

# GAIA: Mission and vision for the way ahead



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With this issue, GAIA is introducing a new slogan: *The sustainability transformations journal*. This reflects vivid debates amongst the editorial team: What is the scope and role of the journal? How do we consider current developments in science and society, with thematic and methodological shifts, but also advances in knowledge? The debate led us to formulate a new mission and vision statement<sup>1</sup>.

**Focus on sustainability transformations.** At the center of the new GAIA mission and vision is the concept of transformations towards sustainability. Firstly, this highlights the interconnected character of the multiple crises we are facing. A systemic understanding that goes beyond narrow and simplistic “fixes” is required. Secondly, human-nature relationships continue to – and need to – change in profound ways. GAIA aims to provide a platform for analyzing, interpreting, reflecting on, and discussing these diverse and dynamic processes. It welcomes theoretical and empirical papers that develop analytical perspectives on transformations, as well as papers that take a more normative stance and are primarily aimed at transformative impact.

**The role of inter- and transdisciplinary approaches.** GAIA particularly invites submissions that transgress disciplinary boundaries, transcend established knowledge domains, or explore novel methodologies, such as participatory and transdisciplinary approaches. While encouraging applied research contributions that build on direct collaboration with actors beyond the academic realm, GAIA also sees substantial value in articles that advance our understanding of the theoretical dimensions of sustainability issues, and thus do not follow a transdisciplinary outline.

## Key areas of action

To animate this mission, we will focus on four key areas of action:

- **Rethink the formats** covered in GAIA (i. e., research papers, debate-focused forum articles, design reports, etc.) and potentially develop new ones (e. g., reviews, case studies, early-career articles, or emerging topics in transdisciplinary research).
- **Strengthen the networks** within the international sustainability transformations research community by, for instance, inviting authors from currently underrepresented fields and regions to contribute papers and organize special issues.
- **Increase the quality and the relevance** of contributions in GAIA. For this, we strive to actively acquire more and better caliber submissions in the field of research on, and for, sustainability transformations.
- **Transition to Open Access:** GAIA is progressing towards a fully open access model that aims to overcome the limitations of the traditional Gold Open Access, which often excludes authors from less affluent academic institutions or the Global South.

We are excited by the path forward and hope you will join us in this journey!

Claudia Bieling  
Editor-in-Chief of GAIA

<sup>1</sup> For the full version, please see <https://gaia.oekom.de/index.php/gaia/about>.