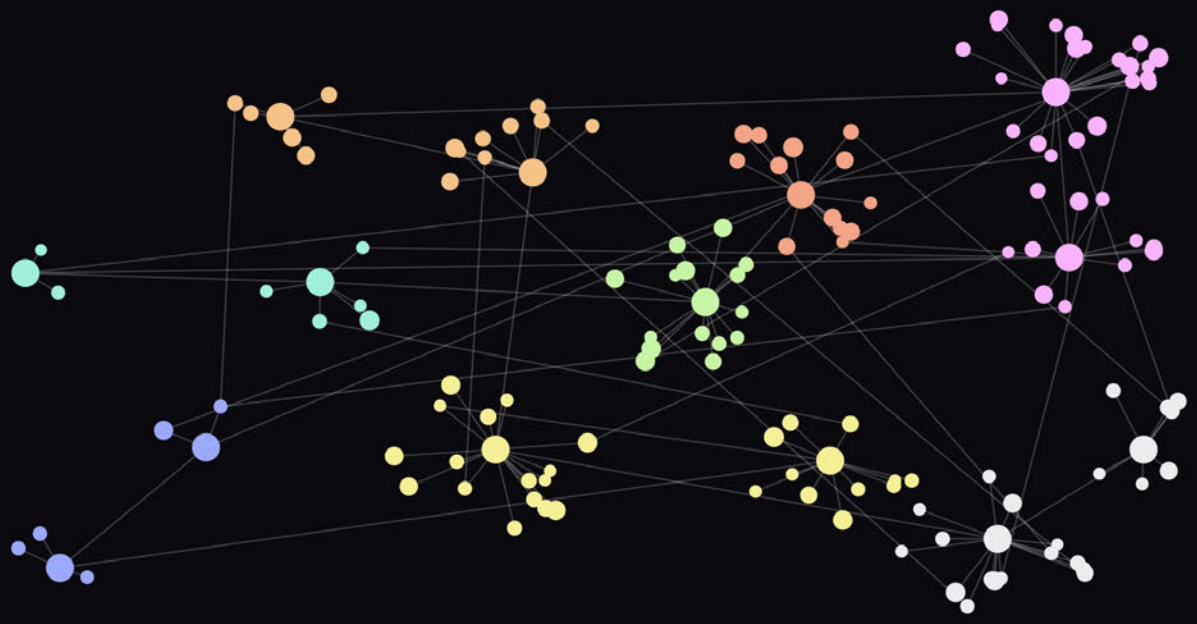


ECOSYSTEM MAPPING

Climate Advocacy & Climate Narratives in Switzerland

Insights & tools for foundations and NGOs

Author: Stephanie Frick (Seeding Futures)

Editorial lead: Corinne Grässle (Clima Now)

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Abstract

Switzerland's climate advocacy ecosystem is broader and more diverse than it is often perceived. This mapping of 149 national-level organisations makes visible who is shaping climate advocacy, how they seek to influence change, what they focus on – and which narratives they convey.

This publication offers three things. **A shared language:** four typologies – 11 actor types, 12 activity categories grouped into 6 intervention modes, 14 thematic areas and 14 Narrative Archetypes. **Patterns:** where the field is concentrated and where few organisations are active, which narratives are anchored in which parts of the ecosystem, and which potentially resonant narratives have very few carriers. **Tools for action:** an interactive Kumu map to explore the ecosystem and filter organisations; a Narrative Map to compare how different narrative logics frame climate challenges, possible solutions and societal transformation; a Strategic Framework for narrative deepening and shifting; and practical guidance for foundations and NGOs on discovering new ways to contribute, finding complementary partners, reading gaps with care, working with narratives and strengthening shared infrastructure.

The findings are exploratory and indicative. Their value lies less in final answers than in sharper questions – for anyone deciding where to focus, whom to work with and how to strengthen climate advocacy – grounded in a deeper understanding of the ecosystem and its narratives.

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Introduction

Why this matters

Switzerland has made significant climate commitments — net-zero by 2050, a 50% emissions reduction by 2030 versus 1990 — and recent years have brought real political milestones, from the Gletscher-Initiative to the Klimaschutzgesetz (2023) and the Stromgesetz (2024). The advocacy ecosystem behind these milestones is broad, spanning civil society, science, politics, business, philanthropy and culture. Yet this landscape remains difficult to navigate: funders struggle to identify leverage points, and organisations struggle to find the right partners. At the same time, the political context is becoming more contested. The rejections of the revised CO_2-Gesetz (2021), the Biodiversitätsinitiative (2024) and the Klimafonds-Initiative (2026) all illustrate how hard it is to build broad majorities for transformative approaches.

What we did

- **Approach:** An exploratory, qualitative mapping — not a scientific study, but a rigorous, practice-oriented analysis. This is a structured attempt to make the Swiss climate advocacy landscape visible, and to provide shared tools for navigating it.
- **Scope:** National-level actors in Switzerland actively engaged in pro-climate advocacy, directly or indirectly. Local and cantonal-only actors were excluded.
- **Sample:** 149 organisations, identified and categorised from an initial pool of around 200.
- **Methods:** Desk research (websites, publications, campaign materials), complemented by 7 expert interviews with field insiders.
- **Output:** A structured dataset, three ecosystem typologies (actor types, intervention modes, thematic focus) and an interactive Kumu map, forming the basis for the Ecosystem Mapping and informing the development of 14 Narrative Archetypes and a Narrative Map. Building on these insights, the authors also developed a complementary Strategic Framework for narrative deepening and shifting.

SCOPE NOTE

Due to the chosen qualitative and exploratory approach, findings are indicative, not statistically representative, and reflect patterns within this specific sample. Local and community-level actors are largely absent from the dataset; where we refer to "gaps", we mean gaps within the mapped ecosystem — not claims about what is missing in Swiss society as a whole.

Our perspective: narrative-led systems change

This work applies a narrative-led systems change perspective to the Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem. This brings the meaning-making dimensions of systems into focus: the shared ways in which problems, possibilities and change are understood, and how these interact with wider systems.

DEFINITION OF "NARRATIVE"

Narratives are recurring patterns across stories, public discourse and social practices that express and reinforce shared ways of making sense of problems and their causes, responsibility, desirable futures and pathways for change. They are connected to deeper values, beliefs and worldviews, and interact with the wider social, cultural and institutional systems in which they emerge and evolve.

Why narratives matter: Narratives help shape what becomes collectively understood as normal, possible, desirable, legitimate and necessary – and with this, the conditions under which different futures and forms of transformation can be imagined and pursued.

Two core assumptions ground this perspective:

1

Narrative change can be a lever for systems change – because it engages with the deeper patterns of meaning, values and mindsets through which systems are understood, legitimised and reproduced.

2

Narrative change is an ecosystem process – it emerges through interactions across a wider ecosystem, not through the actions of individual organisations alone.

Together, these assumptions imply two shifts in perspective: from individual messages to deeper patterns of meaning, and from individual organisations to ecosystem-level narrative change. Applied to climate advocacy, this means looking at two dimensions together: the ecosystem of actors and their interventions working towards climate action, and the plurality of narrative logics present across it.

MORE ABOUT NARRATIVES

Check out the Clima Now Narrative Guide: narrative.climanow.ch

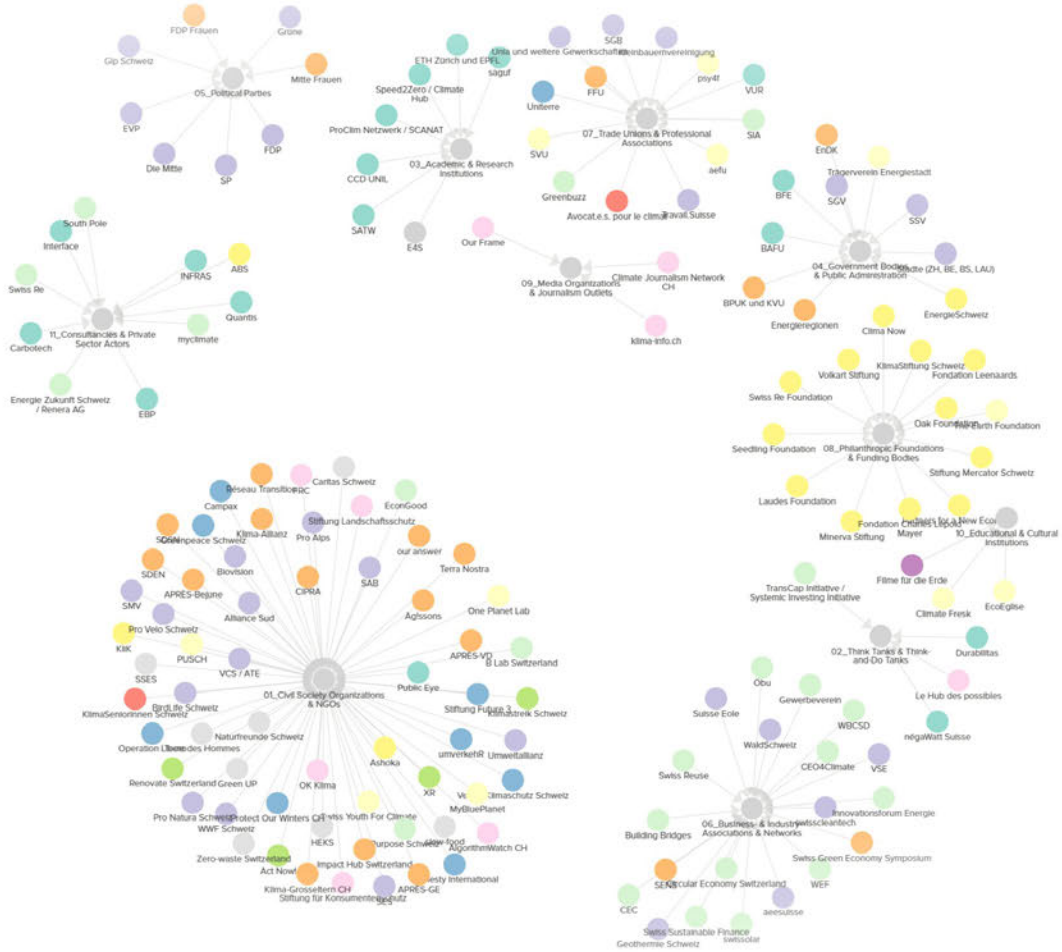
PART 1

The Swiss Climate Advocacy Ecosystem

Who is active? How do they work? What do they work on?

The interactive map

The full dataset is available as an interactive Kumu map – filterable by actor type, activities and intervention mode, thematic focus and Narrative Archetype. Individual organisations are visible in the Kumu map; this ecosystem mapping focuses on structural patterns.



The Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem – 149 mapped organisations (screenshot of the Kumu map).

EXPLORE THE INTERACTIVE MAP

All 149 organisations, filterable by actor type, intervention mode, thematic focus and Narrative Archetype

Open the Kumu map →

kumu.io/MapsforImpact/ecosystem-mapping-climate-advocacy-switzerland

Three lenses on the ecosystem

The Ecosystem Mapping provides a structured view of who is active in Swiss climate advocacy, how actors seek to influence change and what they focus on, across three dimensions: Actor Type, Intervention Mode and Thematic Focus[1].

Individually, each lens answers a narrow question; together, they let any organisation or portfolio locate itself within the ecosystem and see who occupies a similar or complementary position.

LENS 1 · ACTOR TYPE
Who is active?

LENS 2 · INTERVENTION MODE
How do they work?

LENS 3 · THEMATIC FOCUS
What do they work on?

Lens 1: Actor Type – who is active?

What it is: Organisations were categorised by institutional type into 11 categories.

Why it matters: Climate advocacy is not the domain of NGOs alone. Mapping actor types reveals the institutional diversity of the ecosystem and the different organisational positions from which climate agendas are shaped, funded, researched, represented and implemented.

OBSERVATION

Civil society organisations and NGOs form the largest single actor group, accounting for 41% of the mapped national-level ecosystem, but they do not constitute a majority. The remaining 59% spans a diverse range of institutional actors – including business and industry associations, trade unions and professional associations, foundations, public bodies, political parties, research institutions, consultancies and think tanks. This broader institutional composition is easy to overlook when climate advocacy is framed primarily through the lens of civil society organisations.

[1] These dimensions describe what is present in the mapped ecosystem. They do not, on their own, indicate what should be present or constitute a strategic gap – this requires additional judgement and contextual knowledge. Also, the mapping captures nationally active organisations; local and community-level actors are largely outside its scope.

LENS 1 · ACTOR TYPE

Who is active in the Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem?

149 organisations categorised across 11 institutional types

Civil Society Organisations & NGOs **40.9%** n = 61

Non-profit organisations engaged in advocacy, public engagement or programmatic work on climate and related issues.

Business & Industry Associations & Networks **12.8%** n = 19

Organisations representing the interests of companies, sectors or industries, engaged in policy advocacy, industry coordination and influencing business decision-making that impacts climate-related action.

Trade Unions & Professional Associations **8.7%** n = 13

Organisations representing workers or professional groups, influencing labour-related and sectoral policies.

Philanthropic Foundations & Funding Bodies **8.7%** n = 13

Organisations providing financial resources and strategic support to initiatives and actors in the field.

Consultancies & Private Sector Actors **6.7%** n = 10

Actors providing advisory services and climate-related strategy development. Private sector actors that are active in climate advocacy at national level.

Government Bodies & Public Administration **6.0%** n = 9

Public institutions involved in policy-making, implementation and governance at federal, cantonal or municipal levels.

Political Parties **5.4%** n = 8

Political organisations participating in electoral processes and shaping policy agendas.

Academic & Research Institutions **4.0%** n = 6

Universities and research institutes primarily focused on the production of scientific knowledge and expertise.

Think Tanks & Think-and-Do Tanks **2.7%** n = 4

Organisations that combine research, policy analysis and advocacy-oriented activities to influence public debate and decision-making.

Educational & Cultural Institutions **2.0%** n = 3

Institutions engaged in education, learning and cultural production, contributing to societal awareness and meaning-making.

Media Organisations & Journalism Outlets **2.0%** n = 3

Actors producing journalistic content and shaping public discourse through journalism, reporting and analysis.

Bar length and n reflect share of the mapped ecosystem (% of sample, n = 149).

Lens 2: Intervention Mode – how do they work?

What it is: Each organisation was assigned one dominant type of activity out of 12 activity categories in total. These 12 types of activity were further grouped into 6 broader modes of intervention: Knowledge & Expertise | Advocacy & Policy Influence | Mobilisation & Collective Action | Cultural, Discursive & Symbolic Influence | Economic & Business Influence | Resourcing & Enabling. These modes capture not only what organisations do, but the different ways through which they seek to influence political and societal change (modus operandi). The detailed breakdown of the 6 intervention modes and 12 activities is shown on page 10.

Why it matters: Climate advocacy is not just policy lobbying and street protests. Mapping intervention modes makes visible the full range of intervention logics at work in the ecosystem – and reveals where they are concentrated and where few organisations are active.

OBSERVATION

Activity is spread fairly evenly across the six intervention modes, with no single mode dominating. Advocacy & Policy Influence (22%) and Mobilisation & Collective Action (22%) are jointly the two largest modes, followed closely by Knowledge & Expertise (19%). Cultural, Discursive & Symbolic Influence (12%) and Resourcing & Enabling (11%) are the smallest of the six modes. Across the twelve activity categories, Arts & Culture Action (1 organisation) and Strategic Litigation (2) stand out as particularly sparsely represented.

Lens 3: Thematic Focus – what do they work on?

What it is: Each organisation was assigned a primary thematic focus across 14 areas – ranging from sector-specific themes (energy, transport, food, finance) to broader thematic areas such as justice, health, systems change and education. The distribution across the 14 thematic areas is shown on page 11.

Why it matters: It shows where organisational attention is concentrated across the ecosystem – and which themes are covered by comparatively few organisations.

OBSERVATION

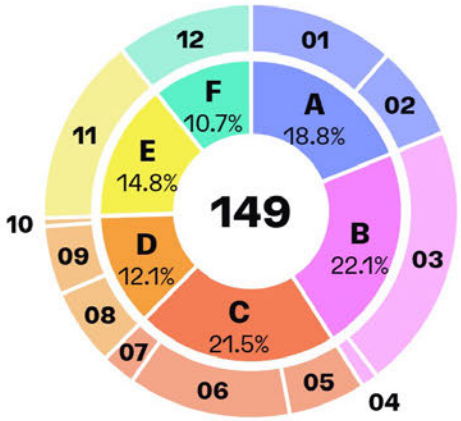
The mapped ecosystem concentrates heavily on cross-cutting mitigation, which represents the largest area, followed by broader new economy and systems-change agendas. Areas such as adaptation, health and digital technology are covered by far fewer organisations. This raises a question for funders and climate organisations: does their current thematic focus match the full range of challenges relevant to climate transformation?

Fewer organisations per category does not necessarily mean a genuine thematic gap exists – it can also reflect how the field happens to be organised geographically or institutionally. Two scope notes apply: the large New Economy & Systems Change category partly reflects its broad, cross-cutting definition, and locally embedded themes such as food systems, local circular economy and community resilience are likely underrepresented given this mapping's national scope.

LENS 2 · INTERVENTION MODE

How do organisations seek to create influence?

12 activity categories (outer ring), grouped into 6 broader modes of intervention (inner ring) · n = 149



A Knowledge & Expertise — 18.8% · n = 28

01 Research & Knowledge Generation n = 17
Production of knowledge, analysis and evidence (e.g. studies, reports, data).

02 Capacity Building & Education n = 11
Development of skills and competencies (e.g. training, educational formats).

B Advocacy & Policy Influence — 22.1% · n = 33

03 Lobbying & Policy Advocacy n = 31
Strategic engagement in policy processes to influence decisions, policies or actions of government officials or regulatory bodies.

04 Strategic Litigation n = 2
Use of legal instruments to influence or challenge regulatory frameworks.

C Mobilisation & Collective Action — 21.5% · n = 32

05 Campaigning (Issue & Electoral) n = 9
Time-bound campaigns aimed at influencing public opinion or political decisions, often linked to specific demands or outcomes.

06 Organising, Network & Coalition Building n = 19
Creation and coordination of alliances and networks (and collective structures).

07 Activism n = 4
Visible and often confrontational actions (e.g. protests, strikes, civil disobedience).

D Cultural, Discursive & Symbolic Influence — 12.1% · n = 18

08 Knowledge Mediation, Public & Expert Discourse n = 9
Activities that interpret, explain and communicate knowledge within public or expert discourse (e.g. journalism, thematic platforms).

09 Awareness Raising & Public Sensitisation n = 8
Activities that create visibility and public attention for climate issues (e.g. information campaigns, public communication formats).

10 Arts & Culture Action n = 1
Cultural and artistic formats that convey meaning and values (e.g. storytelling, film, artistic interventions).

E Economic & Business Influence — 14.8% · n = 22

11 Industry & Business Advocacy or Economic Sphere Influence n = 22
Engagement with companies, industry sectors and business associations to influence private-sector practices through business advocacy, standards and voluntary initiatives.

F Resourcing & Enabling — 10.7% · n = 16

12 Funding & Resource Mobilisation n = 16
Provision and allocation of financial and organisational resources.

Segment size is proportional to the number of organisations (n = 149, centre of the chart). Inner ring: the six broader modes (A–F). Outer ring: the 12 activities, numbered 01–12 and described below.

LENS 3 · THEMATIC FOCUS

What does the Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem work on?

149 organisations categorised across 14 thematic areas

Climate Mitigation & Emission Reduction (Cross-cutting)	**26.8%**	n = 40	Cross-sector approaches to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, including economy-wide decarbonisation pathways, net-zero strategies and overarching mitigation frameworks not tied to a specific sector.
New Economy & Systems Change	**16.1%**	n = 24	Alternative economic models and systemic transformations beyond incremental change, including post-growth, regenerative or solidarity-based approaches.
Climate Justice & Social Equity	**10.7%**	n = 16	Distributional aspects, fairness and social implications of climate change, including impacts on vulnerable groups and questions of responsibility, justice and equity.
Sustainable Business, Circular Economy & Responsible Consumption	**10.1%**	n = 15	Transformation of business models, supply chains and consumption patterns towards sustainability, including circular economy approaches and responsible production and consumption.
Energy Transition	**9.4%**	n = 14	Transformation of energy systems towards renewable sources and efficient solutions, including energy production, distribution, efficiency and energy policy.
Nature & Biodiversity (Protection & Regeneration)	**7.4%**	n = 11	Protection, restoration and regeneration of ecosystems, biodiversity and natural resources.
Food Systems & Agriculture	**4.0%**	n = 6	Sustainable food production, land use and consumption patterns.
Transport & Mobility	**2.7%**	n = 4	Sustainable mobility systems, including public transport, active mobility, electrification and reduction of transport-related emissions.
Health & Quality of Life	**2.7%**	n = 4	Connections between climate change, public health, well-being and quality of life.
Finance	**2.7%**	n = 4	Financial systems, investment flows and economic instruments that influence climate action, including sustainable finance, systemic investing and divestment.
Education & Culture	**2.0%**	n = 3	Learning, education and cultural processes that shape awareness, values and societal understanding of climate issues.
Industry, Built Environment & Infrastructure	**2.0%**	n = 3	Decarbonisation of industrial processes, construction, buildings and large-scale infrastructure systems.
Climate Adaptation & Resilience	**2.0%**	n = 3	Adaptation to climate impacts and strengthening societal, ecological and infrastructural resilience.
Digital Technology & AI	**1.3%**	n = 2	Role of digital technologies, data systems and artificial intelligence in climate mitigation, adaptation or system transformation.

Bar length and n reflect share of the mapped ecosystem (% of sample, n = 149).

PART 2

The Swiss Climate Narrative Archetypes

What recurring narrative logics are present across the ecosystem?

Introducing Climate Narrative Archetypes

Part 1 described the Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem through three lenses: who is active, how actors seek to influence change and what thematic areas they focus on. Part 2 adds a narrative perspective. It looks at the deeper patterns of meaning that organisations express and reinforce – how the climate challenge and possible solutions are understood, which futures are considered desirable and how societal transformation is believed to happen.

There is no single climate narrative. Multiple narrative logics coexist across the climate advocacy ecosystem.

These patterns are often implicit, yet they shape which pathways for change appear possible or desirable. Narratives are expressed and reinforced not only through communication, but also through actions and social practices.

Through the analysis, 14 Narrative Archetypes were identified and developed to make these underlying patterns more visible, structured and comparable. Bringing them into view can help climate advocacy actors reflect more consciously on the narrative logics they express and reinforce, and how these relate to wider processes of societal change. This can support more deliberate engagement with narratives as part of systems change efforts.

The archetypes were developed through an iterative synthesis of expert perspectives, desk research, analysis of recurring patterns observed across communication in the mapped field, and insights from the Ecosystem Mapping. Each Narrative Archetype brings together four dimensions:

Interpretive Frame	**Transformation Logic**	**Values & Emotional Logic**	**Strategic Characteristics for Application**

The archetypes are not fixed or mutually exclusive narratives: organisations may draw on several narrative logics, which can overlap, combine and appear differently across contexts. For mapping purposes, however, organisations were assigned a dominant Narrative Archetype. This should be understood as an analytical simplification rather than an indication that an organisation exclusively represents one narrative logic. The overview on the next page shows the 14 Narrative Archetypes and the number of mapped organisations associated with each. A detailed description of all 14 Narrative Archetypes and their dimensions can be found in the Appendix.

Overview – the 14 Narrative Archetypes at a glance

01 Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership
Breakthroughs, efficiency and technological progress

n = 12

02 Economic Prosperity & Competitiveness
Growth, jobs and national advantage

n = 4

03 Climate as Risk & Insurance
Managing uncertainty and strengthening resilience

n = 3

04 Moral Responsibility & Climate Justice
Fairness, rights and systemic redress

n = 14

05 Natural Ecosystem Protection & Regeneration
Protecting and restoring ecosystems for a thriving planet and future generations

n = 16

06 Resilience, Sovereignty & Local Self-Reliance
Resilient communities with local energy and food systems

n = 6

07 Protect our Home – Stability, Protection & Continuity
Safeguarding people and places we depend on

n = 3

08 Grassroots & Radical Change
People-powered solutions from the ground up

n = 12

09 Systems Transformation
Transforming the rules, structures and mindsets that shape our world

n = 22

10 Health & Quality of Life
Well-being, dignity and flourishing for all people

n = 6

11 Social Balance & Just Transition (Domestic)
Equity and inclusion in the transition to a better future

n = 10

12 Business as Climate Solution
Enterprise, investment and scalable solutions

n = 17

13 Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise
Evidence, analysis and trusted knowledge

n = 16

14 Democratic Process & Consensus
Bringing perspectives together to find common ground and collective direction

n = 8

Colours group neighbouring narrative logics, matching the Narrative Map. Order follows the categorisation scheme (01–14), not frequency. n = number of mapped organisations with this dominant archetype (of 149). **Methodological note:** because each organisation was assigned one dominant archetype, the counts reflect classification within the mapping, not the total number of organisations that might use a particular narrative logic.

What the overview shows

OBSERVATIONS

1 Diverse narrative logics coexist – no single archetype dominates.

Systems Transformation is the most frequent Narrative Archetype, but accounts for only 22 of 149 mapped organisations (approximately 15%). Other frequently represented archetypes include Business as Climate Solution (17), Natural Ecosystem Protection & Regeneration (16) and Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise (16). These reflect different understandings of climate challenges, desirable futures and pathways for change. The mapped field is not organised around one shared understanding of climate change or how change happens (see also the Narrative Map on page 17).

2 Some potentially relevant narrative logics are represented by very few organisations.

Protect our Home and Climate as Risk & Insurance are associated with only three mapped organisations each, while Economic Prosperity & Competitiveness has four. Based on expert input, the first two may have the potential to resonate with broader Swiss audiences. Their limited representation raises a question worth exploring further, but does not, by itself, establish a strategic gap.

The Narrative Map – navigating the narrative landscape

This section provides a comparative view of the 14 Narrative Archetypes by positioning them along two selected characteristics that capture key differences observed across the narrative landscape, creating a Narrative Map:

- **Breadth of the problem and solution space (y-axis)** – from more carbon-centric to more holistic / systemic understandings of the climate challenge and possible solutions.
- **Implied depth of societal transformation (x-axis)** – from improving, protecting and adapting largely within existing systems to more far-reaching transformation and reconfiguration of underlying structures, systems and mindsets.

Together, these dimensions make visible the differences in how the Narrative Archetypes frame the climate challenge and the depth of societal transformation they imply. **The Narrative Map provides a basis for orientation and comparison; it is not a normative assessment or an indication of which narratives are more desirable or effective.**

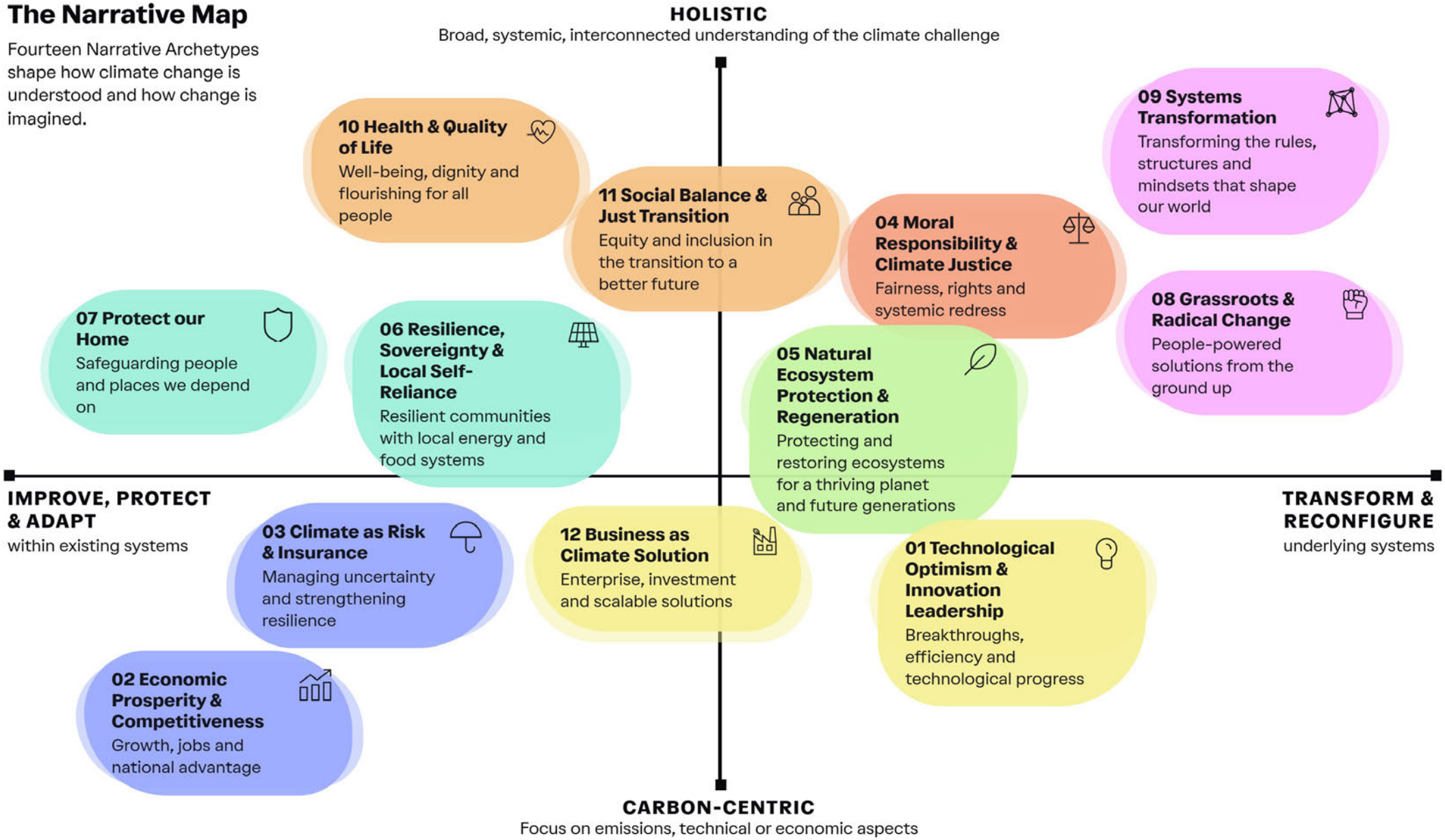
OBSERVATION

The two most prevalent archetypes in our mapping represent distinctly different approaches to transformation: Systems Transformation emphasises deeper changes to systems, structures and mindsets, while Business as Climate Solution works within existing systems, placing businesses and economic actors at the centre of climate action.

Together, the Narrative Archetypes and Map provide a basis for comparing underlying narrative logics, reflecting on different perspectives on transformation and situating an organisation's own narrative orientation within the wider landscape.

The Narrative Map

Fourteen Narrative Archetypes shape how climate change is understood and how change is imagined.



13 Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise
Evidence, analysis and trusted knowledge

14 Democratic Process & Consensus
Bringing perspectives together to find common ground and collective direction

PART 3

Bringing the Ecosystem and Narrative Perspectives Together

Who currently carries different narratives, how and where?

Bringing the ecosystem and narrative perspectives together

Who currently carries different narratives, how and where?

Narratives do not exist in isolation. They are carried, reinforced and shaped through a wider ecosystem of actors, interventions and thematic fields. Bringing the Ecosystem Mapping and Narrative Archetypes together provides an additional perspective on how narrative logics are represented within the mapped Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem.

Taking the Narrative Archetypes as the starting point, the combined analysis examines three questions: Who carries different narrative logics? Through which forms of intervention are they carried and reinforced? And where are they thematically embedded?

What it is: For each Narrative Archetype, the combined view shows how many organisations of each actor type are associated with it. The same cross-analysis was conducted for the 12 activity categories and for Thematic Focus.

Why it matters: Seeing which narratives are anchored in which parts of the ecosystem – across different actor types, intervention modes and thematic fields – can help foundations and organisations identify potential connections, complementarities and opportunities for collaboration.

The interactive Kumu map (page 6) complements the combined analysis by allowing readers to identify the specific organisations behind these patterns and find potential partners across the ecosystem.

Each row of the heatmap on the next page represents one Narrative Archetype. Cells show the number and share of mapped organisations by Actor Type. Base: 149 organisations with an assigned dominant Narrative Archetype.

The findings that follow draw on all three dimensions of the combined analysis – Actor Type, Intervention Mode and Thematic Focus. The corresponding heatmaps for activities and Thematic Focus are provided in the Appendix (pages 45–46).

INTERPRETIVE LIMITS

The combined view shows which narratives are present in the mapped ecosystem, not how influential they are in wider society. Each organisation was assigned one dominant archetype for mapping purposes, although organisations may draw on several narrative logics. Several archetypes include fewer than 10 organisations. The patterns point to strategic questions rather than proven gaps.

Who carries different narrative logics across the ecosystem?

Narrative Archetype × Actor Type · number and share of organisations within each archetype · n = 149

Narrative Archetype	n	Civil Society & NGOs	Think Tanks	Academic & Research	Government & Administration	Political Parties	Business & Industry Associations	Trade Unions & Professional Assoc.	Philanthropic Foundations	Media & Journalism	Educational & Cultural Inst.	Consultancies & Private Sector
01 Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership	12	**3** 25%			**2** 17%		**5** 42%	**1** 8%				**1** 8%
02 Economic Prosperity & Competitiveness	4					**2** 50%	**2** 50%					
03 Climate as Risk & Insurance	3						**1** 33%		**1** 33%			**1** 33%
04 Moral Responsibility & Climate Justice	14	**8** 57%				**2** 14%		**1** 7%	**2** 14%		**1** 7%	
05 Natural Ecosystem Protection & Regeneration	16	**12** 75%						**1** 6%	**2** 13%		**1** 6%	
06 Resilience, Sovereignty & Local Self-Reliance	6	**3** 50%			**1** 17%			**1** 17%	**1** 17%			
07 Protect our Home – Stability, Protection & Continuity	3	**2** 67%				**1** 33%						
08 Grassroots & Radical Change	12	**10** 83%					**1** 8%				**1** 8%	
09 Systems Transformation	22	**10** 45%	**3** 14%				**1** 5%		**6** 27%	**1** 5%		**1** 5%
10 Health & Quality of Life	6	**4** 67%						**2** 33%				
11 Social Balance & Just Transition (Domestic)	10	**4** 40%				**2** 20%		**4** 40%				
12 Business as Climate Solution	17	**3** 18%				**1** 6%	**9** 53%	**1** 6%	**1** 6%			**2** 12%
13 Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise	16		**1** 6%	**6** 38%				**2** 13%		**2** 13%		**5** 31%
14 Democratic Process & Consensus	8	**2** 25%			**6** 75%							
All mapped organisations (reference: share of sample)	**149**	**61** 41%	**4** 3%	**6** 4%	**9** 6%	**8** 5%	**19** 13%	**13** 9%	**13** 9%	**3** 2%	**3** 2%	**10** 7%

How to read: each row is one Narrative Archetype. Cells show the number of organisations and their share within that archetype; darker = higher share. The bottom row shows each actor type's share of the full sample for comparison. Several archetypes include fewer than 10 organisations, so their shares should be read with care. Shares may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

What the combination reveals

OBSERVATIONS

1 Several actor types have a default narrative

Several actor types draw predominantly on one narrative logic that matches their institutional role. All six academic and research institutions have *Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise* as their dominant narrative. Six of nine government bodies use *Democratic Process & Consensus*. Among business and industry associations, 14 of 19 have either *Business as Climate Solution* (9) or *Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership* (5) as their dominant narrative. By contrast, NGOs are distributed across 11 of the 14 Narrative Archetypes, showing that this actor group spans a wide range of narrative logics within the mapping. NGOs are also the largest actor group in the dataset, providing important context for this breadth of representation.

2 Some narratives have a dominant mode of intervention

Certain Narrative Archetypes are strongly associated with particular forms of intervention. *Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise* is predominantly carried through research (13 of 16 organisations), while *Business as Climate Solution* is predominantly carried through business advocacy (13 of 17). This suggests that narrative logics and intervention modes are closely connected in parts of the mapped advocacy ecosystem.

3 Narratives have distinct thematic anchors

Several narrative logics are concentrated in one thematic field: *Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership* in Energy Transition (9 of 12), *Moral Responsibility & Climate Justice* in Climate Justice & Social Equity (9 of 14), and *Systems Transformation* in New Economy & Systems Change (13 of 22).

EXAMPLE – A CLOSER LOOK: SYSTEMS TRANSFORMATION

The archetype *Systems Transformation* is most frequent (22 organisations) and has NGOs as its largest actor group (10 of 22), broadly reflecting their share of the overall sample. What sets it apart is the strong role of philanthropic foundations (6) and think tanks (3): almost half of all mapped foundations (6 of 13) draw on this narrative. No government body or political party is among its carriers.

In terms of activities, funding (8) and network building (6) are most prominent. While *Systems Transformation* has a clear thematic focus on *New Economy & Systems Change* (13 of 22 organisations), it also extends across other thematic areas, including energy, mitigation, sustainable business, finance and climate justice.

PART 4

A Strategic Framework for Narrative Intervention

How can narrative logics be deepened or shifted?

A Strategic Framework for narrative intervention

The Narrative Archetypes describe different underlying narrative logics, while the Narrative Map shows how they are positioned within the wider narrative landscape. The combined analysis adds an ecosystem perspective by showing how these narrative logics are represented across actor types, intervention modes and thematic fields.

Building on these insights, the authors developed a Strategic Framework for actors who wish to engage in more deliberate narrative intervention. It explores how narrative logics might be strengthened and anchored (Narrative Deepening) or expanded and reshaped (Narrative Shifting). The framework offers guidance for foundations and NGOs without prescribing a single approach.

Two strategic levers

The framework distinguishes between two strategic levers: Narrative Deepening and Narrative Shifting. These are distinct but not mutually exclusive: they may be combined over time, within individual organisations or across different actors in the ecosystem. The narrative's position provides context, while the strategic objective guides the choice of lever.

Narrative Deepening

Narrative deepening focuses on strengthening the reach, coherence, resonance and practical or institutional embedding of an existing narrative without fundamentally altering its underlying meaning logic.

The strategic objective is primarily to increase its societal traction, practical relevance and capacity to influence decision-making, institutional processes and everyday contexts.

This may involve:

- increasing reach and expanding resonance across audiences and societal domains;
- strengthening institutional anchoring and implementation pathways;
- increasing narrative coherence and strategic alignment; and
- translating narratives into concrete practices, policies and lived realities.

Narrative Shifting

Narrative shifting focuses on expanding, reframing or transforming existing meaning logics through which climate-related challenges and pathways for change are understood, as well as creating alternative narratives.

The strategic objective is primarily to reshape underlying assumptions, values, interpretive logics and societal imaginaries that define what appears possible, legitimate or desirable in relation to climate action and societal change.

This may involve:

- connecting previously siloed domains and perspectives;
- introducing new values, problem framings or societal priorities;
- challenging dominant assumptions and system logics; and
- developing alternative visions and narratives that expand the space of possible futures.

From strategic levers to a Strategic Space for narrative interventions

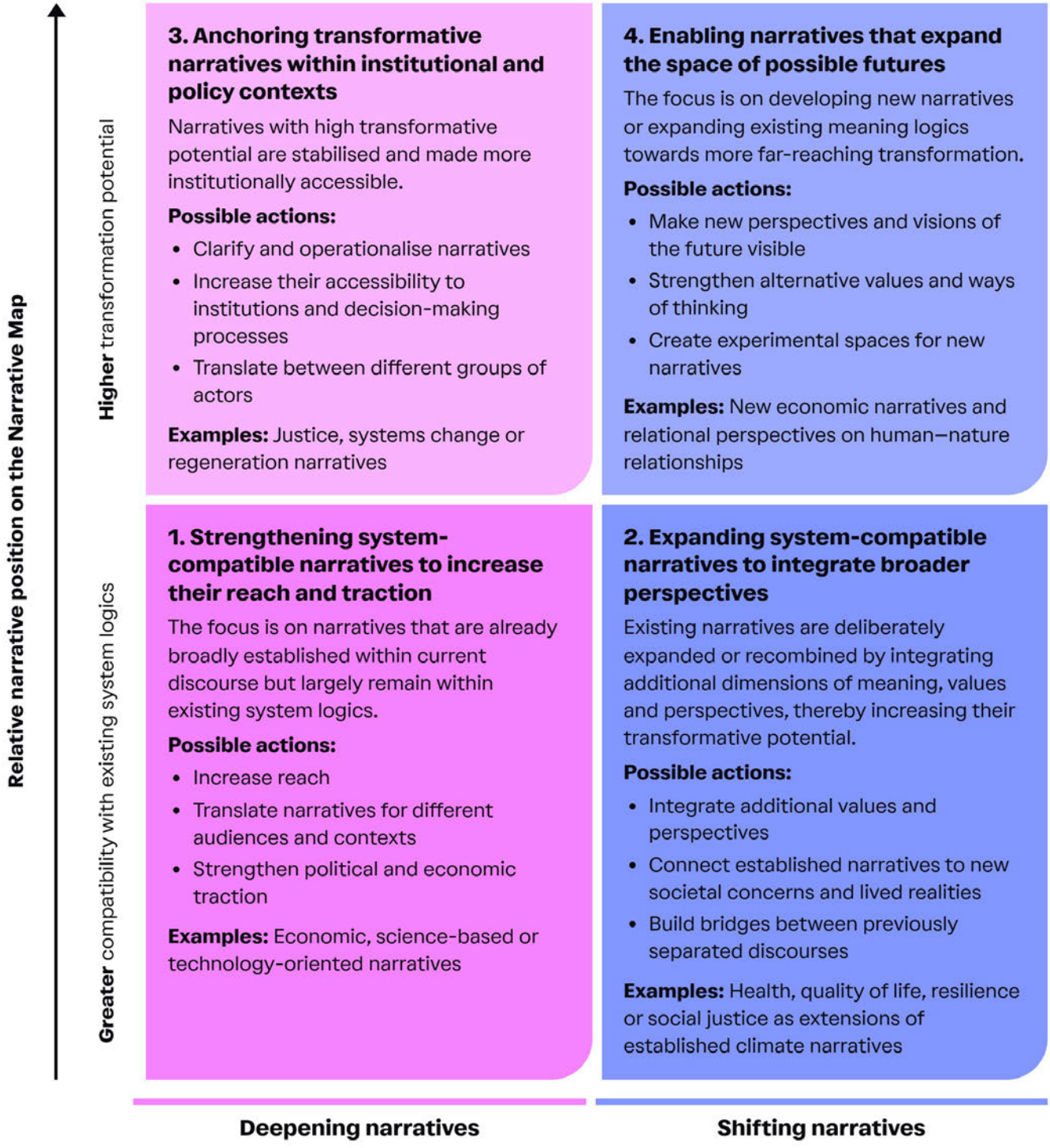
How the two strategic levers can be applied depends in part on a narrative's relative position within the narrative landscape. Building on the Narrative Map, the framework combines this position with the choice of strategic lever.

1. **Narrative position (y-axis):** Represents an interpretive tension within the Swiss climate narrative landscape, ranging from greater compatibility with existing system logics to higher transformative potential. Expert perspectives and desk research suggest that greater compatibility with existing system logics may also be associated with stronger institutional embeddedness, although this is not a fixed relationship.
2. **Strategic lever (x-axis):** Narrative Deepening or Narrative Shifting.

Combining these two dimensions results in four strategic approaches: **Strengthening, Expanding, Anchoring and Enabling.** These illustrate how Deepening and Shifting can take different forms depending on a narrative's position.

How the framework can be applied — in four steps from selecting a Narrative Archetype to identifying a possible strategic approach — is described in the Appendix, together with illustrative examples for four Narrative Archetypes (pages 43–44).

Strategic Space for narrative interventions



Conclusions

01 **What the Mapping Shows**
What patterns emerge across actors, interventions, themes and narratives?

02 **Informing Strategy**
How can understanding the ecosystem and its narratives inform strategy – and help shape change?

03 **Enabling Narrative Work**
What does sustained narrative change require across the ecosystem?

04 **How to Use This Ecosystem Mapping**
How can foundations and NGOs use these insights in their own strategic decisions and climate advocacy work?

CONCLUSION 01

What the mapping shows

What patterns emerge across actors, interventions, themes and narratives?

Read together, Parts 1 to 3 point to four patterns in the Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem – each with implications for how foundations and NGOs approach their work.

1

Climate advocacy is broader than it is often perceived.

Civil society organisations and NGOs form the largest actor group, yet 59% of the mapped organisations are other actor types – from business associations and foundations to public bodies, research institutions and political parties. Activity is spread across six intervention modes, with none dominating.

2

There is no single climate narrative.

Fourteen narrative logics coexist, and none dominates: the most frequent, Systems Transformation, accounts for about 15% of the mapped organisations. The two most prevalent archetypes imply distinctly different approaches to transformation – one seeking deeper changes to systems, structures and mindsets, the other working within existing systems.

3

Narratives are anchored in particular parts of the ecosystem.

Several actor types draw predominantly on one narrative logic, some narratives are carried mainly through particular forms of intervention, and many have distinct thematic anchors, while others extend across several fields. These patterns suggest that narratives may circulate largely within established institutional networks and audiences, while particular intervention modes and thematic fields shape how and where they are expressed and reinforced. This raises questions such as: Which narratives could benefit from being taken up by other actor types? Could complementary intervention modes offer additional ways to express and reinforce them? Where might shared narrative logics create connections across thematic fields? And which alliances could help narratives reach beyond their usual institutional networks and audiences?

4

Some activities, themes and narratives remain at the margins.

Few mapped organisations work through Arts & Culture Action or Strategic Litigation, or thematically focus on adaptation, health or digital technology. The same applies to some narratives: *Protect our Home* and *Climate as Risk & Insurance* are each carried by only three organisations within the mapped ecosystem, although expert input suggests they may have the potential to resonate with broader Swiss audiences.

CONCLUSION 02

Informing strategy

How can understanding the ecosystem and its narratives inform strategy – and help shape change?

Taken together, the insights and tools in this ecosystem mapping support two complementary strategic uses: critical reflection and strategic orientation and, where relevant, more deliberate narrative intervention.

1. Critical reflection and strategic orientation

The ecosystem typologies help foundations and NGOs locate their own work by actor type, intervention mode and thematic focus, and see who occupies similar or complementary positions. The Narrative Archetypes and Map add a further layer: they help actors reflect on the different understandings of climate challenges, possible solutions and societal transformation expressed or supported through their own work and across the wider advocacy landscape. The combined analysis connects both perspectives by showing where different narrative orientations are represented and which parts of the ecosystem might offer relevant perspectives or potential connections. This provides a basis for questioning underlying assumptions and reflecting on one's own strategies and approaches to change – independently of any specific narrative intervention.

2. Deliberate narrative intervention

For actors wishing to use these insights as a basis for deliberate narrative intervention, the Strategic Framework (Part 4) offers a structured way to explore such intervention through two strategic levers – Narrative Deepening and Narrative Shifting. Its use is not a prerequisite for working strategically with the mapping.

Both strategic uses can contribute to longer-term narrative change across the ecosystem, as part of broader systems change efforts.

CONCLUSION 03

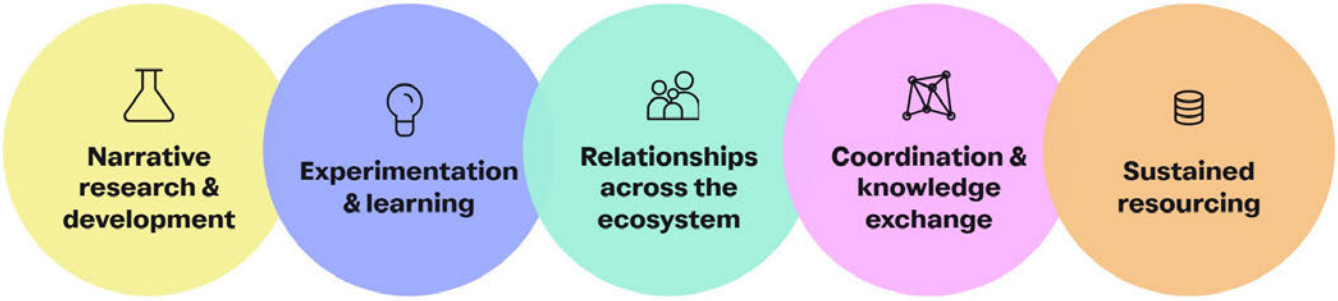
Enabling narrative work across the ecosystem

What does sustained narrative change require across the ecosystem?

As set out in the introduction, narrative change is an ecosystem process. Narratives are carried and reinforced by different actors, through different forms of intervention and across different thematic contexts.

Sustained narrative change therefore depends not only on how individual actors work with narratives, but also on the capacities, relationships and infrastructure that enable longer-term, complementary narrative work across the ecosystem.

These conditions may include capacities for narrative research and development, spaces for experimentation and learning, relationships across different parts of the ecosystem, mechanisms for coordination and knowledge exchange, and sustained resourcing for longer-term narrative work.



At the ecosystem level, different actors may pursue different but complementary approaches to narrative change. Given how strongly narratives are anchored in particular actor types, intervention modes and thematic fields (Conclusion 01), sustained narrative change may depend on how these different contributions connect and reinforce each other over time.

This points to a role for ecosystem-level coordination and orchestration: connecting actors working with different narrative logics and intervention modes, enabling shared learning, and identifying where complementary contributions could reinforce one another. Orchestration does not imply centralised control of the narrative landscape, but more intentional coordination, connection and learning across actors with different roles and approaches.

CONCLUSION 04

How to use this ecosystem mapping – implications for foundations & NGOs

The mapping is not a verdict on the field. It is a shared reference that helps you discover options, identify potential partners and ask sharper strategic questions. Five uses stand out.

01 DISCOVER – Discover more ways to contribute

Climate advocacy is often equated with NGOs doing lobbying or protests. The four typologies developed in this work show that it is much broader: 11 actor types, 12 activity categories (grouped into 6 intervention modes), 14 thematic areas and 14 Narrative Archetypes. This opens up options that are easy to overlook. The typologies can also serve as a structure for strategy work: go through each one and ask which options fit your mission, strengths and role.

FOUNDATIONS

A foundation that sees itself as non-political may conclude that supporting lobbying is not for them. Yet lobbying is only one of 12 activity categories. Others, such as organising, shaping public discourse or awareness raising, can contribute to climate advocacy without direct political lobbying. When developing or reviewing your funding strategy, the typologies can help you define priorities that fit your goals: which actors, activities (intervention modes), themes and narratives you want to support.

NGOS

The typologies can widen your view of possible partners and approaches. For example, 59% of mapped actors are not NGOs but other actor types, including business associations, research institutions, public bodies or think tanks. This invites you to consider how your organisation wants to position itself within the wider advocacy ecosystem, where it could contribute to change, and which themes and narrative logics could complement your current work.

02 CONNECT – Find complementary actors and build coalitions

The Kumu map lets you find organisations by actor type, intervention mode, thematic focus or Narrative Archetype – or any combination of these. It shows who is active in a particular area and helps you identify organisations with similar or different roles, approaches and narrative orientations.

FOUNDATIONS

Map your portfolio against the four typologies. Where does your funding cluster, and is that a deliberate choice? Use the map to identify potential grantees, co-funders or actors worth bringing together.

NGOS

Place your organisation within the four typologies. Then search the map for actors with different roles, intervention modes or narrative orientations who could complement your work. In coalitions, make explicit what each partner brings and how their roles could fit together.

03 QUESTION – Read the field: patterns, not verdicts

Conclusion 01 points to areas with few mapped organisations as well as areas of concentration. What the mapping cannot tell you is whether low representation points to a strategic gap worth addressing, or whether a concentration of organisations means that an area is already sufficiently covered. Low representation may also reflect the national scope of this mapping: local and cantonal actors, which were not included, may already be active in some of these areas. Answering these questions requires further research, conversations with actors in the field and contextual judgement.

FOUNDATIONS

Before funding a sparsely represented area, ask why it has few mapped actors, who could credibly work in this area and what support would be needed. Consider commissioning audience research or further ecosystem analysis.

NGOS

Ask whether a sparsely represented area presents an opportunity for your organisation or would be better addressed by a partner. Test before you pivot.

04 SHAPE – Work strategically with narratives

Use the Narrative Archetypes and Map as a basis for reflection and strategic orientation (see Conclusion 02). For actors wishing to move into more deliberate narrative intervention, the Strategic Framework (Part 4) provides a structured way to explore possible approaches. A four-step guide in the Appendix (page 43) supports this process, from selecting a Narrative Archetype and considering its position on the Narrative Map to identifying a possible strategic approach – Strengthening, Expanding, Anchoring or Enabling.

FOUNDATIONS

Use the Narrative Archetypes and Map to reflect on the narrative orientation of your funding portfolio and the different approaches to change pursued by the initiatives you support. Consider which narrative logics your grants currently support, whether this reflects your intentions. Where useful, consider how Narrative Deepening and Narrative Shifting could complement each other across different grantees. Foundations can also support the capacities and collaborations needed for grantees to pursue these approaches.

NGOS

Use the Narrative Archetypes and Map to reflect on your own narrative orientation and strategic objectives. Examine the underlying assumptions, values and perspectives on transformation expressed or reinforced through your organisation's work. Where useful, consider whether to deepen an existing narrative logic, shift it or combine both approaches, and what this means for your work. Different approaches can also be pursued in collaboration with partners rather than by one organisation alone.

05 ENABLE – Strengthen what no one can do alone

As outlined in Conclusion 03, narrative change depends on shared capacities and relationships that extend beyond individual organisations.

FOUNDATIONS
Fund the ecosystem infrastructure: audience and values research, coordination, learning spaces, long-term core funding and regular updates of this mapping.

NGOS
Use and shape shared spaces for exchange, learning and coordination. Budget for collaboration and ask funders to support it alongside your own campaigns and activities.

Outlook: developing the evidence base

This exploratory mapping provides a starting point rather than a complete picture. Three areas could strengthen and extend the analysis:

Ecosystem dynamics – deeper analysis of how actors relate and collaborate in practice, how funding and resources are distributed across the ecosystem, and how actors, intervention modes and relationships evolve over time. Further research could also examine how different narrative logics are embedded across wider political, economic and societal institutions beyond the mapped advocacy ecosystem. Extending the mapping to local and community-level actors could deepen the analysis by capturing forms of climate advocacy, intervention and narrative work that may differ from those visible at the national level.

Narrative resonance and effectiveness – dedicated audience and values research to understand how different Narrative Archetypes resonate across different groups in Swiss society, how narratives interact and combine in practice, and under what conditions different narrative approaches contribute to change. Longitudinal research could further examine how the narrative landscape evolves alongside political and societal change.

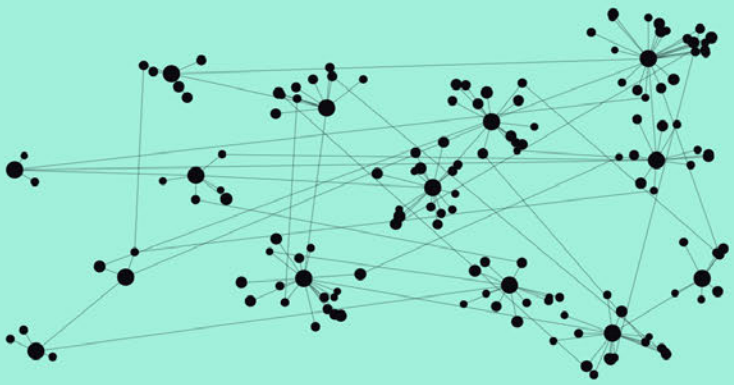
A living ecosystem resource – periodically updating the mapping as actors, narrative logics and intervention patterns evolve, allowing it to support continued ecosystem learning, comparison over time and strategic reflection.

Closing words – building the conditions for narrative change

Climate advocacy operates through an ecosystem of actors, interventions and narratives. Narratives are carried, reinforced and shaped by different actors, through different forms of intervention and across different thematic contexts.

Narrative change is therefore a long-term and collective process that unfolds through the interplay of different actors and interventions across the ecosystem, rather than through isolated interventions. Understanding this process requires looking not only at who is active and what they do, but also at the underlying meaning systems the narratives express, reinforce and potentially reshape – including how climate challenges, possible solution spaces, desirable futures and pathways for change are understood.

This ecosystem mapping aims to contribute to the conditions for such collective work by providing a shared understanding and strategic orientation for the Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem. By bringing the ecosystem and narrative perspectives together, it applies a narrative-led systems change perspective to climate advocacy in Switzerland. It makes visible who is active, how actors seek to influence change and which narrative logics are present – and invites foundations and NGOs to consider how their roles, strategies and contributions might complement one another. In doing so, it seeks to strengthen climate advocacy through a deeper understanding of both the ecosystem and its narratives.



Appendix

APPENDIX

Narrative Archetypes

The 14 Narrative Archetypes are analytical constructs that synthesise recurring narrative logics across the Swiss climate advocacy ecosystem. Each archetype is described through four dimensions:

- **Interpretive Frame:** how the climate challenge and possible solutions are understood, the underlying beliefs and assumptions about society and change, and the vision of a desirable future;
- **Transformation Logic:** how change is believed to happen and the depth of transformation implied;
- **Values & Emotional Logic:** the values associated with the narrative and additional emotional or cultural points of connection; and
- **Strategic Characteristics for Application:** an indicative assessment of its main strengths, opportunities and potential limitations for climate advocacy and broader transformation efforts.



ARCHETYPE 01

Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership

"We can solve climate change through innovation."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as a complex but ultimately solvable technical challenge. At its core lies the belief that ***progress is the solution*** – that innovation, engineering and technological ingenuity can decarbonise the economy without requiring fundamental changes to lifestyles or economic structures. Switzerland is imagined as a high-tech, low-emission innovation leader and investor, where scientific excellence and clean technologies (e.g. carbon removal, advanced energy systems) enable a future that combines sustainability with continued growth and competitiveness.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Decarbonisation through technological advancement and substitution of carbon-intensive systems.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Progress, efficiency, innovation capacity, problem-solving, control
Additional: Excellence, competitiveness, national pride

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Strong alignment with economic, finance and policy actors; solution-oriented
Limitation: Weak connection to behavioural change, social justice and sufficiency; limited emotional resonance



ARCHETYPE 02
Economic Prosperity & Competitiveness

"Climate action must strengthen our economy, not weaken it."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate action is understood and framed as compatible with, and dependent on, economic prosperity. The underlying belief is that ***climate policy must protect wealth, jobs and competitiveness***. Climate action is acceptable and desirable when it reinforces Switzerland's position as a strong and competitive economic and finance location, rather than threatening stability or growth. Climate action is therefore primarily framed as something that must not undermine economic stability, rather than as a driver of transformation in itself.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Incremental, cost-efficient transition that preserves economic stability within existing market structures.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Responsibility, stability, performance, prosperity
Additional: Pragmatism, order

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: High political feasibility and institutional alignment
Limitation: Limits ambition; reinforces incrementalism and the status quo



ARCHETYPE 03
Climate as Risk & Insurance

"We need to treat climate change like any other major risk: identify, assess and reduce it."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as a systemic and calculable risk affecting infrastructure, financial systems and long-term stability. At its core lies the assumption that ***inaction is more costly than prevention***. The future is imagined as a stable and "insurable" system, where risks are anticipated, managed and minimised through rational decision-making.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Risk mitigation and precautionary governance.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Security, risk avoidance, foresight, rationality
Additional: Responsibility, stability

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: High credibility and institutional legitimacy
Limitation: Limited emotional engagement; low mobilisation potential



ARCHETYPE 04

Moral Responsibility & Climate Justice

"Those who caused the problem must take responsibility, globally and historically – by acting first and most decisively."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as a moral and global justice issue, shaped by unequal responsibility and unequal impacts. At its core lies the belief that ***those who caused the problem must take responsibility***. The narrative emphasises Switzerland's global and historical responsibility and frames climate action as an ethical obligation towards vulnerable populations and future generations, with a focus on global and intergenerational justice rather than on domestic distributional concerns.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Redistribution, global cooperation and fairness-based policy.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Justice, fairness, solidarity, responsibility
Additional: Empathy, moral integrity

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Strong normative clarity and moral urgency
Limitation: Can be perceived as abstract or polarising; limited mainstream resonance



ARCHETYPE 05

Natural Ecosystem Protection & Regeneration

"Protecting the climate means protecting and regenerating our landscapes and biodiversity."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as a threat to nature, biodiversity and Switzerland's natural ecosystems – from alpine ecosystems to local habitats. At its core lies the belief that ***protecting the climate means protecting our natural environment and ecosystems***. The narrative draws on deep cultural attachments to natural ecosystems and place. At the same time, parts of the narrative evolve towards regeneration, where nature is not only protected but actively restored.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Primarily conservation, with emerging regenerative approaches.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Connection to nature, preservation, landscape beauty, quality of life
Additional: Identity, balance, cultural heritage

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Strong emotional resonance and cultural embeddedness
Limitation: Can remain apolitical; limited focus on systemic drivers



ARCHETYPE 06

Resilience, Sovereignty & Local Self-Reliance

"We need stronger local and regional systems to become more resilient in times of crisis."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change and related crises are understood and framed through the lens of vulnerability, resilience and dependency on fragile external systems. At its core lies the belief that ***greater local or national self-reliance increases societal resilience, security and long-term stability in times of ecological, economic or geopolitical uncertainty***. The narrative envisions a future in which communities, regions and national systems become more resilient, adaptive and less vulnerable to external disruption through stronger local and regional systems in areas such as energy, food and infrastructure. The narrative can range from pragmatic resilience-building and regional self-sufficiency to more sovereignty-oriented interpretations of autonomy. In some contexts, it also overlaps with broader place-based approaches emphasising community resilience, regional systems and local adaptation capacity.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Decentralisation, resilience-building and strengthening local and regional self-reliance.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Resilience, autonomy, self-reliance, security

Additional: Community, local identity, preparedness

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Connects climate action to resilience, security and local relevance; potential resonance across different political and societal contexts

Limitation: Can shift towards inward-looking interpretations of autonomy and may underemphasise global interdependencies and coordination



ARCHETYPE 07

Protect our Home – Stability, Protection & Continuity

"Transformation must happen in a way that preserves social cohesion and economic stability."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as a growing threat to social stability, economic security and societal continuity. At its core lies the belief that ***the social, economic, natural and cultural foundations that hold society together should not be undermined***. The narrative emphasises continuity, gradual adaptation and the protection of existing systems and ways of life perceived as socially stabilising. Rapid or far-reaching transformation is often viewed with caution when perceived as threatening social cohesion, economic stability or everyday security.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Gradual and stability-oriented adaptation aimed at preserving social and economic continuity ("continuity-oriented transformation").

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Stability, continuity, security, social cohesion

Additional: Tradition, predictability, quality of life, connection to nature, identity and places

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: High societal resonance and political accessibility across broad population segments

Limitation: Can constrain support for more rapid or systemic forms of transformation



ARCHETYPE 08

Grassroots & Radical Change

"We cannot fix this system – we need to change it."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

The climate crisis is understood and framed as a result of fundamentally unjust and unsustainable systems. At its core lies the belief that ***the system itself is the problem***. Incremental change is seen as insufficient; instead, deep structural transformation of economic, political and social systems is required, often driven from the bottom up.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Systemic transformation through mobilisation and pressure.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Justice, urgency, autonomy, transformation

Additional: Solidarity, empowerment, community

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: High mobilisation and visibility

Limitation: Limited institutional compatibility; risk of confusion and delegitimisation



ARCHETYPE 09

Systems Transformation

"We cannot solve the climate crisis without transforming the systems, structures and mindsets that created it."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as a symptom of deeper societal challenges rooted in interconnected economic, political, social and cultural systems and underlying mindsets. At its core lies the belief that ***addressing climate change requires transforming the underlying systems that shape how societies organise, govern, produce and create value, rather than treating isolated symptoms***. The narrative envisions a future in which societal systems are transformed towards regeneration, collective well-being and long-term viability within planetary boundaries.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Transformation of interconnected economic systems, societal structures and mindsets to address the root causes of climate change.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Regeneration, stewardship, collective well-being, solidarity, long-term responsibility

Additional: Systems thinking, interdependence, cooperation

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Strong systemic perspective; connects climate action with broader societal transformation and root-cause thinking

Limitation: High level of abstraction; translating systemic thinking into concrete priorities and actionable strategies can be challenging



ARCHETYPE 10

Health & Quality of Life

"Climate action means cleaner air and healthier lives."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed through its direct impacts on health, well-being and everyday life. The core belief is that ***climate action improves quality of life.*** The narrative highlights co-benefits such as cleaner air, healthier cities and better living conditions, making climate action tangible and personally relevant.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Improving everyday living conditions through climate action.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Health, well-being, safety, quality of life

Additional: Comfort, family

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Highly relatable and accessible

Limitation: Limited systemic perspective



ARCHETYPE 11

Social Balance & Just Transition (Domestic)

"Climate policy must be fair for everyone."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate policy is understood and framed as a question of fairness within society. The core belief is that ***climate action must not create unfair burdens***. The narrative emphasises distributional effects and the need to protect lower- and middle-income groups, making social equity central to political legitimacy. Unlike global justice narratives, the focus here is on fairness within Switzerland, particularly in terms of social acceptance and political feasibility.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Socially balanced transition through fair distribution of costs and benefits, ensuring fairness within national contexts.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Fairness, social security, dignity, equity
Additional: Recognition, stability

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Crucial for political acceptance and legitimacy
Limitation: Often defensive; less mobilising



ARCHETYPE 12

Business as Climate Solution

"Companies are a central part of the climate solution."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as a challenge that can be addressed through markets, innovation and private sector leadership. The core belief is that ***business is part of the solution***. Companies are seen as key actors in driving change through incremental innovation, investment and scalable solutions, often within existing economic systems. In contrast to more defensive economic perspectives, this narrative positions business as an active driver of solutions, not merely something that needs to be protected.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Market-driven, innovation-led change initiated by the private sector.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Entrepreneurship, innovation, efficiency, responsibility
Additional: Growth, pragmatism

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Strong alignment with economic systems and scalability
Limitation: Risk of greenwashing; limited structural change



ARCHETYPE 13

Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise

"The science is clear – we must act accordingly."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate change is understood and framed as an evidence-based reality that requires a rational response. The core belief is that ***science defines what must be done***. The narrative emphasises objectivity, neutrality and the authority of scientific knowledge as the basis for decision-making. Legitimacy is strongly grounded in scientific evidence and expert knowledge, which define what action is necessary.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Evidence-based policy and decision-making.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Truth, objectivity, rationality, evidence
Additional: Trust, neutrality

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: High legitimacy and authority
Limitation: Limited emotional resonance and identification



ARCHETYPE 14

Democratic Process & Consensus

"Climate policy must be built on broad consensus to be sustainable."

INTERPRETIVE FRAME

Climate action is understood and framed as a process that must be democratically legitimised and broadly supported. The core belief is that ***only consensus-based solutions are sustainable***. Particularly in the Swiss context, participation, negotiation and institutional processes are central to how change is understood and implemented. Legitimacy is grounded in democratic processes, participation and consensus-building, emphasising how decisions are collectively negotiated and accepted (even when evidence is clear, legitimacy depends on democratic acceptance). Note: This perspective often coexists with evidence-based arguments, but places particular emphasis on process legitimacy and social acceptance.

TRANSFORMATION LOGIC

Change through democratic processes and consensus-building.

VALUES & EMOTIONAL LOGIC

Legitimacy, participation, fairness, stability
Additional: Trust, order

STRATEGIC CHARACTERISTICS FOR APPLICATION

Strength: Strong system compatibility, especially in Switzerland
Limitation: Slows decision-making; leads to compromise outcomes

APPENDIX

Applying the Strategic Framework

The framework can be applied in four steps, moving from the selection of a Narrative Archetype to the identification of a possible strategic approach.

1 SELECT Archetype

Identify the narrative logic you want to examine or work with.

→

2 LOCATE Position

Consider its relative position on the **Narrative Map** in terms of the depth of transformation it implies.

→

3 ASSESS Lever

Ask whether the strategic objective calls for **Deepening**, **Shifting** or a combination of both.

→

4 IDENTIFY Strategic approach

Depending on narrative position and strategic lever, consider **Strengthening, Expanding, Anchoring or Enabling** as a strategic approach.

The illustrative examples on the following page show how Narrative Deepening and Shifting could translate into different strategic actions across four Narrative Archetypes.

APPENDIX

Illustrative examples

The following examples illustrate how both strategic levers can be applied to differently positioned Narrative Archetypes. Each archetype can be deepened or shifted; its relative position shapes how each lever translates into strategic action. The examples provide orientation rather than fixed prescriptions.

Higher transformation potential at the top, **greater** compatibility with existing system logics at the bottom	**DEEPEN – strengthen the existing meaning logic**	**SHIFT – expand or reframe the meaning logic**
 **09 Systems Transformation**	**ANCHORING** Translate systems thinking into institutional practice: turn systemic principles into concrete policy frameworks, organisational practices and decision-making criteria.	**ENABLING** Make alternative systems imaginable: develop tangible visions of how different economic, political and social systems could work – moving from critique of current systems towards credible alternative futures.
 **05 Natural Ecosystem Protection & Regeneration**	**ANCHORING** Embed regeneration in how places are managed: translate regenerative principles into land-use, agriculture, infrastructure and biodiversity practices and decision-making.	**ENABLING** Reframe the human–nature relationship: move beyond protecting nature as an external resource towards narratives of interdependence, reciprocity and humans as part of living systems.
 **10 Health & Quality of Life**	**STRENGTHENING** Make climate action a health and well-being imperative: embed climate considerations more firmly in public health, healthcare, urban planning and everyday quality-of-life agendas.	**EXPANDING** Reframe what a healthy society means: move beyond health as a co-benefit of climate action towards a broader vision in which well-being, care, healthy environments and quality of life become measures of societal progress. *What if health and well-being become part of how we define societal progress in the first place?*
 **01 Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership**	**STRENGTHENING** Make climate innovation tangible and relevant: connect technological solutions more strongly to implementation, everyday benefits and credible pathways for deployment at scale.	**EXPANDING** Move from technological solutions to socio-technical transformation: broaden the narrative from *which technologies do we need?* to *how should technology, institutions, behaviour and social priorities change together?*

How are different narrative logics carried through intervention?

Narrative Archetype × Activities (12 activity categories) · n = 149

Narrative Archetype	n	Research & Knowledge Generation	Capacity Building & Education	Lobbying & Policy Advocacy	Strategic Litigation	Campaigning (Issue & Electoral)	Organising, Network & Coalition Building	Activism	Knowledge Mediation, Public & Expert Discourse	Awareness Raising & Public Sensitisation	Arts & Culture Action	Industry & Business Advocacy or Economic Sphere Influence	Funding & Resource Mobilisation
01 Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership	12		**1** 8%	**4** 33%					**1** 8%	**1** 8%		**3** 25%	**2** 17%
02 Economic Prosperity & Competitiveness	4			**1** 25%			**1** 25%					**2** 50%	
03 Climate as Risk & Insurance	3			**1** 33%								**1** 33%	**1** 33%
04 Moral Responsibility & Climate Justice	14	**1** 7%	**2** 14%	**3** 21%	**2** 14%	**1** 7%	**2** 14%			**2** 14%			**1** 7%
05 Natural Ecosystem Protection & Regeneration	16		**2** 13%	**6** 38%		**3** 19%	**1** 6%			**1** 6%	**1** 6%		**2** 13%
06 Resilience, Sovereignty & Local Self-Reliance	6		**1** 17%	**3** 50%						**1** 17%			**1** 17%
07 Protect our Home — Stability, Protection & Continuity	3			**1** 33%			**1** 33%		**1** 33%				
08 Grassroots & Radical Change	12		**2** 17%			**2** 17%	**3** 25%	**4** 33%		**1** 8%			
09 Systems Transformation	22	**1** 5%	**1** 5%	**1** 5%			**6** 27%		**2** 9%			**3** 14%	**8** 36%
10 Health & Quality of Life	6		**2** 33%	**2** 33%		**1** 17%				**1** 17%			
11 Social Balance & Just Transition (Domestic)	10			**5** 50%		**1** 10%	**1** 10%		**2** 20%	**1** 10%			
12 Business as Climate Solution	17			**2** 12%			**1** 6%					**13** 76%	**1** 6%
13 Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise	16	**13** 81%					**1** 6%		**2** 13%				
14 Democratic Process & Consensus	8	**2** 25%		**2** 25%		**1** 13%	**2** 25%		**1** 13%				
All mapped organisations (reference: share of sample)	**149**	**17** 11%	**11** 7%	**31** 21%	**2** 1%	**9** 6%	**19** 13%	**4** 3%	**9** 6%	**8** 5%	**1** 1%	**22** 15%	**16** 11%

How to read: each row is one Narrative Archetype; cells show the number of organisations and their share within it; darker = higher share. Shares may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

Where are different narrative logics thematically embedded?

Narrative Archetype × Thematic Focus · n = 149

Narrative Archetype	n	Climate Mitigation & Emission Reduction (Cross-cutting)	Energy Transition	Transport & Mobility	Industry, Built Environment & Infrastructure	Food Systems & Agriculture	Climate Adaptation & Resilience	Climate Justice & Social Equity	Nature & Biodiversity	Sustainable Business, Circular Economy & Resp. Consumption	Education & Culture	Health & Quality of Life	New Economy & Systems Change	Finance	Digital Technology & AI
01 Technological Optimism & Innovation Leadership	12	**1** 8%	**9** 75%		**1** 8%										**1** 8%
02 Economic Prosperity & Competitiveness	4	**2** 50%								**1** 25%				**1** 25%	
03 Climate as Risk & Insurance	3						**1** 33%		**1** 33%	**1** 33%					
04 Moral Responsibility & Climate Justice	14	**3** 21%						**9** 64%				**1** 7%	**1** 7%		
05 Natural Ecosystem Protection & Regeneration	16	**5** 31%		**1** 6%		**2** 13%	**1** 6%		**7** 44%						
06 Resilience, Sovereignty & Local Self-Reliance	6	**1** 17%				**3** 50%	**1** 17%				**1** 17%				
07 Protect our Home – Stability, Protection & Continuity	3	**1** 33%							**1** 33%			**1** 33%			
08 Grassroots & Radical Change	12	**1** 8%			**1** 8%			**1** 8%			**2** 17%		**7** 58%		
09 Systems Transformation	22	**2** 9%	**2** 9%					**1** 5%		**2** 9%			**13** 59%	**2** 9%	
10 Health & Quality of Life	6			**3** 50%						**1** 17%		**2** 33%			
11 Social Balance & Just Transition (Domestic)	10	**2** 20%			**1** 10%	**1** 10%		**4** 40%		**2** 20%					
12 Business as Climate Solution	17	**6** 35%	**1** 6%							**6** 35%			**3** 18%	**1** 6%	
13 Scientific Authority & Neutral Expertise	16	**10** 63%						**1** 6%	**2** 13%	**2** 13%					**1** 6%
14 Democratic Process & Consensus	8	**6** 75%	**2** 25%												
All mapped organisations (reference: share of sample)	**149**	**40** 27%	**14** 9%	**4** 3%	**3** 2%	**6** 4%	**3** 2%	**16** 11%	**11** 7%	**15** 10%	**3** 2%	**4** 3%	**24** 16%	**4** 3%	**2** 1%

How to read: each row is one Narrative Archetype; cells show the number of organisations and their share within it; darker = higher share. Shares may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

About the author & partners

Stephanie Frick – Seeding Futures

Stephanie Frick is a strategist, social innovator and co-creator interested in the space between what is and what could be. At the heart of her work is a commitment to creating the conditions for futures in which people can thrive within planetary boundaries. Bringing together systems thinking, social innovation and collective imagination, she is particularly interested in how narratives and desirable futures can expand what we see as possible and mobilise collective action. For more than 15 years, she has worked at the intersection of strategy, innovation and societal and ecological transformation across civil society, academia, business and the public sector. Today, she brings this work together through Seeding Futures.

Clima Now

Clima Now is a Swiss foundation that sees climate action as a lever for prosperity. Global warming is putting pressure on what our quality of life depends on: a healthy natural environment, social cohesion and an innovative economy. That is why we focus on solutions. We help organisations talk about climate action in a way that brings more people on board. We support partners who build majorities for effective climate policy. And with our Spotlight programme, we drive innovation where it is missing.

Fondation Leenaards

Fondation Leenaards is a public-benefit philanthropic foundation based in Lausanne, committed to the common good and social cohesion. Active in the Lake Geneva region, it supports projects in the fields of culture, social issues, science, and health. It also promotes the ecological transition and works to foster a vibrant democracy.

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Author: Stephanie Frick (Seeding Futures) · **Editorial lead:** Corinne Grässle (Clima Now)

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INTERACTIVE MAP

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ECOSYSTEM MAPPING

Climate Advocacy & Climate Narratives in Switzerland

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Contact: contact@climanow.ch