



OUR STORY

Tamera is a holistic peace research and education center where around 200 people work, research, study and live with the sacred alliance of all life. Based on the Healing Biotopes Plan – a global strategy for peace – we’re building a realistic model for a future without war. The project began in Germany in 1978 and moved to Portugal in 1995.

Our vision is:

To birth Terra Nova – a world beyond war – by building Healing Biotopes: futuristic centers that research and model a new planetary culture.

By “Healing Biotopes” we refer to special experimental research and learning centers that catalyze the emergence of “Terra Nova” – a new planetary culture free of violence and war. Healing Biotopes are futuristic centers for humanity to see and develop a new vision for inhabiting this planet, based on cooperation and trust. Through lived examples and by establishing a holistic ethical, social, spiritual, sexual, ecological and economic framework, they demonstrate how decentralized, autonomous communities can emerge around the world.

“Crucial to the success of these local centers is not how big and strong they are (compared to the existing apparatus of violence), but how comprehensive and complex they are, how many elements of life combine and unite well in them. Evolutionary fields develop not according to the “survival of the fittest,” but the success of the most comprehensive. Otherwise, no new development could prevail, because all have begun small and inconspicuous.”

Dieter Duhm, co-founder, psychoanalyst, sociologist, author



We train and support those committed to the Healing Biotopes Plan and Terra Nova. Partners, global thought leaders and community builders come from all over the world to learn from our 40 years of research in innovative education that focuses on the inner and outer peacework required to affect change – individually, regionally, nationally and globally.

We work with **The Grace Foundation** that engages people with resources to invest in the Healing Biotopes Plan and with the **Publishing House – Verlag Meiga** that distributes our information.

“In its actions and words, Tamera has demonstrated an impressive dedication to an inspiring vision that seeks to address urgent problems of the day, ranging from dilemmas of ordinary life to awesome questions of decent survival. Daunting tasks, but unless seriously undertaken the future may be grim.”

Noam Chomsky, political dissident, linguist, Professor Emeritus at Massachusetts Institute of Technology, USA

OUR LEADERSHIP TEAM



Dieter Duhm is a psychoanalyst, art historian and holds a PhD in sociology. He was one of the intellectual leaders of the 1960s student movement in Germany, initiated the Healing Biotopes Project in 1978 and co-founded Tamera together with his partner Sabine Lichtenfels in 1995. He is the author of many books, including, “Terra Nova: Global Revolution and the Healing of Love,” “The Sacred Matrix” and “Eros Unredeemed.”



Sabine Lichtenfels is a theologian, peace activist and co-founder of the project. In 2005, she initiated the Grace Pilgrimages in different crisis areas and was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize as one of the “1000 Women for Peace.” Sabine co-leads Tamera’s Global Love School as well as our department for spiritual ecology, Terra Deva. She has authored various books, including, “Sources of Love and Peace,” “Temple of Love” and “Grace: Pilgrimage for a Future without War.”



Benjamin von Mendelssohn is a dancer, choreographer and healer and one of Tamera’s next-generation leaders. A speaker and global networker, he led our Institute for Global Peacework, focusing on the Middle East, for many years. Since 2012, he’s co-led the Global Love School with Sabine, and since 2013, he’s been directing The Grace Foundation.



Bernd Mueller is an ecological visionary, landscape restoration consultant and head of our Global Ecology Institute. Studying engineering and going on to work as a landscape gardener and tree surgeon, he discovered spiritual and intuitive ways of cooperating with water, plants and animals. He's one of the leaders who's worked on implementing the Water Retention Landscape in Tamera since 2007.



Barbara Kovats is a community builder, having been part of the project since 1986. Originally trained as an archeologist, she coordinates our Solar Test Field, supporting practitioners in various fields to collaborate with each other and to integrate their work into the Healing Biotopes project. She's also part of Tamera's women's council, who deal with all kinds of social questions inside the community.



Vera Kleinhammes is one of Tamera's next-generation leaders. Having grown up in the community, she's a community builder in service of the planetary movement. Since 2011, she's dedicated herself to the Global Campus, accompanying partner projects in different countries, holding educational events in Tamera and the Global South, and guiding groups through crisis areas. At the same time, she facilitates groups in Tamera.



Martin Winiecki is a political networker and leader of the Institute of Global Peacework. Politically engaged since his early youth, in 2006 he took a break from school to visit and learn in Tamera, and ended up staying to finish 3 years of peace studies. Martin works on writing and publishing, networking and campaigning, organizing international events and providing online education.

[More bios of community leaders on our website »](#)

“Tamera is a living example in the Western world of what a society in alignment with nature and life can look like. It gives us, with our Andean vision of ‘Vivir Bien’ – living well in harmony with Mother Earth – a reference point, and an example for how to manifest and live this vision in a modern way.”

Fernando Huanacuni Mamani, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Bolivia



OUR PLACE

We have around 330 acres of land, and since we arrived here in 1995, we've transformed an uncultivated barren land into a lush biotope with abundant water, vegetation and biodiversity, as well as with many buildings, roads, a children's center and an education campus. Maintaining our facilities in such a multifocal and complex project with limited resources needs imagination and creativity. It's a research area of its own – manifesting great visions into a beautiful material reality.

Our Aula is the largest straw bale building on the Iberian Peninsula and the focal point for community gatherings and our Sunday matinees. On a hill at the heart of our land, we built a Stone Circle as a modern megalithic artwork and ceremonial place.

Our Campus is our guest and education center for all visitors and includes:

- The Tent Hall – 4 seminar rooms and dormitories for sleeping
- Guest welcome center
- Campus kitchen
- Guest House
- Pilgrim huts
- Swimming lake.



Since 2007, we've been creating an example of ecosystem restoration using the principles of rainwater retention

“[In Tamera] I became convinced that it’s possible to fight the desertification of nature. And to have newly populated areas with models of social life that respect nature and the dignity of people. In this way, the Alentejo really becomes a land of bread and peace.”

Dom António Vitalino, former Bishop of Beja



OUR COMMUNITARIAN ETHICS

Our ethical values are central to all who live, work and study in Tamera, and are vital to establishing trust and building community. To create coherence for field building, we share a commitment to understand and incorporate our community ethics as a code of conduct in our daily lives.

Our ethics are:

- be truthful and transparent
- provide mutual support
- participate responsibly
- be reliable
- respect and care for the Earth and all beings.



During an international summer event in our "Aula"

OUR RESEARCH

Our holistic peace research focuses on establishing a field for nonviolently inhabiting the Earth.

Building Community

We've been building and maintaining a community of trust for nearly 40 years as the basis for developing a humane future society. A healthy community organism sees its members supporting each other, with reinforcing feedback loops which help us develop a sense of the communitarian self – a higher level of order in which the individual self is part of a greater whole. All of life lives in community and by restoring it to humanity, we create societal vessels that help us overcome our collective trauma of separation, reconditioning ourselves from fear to trust.



OUR RESEARCH

Healing of Love

Bringing about system change in love and sexuality is essential to our peacework and for building Terra Nova. Sexuality is a sacred life force and healing takes place when we can accept and express it without lies and shame. In a community with strong ethical guidelines, exclusiveness, jealousy and fear are replaced with mutual support and trust. We run Love School to study what makes love last and build trust in community, allowing the universal energy of Eros to connect us with each other, the Earth and all life.

Spirituality, Art & Healing

Behind the visible world there is a parallel world of undreamt possibilities, a reality largely unknown to us, from where growth, healing and insight emerge. To become able to carry out successful global healing work, we're learning to cooperate with these universal powers. By discovering our creative process and sacred life force through thinking, spirituality, consciousness work, art, music, theater and dance, we learn to connect the world that we create with the world that has created us.

Children & Youth

The destiny of children determines the destiny of our world. For decades, we've worked on new communitarian ways for them to grow up in trust. Our children live together as groups in family units embedded within the larger community. Sometimes they like to self-organize and create bigger community groups to live together for certain times. We support them to develop into fearless, autonomously thinking people who will co-create this world responsibly. We focus on strengthening their self-acceptance and community spirit, their natural curiosity and their solidarity and empathy for all that lives.

“ If you're having one those bad days when you can't imagine how the world will pull out of this nosedive into the abyss, check out the work of Tamera and remember the immense creativity and potential that surrounds us.”

Starhawk, Earth activist, permaculture designer, author and teacher, USA

Ecology

Our ecological work focuses on the system change from exploitation to cooperation. In response to the ecological catastrophes unfolding on a planetary scale, we're restoring ecosystems, following the New Water Paradigm, by creating Water Retention Landscapes, reforestation and achieving regional food sovereignty through agroecology and seed saving. We're researching how to collaborate with all beings of nature, restoring the sacred alliance of all life. We take these insights out into the world, promoting a global action plan for climate restoration, building a network of partners and offering education and consultations through our Global Ecology Institute.



OUR RESEARCH

Cooperation With All Beings

A nonviolent future will emerge from the sacred alliance of all beings. Cooperation, communication and synergy are qualities that we must relearn to heal our relation to nature. In “Terra Deva,” our department for spiritual ecology, we research interspecies communication with domesticated and wild animals, plants and nature spirits. We also care for a team of horses that teach us perception and authentic contact and run a dog sanctuary to offer both emergency assistance and sustainable help for suffering canine friends in our region.



The Ultralight Membrane Mirror is our current research project, enabling decentralized small-scale industrial production

Energy Technology

In the Solar Test Field we’re researching energy autonomy and ecological life structures for sunlight-rich regions, and cooperating with the physicist and inventor Juergen Kleinwaechter and other energy researchers to create regenerative social and technological solutions. The energy of the sun is a gift from nature which is freely available and abundant around the world, especially in the Global South. We’re learning how to harness it in a living model without depending on large-scale industry. The results are fed into our research and development of regenerative settlements.

Regenerative Settlements

Regenerative settlements are places where humans and nature live in a mutually beneficial relationship that actively restores ecosystems and supports the local population to thrive. This is more than “sustainable” living – it’s a cooperative approach that dynamically renews all life. The Blueprint Alliance, formed in 2013, is collaborating on integrated design solutions for regenerative settlements to create coordinated aid measures in crisis and disaster areas. Blueprint 200, a core project of the alliance, will create a living, open-source manual throughout the design and construction phases while manifesting a first demonstration site in Tamera.



OUR RESEARCH

Economy

We're working on a new economic approach in which we step out of the hypnosis of monetization and redefine true "value." We're creating a communitarian regenerative economy where people's basic needs can be recognized and met. As much as we can, we're transitioning from a private to a communitarian economy. This isn't enforced by rules – it flourishes through a natural process of growing trust. Trust in community is our biggest currency. Within Tamera there is already a far-reaching gift economy operating.

We empower a planetary community of change makers to take an active role in the transition to a more peaceful and thriving world.

Our trainings are transformative learning experiences, in and through community, based on the findings of our holistic research and the Healing Biotopes Plan.

Online Courses

Our 21-day course on the "Healing Biotopes Plan" offers an in-depth introduction to our global vision and serves as a basis for all those who want to take part in our on-site courses. Our 8-week course on "Global Revolution and the Healing of Love" allows students to explore the inner system change in community, love and sexuality. More courses are in development.



During a "Forum," a facilitated space for creating transparency and trust in community



OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM

Short On-Site Courses

Our Introduction Week provides a comprehensive overview of Tamera, the Healing Biotopes Plan, community building and global peacework. We offer specific seminars on love, art, cooperation with all beings, the “sacred matrix” and contact with horses, from 4–10 days.

Healing Biotopes Students Program

A long term three-cycle educational pathway for those seeking to be an active part in global system change, focusing on the social, spiritual and intellectual qualities needed to catalyze Healing Biotopes and to serve the world as a peaceworker.

Global Love School

A multi-annual program for invited leaders and cooperation partners on the healing of love at both the personal and global level. Participants are aware that the healing of love is necessary for a lasting humane transformation of society.



“There can’t be peace on Earth as long as there’s war in love. Humanity has wrongly organized love, locked it into narrow cages of possession and fear, which is why it so often turns into anger and hatred. The global epidemics of violence ravaging this planet result from a culture that has inhibited love. The healing of love isn’t a private, but a political issue of the highest priority.”

Sabine Lichtenfels, co-founder, theologian, peace activist, author



OUR EDUCATION PROGRAM

For Children & Youth

We're currently setting up and getting our "Escola da Esperança" ("School of Hope") accredited as an international school for primary and secondary level children of Tamera, our region and our global network, offering them an open, holistic learning space. We host international youth camps for 13–18 year-olds.



"Grace Pilgrimage" in Israel-Palestine, 2007

OUR OUTREACH

Aiming for a world without war, we're building a planetary community and sharing our vision of Terra Nova. We collaborate with individuals, organizations, movements and media outlets around the world to create a credible global alternative.

Publishing & Media

We're working to create a global information system to build a field for nonviolently living on Earth. The Institute for Global Peacework, our internal and external communications department, promotes the Healing Biotopes Plan and builds a network for its manifestation. It manages our media work through our website, publications in various outlets, video production, social media and runs focused campaigns. Verlag Meiga – an independent publishing house based in Germany and in Tamera, publishes books and texts from Dieter Duhm, Sabine Lichtenfels and other authors in various languages to promote the Healing Biotopes Plan internationally.

Peacework in Crisis Areas

Since the early 2000s, we've worked for peace in crisis areas, above all in Israel-Palestine and Colombia. We support peace activists and communities, host international gatherings and educational events and build and strengthen the vision of a nonviolent future. From 2005, initiated and led by Sabine Lichtenfels, we've walked various pilgrimages in the name of "Grace" in the Middle East, Colombia and Portugal.



OUR OUTREACH

Global Campus

We facilitate a network of peace initiatives around the world who are creating educational centers for autonomous communities of trust. We've developed partnerships with projects in the Global South, such as the "Favela da Paz," an urban sustainability project in São Paulo, Brazil, the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó in Colombia, the OTEPIC permaculture and community center in Kitale, Kenya and a network of Jewish and Arab peaceworkers and projects in Israel-Palestine.

Regional and National Network

We're working on a model for regional autonomy in Portugal so that people can once again provide for themselves in regenerative ways and are building networks as part of our vision for decentralized communities.

Grace Foundation

The Grace Foundation raises funds and offers a way for people with resources – meaning money, knowledge and influence – to invest in the Healing Biotopes Plan. Based in Tamera, Switzerland and the US, the Foundation supports projects which help create Healing Biotopes, models for regenerative autonomy, and education in Tamera and the Global Campus.

"Tamera does not isolate itself and run away from the problems of the world but is dedicated to healing the pain. The community's involvement in Palestine, Israel, Colombia, India, and in many other places is for me a true light of hope for a better future for all of humanity."

Sami Awad, nonviolence trainer, director of the "Holy Land Trust," Palestine



Aerial art action on Odeceixe beach to stop plans for offshore oil drilling in Portugal, part of our international "Defend the Sacred" gathering in 2017



OUR FUTURE – A REGENERATIVE HOLISTIC MODEL FOR LIFE

We're applying for a change of land use classification through the "PIER" process (Plano de Intervenção em Espaço Rural – Intervention Plan in Rural Areas) in cooperation with the municipality of Odemira, as we have future plans to build a regenerative model settlement for several hundred people and expand our facilities. This means we want to develop a comprehensive infrastructure for a new culture so we can host more conferences, meetings, and educational seminars on global peacework.

Within a 50km radius of Tamera we have all the materials for passive solar eco-buildings – stones, wood, clay and straw – and the building of the Aula has shown that it's possible to build with natural materials. We'll take into account the natural cycles of water, harvest rainwater, use dry toilets to reduce water consumption and use multi-zone architecture with lakes and ponds, where nature and animals are welcome.

As we go through the PIER process, we're setting a precedent for future community projects across the world. Tamera is a futuristic model designed to meet the needs, desires and aspirations of our community, as an example for humanity in the 21st century. Based on cooperation with nature and natural building, this model will make environmental protection obsolete as it brings human culture and nature into synergistic unity.

Literature:

Dieter Duhm: *Terra Nova: Global Revolution and the Healing of Love*. Verlag Meiga

Dieter Duhm: *The Sacred Matrix: From the Matrix of Violence to the Matrix of Life. Foundations for a New Civilization*. Verlag Meiga

Sabine Lichtenfels: *Grace: Pilgrimage for a Future without War*. Verlag Meiga

Leila Dregger: *Tamera: A Model for the Future*. Verlag Meiga

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