

joining hands across the waters ...

## Gulf Islands Alliance

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### Re: Trust Policy Statement Review

The Gulf Islands Alliance shares with Trust Council the objective of enhancing the Trust's ability to uphold its preserve and protect mandate.

In your upcoming review of the Policy Statement, we support the idea expressed in Trustee Wright's "Trust Act Interpretation" letter of May 28, 2019, that "before the review of the Policy Statement takes place [...] Council must first have a clear understanding of the Islands Trust Act, its purpose and limitations, as well as the critical role the Trust Policy Statement plays in our land use planning."

As elected officials, you are subject to an interesting tension - between the need to represent and assist those who voted for you and all your constituents, but also, we are all called to take into account the needs of those without a vote: future generations and non-human life. As trustees, your role is arguably less focused on representing electors than that of other elected officials. Your focus needs to be more centred on upholding the preserve and protect mandate, not only for those who elected you, but for the province as a whole.

Your fairly restricted jurisdiction (centred on zoning and advocacy) was designed to strengthen your role as trustees, essentially a guardianship role. In today's world, it has become clear that protecting the integrity of natural ecosystems is the bedrock on which more human-centred goals of protecting communities and culture can be attained. Perhaps it is no coincidence that a way of visualizing that truth was brought forward by a Trust area resident, Christa Grace-Warrick, (who has been honoured with an Islands Trust Stewardship award). Her article explaining the genesis of that graphic is attached to this submission.

We very much hope the terms of reference for that review will allow for changes which will strengthen the ability of the Trust to uphold its mandate. Any changes which might weaken that ability should not be pursued. As Trustee Wright explained in his letter. the Trust must uphold its mandate, lest it become so ineffective as to be subject to legal challenges or to being abolished. Any new version of the Policy Statement must "remove any ambiguity about our legislation, responsibility, and vision, and motivate us in fulfilling a duty of care to the environment through our statutory mandate."

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## Editorial: A Wholly Owned Subsidiary

Recently, two people have turned my thinking around. One, on a beautiful Galiano summer morning, said, 'You know that triangle thing, it's wrong. The environment is not a point on the triangle along with 'social' and 'economic'. It's the ground on which the triangle rests.'

My eyes widened as I stared at her. I was astonished that I had accepted that 'three pillars' idea—hook, line, and sinker. But that model was a step; the best thing we had at the time. Now it seems downright misleading.

I thought for a few weeks. How would we properly diagram the relationship?

It's not about being 'fair' to nature; giving it a look in. It's about maintaining our source of everything: oxygen, water, food, health, metals, minerals, fossil fuels, climate...



Next, I heard the beautiful quote of Gaylord Nelson, founder of Earth Day (first celebrated in 1970) and former Governor of Wisconsin, who died in July 2005.

'The economy is a wholly owned subsidiary of the environment,' he said, 'not the other way around.'

I tried an equilateral triangle sitting on a line. It didn't have much pizzazz. Then I thought of Leonardo Da Vinci's diagram, the *Canon of Proportions*, with the man inside the circle.

How about bending the environment line into a circle that *contains* the triangle? The three enclosed angles—which are *all* social—needed different names: economy, culture, justice—three interwoven human constructs which emerge from environment. How about calling it the World Wheel? —CG-W

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