

New Markets to Green the Microeconomy

Around the world capitalism is distorted, our planet is among the victims. But constraining, often costly, macro-economic policies to tackle the resulting problems can seem to cast climate campaigners against working people. They too have been unbalanced by destabilized economies, forcing focus on short-term earnings. Radical new markets can empower people and planet.

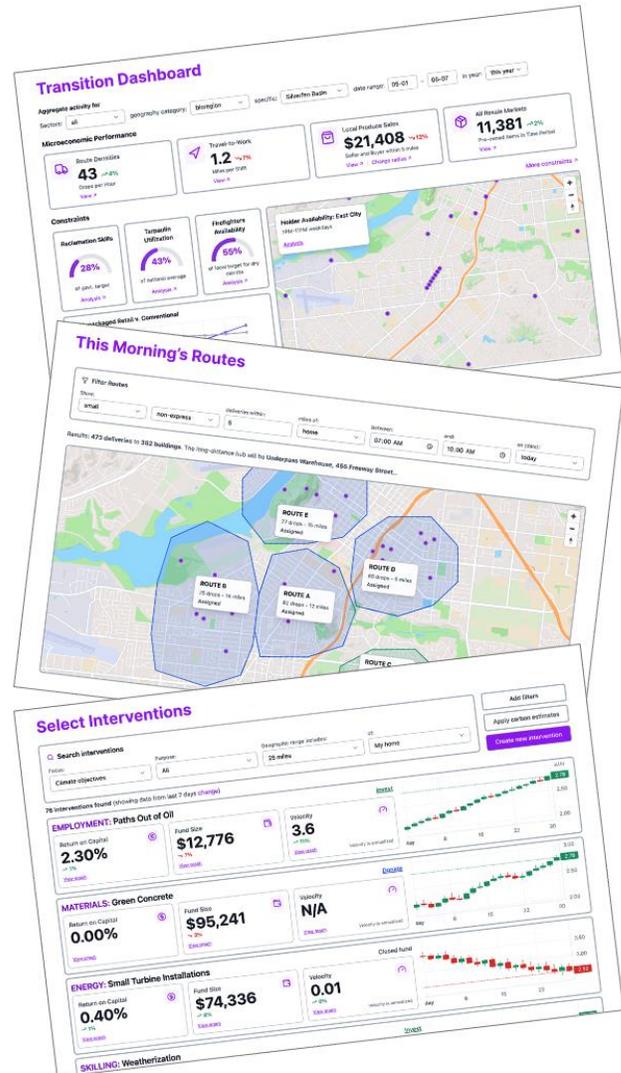
Green New Deals offer job creation, perhaps universal income. But they can be seen as slow to impact lower-skilled households, and out of step with growing anti-government [sentiment](#) amid fears of an inflationary public debt [crisis](#). Voters [everywhere](#) are increasingly enraged by today's economic structures, [mistrust](#) both political leaders and [experts](#) while [embracing anti-green politicians](#).

This paper outlines how any government could initiate radical - **privately funded** and run - **new markets** across the base of their economy. Those markets tangibly increase affordability, stability and household income. They also inherently incentivize localization, circularity of resources and lean new services. Existing resources are monetized as alternatives to manufacturing, building or extracting.

This policy costs taxpayers nothing and requires **no constraints** on anyone's activity; it just widens choices of economic models for anyone dissatisfied with current options. A [People's Capitalism](#) policy can supplement carbon taxes, degrowth, clean energy subsidies and other "enforcement" policies which are prone to splintering popular support for climate mitigation. It offers not a single solution to climate chaos but the starting point for countless micro-solutions, each driven by a market user's self-interest.



White Papers



CONTENTS

1) Context: The Extraordinary <i>Untapped</i> Potential of E-markets	3
2) Today's Economic Platforms: Engines of Consumption	4
PANEL: Case Study: On-demand laundry markets.....	4
3) People's Capitalism Policy: An Overview	5
4) Pro-climate Market Incentives in People's Capitalism	6
a) Disincentivizing of item sales	6
PANEL: Holders: A spine for rental markets	6
b) Boosting the 4 R's of circularity	7
PANEL: Unique Item Records: Lifecycle trackers	7
c) Precision matching	8
d) Localization	8
e) Driving route densities.....	9
f) Improved property, land and government asset usage	11
PANEL: Less "AI versus AI": Less energy needed	12
g) Energy micro-markets.....	12
h) Economic innovation	13
PANEL: High-value track records: Quality control	13
5) Market Signals: The Value of Microeconomic Climate Data	14
a) Revealing utilization	14
b) Transition dashboards	14
c) Market interventions to support climate objectives	16
PANEL: Tools for inspection and enforcement	17
d) Building portfolios of interventions	19
6) People's Capitalism and Climate Politics	21
a) Aligning pocketbook and planetary pain	21
PANEL: Context: Sidestepping the "elites" issue	22
b) A climate campaigner's playbook for People's Capitalism proposals	22
PANEL: How long will it take?	24
c) Broader campaigning	24
APPENDIX: People's Capitalism and Climate in Developing Economies	25
PANEL: Mexico's tree program: Admin. issues	26

<p><i>For simplicity, this briefing uses dollars as a currency. Any system of markets would of course trade in the national money of the jurisdiction it serves.</i></p>
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1) Context: The Extraordinary *Untapped* Potential of E-markets

Starting in the 2000's, capitalist economies around the world comprehensively digitized. Books including [Natural Capitalism](#) (1999), [The Age of Access](#) (2000) and [The Wealth of Networks](#) (2006) anticipated this producing greater efficiency of resource use and circular, "sharing" economies where goods and services were traded at community level, rather than being purchased new from far off factories. There is little evidence this overall scenario has materialized.

To take some illustrative data snapshots of current economic activity (a) online retailing is [driving up](#) consumption, returns and use of packaging (b) countless "sharing economy" sites have [failed](#) (c) convenient, often [price subsidized](#), rideshare services have increased cars on the road (d) growth of AI, widely used for online [comparative shopping](#), is [pushing](#) energy demand.

In response climate champions have refined metrics measuring the damage - emissions, global warming, resource scarcity - then policies that attempt to halt their rise - carbon taxes, degrowth, public investment in renewables. But these solid solutions too often hit other contemporary problems:

- **Public debt fears:** Hikes in public spending could now [precipitate](#) inflationary disaster.
- **Distrust in government:** Around the world, faith in political leadership on issues has [cratered](#).
- **Livid electorates:** Voters ([rightly](#)) seeing rigged economies, turn to visceral [anti-solution](#) politics.

It can be easy to assume today's market economies are just how computerized capitalism *must be*. But the new infrastructure for activity in market economies; online platforms, has been largely left to Silicon Valley startups to deliver. Unsurprisingly these companies have prioritized profitability, competitive advantage and secrecy. This is not conducive to healthy economies or efficient resource use. But, today's misalignment of economies *could* just be a short-lived phase within capitalism's rich [history](#) of course corrections and technological adaptivity. Early predictions of circular economies could come true.

Online platform technologies offer ways of meeting household and business needs from more granular, wider, deeper, lower overhead, better informed, genuinely participatory and more trustworthy markets than has ever been possible before. In these markets, self-interest of a wider array of providers would start to align with many climate objectives. Transport -for example - can be profitably priced into any purchase, not amortized as is so often the case now. The four "R's" of a truly circular economy - rental, repair, resale and recycling - can each become an alluring revenue stream for a range of new players.

Open market data can track indicators including localization, route densities, utilization of items or occupancy of facilities. When each is high, resource use is falling **and** household or small business revenues rising. Actionable data, supported by [new types of financial services](#) and [investment](#), enables precise micro-interventions from an array of newly motivated actors. It is in the way these forces can multiply across thousands of interlocking sectors of activity in any jurisdiction that the potency lies.

"*People's Capitalism*" is a policy proposal for any government ready to take back control of their market economy from multinational opportunists who have inserted their platforms into interactions between buyers and sellers of labor, finance, goods, services and other essentials. The policy requires an official [concession](#), comparable to ones that create national or state lotteries. The concept, which emerged from apolitical work in UK then US thinktanks and public agencies, is outlined at [PeoplesCapitalism.org](#).

2) Today's Economic Platforms: Engines of Consumption

How often do we see vehicles sent by FedEx, Amazon, DHL, supermarkets and food delivery platforms jostling to drop-off in the same street? The sight illustrates a core of wastefulness in current e-markets; siloing. Each of the above channels operates ruthlessly efficient routing software to maximize utilization of *their* drivers and vehicles. But each has only a fraction of today's drop-offs along that road. Energy costs and resources burned by so many duplicative journeys is an externality, shared among us all.

Siloing of buyers and sellers into intensely competitive, profit-maximizing, platforms spawns diverse climate problems. They include:

- **Wasteful specialization:** During the 2000-2002 pandemic, edible animals were incinerated because supply chains [collapsed](#). With catering companies shuttered, the siloed economy in which farmers sold to industrial processors could not adapt to families eating at home.
- **Energy-intense innovation:** Costs of "Last Mile" delivery, from regional hubs to doorsteps, is driving [adoption](#) of drones. But teenagers on bikes proved reliable, more interactive, and economically beneficial, for decades of local drop-offs. However, they lack advantage for any silo.
- **Centralization and standardization:** In competing silos bigness creates [multiple](#) benefits. As firms enlarge, they typically enforce uniformity; retailers discarding "misshapen" produce for example.
- **Misaligned investment:** Wall Street's development of super-efficient digital exchanges has centralized cash allocation, favoring short term returns [over public sensitivities](#) about impact.

PANEL: Case Study: On-demand laundry markets

Washing clothes offers insight into how fragmented e-markets fail to deliver "circular economy" solutions. Laundry is a universal need, rarely popular, and energy intensive. In a block of 100 apartments there can easily be 100 washing machines, many aging, unused 98% of the time.

A trustworthy market in which, perhaps, three residents decide to compete, charging to collect neighbors' bagged dirty linen, returning it clean and folded, could generate earnings for people needing to stay at home. With their appliance turned into a monetized asset, each of the three would be incentivized to upgrade to a lower-energy machine. Meanwhile, other residents could be freed from weekly drudgery, have space unlocked in their kitchens and lose the fixed costs of their own washing machine. The wider impact of a thriving market for peer-to-peer laundry services? Less manufacturing, transport and electrical waste.

This vision led to the founding of [Washio](#) in New York during 2013. Washio deployed couriers to collect soiled linen and drop it at the homes of people signed up as washers. Early signs of success attracted competing platforms; [Rinse](#), [FlyCleaners](#), [Washclub](#), [Butlerbox](#), [Tide Cleaners](#) (kiosks), [ByNext](#) (formerly [Cleanly](#)), and others. To recoup inevitable marketing costs, each retained around [15-20%](#) of their washers' earnings. But duplicative platforms undermined quality and unit economics. Route density is a key driver of costs; the further couriers for each platform have to go to collect a day's loads, the higher the labor and fuel costs. Washio collapsed in 2016 after burning [\\$17m](#).

Surviving services focused on centralized operations, couriating linen to large scale laundries, accepting low route density to deliver quality. The potential of localized peer-to-peer washing-for-pay remains barely viable in a world of high-overhead, disparate, vertical platforms.

3) People's Capitalism Policy: An Overview

Inclusive, supportive-but-competitive, maximally efficient market economies have been a goal for thinkers on right and left for decades. Today's digital technologies for economic activity make this elusive ideal a practical possibility. But political leaders need to initiate such comprehensive e-markets, the private sector has no incentive or unique leverage to do so alone.

All markets are designed by someone. People's Capitalism envisages a "*Modern Markets for All*" policy in any nation. This aims to create the [best possible markets](#) for boosting income of regular people or local businesses across an entire economy. Part of the [checks and balances](#) of a democratic market economy, this infrastructure for economic activity, created by a concession established in [legislation](#) is called POEMs "Public Official E-Markets". We offer illustrative detail on POEMs for [home](#) and [business](#) users.

No-one must be compelled to use POEMs, it is simply another public utility alongside electricity, roads, water supply or postage. But economic activity inevitably gravitates to the broadest, deepest, lowest-overhead, most convenient markets. In a personal example, if a supermarket with wider range, and lower prices opened nearer your home, you would likely shift the location of your weekly shop.

POEMs' policy will be [nuanced](#). Key characteristics of POEMs from a climate perspective include:

- **Seamlessness:** Instead of vertical silos, often international (e.g. [Wag's](#) market for dog walking services in 5,000 cities), POEMs is a [horizontal system](#) of **interlocking** markets across one region. It can instantly compile purchases across multiple markets each open to any legal buyer or seller. As one example, someone seeking a motorbike today could see options for rent locally, each including drop-off, insurance and after-use cleaning. This can make currently uneconomic transactions viable. In peer laundry as another example, it removes customer acquisition costs of a standalone market, linking seamlessly to markets for local couriers and per-load insurance.
- **Stability:** Unlike the shifting sands of frequent [failures](#) in stand-alone platforms today, POEMs is backed by (non-financial) commitments from government. It is too big to fail - making usage, and accumulating a record of truthful, responsible, activity particularly worthwhile.
- **Transparent, predictable, costs for usage:** POEMs charges a fixed percentage markup on each purchase it enables to provide revenue for operators. [Modelling](#) points to around 2%. This tiny overhead leaves costs like travel or transport of goods to have a much greater impact on pricing.
- **Small transactions prioritized:** To boost inclusion, transaction volumes and data gathering, POEMs' private sector operators will be subject to a [revenue formula](#) whereby the proportion of each transaction charge they can retain falls for purchases above a stipulated unit charge.
- **Open data:** Instead of enforcing commercial secrecy, POEMs' operators have to publish all aggregated market activity data. Anyone can check demand, supply and pricing trends across thousands of sectors around their home. This should foster innovation in goods and services.
- **Opportunity Feeds:** Just as social media platforms push lists of new posts at each user, POEMs can proactively offer a personalized weekly, daily or hourly list of earnings possibilities to any user. Each individual can set their filters to exclude irrelevant opportunities. Thus, investment or interventions can be micro-precise, immediately trialled, and easily expanded.

4) Pro-climate Market Incentives in People's Capitalism

Operators of any market shape the activity it enables in countless ways. In the e-markets we use today, shaping is [opaque](#) but typically includes pushing high-value sales as an overarching priority. POEMs' (Public Official E-Markets) operators will have transparent motivation: they maximize returns only by applying digital market technologies, and official benefits granted in the concession they won, to growing millions of [small](#) transactions. [Forbidden](#) from buying or selling in POEMs themselves, they are forced to devise ways of unlocking new small suppliers and providers across the economy.

It would be naive to assume these priorities, rippling through a powerful new system of markets, will counterbalance the incumbent advantages of anti-climate institutions across the economy. But they should spark increasing, incremental, entrepreneurial approaches to mitigation and adaption around climate issues across the microeconomy. Sample forces across these markets would include:

a) Disincentivizing of item sales

A citizen with lawns requiring periodic cutting will find Amazon and countless other sites vying to help her purchase a new mower. POEMs will of course have a market where anyone can sell new or used garden equipment on their own terms with only POEMs' [wafer-thin](#) transaction charge as overhead.

But *manufacturers* hold little interest for POEMs' management. Sale of a \$200 appliance is a one-off transaction for the markets system, its comparatively large value means operators retain only a small chunk of the 2% or so transaction charge.

Existing *owners* of lawnmowers are much more valuable to POEMs' management. If they can be induced to put their machine into community use for profit, each touchpoint between that mower and the market (see next bullet) generates a smaller purchase, on which operators keep the whole 2% markup. A mower, traded all summer, earns them many times the revenue of a sale. It also creates passive revenue for a householder.

The same applies to resources as diverse as scaffolding, boats, beauty appliances, agricultural conveyors, barbecue sets, evening wear or industrial floor buffers. Unless an item is in constant use, POEMs' operators will be striving to make it as monetizable as possible when not required.

PANEL: Holders: A spine for rental markets

A "holder" is a household which undertakes to have a person at home at all times ready to take in or check out deliveries or rental assets for others. It is one example of a sector that barely exists in today's inefficient, institutionalized, digital capitalism.

Holders are a human-centric, more responsive, POEMs' alternative to rigid facilities like [Amazon Lockers](#). The service monetizes existing assets (houses, time people are at home) rather than manufacturing, transporting and installing uniform metal boxes [around a country](#).

As always in POEMs, each holder sets their own rates to compete with others and enters the market for as long as they wish (just one trial weekend perhaps) at no cost. They can attract seamless insurance for goods held through POEMs' [financial services markets](#).

Each person has all the data needed to make decisions about their operation and can seamlessly combine "holding" with any number of other income generating activities across the full range of POEMs marketplaces.

b) Boosting the 4 R's of circularity

The way POEMs drives rental, repair, resale and recycling is most easily explained by tracking the lifecycle of - as example - one bicycle:

- **Rental:** POEMs operates markets allowing any household or business asset to be instantly rented locally. Looking at patterns of demand/supply/pricing around her home, our bike's owner may conclude her possession could most profitably be let out on Saturdays, when she doesn't need it. She may tell POEMs it can only be offered to adults with a track record of at least 10 successful rentals. Unwilling to deal face to face with renters, she may let POEMs build a nearby "Holder" into the transaction chain (see previous panel). Whatever her choices, her bike can generate passive income. And with such a responsive, deep, varied, thorough, rental market cyclists have less incentive to purchase their own machine.
- **Repair:** A bicycle being rented by its current owner will wear out faster than one sitting in a rack most of its time. POEMs offers - of course - a market for competitive bike mechanics, flagging those with verifiable certification so they can set higher charges if they wish. Some will likely choose to offer roadside response; turning up swiftly to fix a flat tyre or broken pedal. It all keeps the machine roadworthy longer, again maximizing bikes in circulation in the economy so anyone only needing one periodically is tempted to rent not buy.
- **Resale:** When tiring of her bike, its original owner can easily, competitively, at lowest-charge, sell it in POEMs' extensive markets for preowned goods.

PANEL: Unique Item Records: Lifecycle trackers

POEMs makes the concept of a Unique Item Record (UIR) uniquely viable. A manufacturer of, perhaps, work boots could create a page on POEMs for each pair they produce. Linked to a one-off barcode in their insoles, control of the page is passed through POEMs to a buyer.

From that point on if the owner rents, repairs, sells or recycles her boots, the UIR becomes part of each transaction; storing and verifying details. If they are stolen, the owner can flag that on the UIR so the thief can't resell in POEMs. The UIR not only lists reclaimable materials in the boots, it can show their value at today's market rates, allowing intelligent decisions about when to recycle them.

Any item with a barcode or microchip can have a UIR in POEMs at no cost (operators can only take a cut of transactions, not charge for adjacent services). Buyers would likely expect them for sewing machines, frying pans, chainsaws, pallet loaders, snowplows, ovens, display cabinets and countless other items that could be monetized over their life.

In produce markets, a tuna carcass, sack of cocoa beans or tree trunk claiming responsible sourcing could have a UIR linked to physically embedded microchips. As the resource passes through processing, transport and distribution facilities the chips are transferred into retail packaging or a code is printed allowing look up of the batch UIR.

To qualify for certification, every step may need to be open to inspection or enforcement which POEMs can arrange with ruthless, microcosmic, effectiveness; see page 17.

UIRs help rentals, the repair/maintenance record is verifiable and visible. Aggregated data enables highlighting of long-lasting, high resale/recycling value items. More on UIRs in our [Horizontal Markets](#) brief (section 4c).

Its Unique Item Record (see panel page 7) proves it was not stolen and can be used to demonstrate its value. As it is cheaper than new bikes, market structures - determined by operators' priorities - will favor it.

- **Recycling:** Once the bike is at the end of its life, the Unique Item Record can be used to identify saleable components, plus others that can be responsibly junked. POEMs' market for "Breakers", people who purchase end-of-life goods to reclaim valuable parts should make this step both effortless and remunerative for the final owner.

c) Precision matching

Maximally efficient, interlinked, markets for small transactions incentivize precise matching of need to supply, cutting waste. Example mechanisms include:

- **Downsizing:** Imagine a qualified tour bus driver, seeing POEMs' data on demand/supply/pricing on routes out of her hometown, decides to rent a 50-seat vehicle this Friday to offer an excursion around local beauty spots. By Thursday POEMs has only been able to sell 12 of her seats at her prices. The system can seamlessly help her rent back the big coach, possibly surrendering a fee pre-set by the owner who can immediately re-rent it. Through POEMs she can then lease a more fuel-efficient minibus for the day. At the same time, POEMs might be helping 5 drivers who have rented minibuses for an unexpectedly popular route on Friday to profitably merge their customers into a coach with each securing a cut of ticket sales now handed on to an entrepreneurial licenced bus driver.
- **Waste sales:** With markets for both couriers and end-users so enticing, a restaurant with surplus food late evening would have every reason to sell it, if only for animal feed. It could be collected instantly. Likewise, carpet off-cuts, ends of copper piping, industrial ingredients approaching a use-by date and other resources currently discarded acquire economic utility.
- **Micro-retail:** In lower-income areas particularly, people who purchase bulk goods and split them into small portions could thrive with POEMs. As examples, wholesale barrels of toiletries or kitchen ingredients could be decanted into pots bought by neighbors buying small amounts. This model is running at macro-level through businesses like [Zero Waste Store](#). POEMs would atomize it, incentivizing face-to-face sales. It may be that sellers need to combine micro-retailing with other in-home economic activity like holding (see panel above). Either way, POEMs will act as their customer attractor, point-of-sale system, inventory management tool, accounting record and - if they wish - automatic tax manager. If there is demand for cheaper household provisions revealed in POEMs, anyone can satisfy it.

d) Localization

POEMs' [sliver of commission](#) will be a minor component in the price paid by purchasers of any good or service. Transport and travel costs will therefore become a more dominant a factor. When renting, buying, or hiring someone for a service such as childcare, the most local eligible provider will likely be

the cheapest. The same should be true when booking a chef, lathe operator, pool lifeguard, temporary receptionist or other professional. Market forces start reducing fuel use.

In poorer communities, any household with a state-of-the-art video game console or home entertainment may charge for periodic gaming or cinema evenings in their front room. (POEMs could channel a percentage of ticket sales to copyright holders if mandated to do so.) It should be cheaper than traveling to an arcade or multiplex.

We do not know what very local services entrepreneurial households could start selling around their neighborhood with the right markets, POEMs will start to reveal possibilities.

e) Driving route densities

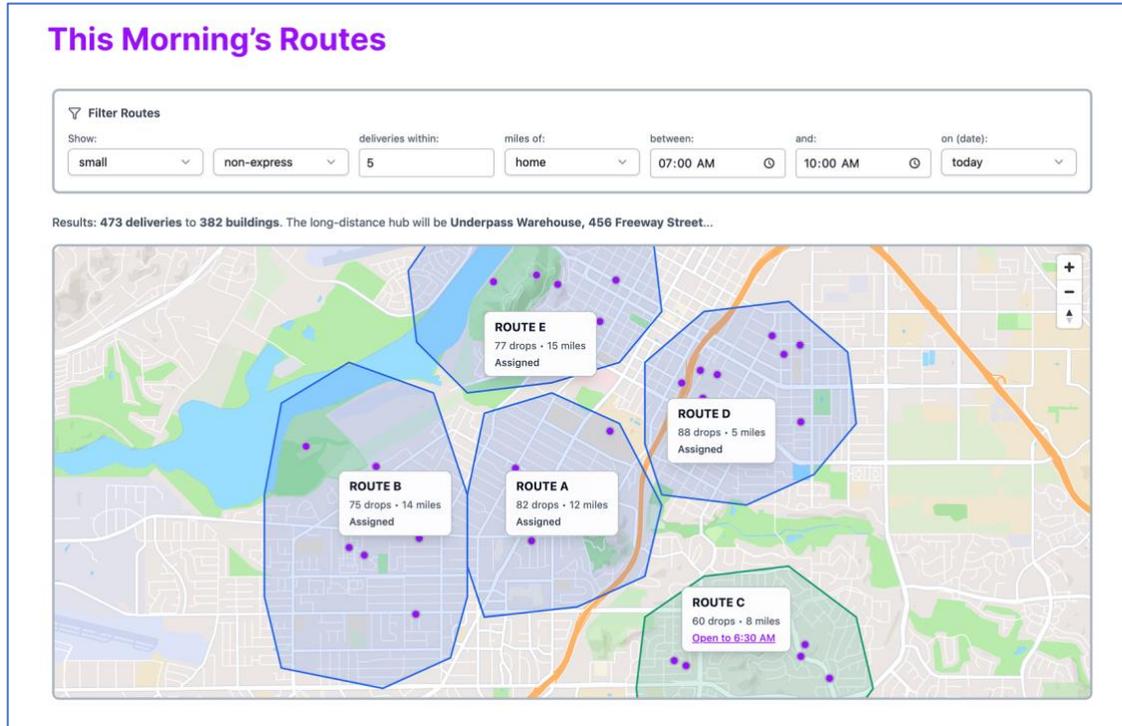
Getting goods to people is key in any economy that is circulating resources. The key metric for economic (and climate) efficiency in deliveries is [route density](#): each deliverer doing the highest number of drop-offs over the shortest possible distance. Big package firms have very efficient route density *within their silo of activity* but they each control their own booking/scheduling platform so can only achieve marginal route density within the overall economy. POEMs' delivery markets - open to anyone wishing to earn from distributing goods, subject only to legal controls on the activity - can do it across an entire region.

POEMs can match local deliverers to any required insurance through its equally open [finance markets](#). This allows the system to use modern scheduling tools to structure routes based on optimal densities, then use the pricing rules of each eligible deliverer to allocate routes to people with aggregated delivery charges from dozens of households going to the individual.

For deliveries that have come from further afield, POEMs will need a market for spaces that can serve as distribution hubs. At its simplest, such a space can just be wasteland or the corner of a construction site which the owner wants to monetize, perhaps temporarily. Having satisfied itself any offered piece of land is within zoning and legal criteria for this function, POEMs will book slots where its sellers of long-distance trucking can converge at a given time, to disgorge their load into holding pens from where local deliverers pick them up.

Anyone can of course rent, or offer to operate, equipment for cross-docking; breaking bulk long-distance loads into consignments for final mile delivery to doorsteps. Again, it adds up to an open version of the dedicated standalone buildings FedEx, DHL, Amazon and others maintain currently.

In our example below, a rider keen to earn this morning by doing deliveries around his neighborhood can see the current status of the market. As a hub for transferring long distance arriving parcels, POEMs is utilizing a warehouse currently with empty space that the manager is hiring lucratively as a distribution point over the next two days. Using that as its best-value local epicenter for today, POEMs has calculated optimal route densities, factoring in preferences of deliverers who have committed long term to sectors of town while offering other routes in its market for riders meeting required criteria.



Some zones are already assigned, likely because enough local householders have expressed a strong preference for a named person to be their ongoing deliverer and are willing to pay that person's charges even if above market rates. For POEMs' users, a trusted local person can be more compelling than a uniformed operative from a big brand multinational. Once a local deliverer has perhaps a few dozen households in their patch willing to prioritize them, it becomes uneconomical for other deliverers to price themselves into drop-offs for the surrounding addresses. By forging local connections, POEMs enforces quality services and fosters community connections.

This system can be particularly strong where the national chains are weak: deliveries for which both pick up and drop off are localized. For example, delivery of shopping, or transfer of a vacuum cleaner one neighbor is renting to another. These are simply scheduled into POEMs' route plans for any given hour.

POEMs can factor in multi-sector activity by its traders. Someone who does bike deliveries may also sell in markets for petcare, house cleaning, gardening or other domestic services. It can all be made as travel/time efficient as possible to maximize income. In this example, POEMs might construct a route so that it ends near a home where the deliverer has a lunchtime engagement to walk the dogs. Pet support may pay better than deliveries, so this is giving POEMs' providers progression paths a UPS franchisee, possibly having to drive all day to recoup the [costs](#) of their branded van, cannot imagine.

FedEx, Amazon, DHL and other behemoths can of course sell or buy through POEMs. They might for example commission a fleet of verifiably reliable local deliverers to meet their long-haul truck at a convenient spot for rapid dispersal to local streets. But, unless they paid any charge each person imposed for corporate exclusivity, the giant's parcels would then be comingled with local drop offs as was most advantageous for each deliverer.

POEMs' markets for passenger journeys could reuse much of the software needed for its open delivery exchanges. Journeys would also be split between two categories of A-to-B transit:

- **Scheduled**: A provider offers space on their bus, truck, or bike pannier that they commit to driving between departure point A to destination B at a given time.
- **Commissioned**: A taxi driver, specialist trucker or courier who will perform any journey required within their personal parameters on distance and other factors, at times they are available.

A buyer seeking to get themselves, or a package, to a destination need only tell POEMs their start and end points, plus a timeframe, any of which can of course be modified if they are price sensitive. POEMs then constructs all the journey/delivery options, possibly including handovers from one provider to another, blending scheduled or commissioned legs as required. Each option is priced, insured if required, and one click away for purchase. To keep costs down, POEMs uses its open markets to drive up route densities with a range of pricing mechanisms that providers would have every reason to use.

f) Improved property, land and government asset usage

Even amid a housing [crisis](#), livable properties [sit empty](#) because they are transitioning between owners, the owner is away, or occupancy of overnight accommodation is below capacity. This is a factor of inefficient markets. POEMs creates a range of enticements to keep buildings used even if there is only a one- or two-night period of vacancy.

A family going away for a week might see in POEMs' data their home could generate \$800 if rented. They may want POEMs to seamlessly build in insurance, nightly "*just checking all is OK*" visits from a certified local property warden (themselves selling multiple bonded community services perhaps), and only let to someone with a valuable track record of impeccable property rentals that they will fear losing. Likewise, an office building or retail premises may be unoccupied for two weeks, if *anyone* can legally use it for *anything*, POEMs should be able to quickly build a transaction that maximizes opportunity for both parties.

In a related dynamic; agriculture could progressively de-institutionalize as atomized alternatives gain efficiency and visibility. Big farms feeding standardized crops or livestock to centralized processors [is a norm](#) in developed nations currently because it is more economical for processors to run giant eco-systems of homogeneous production. POEMs can't completely overturn those economies of scale, but it will tip the scales towards smaller producers. Someone with 12 chickens for example will have access to ready markets for feed, egg sales and butchery. Combining granular local POEMs' demand data with soil analysis will quickly tell them which crops or animals are currently most profitable for even a half-acre.

Thus, monocultured fields with hedgerows ripped out to facilitate enormous machinery could be encroached on by small holders who can extract greater value from subdividing the land. POEMs' link to official land registries and ease of land purchasing (in [small lots](#) of course) could make it tempting for mega-farmers to start selling off fringes of their estates for monetization by more specialized production that realizes higher revenue from each patch while also building variegated landscapes.

Governments initiating a POEMs system for their economy will want to maximize its value for cutting costs of public services. This includes [resilience](#), where expenditure on dealing with an emergency such as wildfires often correlates to lack of preparation. With resources and people to tackle a blaze lacking or in the wrong location, it rages longer - with more dangerous climate impact. A key reason for lack of readiness currently is costs of maintaining equipment that may never be used before it ages out of use.

POEMs can facilitate imaginative financing and co-ownership that scythes these costs. As example, in a wildfire area public agencies may offer to share the costs of tarpaulins - that can suffocate smoldering embers on scrubland - with nearby farms and building companies. Farmers and builders get tarpaulins at half price on condition government can take them for use in an incident. (Wet conditions when farm and building supplies need sheltering are not conditions where wildfire abatement is a priority.) A range of resources - fencing, vehicles, piping - could similarly be on standby for a formal emergency.

g) Energy micro-markets

If a jurisdiction allows small producers to sell power into distribution networks, POEMs can foster active markets which incentivize using corners of buildings or land for generation. As one indication of the uniquely joined-up way it would do this, if meteorological data was localized enough to capture watts that could be generated by a south-facing roof and POEMs was allowed to access official registries of buildings, it could use its Opportunity Feeds (see page 5) to alert anyone with an optimally sited roof of their specific potential earnings from solar panels.

If a householder is interested in this income source, POEMs could then seamlessly show certified installers, panels available for sale or rent locally with delivery priced in, and possibly [financing](#) offers. All this would be done instantly with a chosen package timetabled, purchased and insured with one click. As power comes onstream, POEMs can be the householder's conduit for sale to a national grid.

As is so often the case with POEMs, this possibility monetizes existing resources that can be deployed tentatively at first and at very small scale. It contrasts with major multi-year projects often associated with climate responses; wind farms, geothermal mining, sprawling solar panel banks, and so on.

PANEL: Less "AI versus AI": Less energy needed

POEMs offers an information technology innovation that *lowers* energy requirements.

In today's bewildering array of online marketplaces with [complex pricing](#), possible "[junk fees](#)", and [extractive](#) business models consumers are understandably [turning to artificial intelligence agents](#) to find, as example, "*a pair of brown \$30 sunglasses that can be delivered by lunchtime*". Retailers [use AI to push up prices](#). It's AI battling AI.

Others use AI to [navigate](#) a confusing array of secretive "gig work" sites in search of the best opportunities or to compile accounts and tax submissions across disparate platforms. Platforms use AI to [lower wages](#). Enormous [energy needs](#) of all the data crunching involved are an externality for society to bear.

POEMs' markets are [lowest overhead](#), [straightforward](#), open and localized. It doesn't need AI to sift through its sunglasses for sale and align each with a local deliver for inclusive pricing or constantly scan multiple unrelated marketplaces then synthesize data. Absent a thicket of incompatible, shifting sands, platforms, AI has little to add to immediate searches for shoppers or workers.

h) Economic innovation

POEMs delivers actionable data on activity in any market across any locality [as a public right](#). Costs of entry into any market, once any legal checks are completed (which POEMs can help with through its [interfacing](#) to official databases), is free. Anyone seeking to maximize income from microeconomic activity can trial any number of ideas, try profiting from any household or business asset, seek upskilling or otherwise align themselves with market need in ways that are inconceivable today.

Many of the new offerings will be inherently local and green. They may involve unbundling existing centralized services to attack a part of their function. They can be nimbly implemented alternatives to the lumbering fixed-cost operations of extractive industries running mines, refineries, pipelines, ships and gas stations.

Underpinning all the above are POEMs' extensive [granular markets](#) for insurance, loans, investment, factoring and other micro-finance possibilities. All are structured around small dollar amounts and likely to draw on the value of POEMs' track records (see panel opposite) so that provenly reliable individuals find it easy to attract investment in their business ideas. This facilitates the small producers that these markets increasingly put on a level playing field with the largest companies' trading tools of today.

PANEL: High-value track records: Quality control

Peer-to-peer services can be the most localized, economically efficient, opportunity-generating, way of meeting needs such as laundry. But quality control is a constant problem. POEMs changes that.

Peer marketplaces today typically rely on buyer ratings of providers to grade providers. But an [industry](#) of 'bots, artificial intelligence and offshore operators [sell favorable reviews](#) or will generate bad ones for competitors. Staying ahead is hard.

Multiple vertical marketplaces jostling for growth in any sector incentivize poor quality. Why wash someone's clothes well if the exchange owning your ratings could go bust tomorrow? It's more lucrative to launder hastily knowing once you have bad reviews in one market, you just set up in another.

POEMs allows building of an objective track record of activity across thousands of sectors. And it unlocks the value of provenly reliable service to charge more, or pay less (because sellers can set a price based on a counterparty's reliability) with the same breadth. Washing well can put you on a ladder to other types of work. Your POEMs track record is like a clean driving licence; irreplaceable.

More on this in our [Horizontal Markets](#) paper (section 4b).

5) Market Signals: The Value of Microeconomic Climate Data

Today's infrastructure for economic transactions, driven by need for competitive advantage is typically [secretive](#) about the data collected in each silo of activity. Constantly constructing end-to-end transactions across thousands of sectors, POEMs (Public Official E-Markets) builds troves of minute-by-minute data about much broader economic activity. Once anonymized and aggregated, it [must](#) all be published openly. Anyone can identify metrics highlighting progress to climate goals, possibly choosing to then use POEMs' tools to create a supportive market intervention.

[a\) Revealing utilization](#)

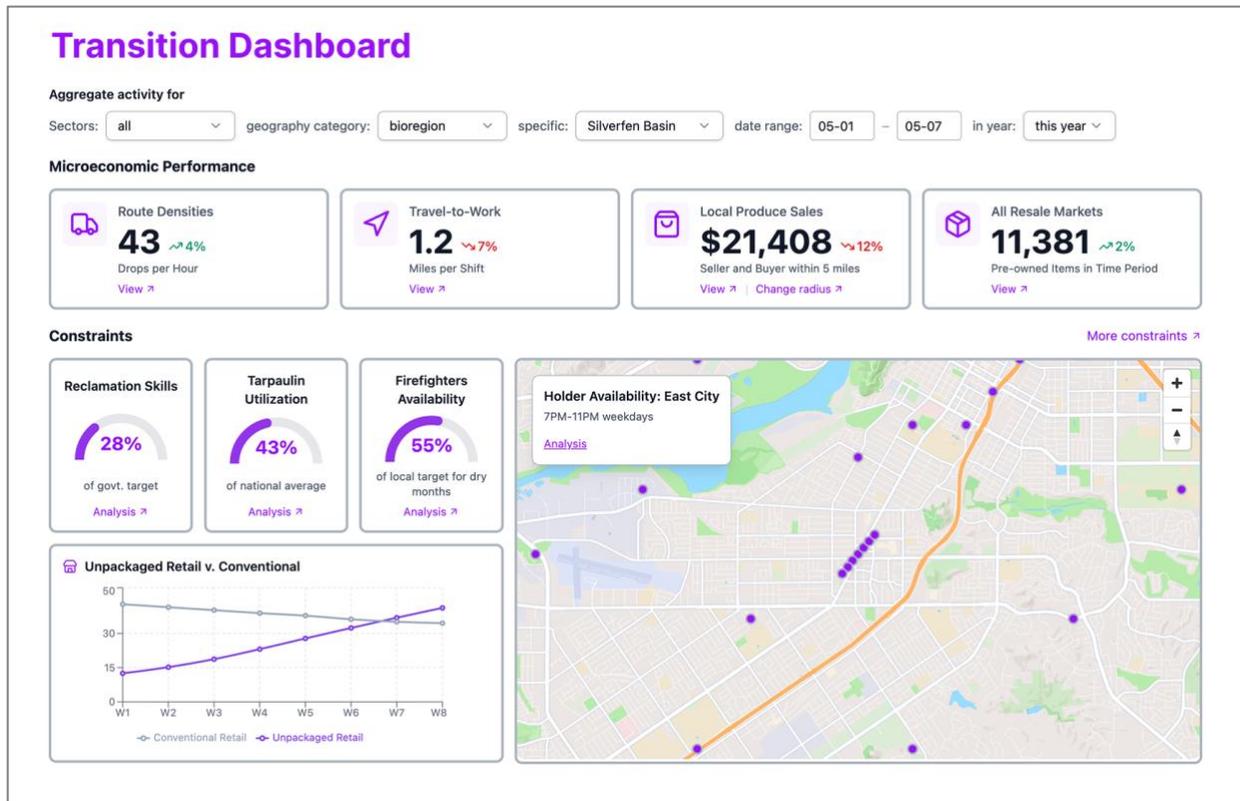
The headline metric for any sector in which people can be hired, or items rented, is *utilization*; what percentage of all the hours available are being booked for carpenters, office cleaners, solar panel installers, trailers, children's paddling pools or any other economic resource? Data can of course be localized and coupled to earnings information. So, a user currently working as a van driver might ask "*What was the utilization of home insulation installers within 5 miles of my address last week, and what was the average hourly wage?*" If insulation experts were running at 80% of available hours being booked and van drivers at 30% with averaged earnings 20% higher, a case for retraining is clear.

Utilization is a vital metric for greening any microeconomy. It tracks how much existing items are being used, but that is just a first tier of the insights on offer. POEMs tracks not just how many, for example, tents are available for rental in any given geography, it can reveal averaged turn-around times; the period between tents ending one period of rental and starting another. If that is spanning several days, possibly pushing utilization artificially high at peak weekend periods, some investigation around how to make cleaning and repacking services more efficient than current providers could suggest a path to maximizing rental. Once again in POEMs, priorities of climate activists - reduced tent manufacturing - aligns with interests of local communities - maximizing passive income from otherwise dormant household assets or generating new services based on market needs. Likewise, signals of over-production can be seen early, so diverse providers slow down before flooding the market.

Any sub-stream of this data can be blended with other information sources to track wider outcomes. [Avoided production](#) could become a tangible milestone if, as one small example, POEMs' data on rental between households of festive lights (families that have lights to celebrate Diwali in October/November perhaps putting their home illuminations on the market for others in December) could be paired with official import figures for home decorations. If imports/sales are falling while rental/resale is rising, that is likely causation. Anyone could construct this index of activity that helps deliver a "Green Christmas".

[b\) Transition dashboards](#)

Policymakers could draw on POEMs' dynamic metrics at national, regional or hyper-local level. They may choose to configure a dashboard for their region drawing on the system's user-friendly display functions to present POEMs' validated data around metrics they judge important to their electorate. In the example screen below a user wants to check progress the previous week within a geographic area defined by its biological, rather than political, boundaries. She checks a government website that draws on POEMs' data:



The dashboard is highlighting key metrics that drive carbon consumption in localized activity. Route density determines the economic and climate efficiency of deliveries and passenger journeys (see page 9). Rising density indicates increasing efficiency of vehicle usage, and higher earnings for deliverers.

Averaged distances residents are traveling to each work assignment booked through POEMs again illuminate fuel consumption in the local economy. Falling distances create incentives for further localization. If I am a plumber, in-home hairdresser, house painter, office temp or stand-by chef, I can see I risk being undercut locally if I am carelessly failing to build compensation for travel time/costs into my pricing (see page 9). By valuing my time and travel costs I will be better value for more local work.

A similar dynamic could be pushing local produce sales. If people are buying meat, vegetables and other vital resources from farms within a 5-mile radius that could be a signal to industrial farmers, likely on monopoly contracts with vast processing facilities; they could profitably start selling off parcels of land to those who can monetize them better with small-scale, soil and terrain specific, models of agriculture.

Activity in resale markets is a proxy for circularity in the local economy. If citizens and businesses are buying assets second hand, they are paying less while reducing demand for manufacturing.

The dashboard also crunches activity data to find bottlenecks in transition. Its Constraints panel shows this region has a clear shortage of available hours from people badged as qualified to strip end-of-life machinery, furniture, vehicles and buildings of their reclaimable components. That is both an economic loss regionally, POEMs offers ultra-low charge, open, markets for those materials once stripped, and a burden on the climate as goods are shipped long distances to be broken down, or simply dumped intact.

The next panel's revelation that tarpaulins are being offered, but not rented, locally may seem abstract. But expensively manufactured plastic sheets preserve crops, protect loads, shelter building work and conserve resources in countless other ways. Clicking for further analysis should reveal if the problem locally is oversupply or simply businesses across the bioregion not realizing the value of hiring tarpaulins as needed, perhaps assuming they must expensively purchase them. In that case, some targeted local advertising perhaps by local government, could benefit regional economic growth and the climate.

Official data shows the selected bioregion is a wildfire risk area. Local politicians have pledged a target for the number of trained firefighter hours that will be bookable on any given day during hot months. Because this is POEMs, they are not necessarily committing to expensively hire full time fire crews who may not be needed in winter. They have offered to train anyone meeting criteria as a firefighter if they will agree to pre-emption: whatever other work they do through POEMs (or off-platform), once an emergency is officially declared, those bookings can be immediately postponed and each person reassigned to membership of a fire crew. (This is explained in our page on [crisis response](#).)

Holders are households that act as way points for goods or packages in transit (see panel, page 6). The map above is identifying a paucity of these facilities in one city in the bioregion in the evenings. Again, it is actionable data that any family willing to undertake to always have someone at home between end-of-work and bedtime could profitably seize. Holders are pivotal in a circular economy, they remove the need for buyer and seller, or renter and borrower, to physically be in the same place at a given time.

Other indicators might track sales of unpackaged goods, possibly by holders doubling as micro-retailers (see page 8), bike rentals mapped against taxi journeys, sales of home-produced electricity to the region's grid, and so on. It's all identifying trends, gaps and above all, opportunities to earn.

c) Market interventions to support climate objectives

Complementing industrial policy to increase renewables, POEMs enables micro-interventions by anyone wishing to align consumption with green priorities for commercial, philanthropic or public policy ends. The key to this is POEMs' mechanisms for investing, insuring, subsidizing lending through its deinstitutionalized financial markets. These are based on the concept of a "unifund"; a secure mechanism based around a pot of money that it can use to intelligently buy, sell, invest or otherwise allocate capital within rules set by the POEMs' user who instigated the fund. The appendix of our [briefing on POEMs' financial markets](#) outlines, as example, how a fund to boost bike rentals would form.

Once a market intervention is set up, processes for actioning it can be instant, not requiring awareness raising or applications from potential beneficiaries. For example, a fund to train tree surgeons might be established by a user who stipulates criteria for any qualifying person (verifiable experience, track record of reliability, history of outdoors work, etc.). POEMs then builds a list of qualifying users whose parameters for accepting upskilling offers align, and inserts it in the daily Opportunity Feed of each (see page 5). Likewise, an intervention intended to make taxi journeys by rechargeable cars cheaper than fossil fuel alternatives can just lower the price of any e-car eligible in any qualifying transaction by the formula specified until the fund expires. Administration, targeting and auditing is automated.

This creates three obvious categories of climate-focused interventions, each illustrated with examples:

Commercial

- **Labor forces:** A plumbing trade body may realize shortage of members able to install composting toilets is a barrier to growth. A fund to upskill rural plumbers with a verifiable track record of reliable bookings in POEMs to also install composting units could be a good use of funds.
- **Sourcing sites:** A maker of vertical farming equipment might tell POEMs' the requirements for a productive micro-installation - sun-facing white wall, rainwater run off, zoning for small-scale food production. Any user open to investment offers who has also allowed POEMs to link to their household or business premises' land registry record could then, if meteorological data is right, find themselves offered a chance to lease their wall to the company through POEMs'.
- **Backing innovation:** An investor keen to boost insects as a renewable food source might create a POEMs fund acting as a middleman that buys from producers and sells to eateries, possibly artificially boosting the price for farmers and lowering it for consumers to build an initial flywheel of customer acceptance.

Philanthropic

POEMs provides a ready channel for organizations or individuals wishing to provide a non-commercial solution to climate issues. Tools include:

- **Micro-subsidies:** A user may wish to encourage rickshaw journeys as an alternative to car transport. They could set up a fund in POEMs dedicated to perhaps, "*paying up to 40% of the cost of any journey less than 3 miles to ensure any eligible rickshaw is 15% cheaper than the cost of fuel and vehicle depreciation*". Again, POEMs will insert funds into each qualifying transaction so rickshaws just become cheaper for the customer when planning any qualifying route. It will transparently run the fund's accounts, and its demand/supply graphing could quickly alert anyone with a rickshaw to get into the market or rent their rickshaw to others through POEMs. It does all this for its [fractional](#) percentage markup on each transaction.

PANEL: Tools for inspection and enforcement

In today's capitalism climate interventions are often open to fraud; accepting payment to clear waste from a beauty spot but delivering easier to gather trash from elsewhere to trigger payouts for example.

POEMs has an array of inspection and enforcement tools across the atomized economy it enables. Someone paying for a specific activity or outcome could seamlessly book randomized, fully briefed, possibly unannounced, checks on activity from POEMs' markets for verified, trained, inspectors across a range of disciplines.

Receipt of funds for trash picking at a nature reserve for example, could be dependant on willingness to accept spot inspections ensuring garbage from other sources wasn't included. It could also require each participant's acceptance that if shown to have acted fraudulently, they will forfeit maybe three grades of the POEMs' record of reliable trading that allows them to command a premium price across its array of markets.

There are further layers of possibility behind this simplistic description. They are explained in [another brief](#). But high likelihood of detection, and future loss of income, should make POEMs a poor choice of channel for fraudsters.

- **Reverse supply chains:** Anyone wanting to clear perhaps a beach of plastic waste might set up a fund to purchase the flotsam for responsible disposal within a given timeframe, which maybe "tomorrow". Inspection to ensure honest collection could be part of the deal (see page 17).

Government

Even the extraordinary market efficiencies POEMs could bring to any region will likely be unequal to embedded behavior, convenience and omnipresent infrastructure that drives climate degradation. Subsidizing sales of holders (see page 6) who also micro-retail packaging-free toiletries for example may not curtail force-of-habit purchasing of a bottle of Head & Shoulders from the supermarket.

But if governments were to decide to fully tax externalities of traditional shopping and supply chains, POEMs could become a uniquely effective machine redistributing the wealth. As a blunt example, a levy on bottled toiletries could pay for a reverse supply chain through POEMs which monetizes the discarded packaging and funnels it to recycling plants. Or the sales tax could start reducing costs of buying bring-your-own-bottle goods from neighborhood micro-retailing households with subsidies applied at point of sale by POEMs. Thus, a People's Capitalism policy aligns green objectives with a form of wealth transfer, the well off may choose to pick up packaged products for convenience, but in doing so they are contributing to opportunities for lower income breadwinners to earn and cut household costs.

Tax changes generally could impact rapidly on consumer or business behavior through POEMs. If policymakers add 5% to the cost of diesel fuel, a range of vehicle operators will be motivated to turn to POEMs pricing tools to ensure increased overhead is passed onto customers starting immediately. They can use POEMs' aggregated data to check competitors are broadly doing the same.

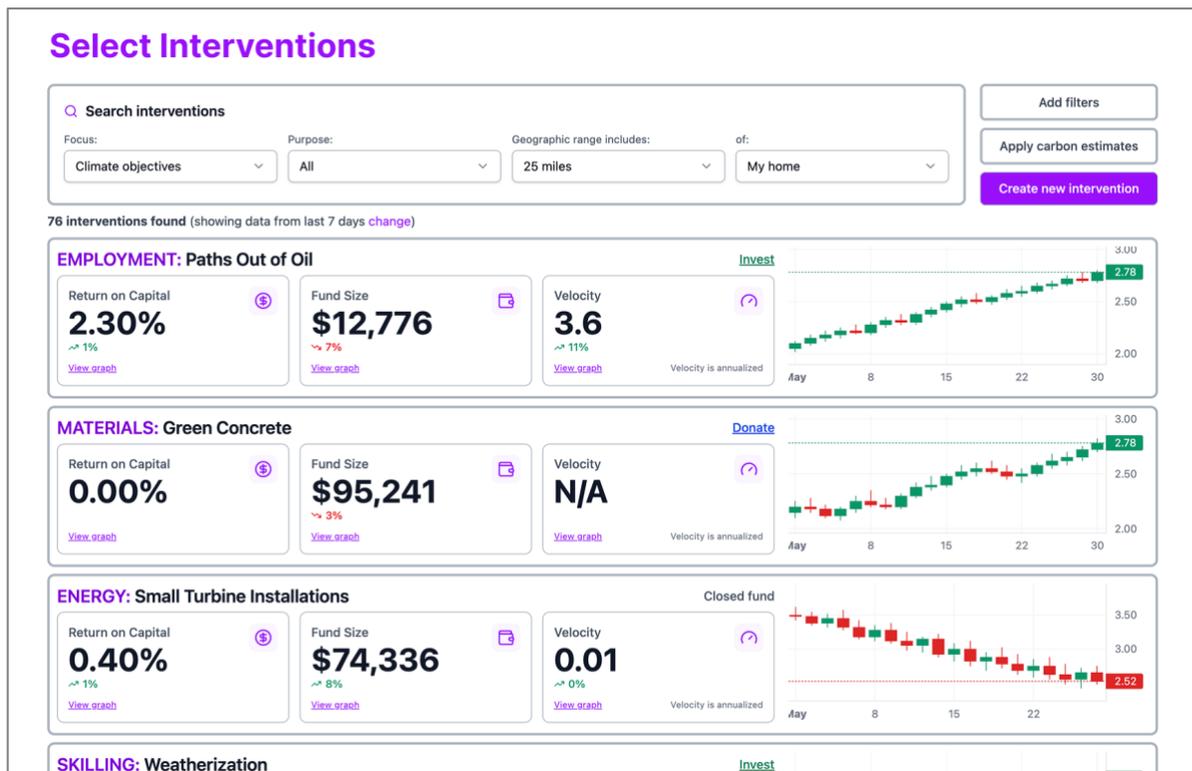
The "unifund" mechanism within POEMs, allowing set up of a verifiably transparent deposit/spending account for any purpose, could allay distrust of tax measures like carbon pricing. Currently, there is often [doubt](#) taxes on fuel for instance are used to address pollution as claimed. If gas was paid for through POEMs, the buyer could see her \$1.22 or so tax on a fill up landing immediately as a rebalancing line item in a unifund for "*hypothecated carbon tax*" which may total tens of millions of dollars. Clicking on the "*payments*" tab she might then see transfers to local tree planting projects, each equally visible in its auditing, down to the last cent. on thousands of small, specific. "*Dollar in, dollar out*" rules within the fund, set up by government officials, could limit assets on deposit to, maybe, a reserve of \$1m; everything else has to be spent fast on trackable, randomly but verifiably [inspected](#), community based, climate solutions.

Stimulus too could acquire a green tinge with POEMs. In today's institutionalized capitalism, funds pumped into the economy by governments typically wash through mega-banks, each [skimming](#) their take off each onward allocation to businesses or households. In any jurisdiction with POEMs, politicians may prefer to direct relief right into voters' pocketbooks with transfers to verified household users. This could be done bluntly using mechanisms like [negative income tax](#) to target aid most effectively. But it could equally factor in climate aims, for example paying for weatherization of buildings would create labor demand, increase the value of household assets and reduce fuel need while offering swift, to-the-penny accountable, cost savings for targeted households.

d) Building portfolios of interventions

Traditional, comparatively rigid, categorization of climate interventions may be unattractive in POEMs. Anyone with capital to spend on green goals can build a much more personalized, tailored, collection of interventions to boost transition to a decarbonized economy, possibly swapping in and out of individual interventions at will.

In our example screen below, someone planning to spend as little as a few hundred dollars on driving decarbonization locally is viewing [POEMs unifunds](#) set up to intervene in economic activity in ways that curb climate change. Her initial search is very broad, including for-profit and non-profit interventions across the spectrum of possible functions for a unifund:



As examples, this screen is showing a first four interventions she might consider:

- Paths Out of Oil:** This unifund was set up by a user recognizing that workers at oil refineries are crucial to the industry's economic performance but have valuable, transferrable, skills. She wishes to aggressively fund personalized re-training of these individuals in ways that align with POEMs' market data. If a roustabout fancies working as a medical device technician to take one pathway, POEMs builds stepping stones of adjacent-work bookings and skilling for that person.

By limiting re-training that can be funded to growth sectors and mandating recipients must allow POEMs to tithe 15% of their enhanced earnings back to the fund, she is potentially making a profit. If POEMs' users wish to use market mechanisms to undermine oil companies, forcing them into constant rehiring and retraining, it will neutrally provide the data and tools as it does for any other user.

- **Green Concrete:** This fund is philanthropic, subsidizing the price of concrete that [certifiably](#) entombs CO2 in its manufacturing. Feeling this is a promising, though not yet economically viable, industrial process, the philanthropy aims to get a first 20 buildings locally erected with the substance by making it competitive against conventional cement for qualifying builders.
- **Small Turbine Installations:** This fund has been set up by a manufacturer of small vertical-axis turbines. These "home windmills" can generate electricity to be sold through POEMs back to a national grid. Having mapped wind-exposed areas of the region, the maker is willing to fund proof-of-concept installations for householders with eligible properties. In return they want a specified cut of proceeds. Their fund is not open to additional investment, but they choose to allow it to report activity openly, possibly to boost market confidence in their business plan.
- **Weatherization:** This fund trains people meeting specified criteria, possibly including underutilization for their existing skills, in the installation of weatherproofing for properties.

Some other functions on this screen:

- **Apply carbon estimates:** POEMs itself must be a neutral marketplace and cannot endorse any set of climate metrics other than those of the government in the jurisdiction it serves. But it can allow any number of external bodies to rate the interventions on offer, with an algorithm of their choosing or through human judgement.

Clicking on this link atop the screen will ask which organization's ratings should be applied before adding that organization's assessments to each intervention. It can then re-rank them by the marks. Bodies like [CDP](#), [Sierra Club](#) or [350.org](#) may choose to rank POEMs' offerings like this, possibly only revealing their ratings to subscribers.

- **Create new intervention:** If the user has money to dedicate to climate protection and isn't impressed by current options for doing so, she can create her own unifund. The steps are outlined in our [Financial Services briefing](#), section 5.

6) People's Capitalism and Climate Politics

Revolts such as France's [gilets jaunes](#) protests, [Ecuador's fuel riots](#) and [campaigns worldwide incited](#) by right wing organizations against fuel efficient appliances illustrate how easily climate campaigners can be positioned as elites, unconnected to working class struggle. People's Capitalism policy can be a gamechanger in these febrile debates. It sidesteps current controversies, forcing advocates for fossil fuel to argue *against new choices* for consumers. It offers fresh metrics to track decarbonization.

[a\) Aligning pocketbook and planetary pain](#)

Global warming is often seen as needing huge "A Manhattan Project of..." solutions. Calculations of metrics like Social Costs of Carbon can seem abstract. Anyone advocating for POEMs (Public Official E-Markets, see page 5) would be highlighting "bad arteries" which is immediately [relatable](#) for so many breadwinners. This messaging argues that political passivity around the world has allowed multinational chancers to build the transactional infrastructure of digital-era market economies leaving regulatory bodies [ineptly](#) scrabbling to curb the worst excesses of [deep pocketed](#), [unethical](#), [unpopular](#), Silicon Valley startups. Planet **and** people are victims of our bad economic arteries.

This framing of drivers of planetary and household degradation points to an obvious solution; alternative infrastructure for economic activity built around lowest viable charges, income maximization, open data, neutrality and transparency. Only governments can initiate that and the [need](#) for them to do so has never been more pressing. Once this is done, pricing behavior within those markets can be nuanced, responsive and even linked to hyper-specific outcomes. It's an alternative to imposing measures such as carbon taxes at scale through existing, often hostile, online markets.

Climate advocates often propose "*local pain for global gain*"; curbing bad practices in a given country so the planet can start recovering. People's Capitalism as a climate priority offers new messaging:

- **Tangible, local, commitments**: Alongside committing to lower global warming, politicians might - with POEMs - specify they would "*reduce average travel-to-work times by 20% over 2 years*". Levers to do this include targeting training funds towards very localized areas of demand as revealed in POEMs' market activity reporting, tax breaks on taxis to nearby work bookings *when local meteorological data shows significant rainfall* (encouraging work within a zone that is amenable to cycling or walking in normal weather), seeding finance for minibus departures in response to commuter travel needs, and so on. It helps households and reduces fuel use.
- **Backfooting opponents**: Petro-states have [lobbied](#) against caps on global warming and other internationalist measures citing costs and public distaste. How will they fight against launch of POEMs, which localizes economic activity at scale in any region? Fossil fuel pressure groups would have to advocate against giving people a choice of forums for their economic activity.
- **Mitigation v. adaptation**: Climate groups have [argued](#) over whether stopping climate change is more important than alleviating its impacts. POEMs offers a direct path to both, making it easy, transparent, lowest overhead and fair when people are hired to build new levees while also incentivizing reduced waste. It is simply pricing of finite resources within responsive capitalism.

- **Big project impacts:** Climate calming will always require large physical infrastructure projects. Currently these can largely benefit people already doing well. A new battery factory for instance will need for architects, engineers, roboticists, chemical engineers and project managers; all of whom will likely move nearby, pushing up property values.

Too often the lower-level largely transient workforce - laborers, security guards, cleaners, catering staff, landscaping crews, shuttle drivers - will be contracted from outsourcing companies. They run the infrastructure that very efficiently recruits and schedules such people - within that silo of activity. By committing that this second-tier demand will flow into local communities through POEMs, political backers of the project ensure its economic impact spreads more widely. Green activists could seek to make it mandatory.

b) A climate campaigner's playbook for People's Capitalism proposals

It may seem tempting to climate campaigners to make implementation of POEMs (Public Official E-Markets) in any jurisdiction an explicitly green policy tool; setting up efficient, low-overhead, markets that foster climate-friendly activity **only**. To take one trivial example, the intended markets could be banned from trading wood stoves or the fuel they need even though that activity remains legal in the wider economy.

This would risk turning the policy into a social engineering project. If a People's Capitalism policy is simply recognized as an overdue upgrade to the operating system of market economies, aiming just at common priorities for any political party - productivity, fairness, economic opportunity, accountability, and so on - it will likely attract more support and be harder to oppose. This asks for faith from climate activists; that the invisible hand of countless individuals and businesses pursuing their self-interest in newly granular markets - which are democratically regulated and subject to market interventions within a framework of laws - will inherently produce improved climate outcomes, albeit unevenly. It is a contrast to the view that only centrally imposed so-called "*climate socialism*" can confront the dangers of a burning planet.

PANEL: Context: Sidestepping the "elites" issue

Focused on an embattled planet, it can be easy for climate activists to miss the breadth and depth of popular economic discontent [known to be driving](#) anti-solutions politics in the [UK](#), [US](#) and [elsewhere](#). Amid distrust of ["elite" experts](#), campaigners risk being vilified if proposing new taxes or controls.

[Polling](#) in 2025 found 68% of voters across 31 countries believe their economy is rigged against them. Separate [research](#) established 40% support violence to change the system. Alongside this pain, there is [widespread](#) loss of faith in governments' ability to solve problems, including climate change.

Climate campaigners have recognized the new world of terrible jobs and [status anxiety](#) masked by [out-of-date](#) official statistics. But solutions, such as the billions of investment in a renewables-led industrial policy in the US Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act, take time to filter through to communities, can be perceived as government "wastefulness" at a time of [feared](#) public debt crises and often create higher-skilled rather than blue collar jobs.

Meanwhile low wage jobs [morph](#) into precarious on call work, with insecurity triggering [an authoritarian reflex](#) and a [loss of trust in other social groups](#).

People's Capitalism policy gets competing corporates to invest at-risk in new national economic infrastructure for anyone wanting an alternative. Anyone can use it if/as they personally wish: No "nanny state" edicts.

If climate campaigners are willing to push for improved infrastructure for an imperfect economy, rather than advocating policy that aims for a pre-determined climate outcome as overarching priority, there would still be many levers to pull in the political debates around People's Capitalism:

Shaping the mandate

POEMs will be defined by a [concession](#) outlining benefits government will bestow on the intended markets system, in return for specified public service obligations, for a fixed time period. This legislation which will scope core aspects of the eventual system could, for climate purposes, usefully be mandated to include functionality for:

- **Travel reduction**: Digital tools can cut journeys just by empowering users. As one example, that could resonate with weary commuters, climate activists might lobby for POEMs' operators to be mandated to provide "*travel distance to work*" settings that fully integrate into public transit. This would enable a user to make choices like, for instance, "*If a work assignment for which I am eligible is more than 5 minutes' walk from a stop on the 135 bus route, the payrate I need goes up by \$2.50 per shift to compensate for travel inconvenience*".
- **Boycotts**: Allowing any user to tell POEMs when listing options for any need to avoid, as examples, any goods that have transited Amazon's warehouses (to protest packaging policy) or have Norwegian origins (to penalize commercial whaling) would allow POEMs' tracking of supply chains to also manage boycotts. Anonymized, aggregated, boycott data would be published so that if, perhaps, 3% of POEMs' users were stipulating "*I will pay up to 10% extra to avoid produce from the bottom 30 countries on the worldwide democracy index*", the signal would ripple through importers, wholesalers, retailers (conventional and micro) and policymakers.
- **Indices**: POEMs must extract data and authoritatively compile mandated indices of activity in its markets. Some key indices, for which operators will be held legally responsible, will obviously include economic growth, users' income, hourly pay averages and so on. But, possibly coupled with data from sources climate bodies consider accurate, the ***official*** dashboards could include metrics such as pollution creation. (Of course, anyone can create unofficial dashboards.)
- **Exceptional transaction sizes**: Priorities for POEMs' operators when designing their markets will be determined by a [Maximum Average Transaction Size](#) rule. This ensures they profit most from small unit-size transactions. There will inevitably be calls for carveouts to create areas of economic activity where transaction sizes can profitably be larger for the markets' operators.

Any carveout will incentivize [businesses running POEMs](#) to drive volume in those sectors because they retain the full markup even on larger purchases. Land sales could be one sector exempt from a drive to very small transaction sizes. Perhaps a unit size of 50% of an acre would most efficiently encourage tools supporting sales of currently industrially farmed land for smaller scale, more adaptive, agriculture? Climate campaigners could push for this rule within the legislation to unleash an economic engine relentlessly incentivizing mono-culture industrial farmers to sell off parcels of their land to smaller operators.

Exploiting new tools

Climate advocates may also wish to explore policy proposals that leverage POEMs' activity and capabilities. Some illustrative examples:

- **New hypothecated taxes**: POEMs has an explicit aim of encouraging rentals, including of vehicles. That will inevitably attract some users to booking a gas-guzzling SUV for a weekend of off-roading. Climate proponents could push for a tax on SUV rentals, collected automatically by POEMs or through paperwork in off-platform channels, that is directed into a POEMs' [unifund](#) to subsidize costs of enhanced care for children certified with respiratory conditions. With dollar-in-dollar-out transparent reporting, the fund blunts "war on motorists" invective with a "war on sick kids" framing to apply to opponents of the levy.
- **Rights to repair**: Climate groups already oppose manufacturers' controls on owners' ability to refurbish their items. POEMs makes the argument more pressing; if anything of value can be overhauled, a localizing, regulated, informed, lowest-overhead, market should spring up to serve the need. As example, if legal [ambiguity](#) about refilled printer cartridges could be definitively clarified, a supply chain of people who bulk-purchase inks, buy spent cartridges and master the ingenuities of refilling should dynamically emerge.
- **Readiness funds**: Spending on climate issues can be targeted with laser-like precision through POEMs. Climate bodies might build a coalition of donors who pledge, perhaps, \$20m that will flow into subsidies for POEMs' markets for home insulation in electorally marginal districts if a pro-POEMs party wins the next vote. If electoral law allows this kind of offer, it would kickstart wider economic activity with verified training, materials and workers to cut voters' heating costs.

c) Broader campaigning

Ultimately, the key relevance POEMs may bring to climate campaigning is addressing economic insecurity with new income possibilities, [public services](#) devolved to local communities, [safety net mechanisms](#) and cost-cutting.

This creates headspace for voters to consider, for example, impacts of pollution on their children's development, rather than just how to make rent this week. It's one more reason for climate groups seeing new choices for economic infrastructure as a cause with which they can align.

PANEL: How long will it take?

Voters are [not](#) showing signs of patience while waiting for solutions to economic pain. Unlike Green New Deals and other macroeconomic responses to climate chaos, instigating POEMs could go from political proposal to spreading opportunity into households in two years.

The key is policymakers speed at assembling a concession and the readiness of financiers, technologists and local entrepreneurs. [We](#) are working to build the later with outreach.

APPENDIX: People's Capitalism and Climate in Developing Economies

Citizens in the global south understandably [seek](#) levels of earnings and consumption mirroring western economies. Many are already victims of climate economics, their regions used as dumping grounds for cast offs from fast fashion or toxic goods sent for reprocessing offshore by richer nations. There is a particular business case for an economy in transition out of poverty initiating POEMs (Public Official E-Markets). Commercial operators of those markets would be banking on their system's ability to sideline corruption and surface resources that build a robust economy from which their percentage cut of each transaction could add up to alluring returns over a multi-year concession period.

This case for a People's Capitalism strategy in a developing nation is explained in more detail in a [separate briefing](#). Crucially, POEMs offers a chance for developing nations to leapfrog over a stage in technological development, as [they did](#) with landline phones; simply going from no phones in many regions to cellular masts and cheap handsets. They could likewise bypass the problem phase of thousands of extractive vertical online markets and go straight to a co-ordinated national system, possibly mandating that universal internet access be provided as part of a [concession](#).

A successfully awarded concession establishing POEMs in an underdeveloped nation may require oversight from international agencies in the short term. But it could create a powerful, independent, institution within the nation's [checks and balances](#); a [consortium](#) of international companies and local entrepreneurs motivated to grow an inclusive, efficient, transparent microeconomy across the region.

Internationally focused climate campaigners might assist countries towards this path, particularly where climate reparations or other external payments could flow into communities directly through POEMs rather than being handed over to local officials who may not be trusted to dispense funds fairly.

Obvious possibilities that POEMs could make radically more efficient and transparent include:

- **[Pay-to-preserve](#)**: Wide economic arguments for looking after rainforest, over short-term gains from clearing it for beef for example, are established. POEMs would make it easy, inspectable and auditable to pay local ranchers to perform perhaps daily upgrades, checks and reports on their small patch of forest. If a [unifund](#) paying for this activity is paid for by a tax on meat from selected nations, diners anywhere will know they can check daily activity and outputs in POEMs. They may also choose to confirm a, perhaps, 10% levy on their meal went directly into the fund.
- **[Improved land ownership](#)**: POEMs can't alone solve issues around lack of clarity on who owns a given plot of land. But if it is permitted to link to a nation's land registry, or become it if nothing viable currently exists, it can create a Unique Item Record for each plot (see panel on page 8). That then verifiably records when labor was hired, materials purchased or any other economic activity applied to the holding. This incentivizes responsible stewardship to maintain its value, particularly if coupled with pay-to-preserve funds from abroad.
- **[Eco-tourism](#)**: Rather than inviting international hotel and package tour operators to build, a nation with POEMs could advertise "*stay with locals*" holidays to foreigners. This could extend to residents providing services, renting goods and cooking meals all within seamless, underwritten, packages for visitors seeking authentic experiences unintermediated by major brands. It is a faster path to tourism revenues that monetizes existing resources, keeping profits local.

- **Tracking supply chains:** Sustainable timber, beef, fish and metals could be tracked through POEMs' UIR's (see panel on page 8). If two nations' POEMs systems had interchangeable information protocols, a UIR could pass from the developing nation that produced something to the country where it was consumed. This could justify premium pricing for the sustainability.

The process can extend to materials going the other way. If bales of waste heading to a poor nation for reprocessing are each chipped and recorded in a Unique Item Record, the application of labor, extraction of value and onwards destination of its contents can be tracked through POEMs and inspected.

- **Inspection protocols:** To attract aid, investment and premium prices for sustainable sourcing, POEMs can run atomized, unpredictable, rigorous, commissioned-by-anyone local inspection routines. This tackles fears of corruption. It is explained in a [separate briefing](#).
- **Informal economy counterweights:** Off-the-books economic activity can total [over 50%](#) of GDP in some nations. This zone of semi-criminality covers a mass of climate abuses. POEMs rivals the convenience and immediacy of shadow economy transactions, but far exceeds them in market depth, trustworthiness, low overheads and actionable data for buyers and sellers.

Anyone choosing to stay outside POEMs for their activity is therefore quite likely doing so because they are at the more lawless end of the criminality spectrum. By attracting honest buyers and sellers, POEMs makes it easier to crack down on those behaving irresponsibly.

- **Climate refugees:** As populations are forced to migrate away from climate disaster, POEMs within any receiving nation's economy offers a personalized on-ramp for incomers to get a first foothold in local markets for labor and services, with onward progression awaiting.

PANEL: Mexico's tree program: Admin. issues

[Sembrando Vida](#) (Sowing Life) is a flagship Mexican federal program. It pays small farmers to plant trees, tackling rural poverty, soil erosion and deforestation at scale.

Allegations of inadequate administration [surface](#) periodically. Officials are said by some smallholders to be demanding kickbacks. Selection of beneficiaries lacks clarity. Insufficient saplings are grown relative to allocated funding and qualifying patches of land. Some farmers [burn trees](#) to qualify.

Administering Sembrando Vida through a POEMs system initiated by Mexico's government could address these deficiencies in multiple ways:

- Criteria for participation can be transparently applied (ownership of land in an eligible zone with proof of its qualifying economic activity for example).
- Funds could be transferred from POEMs, in tranches, to each qualifying recipient.
- Saplings could be grown, not institutionally by the army as now, but by any established nursery willing to abide by specified inspection regimes.
- Ad-hoc but tightly regulated [inspection](#) before, during and after receipt of funds confirms farmers are playing by the rules.

Distrust of corruption [dogs](#) climate initiatives in developing nations. POEMs, managing end-to-end transactions in open markets, makes granular activity auditable to the last cent.