



Bioregional Financing Facilities

Reimagining Finance to Regenerate Our Planet

Case Study 10: Hylo



BioFi Project



Capital Systems



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Hylo – A Coordination Platform for the Future of Bioregional Organizing

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About Hylo

Hylo is a community-led, open-source coordination tool for purpose-driven groups, with an emphasis on place-based organizing. The free web and mobile apps allow community members to deepen relationships and collaborate to get things done through discussions, requests, offers, resources, projects, events, geographic maps, direct messaging, and chat. All of this is offered without advertising or data-harvesting in a clean and simple user interface.

Hylo is for place-based organizing

Giving groups tools for local coordination is a particular focus for Hylo, because ecological regeneration and community care must happen in a place-based context. By using the geographic map, members can share and discover local events, resources, and collaborators. Groups can also define their geographic boundary and display that on the shared map, which also includes a layer for Native territories that can be toggled on and off. Hylo plans to add bioregions as the next map layer.

Bioregional coordination is already happening on Hylo

Several bioregions are using Hylo to support connection in their local landscape. In 2023, Salmon Nation bioregion used Hylo to convene a community of local leaders, the “Edgewalkers,” throughout Alaska, British Columbia, Washington, Oregon, and northern California for an initiative called the Edge Prize. The group gathered on Hylo for a series of online relationship-building and educational sessions, and many participants also met up in-person and made new local connections. The Edge Prize culminated in the Edgewalkers distributing \$80,000 in prize money to deserving bioregional projects through a participatory budgeting process. The Edgewalkers used a different tech tool to conduct the co-budgeting exercise, and in the future this function will be built into Hylo.

After the convening, two Edge Prize participants founded a new bioregional group together, Regenerate Cascadia, which went on to organize an in-person bioregional activation tour, in-person event series, and online summit all dedicated to ecological regeneration and community resilience in Cascadia bioregion. This group remains very active on the ground in Cascadia bioregion.

Other bioregional groups using Hylo include the Bay Area Bioregion, Salish Sea, Sacramento River, Appalachia, Thames River Watershed, and Bioregional Weaving Labs. People use these groups to share local opportunities and information, meet collaborators, and coordinate action - like civic participation in public comments related to local environmental policy, or crowdfunding to support the return of land to Indigenous tribes. There is also a global community of practice, the Bioregional Commons, where place-based organizers from around

the world are connecting to share and discuss resources relevant to bioregionalism and the transition to regenerative bioregional economies.

Tools for bioregional self-governance

Through a partnership with OpenTEAM, the Open Technology Ecosystem for Agricultural Management, Hylo is building tools to support the transition to regenerative agriculture and the participatory governance of purpose-driven, collaborative groups. These prosocial tools include space for groups to share their purpose and agreements, and prompt members to commit to them; administrative tools to curate and assign roles and responsibilities within the group; and coming soon, tools for proposals and decision-making. OpenTEAM is using these tools to manage collaboration among dozens of sub-awardees - networks of farmers and open-source technologists - working together to fulfill a \$35M grant to the organization from the USDA to support the growth of climate-smart agriculture in the US.

Combined with Hylo's mapping features, these tools to support place-based collaboration and governance give bioregional groups the power to steward their landscape as a commons. This might, for example, mean the residents of a bioregion making proposals for restoration projects or local regenerative businesses, with other residents voting on which proposals to support and how to allocate resources among them. These tools can be powerful enablers of capital allocation for Bioregional Financing Facilities.

Bioregional DAOs

Hylo is stewarded by Terran Collective, a bioregional group in the California Bay Area whose purpose is to amplify collaboration among people regenerating communities and the planet. Terran's vision is for bioregional groups on Hylo to grow strong collaborative cultures and mature into bioregional DAOs – Decentralized Autonomous Organizations (see Section 4.7). A DAO is a collaborative organization where members decide together how to govern a shared resource or a commons.

The aim of such a DAO would be to steward the wellbeing of the land and the people, with members participating in governance decisions to support this care. Decisions could enable the creation of land management agreements, the transition to local production and circular economies, advancement of ecological regeneration, and improvements in community resilience and climate adaptation.

This Case Study on **Hylo** is an Excerpt from the book **Bioregional Financing Facilities: Reimagining Finance to Regenerate Our Planet**, by Samantha Power and Leon Seefeld. To see other case studies, or to buy or download the book, visit www.biofi.earth.

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