

The Commons Stewardship Canvas

Embed commons stewardship into your enterprise, investment, or community — so that use and renewal rise together.

ENTERPRISE / COMMUNITY

DATE

FACILITATOR

1 Name the Commons You Depend On

Across five domains, name the shared resources your work relies on.

Ecological

water, soil, air, biodiversity, climate

Knowledge

open-source code, research, traditional wisdom

Cultural

language, stories, practices, public space

Social

trust, civic infrastructure, mutual aid

Digital

internet infrastructure, data, platforms

2 Map Stakeholders & Assess Threats

Stakeholders — including the voiceless: direct users, indirect beneficiaries (downstream, future), nonhuman stakeholders (ecosystems, species, watersheds), and future generations. Ensure all are represented in governance — not just the loudest.

Threats & opportunities: Where is enclosure, extraction, or degradation a risk — and who benefits from it? Then: where could restoration, governance innovation, or new economic models strengthen the commons?

3 Choose Governance Structures

Select models that resist enclosure. Place: land trusts, conservation easements, Indigenous land agreements, co-ops. Knowledge: open-source licensing, patent pools, traditional-knowledge protocols. Enterprise: multistakeholder co-ops, mission-locked benefit corps, perpetual purpose trusts, steward ownership. Digital: data trusts, platform co-ops, decentralized protocols.

4 Embed, Monitor & Support Guardians

Align revenue so it reinforces the commons: regenerative reinvestment, access covenants, benefit sharing, anti-enclosure clauses. Track commons condition transparently (public dashboards, third-party verification, participatory evaluation). And resource the guardians — fair pay for stewardship labor, legal support, recognition, protection from retaliation.

5 One Commons — This Year

The one commons you will help restore or protect in the next year — and how you'll ensure its benefits remain shared across generations. One commons. One stewardship commitment.