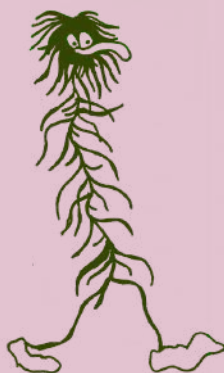


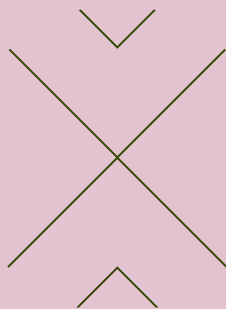
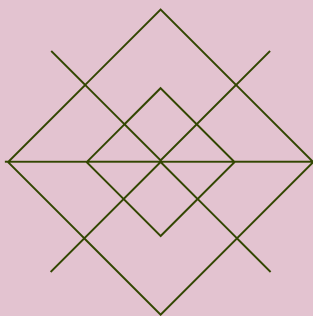
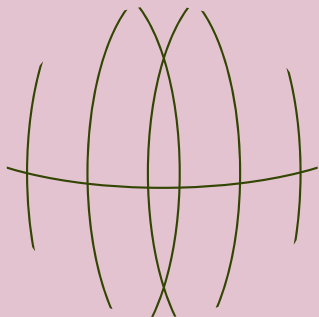
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# RE-IMAGINING PEATLANDS



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## WHAT'S THE DEAL?

RE-PEAT has been exploring imagination as a tool for realising transformational change for peatlands for several years, which led to the conceptualisation and development of a Peatlands and (Re-)Imagination workshop. The workshop introduces peatlands to a wider audience and builds appreciation amongst newcomers, acquaintances and experts alike. We introduce our theory of how peatlands and imagination work together and run some exercises to train our imagination muscles!

On the 1st of April we held this workshop in Aarhus, Denmark thanks to funding and support from Communities for Future, SPARK: Youth Action for People and Planet, and the European Union. The workshop was hosted at volunteer-run Cafe Mellemfolk, which donates profits to projects globally working for a more sustainable and fair world.

# DID YOU KNOW?



Peatlands may also be known as bogs, mires, fens and moors

Peatlands form because plant matter is unable to fully decompose due to waterlogged conditions and a lack of oxygen



Despite only taking up about 3% of the planet's land and freshwater surface area, peatlands are the world's largest terrestrial carbon store.

That's 550 gigatonnes of carbon – twice as much as the world's forests!

Forming at approximately only 1 mm per year, it can take many many years for a peatland to form

They also act as water purifiers, offer flood and fire protection and have spiritual and cultural value



Approximately 5% of global anthropogenic CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are a result of drained and degraded peatlands. Drained peatlands currently account for 10% of all peatlands



Peatlands have incredible preservation capacities – with centuries-old butter, artifacts and even bodies being found!



Peatlands across Europe  
have been drained and  
extracted for various  
reasons:

Horticulture

Fuel

Forestry

Agriculture

Housing and urban development

# PEOPLE AND PEATLANDS

In recent years, more attention  
has been given to the myriad of  
values peatlands hold and  
benefits they bring



People are both discovering  
the bog & forging new  
relationships as well as  
uncovering past forgotten or  
dormant relationships and  
perspectives



# NARRATIVE CHANGE

The ongoing dominant narrative of peatlands is that they are wastelands, and undesirable or unproductive places



Think of the Swamps of Sadness in *The Neverending Story*, or the Dead Marshes in the *Lord of the Rings*.

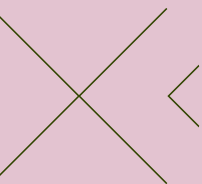


One of the major challenges in peatland restoration and care is changing this narrative

How can we envision, rediscover and co-create new stories about peatlands?

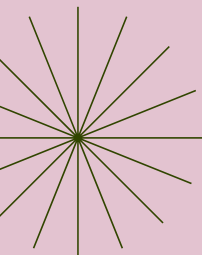


# IMAGINATION



“Imagination is ... a transformative practice, which has the capacity to cultivate and foster alternatives to social, political, cultural and economic conditions; it is a prerequisite for changing the world for the better”

– Olivia Oldham

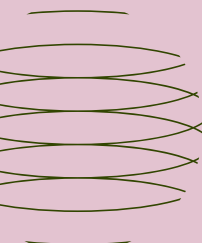


“Our radical imagination is a tool for decolonization, for reclaiming our right to shape our lived reality”

– adrienne maree brown

“...a way of seeing, sensing, thinking, and dreaming that creates the conditions for material interventions in, and political sensibilities of the world”

– Kathryn Yusoff & Jennifer Gabrys



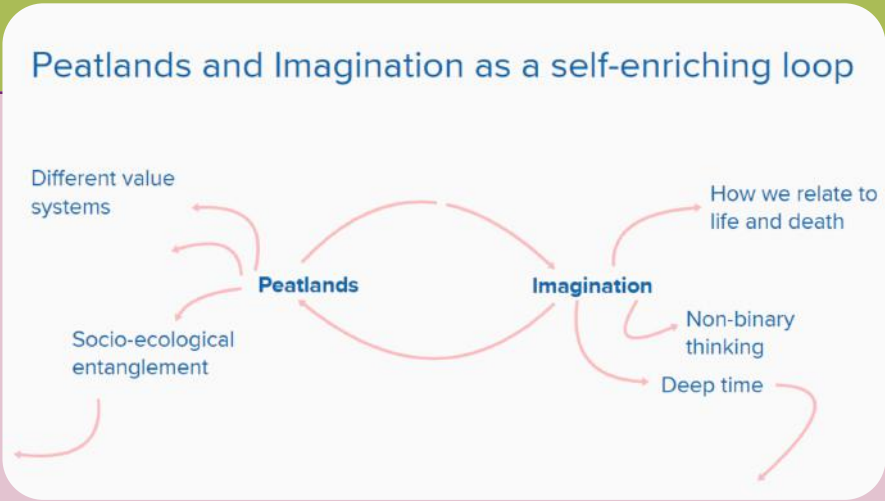
“the ability to see things as if they could be otherwise” – John Dewey



# HOW DO PEATLANDS AND IMAGINATION INTERFACE?

We propose that peatlands act as a space for practicing and a site of application of imagination and that imagination as a means of socio-ecological change-making for peatlands

In this way, we can think of peatlands and imagination as interacting in a loop, whereby peatlands can be used as an arena to think through deep time, non binary thinking or other lessons gleaned from peatlands, whilst imagination can also create new peatland paradigms





## Liminality

Peatlands are inherently in transition. Their soil is both an archive of the past as well as a lively picture of the now. They are both water and land in one. They are both dead, a symbol of partial decay, while also alive and active. Their existence challenges the binary way of thinking.

Learning from this, we are opened up to new possibilities.

Raimo Pajula



# HOW DO PEATLANDS SPARK OUR IMAGINATIONS?



## Boundaries

Something curious happens to our imagination when it is given boundaries or confines – within these, it can roam freely around but there is a defined space for it. Think of creative writing prompts for example. Peatlands are that for RE-PEAT.



Oak Ridge National Laboratory

“Compared to flowing waters, the bog is stagnant and viscous, reticent. While fluidity emphasizes total dissolution and infinite possibilities, viscosity draws attention to sites of resistance and opposition. The Bog is a sort of membrane between the forest and the wetland...



..A transition area, an open-ended gathering of living and dead matter. Bogs are queer ecosystems. Their cool and wet environment preserves many futures under a single slimy surface, without presumption of a seamlessly harmonious collaboration."

– COVEN Berlin

# INTERVIEW WITH A WORD



We invited people to step into the shoes of a word, specifically one related to peatlands or change. Another person acted as the interviewer and was asked questions such as:

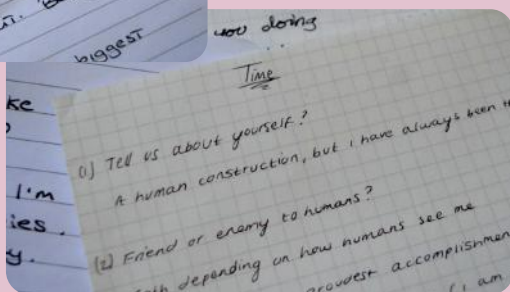
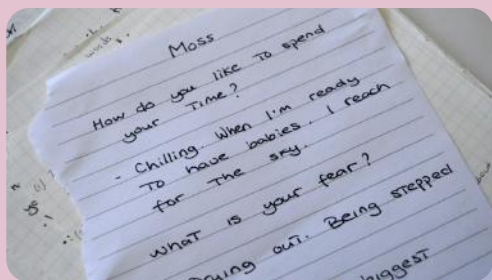
How do you like to spend your time?

What are your fears?

Who are your friends?

What is your favourite time of day?

What are your strengths/weaknesses?



This exercise was inspired by the [CreaTures Glossary](#), a project by Amira Hanafi

moss

transition

boundary

soil

catalyst

power

entanglement

peat

future

time

peat

in-between

shift

imagination

shift

# FUTURES THINKING



This exercise was adapted from UNESCO's Futures Literacy project. They define Futures Literacy as a capability which anyone can acquire. This capability assists us with understanding the role the future plays in what we see and do.

We practiced this skill by thinking through probably and desirable futures for peatlands. We then discussed which future our actions are working towards and how we may work towards the desirable future.

Probable futures:

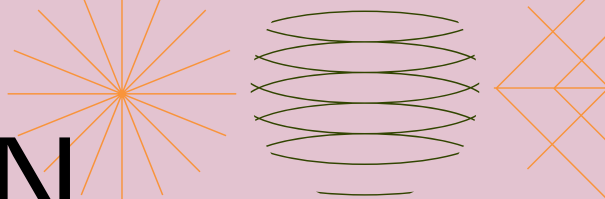
What do you think  
peatlands will be like  
in 2070?

Desirable futures:

What do you want  
peatlands to be like  
in 2070?



# KEEP IN TOUCH



We're going to be unpacking these ideas and developing our framework for understanding peatlands and imagination. Follow us to stay up-to-date!



/repeatearth



repeat.earth



@repeatearth



info@repeat.earth





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