

*An investment in knowledge pays the best interest*  
— Benjamin Franklin '*The Way to Wealth*' (1758).

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In the end there are few certain and enduring truths in the ecological and biological sciences, nor in the economics, psychologies, sociologies and politics that we use to govern them. One, however, comes from the work of Elinor Ostrom, a late and widely missed colleague, who showed from her work on managing fisheries and ecosystems that complex problems can be solved if communication is transparent and open, visions are shared, trust is high, and communities are activated to work from the bottom-up as well as from the top down.

As we navigate the Anthropocene, the epoch named in recognition of our impact on the planet, we will need to encourage more people to become involved in solving the wicked problems of our times. Whether through gathering local information or becoming more aware of the many uncertainties and unpredictabilities in our surroundings, the power structures of knowledge will need to change. And if we are to respond more responsibly to the early warning signals of change, we will need to re-design our style of governance to one which reflects a future defined by the local and specific rather than only the global and the average.

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**Professor Jacqueline McGlade,**  
Executive Director  
European Environment Agency (EEA)