

# THE Ecologist

VOLUME 32 NO 7 £3.50

RETHINKING BASIC ASSUMPTIONS

SEPTEMBER 2002

## STATE OF THE PLANET

The facts, figures  
and failed promises

## STAND UP AND BE COUNTED

The power is in  
your hands

## BACK TO SCHOOL

A few life lessons for  
our world leaders

## MILLIONS LIKE US

The people who are  
making a difference

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT

How shopping saves  
the environment

## Featuring...

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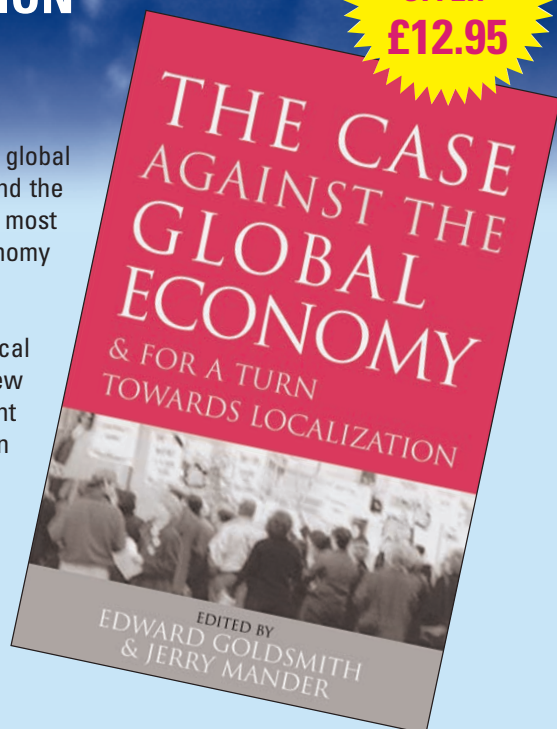
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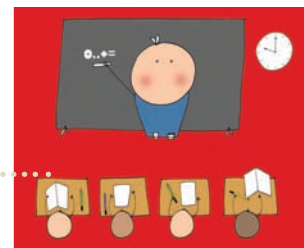
The more we read, the more we know.

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## PLUS... TRIBUNES

The Colombian minister for the environment. Naomi Klein. An activist from Soweto. These and many others make their feelings known on the issues underlying the summit.



# THE Ecologist

## An open letter to Kofi Annan, UN Secretary General

Dear Mr Annan,

Shortly after this edition goes to press the United Nations, under your guidance, will host one of the biggest ever gatherings of world leaders to combat global poverty and environmental devastation, 30 years after the UN conference on the Human Environment in Stockholm and ten years after the so-called 'Earth Summit' in Rio de Janeiro.

The need for a follow-up has never been greater. Both the state of the environment and poverty have greatly worsened since Rio, as the first few pages of this edition make emphatically clear. In the last few weeks, three major international organisations, the National Academy of Sciences, the World Wide Fund for Nature and the United Nations itself have all warned that the Earth's capacity for regeneration is on the verge of being exhausted. Time is not on our side.

It is all the more tragic therefore that the UN and its member governments have allowed this once in a decade opportunity to be squandered. The two previous summits, in Stockholm and Rio, were derailed by global corporate interests, keen to remove from the agenda any mention of their own complicity in the world's growing problems and the same interests have succeeded in co-opting Johannesburg.

As ever, the executioner of their every demand has been the United States of America, which has gone to great lengths to ensure that neither the global economy, nor its corporate beneficiaries are questioned. Following mountainous pressure from the US, the most its corporations can now expect from Johannesburg in the way of checks and balances will be voluntary codes of conduct whose goals they will set themselves, and whose accomplishments they will also assess. The event's organisers will no doubt hail this as a victory. Yet the real result is a conference on the reduction of poverty and environmental destruction that is guaranteed to increase both.

While most concrete goals for action to benefit the environment and the developing world have been gutted from the Johannesburg agenda, mainly as a result of US pressure, the proposals

# THE Ecologist

that remain promote false solutions – namely more industrial development and free trade – that fit the corporate agenda.

Despite the fact that the past 50 years have seen a five-fold increase in world economic growth and a nineteen-fold increase in the volume of world trade, the world during that time has experienced unprecedented poverty and environmental chaos. Globalisation of economic development could not have failed more dramatically, yet the agenda for Johannesburg demands acceleration of the same disastrous policies.

The solution, Mr Annan, if you find yourself hurtling towards a brick wall, is not to accelerate – to suit the short-term interests of corporations – in the hope that it will disappear: that is madness. It is to apply the brakes and establish a different course.

If governments are serious about improving the environment and reducing global poverty, they should use Johannesburg to launch a complete overhaul of the global economic and financial institutions that are responsible for the most damage. They should require the IMF, World Bank and the WTO to U-turn on current policy and re-subordinate global trade and finance rules to environmental, social and cultural needs.

They should require transnational corporations to abide by the best standards of behaviour globally rather than the lowest and, if they fail to do so, governments should make their CEOs criminally liable for any harm that results.

And above all, governments everywhere should adopt policies to nurture, rather than destroy, strong local economies and communities worldwide – the best insurance policy possible against continued social and environmental breakdown.

The Charter of the United Nations opens with the phrase ‘We the Peoples’ not ‘We the corporations.’ What the world’s citizens expect from you and your member governments at Johannesburg, Mr Annan, is to remember that, and act with responsibility and vision, putting the people’s interests and that of the planet’s first.



**Zac Goldsmith**  
Editor, The Ecologist

# State of the Planet

BY MATILDA LEE

After three decades of talks, promises and proposals, and over 300 international environmental treaties, *The Ecologist* asks, on the eve of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, what has really been achieved in addressing our environmental and social problems.



## The reality

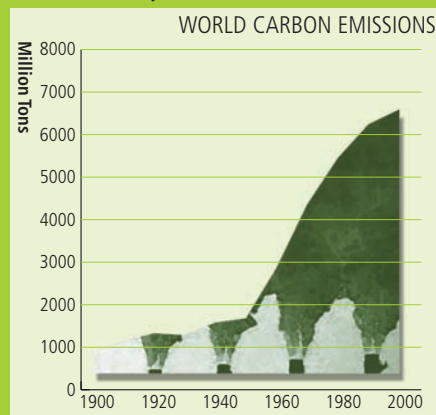
By 2000, CO<sub>2</sub> emissions had risen 18.1 per cent above 1990 levels in the US; by 10.7 per cent in Japan; 12.8 per cent in Canada and 28.8 per cent in Australia.

Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> concentration levels are 30 per cent higher today than in pre-industrial times, rising from 281 parts per million by volume (ppmv) in 1800, to 327 in 1972, 356 in 1992, and 367 in 2002.

As a result, climate change is now happening with dramatic consequences. The 1990s were the warmest decade since written records began.

If nothing continues to be done, the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that temperatures could rise by a global average of

5.8°C (10.4°F) by 2100.



**Weather-related disasters (such as droughts, windstorms and floods) have increased by 160 per cent between 1975 and 2001, killing 440,000 people and causing \$480 billion worth of damage in the 1990s alone.**

## The official statements

‘It is recommended that Governments be mindful of activities in which there is an appreciable risk of effects on climate.’ (UN Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 1972)

‘Governments should protect the climate system for the benefit of present and future generations of humankind.’ (UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio, 1992)

## The official promises

‘Annex I Parties [of industrialised countries] commit to ... the aim of returning individually or jointly to their 1990 levels of ... anthropogenic emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases...[by the year 2000].’ (Rio, 1992)

‘The ultimate objective of this Convention is to achieve ... stabilisation of greenhouse gas concentrations in the atmosphere at a level that would prevent dangerous anthropogenic interference with the climate system.’ (Stockholm, 1972)



## The statements

‘International organisations should give positive advice to member countries on the important role of forests...’ (Stockholm, 1972).

‘Forests world wide have been and are being threatened by uncontrolled degradation... The present situation calls for urgent and consistent action for conserving and sustaining forest resources.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The proposals

‘National policies and strategies should provide a framework for increased efforts... for the management, conservation and sustainable development of forests and forest lands.’ (Rio, 1992)

‘All parties ... shall ... promote and cooperate in the conservation and enhancement ... of forests.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The reality

Half of the world's original forest cover has now been destroyed. Over 60 per cent of temperate broadleaf and mixed forests have been lost; about 45 per cent of tropical moist forests; and approximately 70 per cent of tropical dry forests.

Remaining forests are being depleted by about 160,000 km<sup>2</sup> – or half the size of Norway – every year. 11 countries are on the verge of losing their forests completely and 28 have forestland that is threatened.

Given that forest vegetation and soils sequester, or hold, about 40 per cent of the globe's terrestrial carbon, deforestation has contributed to about 30 per cent of the atmospheric build-up of CO<sub>2</sub> over the past 150 years.

The burning of forests is the second largest cause of carbon released into the atmosphere after the burning of fossil fuels.

**418m ha of natural forest have been lost worldwide over the last 30 years – a ten per cent loss since 1972 – according to the UN Environment Programme.**

If current deforestation rates continue, many of the 50 to 90 per cent of the Earth's species that live in forests will be lost by the middle of the 21st century.



REUTERS

# Loss of fresh water

## The statements

‘The basic objective of all water resource use... is to ensure the best use of water and to avoid its pollution in each country...’ (Stockholm, 1972)

‘As populations and economic activities grow, many countries are rapidly reaching conditions of water scarcity... The holistic management of freshwater as a finite and vulnerable

CORBIS

resource...[is] of paramount importance for action in the 1990s and beyond.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The goals

‘The general objective is to make certain that adequate supplies of water of good quality are maintained for the entire population of this planet...’ (Rio, 1992)

‘All States could ... initiate programmes for the protection, conservation and rational use of [surface and groundwater] resources on a sustainable basis...’ (Rio, 1992)

## The reality

There has been a 175 per cent increase over the last 30 years in global freshwater

withdrawals by agriculture (which is responsible for 70 per cent of global freshwater consumption), rising from 1,850 km<sup>3</sup> in 1970 to 3,250 km<sup>3</sup> in 2000.

**Global consumption of water is doubling every 20 years, more than twice the rate of human population growth.**

According to the UN, 41 per cent of the world’s population, some 2.3bn people, live in ‘water-stressed’ areas – where water shortages are frequent.

In 2002, water shortages killed over 7m people.

By 2025, the demand for fresh water is expected to rise by 56 per cent more than is currently available, causing two in every three people on the planet to face water scarcity.

According to the UN, about 1.2bn people worldwide drink polluted water, causing hundreds of millions of cases of water-related diseases every year and over 5m deaths – ten times the number of people killed in wars worldwide.

6,000 children die every day from drinking polluted water.



# Land degradation

## The statements

‘The natural resources of the earth, including the land ... must be safeguarded for the benefit of present and future generations through careful planning or management...’ (Stockholm, 1972)

‘Land degradation is the most important environmental problem affecting extensive areas of land in both developed and developing countries. The problem of soil erosion is particularly acute in developing countries, while problems of ... loss of soil fertility are increasing in all countries.’ (Rio, 1992)

**World grain-harvested area per person has declined from around 0.17ha in 1972 to 0.12ha in 1996.**

## The goals

‘Governments should ... formulate, introduce and monitor policies, laws and regulations and incentives leading to sustainable agriculture...’ (Rio, 1992)

‘It is urgent to arrest land degradation and launch conservation and rehabilitation programmes in the most critically affected and vulnerable areas.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The reality

About 2bn hectares of soil, equivalent to 15 per cent of the Earth’s land area (an area larger than the US and Mexico combined), have been degraded by intensive agriculture and other human activities.

Globally, each year, there continues to be a net loss of 26bn tons of soil from erosion; human-induced desertification encroaches on 6m ha of once productive land; and up to 2.5m ha of prime

agricultural land are abandoned because of salinisation (due to large-scale irrigation).

In total, an estimated 552m ha, or around 38 per cent of current global cultivated area, have been degraded by unsustainable agricultural practices between 1945 and 1990 (with soil erosion accounting for 84 per cent of degraded areas).

The worldwide loss of productivity due to soil erosion alone is estimated to be the equivalent of 20m tons of grain per year.

Support for organic, soil conserving forms of agriculture accounts for only 2 per cent of the total agricultural budgets in industrialised countries.

Worldwide, government subsidies for industrial forms of agriculture amount to more than \$313bn each year.

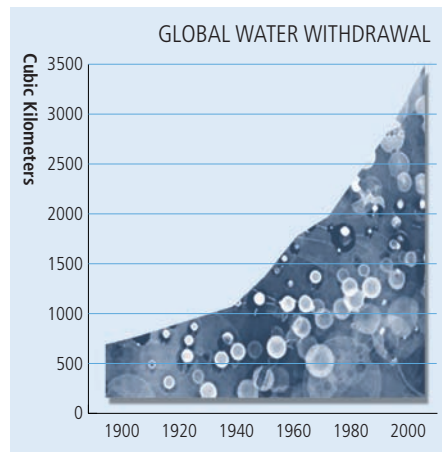
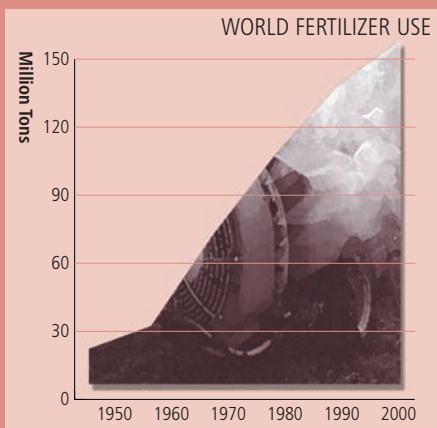
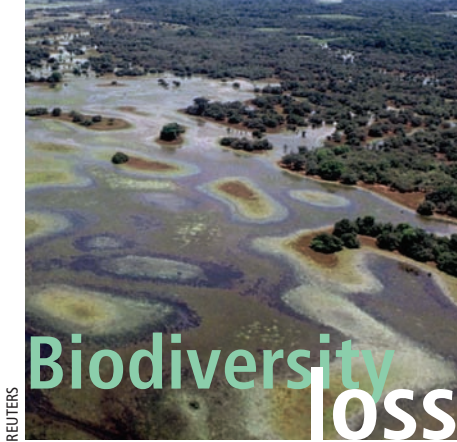


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(Stockholm 1972) refers to The UN Conference On The Human Environment, Stockholm, 1972. (Rio 1992) refers to The UN Conference on Environment and Development, Rio, 1992.



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## The statements

‘Man has a special responsibility to safeguard and wisely manage the heritage of wildlife and its habitat...’ (Stockholm, 1972)

‘The current decline in biodiversity is largely the result of human activity and represents a serious threat to human development.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The goals

‘The objectives of this Convention ... are the conservation of biological diversity, [and] the sustainable use of its components.’ (United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), Rio, 1992)

**50-100 species are vanishing every day – 10,000 times faster than natural extinction rates; faster than at any time in the last 65m years.**

## The reality

Since 1970, according to the WWF, there has been a 54 per cent decline in the populations of 195 freshwater species (living in rivers and wetlands); a 35 per cent decline in the populations of 217 marine species; and a 15 per cent decline in the populations of 282 forest species.

Today, around 27 per cent of the world’s coral reefs (home to one quarter of all ocean species) are threatened, up from 10 per cent a decade ago.

Food variety is being lost too: 80 per cent of tomato varieties and 92 per cent of lettuce varieties have been lost in the 20th Century.

The UN states that 11,046 species of plants and animals are currently endangered. These include 1,130 mammals (24 per cent of the total), and 1,183 species of birds (12 per cent of the total), as well as 5,611 species of plants.

In 1995, the illegal trade in wildlife was estimated to be worth over \$5bn – the second largest illegal trade in the world after drugs.

If current trends in species extinction continue, we may lose half of all the Earth’s plant and animal species in just 50 years time.



BBC WILD



## The statements

‘States shall take all possible steps to prevent pollution of the seas by substances that are liable to ... harm living resources and marine life.’ (Stockholm, 1972)

## The promises

‘States commit themselves to the conservation and sustainable use of marine living resources under national jurisdiction... [and] on the high seas.’ (Rio, 1992)

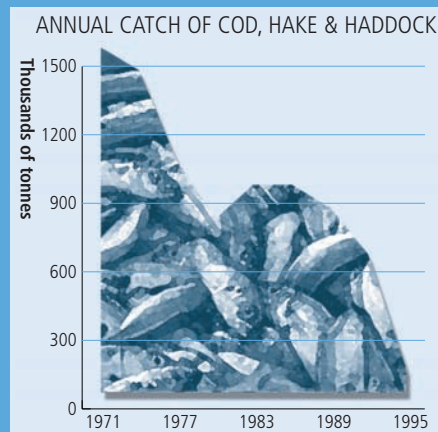
**There has been a doubling in global fish catch over the last 35 years, reaching 137m tons today. As a result, according to the UN, half of all fisheries are fully depleted and another 25 per cent are over-fished.**

## The reality

Fisheries such as the Atlantic cod, haddock, Capelin, Atlantic herring and Southern African pilchard have either collapsed or are harvested at unsustainable levels..

It is estimated that world commercial fishing capacity is in excess of up to 150 percent of what is seen to be sustainable. WWF notes that government subsidies to the fishing industry equal some \$15bn per year (equivalent to around 20 per cent of the total landed value of the world’s commercial fish catch).

Ships discharge up to 50m tons of oil at sea every year (mainly from washing out tar from ships’ tanks and oil spills).





REUTERS

# Nuclear waste & radiation

## The statements

‘Governments should ... support and expand international co-operation on radioactive waste problems...’ (Stockholm, 1972)

‘The safe and environmentally sound management of radioactive wastes, including their minimisation, transportation and disposal, is important, given their characteristics.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The goals

‘States should ... promote policies and practical measures to minimise and limit the generation of radioactive wastes and provide for their safe processing, conditioning, transportation and disposal.’ (Rio, 1992)

**Since 1970, between 250 and 500 kilograms of plutonium have been discharged into the Irish Sea from the Sellafield nuclear reprocessing plant, making it the most radioactively contaminated sea in the world**

## The reality

Annual spent fuel (the most radioactive type of waste) from nuclear power plants in OECD countries has almost doubled from 4,391 tonnes in 1982 to 8,362 tonnes in 1995.

In 2000, the total global stockpile of spent nuclear fuel was 220,000 tonnes and it is growing by approximately 10,000 tonnes each year, according to the International Atomic Agency.

Annually, a further 200,000 cubic metres of low-level and intermediate-level waste is generated globally from nuclear power production, according to the UN. Some of the nuclear waste dumping grounds are now leaking, contaminating nearby soil and water supplies.

Over 400 nuclear bomb factories and power plants worldwide make routine discharges of radioactive waste into the environment.

Cancer clusters have been found around nuclear plants worldwide. A US government study found a high incidence of 22 different types of cancer at 14 different US nuclear weapons facilities across the country.

Sellafield alone produces enough plutonium annually to make 1000 4kg nuclear bombs. The risk of terrorist bomb-making is real. In Europe, between 1992 and 1998, 173 attempted nuclear-related thefts, including of bomb-making material, were reported.



REUTERS

# Chemical pollution

## The statements

‘The discharge of toxic substances ... in such quantities or concentrations as to exceed the capacity of the environment to render them harmless, must be halted in order to ensure that serious or irreversible damage is not inflicted upon ecosystems.’ (Stockholm 1972)

## The goals

‘Governments ... should ... undertake concerted activities to reduce risks for toxic chemicals... These activities could encompass ... the phasing out or banning of toxic chemicals that pose an unreasonable and otherwise unmanageable risk to the environment or human health, and those that are toxic, persistent and bio-accumulative...’ (Rio, 1992)

‘By the year 2000, national systems for environmentally sound management of chemicals, including legislation and provisions for implementation and enforcement, should be in place in all countries...’ (Rio, 1992)

## The reality

Global sales of chemicals have increased almost ninefold since 1970: from \$171bn in 1970 to almost \$1.5 trillion in 1998. Between 70,000 and 100,000 chemicals are currently on the world market and 1,500 new chemicals are being introduced each year.

**Pesticides have become between 10 and 100 times more toxic than in the mid-1970s, and their use results in between 3.5m to 5m acute poisonings a year.**

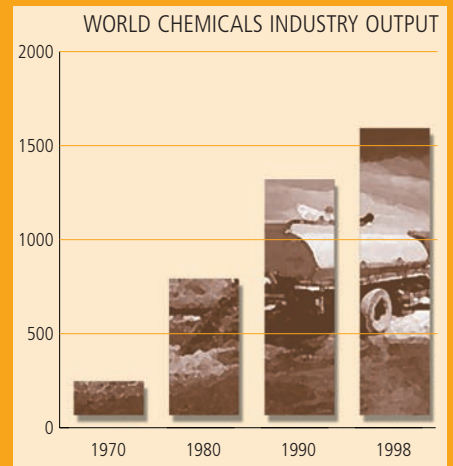
According to the WorldWatch Institute, there are no basic health and environmental data for 71 per cent of the most widely-used chemicals in the United States, and less than 10 per cent of new chemicals reviewed each year have adequate test data on health effects.

The World Health Organisation estimates that 25 per cent of all preventable ill health in the world is due to environmental factors, including exposure to hazardous chemicals.

Childhood cancer (including brain tumours and leukaemia) in the US is increasing by one per cent per year and is now the second leading cause of death in children aged one to 14.

Rates of testicular cancer have tripled, prostate cancer rates have doubled and sperm counts have fallen by 50 per cent among European and American men since 1950.

Breast cancer afflicted one in eight women in developed countries in 1993, compared to one in 20 in 1960.



REUTERS

# State of the Planet



# Waste creation & disposal

## The statements and goals

‘States should reduce and eliminate unsustainable patterns of production and consumption...’ (Rio, 1992)

‘Governments should, by the year 2000, promote sufficient financial and technological capacities at the regional, national and local levels to implement waste reuse and recycling policies and actions...’ (Rio, 1992)

‘Governments should initiate programmes to achieve sustained minimisation of waste generation...’ (Rio, 1992)

## The reality

Two-thirds of waste is dumped into landfill sites (in the EU in 1996, there were 8,700 landfill sites storing 1.2 bn tonnes of waste) – producing emissions of the greenhouse gas methane and contaminating groundwater.

Pregnant women living within 2 kilometres of a landfill site have been found to have a higher risk of having a baby with a congenital defect.

**In the past 20 years, municipal waste generated per person in industrialised countries has increased almost threefold, to an average of 475 kilos per person per year.**

Many countries have now turned to incineration to deal with their growing waste problems – causing dangerous emissions of dioxins (a Class 1 human carcinogen), heavy metals and acid gases.

According to the British Foods Standards Agency, one third of the UK population regularly consumes food that contains unsafe levels of dioxins.

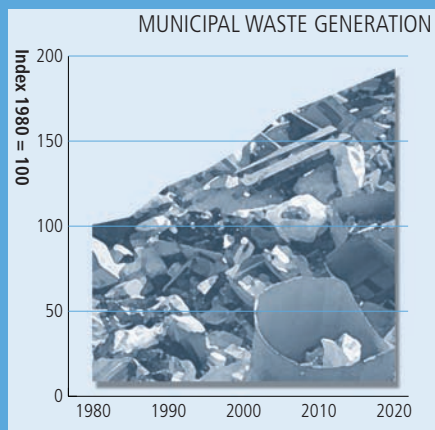
Another UK study found that cancer deaths among children living in communities neighbouring municipal waste incinerators had doubled between 1974 and 1987.

Many countries, including Japan, France, Britain, Ireland, Greece and Mexico still recycle less than 12 per cent of their household waste.

The United States still throws away enough aluminium to replace its entire commercial aircraft fleet every three months.

On current trends, the OECD predicts a further 70 to 100 per cent increase in waste generation in

industrialised countries by 2020 and a 200 per cent increase in developing countries.



# Health epidemics

## The statements

‘Man has the fundamental right to... adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being...’ (Stockholm, 1972).

## The goals

‘Goals [that] are recommended for implementation by all countries [include] ... by the year 2000 ... to mobilize and unify national and international efforts against AIDS to prevent infection and to reduce the personal and social impact of HIV; to contain the resurgence of tuberculosis, with particular emphasis on multiple antibiotic resistant forms.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The reality

Deaths from HIV/AIDS jumped more than sixfold worldwide over the past decade, from just over a half-million in 1990 to over 3 million in 2000. Nearly four out of five of these deaths occurred in sub-Saharan Africa.’

**Deaths from HIV/AIDS jumped more than sixfold worldwide over the past decade**

There were an estimated 8.4m new cases of tuberculosis in 1999, up from 8.0m new cases in 1997, largely due to a 20 per cent increase in incidence in African countries.

Malaria caused 1.08m deaths worldwide in 2000, up from 0.86m in 1990. Children in Africa under the age of five make up a significant share of these deaths.

# State of the Planet



REUTERS



# Poverty

## The statements

‘Millions continue to live far below the minimum levels required for a decent human existence ... the industrialized countries should make efforts to reduce the gap between themselves and the developing countries.’ (Stockholm, 1972)

## The promises

‘All States and all people shall co-operate in the essential task of eradicating poverty ... in order to decrease the disparities in standards of living and better meet the needs of the majority of the people of the world.’ (Rio, 1992)

## The reality

The number of people living in poverty (defined as living on less than a dollar a day) over the last decade has increased by 100m, according to the former Chief Economist of the World Bank, Joseph Stiglitz, to 1.3bn people (over a fifth of the world’s population).

A further 1.6 bn (another quarter of the world’s population) survive on less than two dollars.

The UN forecasts that another 100m people will live on less than a dollar a day by 2015.

The UN states that the average household consumption expenditure in Africa is 20 per cent less than it was 25 years ago (despite the fact that the average annual rate of GDP for developing countries as a whole rose from 2.7 to 4.3 per cent from the 1980s to the 1990s).

In 1960 the combined incomes of the richest fifth of the world’s population were 30 times greater than the poorest fifth. By 1991 they were over 60 times and in 1998, 78 times as high.

**In 1997, 40 per cent of all children in the developing world under the age of five were underweight or starving**

In the second half of the 1990s, one third of the world’s willing-to-work population was either unemployed or underemployed, the worse situation since the 1930s.

In 1997, 40 per cent of all children in the developing world under the age of five were underweight or starving. In 1996 the average daily intake of calories in the developing world was the same as in 1970. About 840m people worldwide are now malnourished.

The total debt burden in developing and former Eastern bloc countries has increased 34 per cent since 1992, to \$2.5 trillion in 2000, the WorldWatch Institute notes.

In 1997, external debt payments made up 92.3 per cent of the GDP of countries of so-called ‘low development.’

Development assistance to developing nations has decreased in the past decade from \$69bn in 1992 (in 2000 dollars) to \$53bn in 2000. As a percentage of GNP, development aid decreased from 0.33 per cent in 1992 to 0.22 per cent in 2000.

The UN High Commission for Refugees estimates that the number of refugees (forced from their homes because of political persecution, armed conflict or environmental disasters) has grown from 2.7m in 1972 to 12.1m in 2000.

Globally, about 160,000 extra people are migrating to cities from the countryside every day, because rapid industrialisation of agriculture and imports of subsidised food are driving them off the land. Most migrants end up in booming squatter settlements or slums.

## Poverty of affluence

If a broader definition of poverty is considered, taking into account social and cultural indicators, poverty has increased in the industrialised world too.

For the 24 OECD countries for which data are available, the OECD reported that the average divorce rate as a percentage of marriages has almost tripled from 14.3 per cent in 1970 to 41.2 per cent in 1998.

An estimated 4,000-9,000 languages have disappeared in the last 500 years and it is estimated that at least half and up to 90 per cent of the remaining 6,800 remaining languages will be extinct by the end of this century.

Prison rates in industrialised countries have doubled from around 44 per 100,000 population in 1972 to around 88 per 100,000 population in 1992.

The OECD reported that in the last 30 years, suicide rates have increased by more than 10 per cent on average among the OECD countries.

In the United States, people living alone swelled from only 17 per cent of all households in 1970 to 26 per cent in 2000.



CORBIS

# Why are we failing the planet?

BY SIMON RETALLACK

Three words were handwritten on a plain white board, hung on a pillar in the middle of the War Room of Governor Clinton's campaign headquarters in Little Rock, Arkansas. The second of three campaign commandments, they read simply: 'The economy, stupid.'

Famously, they were designed to remind Clinton and his campaign team to use every opportunity to talk about how the economy – and the person presiding over it – was failing the US public – deemed essential for winning the race to the White House in 1992.

Now, the phrase should be drummed into the heads of all our politicians – but for a different purpose. It should be blown up into giant letters and hung from the ceiling of every global environmental summit so that as our leaders sit in their cavernous conference rooms wondering why every major environmental problem is getting worse, they can be reminded that it is the economy itself which is the problem and which needs to be fixed.

The policies of economic globalisation – designed to create a single, global, industrial, market economy – are exacerbating all our major environmental troubles. Yet each previous summit has ignored, or worse, promoted them as a solution.

Agenda 21, the flagship text of the Rio Summit, states: 'Trade liberalisation should be pursued on a global basis so as to contribute to sustainable development.' We will hear the same refrain from heads-of-state at the Johannesburg Summit. While mouthing platitudes about the need to protect the environment, they are advancing an agenda that is destroying it.

## What is economic globalisation?

Economic globalisation is about tearing down obstacles to the growth and profits of corporations and investment funds.

It's about shredding national controls on the movement of money, so that investors can secure maximum global opportunities to invest their capital.

It's about tearing down national quotas and taxes on imports and exports so that corporations can access more customers and sell more goods.

It's about ripping out national restrictions on corporate investment and private ownership rights so that corporations can set up more factories and extract more natural resources wherever it suits them.

And it's about pulling down any other 'anti-competitive' laws and taxes – such



**Q: WHY ARE WE FAILING?**

**A: 'Environmental problems continue to worsen because policymakers have mainly addressed a set of isolated environmental symptoms rather than the fundamental malaise in economics and ethics that is a common contribution to all of them.'**

TONY JUNIPER,  
Vice Chair,  
*Friends of the Earth International*

**A: 'Governments should have acted on the information they have. Instead they are falling into inaction to keep the corporations, in whose pockets they are, happy.'**

VANDANA SHIVA,  
Activist and Author

as those that protect the environment – so that corporations and investors can minimize their short-term costs.

It's an agenda lobbied for by corporations and investors; insisted on by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank and the World Trade Organisation (WTO); and implemented with increasing vigour by national governments the world over since the end of the Second World War, and with particular zeal since 1980.

The results are already spectacular.

More goods are being traded globally than ever before – 19 times more in terms of volume than in 1950. Investment by corporations in developing countries has grown nearly 58-fold since 1970.

The number of corporations with transnational activity has increased nine-fold since 1970 to over 63,000 today. And nothing less than the end of geography has taken place in the finance business, with electronic transfer systems making over 150,000

instantaneous international transactions and transferring over \$6 trillion around the world, from country to country, every single day.

**Increasing ecological impact**

All of this is taking place at an escalating environmental cost. The more trade that takes place – the greater the amount of goods exported and imported – the more fossil fuel-burning transportation occurs, contributing to air pollution and, above all, global climate change. More bio-invasion (the

second leading cause of species extinction worldwide) takes place, as more species are transported in ships, planes and trucks to foreign ecosystems, destroying native species. More precious habitats – including rainforests and wetlands – are destroyed to make way

for new global networks of roads, railway lines, waterways and airports worldwide.

To make or supply this increase in goods, more natural resources are depleted – more metals mined from the ground to be converted into cars; more trees felled to be converted into

paper, packaging and furniture; more oil and coal mined for energy; more fish extracted from the oceans; more soil and water exhausted to produce cash crops.

As these resources are processed or manufactured, more electricity is needed, requiring the construction of thousands of new coal or gas burning power plants, nuclear reactors and large hydroelectric dams – each causing huge ecological and human damage.

More chemicals are needed too, as virtually every manufactured product, from automobiles to clothes, uses a

**'To attract companies like yours ... we have felled mountains, razed jungles, filled swamps, moved rivers, relocated towns ... to make it easier for you and your business to do business here.'**

Advert placed in *Fortune* magazine  
by the Philippine government

## THE IMF FORMULA – trash the planet for a quick buck

In exchange for loans, the International Monetary Fund requires developing countries to implement structural adjustment programmes containing environmentally destructive conditions to increase 'competitiveness' and earn foreign cash to service their debts.

**● Increase exports of natural resources!**

The promotion of export-oriented production has caused natural resource extraction to increase on a totally unsustainable scale. Since the enactment of IMF adjustment in 1988 in Cameroon, there has been an increase in industrial roundwood exports of 233 per cent. Similarly, since IMF adjustment started in Gabon in 1991, log exports have increased by 85% up to 1997.

**● Remove barriers to imports of food!**

By requiring countries such as Mexico, Costa Rica and Haiti to remove barriers to imports of cheap, highly subsidised, industrially produced staple foods from the US and Europe, the IMF has put millions of small farmers (many practising sustainable agriculture) out of business, pushing them off their land into forests and other ecologically sensitive areas, or into vast urban, sewage-less slums.

**● Lower environmental standards!**

Under an IMF-inspired deregulation drive, Papua New Guinea has exempted certain foreign-owned mines from all the country's environmental legislation, including the Water Resources Act, leading to appalling water pollution. In Guyana, under IMF guidance, a new investment code was drawn up in 1988 that

contained almost no environmental restrictions on foreign corporations. As a result, large-scale mining permits (largely owned by foreign companies) now cover 10 per cent of the country's surface area, and timber concessions span the majority of the country's forests, polluting waterways and destroying forests.

**● Cut environmental budgets!**

Since IMF intervention, budgets for environmental protection have been cut in Mexico, Brazil, Thailand, Nicaragua, Guyana, Papua New Guinea, Tanzania, Cameroon, Russia and Indonesia. Cuts have ranged from between 26 and 66 per cent of environment ministries' budgets. This has impeded the enforcement of environmental protection measures and facilitated widespread illegal logging and poaching of endangered species.

variety of chemical inputs, creating huge amounts of hazardous waste – contributing to biodiversity loss and growing cancer rates.

More products are also sold to vast new markets, notably in the industrialising world, that are polluting when used, such as the car. Annual ownership growth rates in South Korea and Thailand, for instance, have been as high as 40 per cent in the 1990s, bringing crippling air pollution to urban centres and increasing global warming.

Also exported in increasing volumes worldwide are an array of home and

office appliances requiring masses of electricity, genetically modified foods, and thousands of health-threatening chemical products such as artificial pesticides – the value of world exports of which has grown eight-fold between 1961 and 1997.

Equally, the more countries that corporations can set themselves up and invest in, the more industrial manufacturing facilities they can establish worldwide – increasing the number of places subjected to the pollution which these cause.

The computer manufacturing

industry, which generates vast chemical waste, has spread from North America to Asia and Latin America. Similar expansion by the steel, paper, plastic, chemical and oil-refining industries – which all create hazardous waste – is damaging health and biodiversity. In fact, the UN calculates that up to 50 per cent of all foreign investment in developing countries is in 'pollution-intensive industries'.

Similar expansion has been carried out by corporations engaged in natural resource extraction: ExxonMobil and Shell in oil; Rio Tinto and BHP in mining; Mitsubishi and Boise Cascade in logging; Pescanova and Arctic-Tyson Foods in fishing; Vivendi and Suez in water; and Cargill and Monsanto in food. All these corporations have expanded their operations to the four corners of the Earth. The result is much more rapid resource depletion and habitat destruction.

To make matters worse, the more places institutional investors have to scour for the best returns, the greater the pressure on corporations to generate profits that attract the capital they need to finance their vast operations.

Among the means by which corporations are achieving that (other than by laying-off workers and cutting wages) is to intensify natural resource exploitation and cut back on pollution control.

In a change typical of global trends, the US Pacific Lumber Company, has ditched its sustainable logging practices and doubled the rate at which its thousand-year-old Californian redwoods are cut to generate larger, faster profits for a distant investor with no ties to a land that now lies stripped of its ancient forests.

Forced by dependence on finance capital to respond to the incessant demands of financial markets to generate ever-greater profits through perpetual expansion, corporations, as David Korten explains, are like cancerous tumors, which 'forget they are part of a larger whole of the body and unleash the pursuit of their unlimited growth.' With economic globalisation, instead of trying to contain the cancer, we feed it – pulling down barriers in its path, allowing it to devour ever more of our natural world.

### Remove all restrictions

Environmental regulations are being torn down just when they are needed most. Under economic globalisation, more and

## WORLD BANK AND EXPORT CREDIT AGENCIES – subsidising destruction

The World Bank and its regional counterparts lend \$45 billion to developing countries every year. Similarly, Export Credit Agencies (ECAs) – government departments which promote corporate exports and investments abroad – approve over \$100bn in new loans, guarantees and insurance annually. Much of these tax-payer-backed funds support environmentally destructive corporate activities in developing countries.

### ● Fossil fuel projects

The World Bank has financed \$20.8bn worth of fossil fuel-based energy projects in developing countries since the Rio Summit in 1992, in the form of 212 coal, oil and gas-fired power plants and coal mines. These projects will emit 40.6bn tons of CO<sub>2</sub> over their lifetimes – double what was emitted by the whole world in 1999, thereby contributing significantly to climate change.

The cumulative support for coal, oil and gas projects by the US ECAs Ex-IM and OPIC alone between 1992-98 totalled \$23.2bn. According to the US-based Institute for Policy Studies, these projects will release 29.3bn tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> over their lifetimes – more than all global emissions for 1996.

### ● Large dams

Historically, the World Bank has been the greatest single source of funds for large dams. Since 1948, it has provided over \$74bn for the construction of 538 large dams, forcibly displacing up to 10m people from their homes.

ECAs support most of the large dams currently under construction. The Three Gorges Dam on the Yangtze River in China, the largest hydropower project in the world, is being built because of hundreds of million of dollars of loans and guarantees being provided or offered by the ECAs of Germany, Japan, Switzerland, Sweden, Canada, France and Brazil. It will submerge an area of 632 square kilometres, displacing up to 1.9m people and flooding

28,400 hectares of farmland and orchards, as well as hundreds of archaeological sites.

### ● Mining

Large-scale mining is another particularly ecologically destructive activity that ECAs promote. The Australian Export Finance and Insurance Corporation (EFIC) and the US Ex-Im have provided loans totalling over \$320m to Australian and US companies working on the Ok Tedi mine in Papua New Guinea (PNG) – which dumps 80,000 tonnes of waste containing lead, cadmium, zinc and copper daily into local rivers which have become biologically dead as a result. Even worse is the Porgera gold mine in the Enga Province of PNG, backed, once again, by the EFIC with \$120m in loans, whose toxic discharges reach levels that have been measured at up to 3,000 times PNG limits.

The World Bank Group spent nearly US\$1bn on mining projects in developing countries in 1997 alone. It provided loans or risk insurance to the Omai goldmine in Guyana, which has caused some 3.2bn litres of cyanide-laced waste to flow into a tributary of the Essequibo River.

### ● Logging and pulping

ECAs have backed logging and pulping operations in several countries. OPIC provided finance and insurance to two US-Russian joint logging ventures – Global Forest Management Group and Pioneer – both of which were involved in the clearing of irreplaceable primary forests in Khabarovsk Krai, Russia, and exporting raw logs to Japan.

Just as destructive has been the support provided in 1994 by the German, Japanese, Finnish, Swedish and Canadian ECAs, in the form of a \$1.5bn finance package, to Indonesia's largest pulp and paper mill – the P. Tanjung Enum Lestari.

# WTO – overturns environment and health laws

## ● The US Clean Air Act

Following a challenge initiated by the governments of Venezuela and Brazil on behalf of their oil industries, the WTO ruled in January 1996 that regulations of the US Clean Air Act violated world trade rules.

The regulations in question required domestic and foreign gasoline refineries selling to the US market to make cleaner petrol in order to reduce health-threatening air pollution. Venezuelan and Brazilian refiners objected to the costs involved with upgrading their refineries to produce cleaner petrol.

The WTO panel and Appellate Body adjudicating the case ruled in their favour, finding that the US failed to prove that it had used the 'least trade restrictive' measures to enforce its standard. Because of the WTO ruling, the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has been forced to lower its standard to allow oil refiners to sell gasoline that is dirtier than the 1990 industry average in the US, causing air quality to deteriorate.

## ● The US Endangered Species Act

In 1998, The WTO overturned a section of the US Endangered Species Act requiring all shrimp sold in the US to be harvested using relatively inexpensive Turtle Excluder Devices that reduce sea turtle deaths – of which there were 150,000 in 1998 – by as much as 97 per cent. The WTO panels argued that the regulations represented an unjustified discrimination against free trade. The US has changed its regulations to comply.

## ● The EU beef-hormone ban

Since 1988, the European Union has banned the sale and import of beef from cattle treated with artificial growth hormones, which EU studies show increase both the risk of illness in treated animals and in humans who consume them. Even though the ban applies to domestic and foreign beef alike, following a complaint from the US and Canada (the principal exporters of hormone-treated beef), two WTO panels ruled

that the ban is illegal, because it has been taken in advance of scientific certainty – which is forbidden under provisions of the WTO's Agreement on Sanitary and Phytosanitary Measures (SPS). The WTO ruled that the ban would consequently have to be lifted. After the EU refused to comply, the WTO granted the US permission to impose \$116.8 million in retaliatory sanctions for each year that the ban is in place.

## ● EU laws on animal cruelty

The WTO's Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade (TBT) has been used to undermine or threaten a number of environmental regulations. The US, for example, has used TBT Agreement provisions to attack and substantially weaken an EU ban on the import of fur caught with steel jaw leg traps deemed cruel to animals, without even having to bring the case to the WTO.

more companies compete to sell goods to the same markets. This increases pressure to produce goods at the cheapest possible price – a goal that national environmental regulations and taxes can stand in the way of, and are regularly resisted by corporations as a result.

Corporate lobbyists frequently tell regulators that if environmental 'costs', whether real or perceived, are imposed on them, they will become 'uncompetitive' with companies

in other parts of the world to whom these regulations do not apply. This, they say, will make them go out of business.

Unless governments give in, corporations threaten to use their new

freedom – created by the dismantling of barriers to investment – to relocate to another country with weaker environmental regulations, shedding precious jobs in the process.

Governments frequently cave in to such threats, and many important environmental measures have been overturned or blocked as a result. These include major initiatives designed to address climate change, such as a carbon-tax in Europe and the Kyoto Protocol

in the US.

An increasing number of governments, often under the tutelage of the IMF, are attempting to pre-empt such corporate hostility by deregulating voluntarily. In India, for example,

prohibitions against siting industrial facilities in ecologically sensitive areas have been removed and conservation zones stripped of their status so that cement plants, bauxite mines, prawn aquaculture and luxury hotels can be

**'In the words of the UN's**

**Global Environmental Outlook for the year 2000 (GEO3), "The present course is unsustainable and postponing action is no longer an option."**

**FACT: Since 1900, there has been an 18-fold increase in the global consumption of materials (minerals, metals, wood products, and synthetic fossil-fuel-based materials). In 1995, nearly 10 billion tons of materials entered the global economy – more than twice as much as in 1963 (i.e. before the modern global economy fully took shape). If such trends were to continue and the entire world were to live at the materials-intensive level of the average American, materials use would increase at least seven-fold and the corresponding environmental damage would increase catastrophically.**

**Q: WHY ARE WE FAILING?**

**A: 'The same politicians and CEOs who gave us WorldCom, Enron and Halliburton have been stripping away environmental protections at the same time as they strip away shareholder protections. Their driving motivation is to steal what they can, while they can.'**

DAVID KORTEN,  
*Chair, Positive Futures Network*

**A: 'The game is fairly clear: governments publicly fret that they are unable to act because it is WTO-illegal or would make their country uncompetitive. Meanwhile the same governments have colluded with the corporate special interests they are supposed to regulate.'**

LORI WALLACH  
*Director, Public Citizen*

**FACT: Because of the boom in global trade, global shipping has grown 10-fold by weight since 1950 and is set to increase by about 85 per cent over 1997 levels by 2010. World air cargo traffic grew by 280 per cent between 1985 and 1997, and Boeing forecasts a further tripling in air cargo traffic by 2017. Freight transport over land has increased too: Europe has witnessed a tripling of trans-border truck traffic between 1970 and 1997. Given that transportation is still driven by fossil fuels – which when burnt release sulphur dioxide, nitric oxides, and, above all, carbon dioxide (the main greenhouse gas) – the increase in world trade has led directly to increased air pollution and global warming.**

built. And forestry regulations, fisheries controls and mining laws have been relaxed to attract paper, fishing and mining corporations.

Other developing countries – notably Mexico and China – are creating hundreds of so-called ‘free-trade zones’ in which lax environmental enforcement is the norm. In the process, whole regions are being ecologically decimated.

Three quarters of so-called maquiladora factories, many owned by US corporations, in a free-trade zone on the Mexican side of the border with the US, were found to be dumping toxic waste directly into waterways and on to

soils, causing serious health problems for workers, including deformities, cancer and brain damage among their babies.

But this is a price governments seem willing to pay to ‘succeed’ in the global economy. As an advert placed in *Fortune* Magazine by the Philippine government says: ‘To attract companies like yours ... we have felled mountains, razed jungles, filled swamps, moved rivers, relocated towns ... to make it easier for you and your business to do business here.’

As if that were not enough, the removal of laws that stand in the way of free trade and corporate commerce has been

institutionalised in the rules and procedures of the WTO. According to these rules, no environmental measure is allowed if it represents ‘a disguised restriction on international trade’. No environmental measure affecting trade will be judged legitimate unless it is proved to be both ‘necessary’ and ‘the least trade restrictive’ way to achieve the conservation or environmental goal it is seeking.

No standards on food safety, pesticides, biotechnology, and plants and animals generally that affect trade are allowable unless an international scientific consensus is reached that such standards are scientifically justified, according to risk assessment.

All these highly restrictive conditions provide enormous scope for subjective interpretation by WTO panels of trade bureaucrats – usually lawyers who have made their money representing corporate clients – working in secret. All of which explains why almost every environmental or health measure ruled upon so far by the WTO has been overturned.

The mere threat or possibility of WTO action has been sufficient to persuade many countries to change their laws voluntarily to be ‘WTO compliant’. Under this ‘chilling effect,’ countless existing or prospective measures important to environmental protection are either under threat or are no longer considered. Even multilateral environmental agreements could be challenged, including the Convention on Trade in Endangered Species and the Kyoto Protocol, as most contain trade instruments to be used to require countries to change their policies and practices.

The prospects for environmental laws could become even worse if investment measures that exist under the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) are extended worldwide. Under these rules, corporations have the right to sue governments for compensation if they believe their policies, including environmental or public health laws, have reduced or ‘expropriated’ their profits – a right that corporations have already successfully deployed.

NAFTA’s track record makes plans to expand it to the whole of Latin America and add similar provisions to WTO rules during the new round of world trade negotiations launched in Doha in November 2001 extremely disturbing.

### **A recipe for disaster**

The rules and dynamics of economic globalisation are ultimately suicidal. By

CORBIS

## NAFTA – placing investors’ rights before the environment

### ● **The Ethyl Corporation vs Canada’s ban on the neurotoxin MMT**

In 1996, the Canadian government introduced legislation banning the import and inter-provincial transport of MMT – a neurotoxin used as a fuel additive that increases emissions of harmful gases such as carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, and hydrocarbons.

As soon as the law was proclaimed, the only North American manufacturer of MMT, the US Ethyl Corporation, sued the Canadian government for \$350 million in damages. It argued that the Canadian law violated NAFTA, and constituted an expropriation of Ethyl’s Canadian investments. It even claimed that merely by introducing and debating the bill, the Canadian government harmed Ethyl’s international reputation, thereby ‘expropriating’ part of its future profits.

Lawyers advised the government that it would lose under NAFTA rules, and so the ban was repealed, with \$13m and an apology provided in compensation.

### ● **The Metalclad Corporation vs Mexico’s ban on toxic waste**

In 1997, the Metalclad Corporation, a US waste-disposal company, sued the Mexican government because the municipal government of Guadalupe refused to allow it to open a new toxic-waste facility on an existing site with a history of contaminating local groundwater. Under NAFTA, Metalclad won the case and was awarded \$15.6m by the Mexican government.

### ● **The SD Myers company vs Canada’s ban on PCBs**

In 1998, SD Myers, an Ohio-based waste treatment company, sued the Canadian government for \$20m in compensation to cover lost profits from a ban introduced on exports of PCBs – which SD Myers had started to import into the US for processing and disposal. Even though PCBs have been found to cause developmental toxicity, reproductive damage and cancer in humans, in November 2000, a NAFTA tribunal ruled in favour of SD Myers (the level of compensation is still pending).



**Q: WHY ARE WE FAILING?**

**A: 'The large multilateral institutions such as the World Bank, IMF, the UN and the TNCs have failed because their model of intervention is the cause of the problem, not the solution. They approach the environment as a resource flow issue rather than a rights issue.'**

PAUL HAWKEN,  
Co-author of *Natural Capitalism*

**A: 'We have the ideas and technologies to move towards sustainability. The problems are neither conceptual nor technical. It's a moral question we are facing, and we refuse to address it because the dominant economic mindset lacks an ethical dimension. What we need most urgently is political will and leadership.'**

FRITJOF CAPRA  
Author, *Hidden Connections*

extending the industrial market model throughout the world to vast swathes of the planet where it had never previously existed, a system is exported that treats nature as little more than an inanimate collection of resources to be exploited for short-term financial gain. Economic globalisation thus transforms local or contained crises into uncontrolled planetary ones.

Crucially, it simultaneously erodes our ability to take the action necessary to get to grips with these crises by transferring power away from democratically-elected governments to corporations, major holders of finance capital and the markets they operate in. While these have become global, government has remained national, enabling corporations and investors to function increasingly beyond the reach of public accountability.

Economic globalisation is thus placing us on a collision course with the Earth's natural limits – exhausting the planet's capacity to replenish natural resources and absorb our wastes at such a voracious rate as to jeopardise its ability to support generations to come. To suggest we should further increase economic globalisation, therefore,



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couldn't be more irresponsible. If we attempt to do so, the planet will become uninhabitable. In the words of the UN's Global Environmental Outlook for the year 2000, 'The present course is unsustainable and postponing action is no longer an option.'

The first of the commandments on that white board hanging in Bill Clinton's election War Room in Arkansas read: 'Change vs More of the Same.' Clinton didn't keep his promise, but his slogans remain relevant.

We cannot live, and our economies cannot function, without a healthy natural environment. So if governments are serious about achieving real environmental progress and about giving our children a future, then more of the same is not an option. A fundamental redesign of the global economy is essential. It is 'the economy, stupid', that is failing the planet, and it is the economy that we need to change.



**SIMON RETALLACK** is co-director of The Climate Initiatives Fund and Managing Editor of The Ecologist's Special Issues



# Have a nice day

PHOTODISC

America's children are like canaries in a mineshaft: if the American Dream isn't working for them (overdoses; murder; anorexia; mental illness) – why should anyone, anywhere, believe it would work better for their own children?

Implicit in all the rhetoric our leaders spout about globalisation is the idea that the rest of the world should eventually be brought up to the standard of living of the West, and America in particular. Read between the lines of the 'sustainable development' argument and you'll find the American Dream lurking: it is globalisation's touchstone, its apparent endpoint.

But if this is the direction globalisation is taking us, it is worth examining where America itself is headed. A good way to do so is to take a hard look at America's children, since so many features of the global monoculture have been in place their whole lives. They are like canaries in a mineshaft: if the American Dream isn't working for them, why should anyone, anywhere, believe it would work better for their own children?

As it turns out, children in the US are far from 'confident, self-reliant, tolerant, generous, and future-oriented'. One indication of this is that an estimated five million of them are being given at least one psychiatric drug. This disturbing trend is growing rapidly. The number of children ages 2-4 for whom stimulant and anti-depressant drugs have been prescribed increased 50 per cent between 1991 and 1995. In the following four years, prescriptions for anti-depressant drugs rose even more steeply, climbing 151 per cent for children in the 7-12 age group, and 580 per cent for children six and under.

For most people in the less 'developed' world it is impossible to imagine two-year old children so depressed that they need prescription drugs. Equally hard to fathom are the many other symptoms of social breakdown among America's children. Eating disorders, for example. The number of pre-pubescent children with eating disorders is on the rise, with girls as young as four showing symptoms of anorexia.

Cosmetic surgery, another symptom of insecurity and poor self-image, is also on the increase, with the number of teenage girls having their breasts augmented quadrupling, and liposuction procedures tripling, in just the past five years.

What about violence, which is a more common symptom of breakdown for boys? Consider the fact that there have been at least 25 school shootings in the US since 1996, claiming the lives of 35 students. The youngest killer? A six-year old boy.

## Lost childhood

What has made America's children so insecure and troubled? A number of causes are surely involved, all of which can be traced back to the global economy. As corporations scour the world for bigger subsidies and lower costs, jobs move with them, and families as well: the typical American child moves six or more times while growing up, constantly severing connections between relatives, neighbours and friends. Within almost every family, the economic pressures on parents systematically rob them of time with their children. Americans put in longer hours at work than people in any other industrialised country, and the trend is ever upward: Americans work the equivalent of one week longer per year than they did a decade ago, more than five weeks longer than in 1970. As a consequence, more and more young children are relegated to the care of strangers in crowded daycare centres. Older children are often left in the company of violent video games or the corporate sponsors of their favourite television shows. Time spent in nature – fundamentally important to our psychological well-being – is increasingly rare.

Globalisation and the spreading consumer culture thus work to displace the flesh-and-blood role models – parents and grandparents, aunts and uncles, friends and neighbours – that children once looked up to, replacing them with media and advertising images: rakish movie and rock stars, steroid-enhanced athletes and airbrushed supermodels. Children who strive to emulate these manufactured 'perfect' idols are left feeling insecure and inadequate.

In this sense, what is often seen as American 'culture' is not a product of the American people. It is, in fact, an artificial consumer culture being foisted on people through advertising and the

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media. This consumer culture is fundamentally different from those cultures, which for millennia were shaped by climate and topography; by a dialogue between humans and the natural world. This is a new phenomenon, something that has never happened before: a culture determined by technological and economic forces, rather than human and ecological needs. It is not surprising that American children, many of whom seem to 'have everything', are so unhappy: like their parents, their teachers at school and their television heroes, they too have been put on a treadmill that is ever more stressful and competitive, ever more meaningless and lonely.

America's children are among the first victims of a culture shaped by commercial interests and media moguls. But today millions of children from Mongolia to Patagonia are targets of a fanatical and fundamentalist campaign to bring them into the consumer culture. The cost is massive: self-rejection, psychological breakdown and violence. These children are just as vulnerable as their American counterparts to the sales pitches of corporate advertisers, who tell them that this brand of make-up will inch them closer to perfection, or that wearing that brand of sneakers will make them more like their sports heroes. The sale of dangerous bleach for skin and hair, contact lenses advertised as 'the colour of eyes you wish you were born with' is skyrocketing in the South.

### Poorer and poorer

This psychological impoverishment is accompanied by a massive rise in material poverty. Even a decade-long economic 'boom' could not lift an estimated 35 million Americans above the poverty line. And what about the millions of people drawn into rapidly growing Third World slums every year, with little hope of escape? What about the factory workers in sweatshops and maquiladoras, and the small farmers in their dying rural communities? What about the indigenous peoples being driven to extinction, and those whose



ways of life are so threatened by the forces of globalisation that they turn to fundamentalism, even terrorism?

The central hope of the American Dream – that our children will have a better life than we do – seems to have vanished. Many people, in fact, no longer believe that our children really have any future at all.

Nonetheless policymakers insist that globalisation is bringing a better world for everyone. How can there be such a gap between the cheerleading rhetoric and the lives of real people? Part of the disparity results from the way globalisation's promoters measure 'progress'. It is all too easy to compare America's consumer cornucopia today with what was available 50 or 150 years ago. The baseline from which comparisons

are made is usually rooted in the Dickensian period of the early industrial revolution, when exploitation and deprivation, pollution and squalor were rampant. From this starting point, our child-labour laws and 40-hour work week look like real progress. Similarly, the baseline in the Third World is the immediate post-colonial period, with its uprooted cultures, poverty, overpopulation and political instability. Based on these wretched starting points, political leaders can argue that our technologies and our economic system have brought a far better world into being, and that globalisation will bring benefits to the 'wretched, servile, fatalistic and intolerant human beings' in the remaining 'undeveloped' parts

of the world.

In reality, however, globalisation is a continuation of a broad process that started with the age of conquest and colonialism in the South, and the Enclosures and the Industrial Revolution in the North. A single culture and economic system has relentlessly expanded, taking over other cultures, other people's resources and labour. Far from delivering us from poverty, the globalising industrial system continually creates it.

### Progress brings poverty

Today, on the eve of the Johannesburg summit, it is vital that we connect growing physical and emotional poverty – whether inside or outside the US – to the whole industrial system; to a history that included robbing people from all over the world of their natural resources, labour and self-respect. Our leaders simply fail to connect the dots between 'progress' and poverty.

Even in the narrowest economic terms, globalisation means continuing to rob, rather than enrich, the majority. In 1960, the income of the richest fifth of the global population was 30 times that of the poorest fifth; by 1997 the gap more than doubled, with the richest fifth

receiving 74 times more than the poorest fifth. This is globalisation at work.

With those in the industrialised world using ten times

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**The central hope of the American Dream – that our children will have a better life than we do – seems to have vanished.**

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their share of the earth's resources, it is criminal to suggest that everyone in the 'undeveloped' world can do the same. The global spread of this fantasy has been profoundly destructive to people's ability to survive in their own cultures, in their own place on the earth. It has even been destructive to its most privileged beneficiaries. America's children are telling us we need a very different dream – one shaped by culture and nature, not by corporate greed.



**STEVE GORELICK** is an organic farmer and director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture



BY SIMON RETALLACK

The World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) – a critical, once-in-a-decade opportunity for world leaders to address environmental degradation and poverty – looks set to be ruined by efforts led by the United States to impose a narrow corporate agenda on the meeting – signalling a collective abdication of responsibility by governments.

The event, being held in Johannesburg from August 26 to September 4 on the tenth anniversary of the Rio Earth Summit, should have been used to reverse the tide of failure of the past decade. 'Developed countries, in particular,' says UN Secretary General, Kofi Annan, 'have not lived up to the promises they made either to protect the environment or to help the developing world.' As a result, all our major environmental and social problems are worse than ever – making the need for success at Johannesburg, for new binding commitments on governments to act, all the more

important. Yet the summit – predicted to draw some 65,000 government, business and civil society delegates – is expected to achieve next to nothing or, perversely, make matters worse.

### Blocking reform

Unlike Rio, no new global conventions or protocols will be launched at Johannesburg.

In their place, there will be a 'Plan of Implementation' setting out how governments will implement the principles outlined in Agenda 21, (the Blueprint for action for global sustainable development in the 21st Century) launched in Rio ten years ago. However, the Bush Administration, in defence of short-term corporate interests, is opposing the few even remotely meaningful goals, targets and timetables for action being proposed.

On climate change, the US is blocking proposals to 'increase the share of renewable energy sources to at least 5 percent of total national primary energy

supply by 2010; adopt timetables for progressively phasing out energy subsidies which inhibit sustainable development,' and 'make every effort to ensure entry into force of the Kyoto Protocol.'

On fresh water, an initiative is being blocked to 'halve, by the year 2015, the proportion of people who are unable to reach, or to afford, safe drinking water.'

On natural resource depletion, a proposal is being blocked to 'halt and reverse the current trend in loss of natural resources at the global and national levels by 2015.' On sustainable agriculture, a statement is being blocked calling for governments to 'promote the creation of domestic and international markets for organic produce'.

Statements are also being blocked calling on governments to 'reduce and eliminate environmentally harmful subsidies', to 'make trade and environment mutually supportive' and to 'increase the level of resources of the Funds established within the multilateral environment agreements'.

# US HIJACKS JOHANNES

## The US and its corrupt corporate agenda is paralysing the Summit. The future of the world is being entrusted to companies who can't even look after their own books.

As Martin Khor, director of the Third World Network and a seasoned observer of international summits says, with anglophilic understatement, 'The US is not very keen on anything environmental at all'.

The US is also leading the charge against proposals supported by developing countries to reform the IMF, World Bank and WTO, whose policies are destroying poor countries' economies. Hence, the US is blocking calls for 'measures to mitigate the impact of excessive volatility of short-term capital flows', and for 'phasing out all forms of export subsidies', as well as a proposal to 'establish an international mechanism to stabilize commodity prices', (whose decline has knocked 40 percent off some countries' GDP).

Similarly, the US is blocking a call to 'strengthen and make operational all special and differential treatment provisions' – code for allowing developing countries to protect their domestic industries.

A statement is also being blocked calling on governments to 'reduce the unsustainable debt burden of developing countries, through speedy action for debt relief and debt cancellation'. So too is the call to 'provide for full and effective participation of developing countries in international economic decision-making'.

On the eve of the Johannesburg summit, every one of the proposals listed here remain in square brackets (and therefore un-agreed) within the draft text of the Plan of Implementation.

For Martin Khor, 'the only way US opposition to meaningful change might be overcome is if the European Union forms an alliance with developing countries...Which may persuade the US to come along, because they do not want to be isolated.' But until now, that has been impossible as the EU, while playing a generally positive role on the conventional environmental agenda, has actually sided with the US on issues relating to reform of the global economy – including on trade and debt.

### Two key cornerstones of Rio's Earth Summit threatened

The absence of meaningful action – as extraordinary as that is in a time of worsening environmental and social crises – isn't the only problem facing the Johannesburg summit. Real damage to environmental progress may be caused as a result of a determined effort by the Bush administration to destroy two key cornerstones of the Rio Earth Summit.

Wherever in the Plan of Implementation calls are made for governments to apply the 'precautionary principle' and the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities', the US is opposing them.

#### 1 THE PRECAUTIONARY PRINCIPLE

The precautionary principle guides governments to take precautionary, preventative action when a practice or product raises potentially significant threats of harm to human health or the environment, even if scientific uncertainty remains.

It forms the basis of the Rio Summit's Convention on Biological Diversity and the subsequent Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety, which gives countries the right to regulate or refuse imports of genetically modified organisms (GMOs).

It clashes, however, with the rules of the WTO which require countries to present categorical scientific proof of harm before taking measures that restrict trade. And, as Victor Menotti, of the International Forum on Globalization, explains, 'The US wants WTO rules to supersede so that its biotechnology industry will not face trade restrictions on its GMO exports'.

Preventing the international community from re-endorsing the principle in Johannesburg is seen by the US as a key step towards achieving that goal as it will undermine the principle's legitimacy.

#### 2 THE PRINCIPLE OF 'COMMON BUT DIFFERENTIATED RESPONSIBILITIES'

Just as damaging is US opposition to the principle of 'common but differentiated responsibilities' – which developing countries attach huge importance to as it places a duty on those that contribute most to causing environmental problems

(industrialised countries) to take the lead in addressing them. And it forms the basis of another product of Rio, the Convention on Climate Change.

In the fight against global warming, it is vital that the principle be acted upon: unless industrialised countries take the lead in cutting greenhouse gas emissions, of which the US emits more than any other country in the world, developing countries will refuse to do so themselves.

However, in Johannesburg, the Bush Administration, once again, wants to de-legitimise the principle so that US fossil fuel industries can pursue business as usual and the onus to act be transferred to countries such as China and India instead.

As Tony Juniper, director-designate of Friends of the Earth in England and Wales, points out, 'the fact that the US government is actively undermining agreements made 10 years ago has led some to refer to the event as Rio minus ten rather than Rio plus 10'.

If the US maintains its hardline opposition to these two core

**Q: WHAT WILL THE SUMMIT ACHIEVE?**

**A: 'The summit will put the final nail in the coffin of a deeply discredited idea – the idea that "socially responsible businesses" will partner with "civil society" to save the planet. Now that we know corporations aren't even "socially responsible" enough to keep their own books, maybe "society" can stop being so civil.'**

NAOMI KLEIN, *author, NO LOGO*

**A: 'In itself, very little. And that's seriously bad news. It may well persuade business leaders that "business as usual with a few green knobs on" is just fine – given governments' procrastination and gut-wrenching cowardice.'**

JONATHAN PORRITT,  
*Forum for the Future*

**Q: WHAT WILL THE SUMMIT ACHIEVE?**

**A: 'If George Bush continues his imitation of the Evil Dr No and blocks every positive effort on ecological or social issues, then the meeting can be a success just by highlighting and alienating him.'**

JOHN PASSACANTANDO,  
*Director, Greenpeace*

**A: 'Today, with all the amplified brainpower of engineers, scientists, computers and global telecommunications, we no longer seem able to do what our ancestors did to get us here. What will it take to move humanity to action? I hope Johannesburg may do it, but if history is any indication, not much will come of it.'**

DAVID SUZUKI,  
*Biologist, author and president the David Suzuki Foundation*

**A: 'The results could be frustrating, taking into account the failures during its preparatory process. However, this might produce strong reactions from the international community that would lead us into a serious stage of reflection. Such crisis will provide us with new opportunities.'**

JUAN MAYR  
*Minister for the Environment, Colombia*

principles, either the Plan of Implementation will collapse as developing countries refuse to agree to this type of sabotage, or global environmental policy will be set back by 20 years.

### **Wolf in sheep's clothing**

It isn't only what may be left out of the Johannesburg agenda that is causing concern.

What are certain to be pedalled as 'solutions' are policies of industrial

globalization that are actually harming the environment and creating poverty.

The Plan of Implementation calls on countries to 'Provide assistance and mobilise resources to enhance industrial development in developing countries'. It requires governments to 'create the necessary conditions to facilitate increases in Foreign Direct Investment' – code for making it easier for foreign corporations to establish themselves. And it asks governments to 'reduce or eliminate tariffs on non-agricultural products' and 'increase exports', to boost free trade, which, as Tony Juniper, explains, 'governments and corporations have convinced themselves is the same thing as sustainable development'.

Furthermore, instead of proposing measures to hold transnational corporations accountable for their actions through, for example, a legally-binding framework for corporate accountability, the Plan of Implementation asks governments to 'encourage industry to improve social and environmental performance through voluntary initiatives'.

Indeed, this approach, lobbied for in the run-up to Johannesburg by corporations and endorsed by the world's governments, led by the United States, lies behind the other certain outcome of the summit. A series of voluntary partnerships will be announced with corporations – ostensibly as a means of implementing international agreements in five key areas: water and sanitation, energy, health, agriculture and biodiversity. Corporations, in partnership with governments or civil society groups, will be able to design the objectives of their initiatives, the means of implementation and the monitoring arrangements. These deals, says the UN, 'are expected to become one of the major outcomes of the World Summit on Sustainable Development'.

According to Kenny Bruno, UN and Corporations Project Coordinator for CorpWatch, these partnerships are actually designed 'to save face, because new agreements are impossible due to the unilateralist stance of the US', but with far-reaching and worrying repercussions.

By adopting this approach, governments are effectively abdicating responsibility to act, explains Kenny Bruno, 'allowing the private sector to take over, and, to a shocking extent, design the solutions'. Not only will this

enable corporations to greenwash over their own bad environmental records, it could allow them to make our problems worse by insisting, for example, on the use of biotechnology in agricultural partnerships, or on privatisation in partnerships on water, energy and health care.

Victor Menotti calls it 'Enron Environmentalism' – asking the very entities responsible for our problems to solve them, without any mechanisms to ensure accountability. The audacity of asking the public to accept this as a solution is extraordinary. Just as corruption engulfs corporate America, US negotiators are 'insisting,' says Menotti, 'that the world should trust unregulated corporate initiatives.'

Instead of helping us move forwards in the battle to resolve environmental degradation and global poverty, the Johannesburg Summit could thus have the opposite effect.

The US government's withdrawal from Kyoto seems to have been a mere prelude to its wider goal of subjugating the entire UN system to its narrow brand of corporate interests. Other governments will be complicit if they concede, and the signs are not good.

So far the EU has shown neither leadership nor vision. As the Green MEP Caroline Lucas says, 'the EU should be doing more, in particular with regard to the global governance gap [created by] global market forces running far ahead of the ability of institutions to regulate them.'

### **Hope springs eternal**

A vital opportunity to set the agenda for the next 10 years thus looks as if it is being lost, just when we can afford it least.

But there is another, more hopeful interpretation of what Johannesburg will deliver – not as a result of the official summit, but of the hundreds of 'parallel activities' being planned, including a giant teach-in organised by the International Forum on Globalization and a Peoples' Earth Summit.

Martin Khor articulates a widely held view. 'I think what is important for Johannesburg,' he says, 'is the citizens' movements – the kind of networking we do there, the kind of new campaigns we build together for the next four of five years, the kinds of insight we develop into the international governmental system and therefore our own response to it.'

Khor believes that 'we shouldn't be depressed if governments don't move, it

should just make us more dedicated to finding the resources and energy to do more... to move the agenda on the ground, on the streets, in the supermarkets, in the farms. If there's a vacuum', he says, 'we should fill it. It's up to us, don't you think? We are players too'.

**Q:** WHAT WILL THE SUMMIT ACHIEVE?

**A:** 'The summit is already weighed down by the heavy legacy of failure to implement the 1992 decisions of Rio. Fighting terrorism in its bogus form of hunting down individuals instead of eliminating alienation, and the pleasant words of the unfinanced and insubstantive NEPAD to lift Africa from an assumed mire will, instead, be used to divert attention from the stark reality of this failure. But I do not think that the diversion will fool enough people. Instead, it will start a serious re-evaluation of national and global governance. I am an optimist: the failure will open new doors.'

TEWOLDE GEBRE EGZHIABER,  
Head, Environment Protection Agency,  
Ethiopia

**A:** 'There will be a very vibrant and diverse movement present, not necessarily as a part of the summit itself, which is claiming more and more power. The Landless Peoples' Movement of South Africa has mobilized thousands of rural and urban landless to denounce the hollow notion of sustainable development without land. This will make it obvious to the world that the world's poor and landless will not benefit unless governments are willing to stop protecting property rights of the world wealthy minority.'

ANURADHA MITTAL  
Co-Director, Institute for Food and  
Development Policy

# RIO EARTH SUMMIT 1992

## Have we learnt anything?

BY MATTHIAS FINGER

In 1992, to global applause and expectation, the so-called Earth Summit descended upon Rio de Janeiro. Yet far from being the high point of environmental policy making that many think it was, the summit needs to be understood rather as the dawn of the current crisis.

Importantly, Rio saw the emergence of the concept of 'sustainable development', which in effect is nothing more than a smart trick to translate environmental concerns into development objectives and practices. Since the early 1970s, the environment had been identified as a threat to further industrial development (and thus to profits). Therefore at Rio, environmental problems were redefined in such a way as to foster, rather than hinder, the very industrial growth and development that was their cause.

This was achieved first by focusing exclusively on cross-boundary natural resources problems (oceans, forests, etc.) and secondly by redefining these problems in terms of development (e.g., biodiversity 'development'). In other words, the Rio approach effectively eliminated system-wide environmental problems. It replaced them with 'transboundary resources management issues' that could now be addressed in the traditional development mode, i.e., by promoting new technologies and by investing more money.

This piece-meal, rather than systems-wide, approach was itself the result of institutional problems, namely the fact that this whole UN exercise was still very state-centric. Though this problem was recognized, it was addressed in a way that actually made things worse. Indeed Rio goes down in history as the moment when the concept of environmental 'governance' was turned into a *business advantage*.

What happened at Rio was the decision that governments would work with 'non-governmental organizations' (which in this case meant both traditional NGOs and profit motivated-corporations) to solve global environmental problems in a new 'cooperative' approach. Inspired as this whole approach was by quasi-New Age

principles, such 'partnerships' among well-meaning governments, NGOs, and businesses ultimately served the aim of transforming multinational corporations into legitimate political actors.

This approach also came in handy – and this aspect is often neglected – for the United Nations, whose legitimacy had increasingly become threatened, not the least by the World Bank and International Monetary Fund. The Earth Summit served not only to reactivate its traditional development agenda by redefining the environment as a development problem, but also as a way of justifying its continued existence by using both NGOs and business as 'partners'.

Needless to say this strategy has miserably failed. Rather than being able to use the multinationals for its own financial survival, the corporations have co-opted the UN for their own PR campaigns. As a result they have gained cheap access to developing countries' markets under the cover of humanitarian aid, infrastructure development, or other forms of UN-sponsored interference into domestic affairs and community life.

But it is in the environmental field where the UN record is particularly appalling. Flawed from their very inception, none of the Rio-initiated agreements and institutions has managed to halt, or even slow, environmental degradation.

**MATTHIAS FINGER** is co-author (with Pratap Chatterjee) of *The Earth Brokers: Power, Politics and World Development*





# How can we survive?

BY EDWARD GOLDSMITH

30 years ago, the same year as the first summit in Stockholm, *The Ecologist* published *A Blueprint for Survival*. Now, on the eve of Johannesburg, the magazine's founding editor, Edward Goldsmith asks why, in the face of mounting environmental crises, nothing has changed.

unscientific is to be denied legitimacy and held up to ridicule.

REUTERS

In fact, the very declarations of our scientists are now imbued with an aura of sanctity, previously reserved for the holy texts of the established religions.

### False Utopias

The idea of progress was firmly built into the Utopia of Francis Bacon, regarded as one of the founders of modern science, along with René Descartes and Galileo Galilei. None of them really saw science as an objective study, but rather as an imperialistic enterprise, whose goal it was to subjugate the natural world.

The Scientific Academy of the New Atlantis – Bacon's Utopia – he called Solomon's House. Its goal was the 'enlarging [of] the bounds of human empire to the effecting of all things possible'. The suggestion was that every scientific intrusion into the workings of nature was necessarily beneficial and that therefore no limits could or should be imposed.

For Bacon this enterprise would create 'a second nature', in other words, a man-made, science-and-technology-inspired

Why are we unable to escape the terrible mess that the planet is in?

The conventional answer is that we have the solutions, but that we are experiencing some difficulties in putting them into practice. Once the final flaws are ironed out, hey presto, Heaven on Earth.

What we fail, or refuse, to realise is that the solution we are pursuing is not the solution at all. In fact it is the very root of the problem.

To begin with, the basic assumption of this world view is that, in creating the world, God (or if we prefer, the

evolutionary process) somehow did a bad job. Man's mission on this planet, we therefore presume, is to develop technologies that will enable us to redesign the World in accordance with our vastly superior plan.

What lends credibility to this infantile world view is that it is the very basis of modern science. And science is seen as the ultimate arbiter of truth. Indeed, science has become very much part of our secular religion.

To be seen as scientific is to be seen as right, and therefore beyond question. On the other hand, to be branded as

surrogate world, which was seen as a vast improvement on the natural world.

The scientists of Solomon's House would then be in a position to ensure 'the prolongation of life' and 'the restitution of youth', as well as 'the retardation of age' and 'the curing of diseases counted as incurable'. They would even be capable of 'regulating climate' and 'making new species'.

There was indeed no limit to what they could achieve, or to the extent to which they could transform the natural world. Nor was there the slightest concern for the implications of implementing this puerile and megalomaniac dream, which modern science has only achieved imperfectly and in the very short term, and at the cost of creating the terrible mess we are in today.

### The religion of progress

Our economists are also imbued with the Religion of Progress. Economics, as taught in our universities, is above all designed to rationalise, and hence legitimise, economic growth. Or as it is called when imposed on Third World countries – development.

If scientists are the priests of our technological society, then economists are its cardinals and archbishops. Indeed, for an economist to brand a project as uneconomic is possibly even more damning than for a scientist to condemn it as unscientific.

### An act of supreme arrogance

One of the main problems with modern economics is that it is based on a minute, totally atypical, and necessarily short-lived sample of the total human experience on this planet – that of the industrial age. Economists thereby assume, as do our sociologists and political scientists, that 99 per cent of human experience on this planet is irrelevant to solving the problems we face today. This is, among other things, an act of supreme arrogance.

Until recently, however, society was above all based on the extended family and the community. This cannot be a coincidence. Its members were bound by a strong set of reciprocal obligations towards each other. This provided the basis of their 'economic system', namely the production and distribution within these social units of the food and artefacts that they required. This, it is critical to realise, took place without any money changing hands.

Nor, for that matter, was money

required to motivate the members of these traditional communities to fulfil the other functions required to assure the welfare of their members: the raising of their children, the care of the old and the sick, their religious rituals, and the maintenance of law and justice.

This is important because the principal argument for economic growth is that money is vital for assuring people's welfare and solving whatever problems they suffer from.

Thus the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations insists that if people are hungry it is because they cannot afford to buy food. So too the World Health Organization assures us that people are disease-ridden and die young because they cannot pay for medicines.

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## Economists assume that 99 per cent of the human experience on this planet is irrelevant to the problems we face today

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Hunger and disease are thereby classified as but two of the many forms which poverty must take. Meanwhile, only one solution, economic growth, is capable of generating the money we think is required. This is, of course, what they want to make us believe at Johannesburg.

No one seems to have pointed out to the promoters of this lethal process that, until recently, people could feed themselves very satisfactorily without money, and usually maintain themselves in excellent health.

### The myth of poverty

One could go further than this and point out that poverty itself is not a term that made much sense in the context of a pre-development community. What seems certain, rather, is that its members did not regard themselves as poor.

In fact, if we are to believe the French sociologist Serge Latouche, the West African societies, in which he lived and worked, do not even have a word for poverty. Helena Norberg-Hodge, who spent much of her time in Ladakh, a Tibetan society in the Himalayas in the last 30 years, also tells us that the Ladakhi had no word for poverty.

Marshall Sahlins, the well-known anthropologist, regards poverty as 'an invention of civilization'.

For Latouche the word closest to poverty in the vocabulary of West African people is that which denotes an orphan, i.e. someone who is deprived of social support. This is not surprising since in a pre-development society a person's family, community, and land – of which development necessarily deprives them – are their principal sources of wealth and security.

Significantly, the late Julius Nyerere, when Prime Minister of Tanzania, told us that 'in an African society... nobody starved, either of food or human dignity, because he lacked personal wealth; he could depend on the wealth possessed by the community of which he was a member.'

### Isolated from reality

Another of the problems with modern economics is that it is studied in isolation. Its practitioners know almost nothing about society and the natural world. As the late Professor Nicholas Georgescu Roegen, a dissident economist at Vanderbilt University, pointed out: 'the economic process is depicted by modern economists as 'a circular diagram, a pendulum movement between production and consumption within a completely closed system'. As a result, 'the fact that there is a continuous influence between the economic process and the physical environment carries no weight with a standard economist'.

In other words, economic development is seen as a purely economic process, whereas by its very nature it must give rise to the most dramatic social, ecological, and cognitive transformations. If our knowledge were not so fragmented, they would be regarded as the integral components of this lethal process.

The reason economic development is so socially destructive is that it is, above all, a process whereby the functions that were previously fulfilled effectively and entirely for free by the traditional families and communities are taken over by the state and commercial enterprises that then commodify them.

Of course, this enables them to contribute to Gross National Product (GNP) – or as it should more realistically be known, Gross National Cost (GNC). As this occurs, these key social units, now divested of their natural

# How can we Survive?

functions, must inevitably atrophy, like muscles that are no longer in use. What they leave behind is an atomised mass of socially deprived and alienated individuals – the main cause of the current epidemic of delinquency and drug addiction.

At the same time a vast number of people, not only in the Third World, but also in the industrialised countries of the West, no longer have access to these now-commodified benefits. If the current global trends towards the further privatisation of key goods and services proceeds as planned, then their numbers can only escalate.

## The dangers of development

Economic development has very much the same effect on ecosystems, on whose sustainable functioning human life, as well as all other living things, depends. As development proceeds, however, these critical functions that are provided entirely for free are also repackaged by the State and the corporations and sold off.

Thus the nitrogen used to fertilise our land is increasingly produced at great cost in factories rather than fixed by nitrogen-fixing bacteria on the roots of leguminous plants. The water we use, instead of being stored for free in the aquifers beneath the forest floor, is held in expensive man-made reservoirs that, in tropical areas, silt up in a few decades, and often more quickly.

Development also involves a transformation of the world view with which pre-development people were imbued. Thus, instead of seeing our survival as dependent on the preservation of the critical structure of

the cosmos, we now see it as dependent on its systemic annihilation.

As development proceeds, we become ever more hooked on the cancer-like expansion of the surrogate world we have created – Bacon's 'new nature'. This is not because it is really designed to



satisfy human needs, but because we are at the same time being deprived of the real world on which we previously depended.

Unfortunately, just about every serious problem that confronts us today is interpreted, by those who govern us, in terms of this aberrant world view. More precisely, its highly flawed paradigms of reductionist science and

modern economics are interpreted in such a way as to make it appear a viable solution: one involving more science, technology, and capital investment.

This will, of course, only further boost the profits of the vast corporations that, with the globalization of the economy, now largely control our governments and international agencies. In this way, the problems caused by economic development are simply transformed into business opportunities.

But such pseudo-solutions can only mask the symptoms of our problems. The problems themselves can only really be solved by putting economic development into reverse.

Of course, this is not remotely acceptable. Hence the problems can only worsen – and the money required for providing ever more pseudo-solutions constitutes an ever-growing proportion of our Gross National Product (GNP). This is the main reason I prefer to refer to GNP as 'Gross National Cost'.

## Rethinking the land

To give a typical example, the agricultural economist Philip Raup tells us that 'there can be no permanent shortage of agricultural land. To suppose the opposite is an error that stems from wrongly considering the availability of resources in physical rather than economic terms. Indeed, if some land is unsuitable for agriculture, this is only a reflection of current market conditions. If the land were really needed, then the necessary science, technology and capital, would make it productive.'

Of course, if this were true we would not have to abandon some seven or eight million hectares of agricultural land every year. If the land has been destroyed it is because industrial agriculture is so incredibly destructive.

It is also because modern society is incapable of controlling its population, any more than it can its natural resources. If there is a land shortage, it is

also because, for development to occur, we must accommodate the sprawling infrastructure of the industrial society it creates.

Significantly, the three countries of South-East Asia regarded as having achieved the most economic growth – as Lester Brown tells in his book *Who Will Feed China?* – have lost between 40 and 52 per cent of their cereal-growing land in the space of less than 40 years.

It is not clear how these countries will feed themselves if this is allowed to continue (especially as it is also occurring in the countries from which the South-East Asian countries might import food to meet demand).

The only way to solve the problem of land shortages is clearly to put these trends – all of which are the inevitable consequences of economic growth – into reverse. At present we cannot do this. However, if we fail, the unstable global economy must one day collapse on its own accord.

I've mentioned that the present epidemic of crime, delinquency and drug addiction is caused by the breakdown of the family and the community, again the inevitable

consequence of economic development. Building ever more prisons, as we are doing today, is likewise but a means of masking symptoms of our sick society

requires de-commodifying the real necessities of life, and so putting development into reverse. This is essential for slowing down climate change, the most daunting problem mankind has ever faced. Significantly, the day we learned how to mobilise the energy contained in fossil fuels, within the context of a market economy, we were condemned to climate change. This is a sufficient indictment of the industrial society which today the whole world seeks to emulate.

Indeed, if we are to survive for much longer on this planet, we have no alternative but to turn to some of the main features of the traditional pre-development society. This will mean that most of us will live in largely, but not entirely, self-sufficient villages, geared to the small-scale, low-tech production of food and artefacts. It also means that our social and cultural life will, as it once did, play a much more important part in our lives.

Finally, it also means that we must be imbued with a very different world view, one in which we see human survival as dependent upon a return to traditional communities and the preservation of the

natural world of which they are part, rather than on the surrogate and unsustainable world that economic development brings.

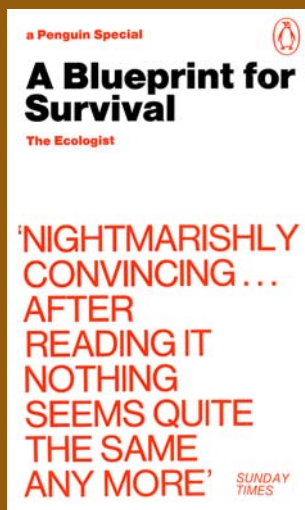


'I can't understand it. Productivity has never been higher.'

and of providing the now privatised 'prison-industrial complex' with a superb business opportunity.

An effective campaign against poverty

Originally published in January 1972, *A Blueprint for Survival* went on to become one of the decade's most important environmental books, selling 120,000 copies in 17 languages, and influencing the formation of Green Parties around the world.



'The principle defect of the industrial way of life with its ethos of expansion is that it is not sustainable. Its termination within the lifetime of someone born today is inevitable – unless it continues to be sustained for a while longer by an entrenched minority at the cost of imposing great suffering on the rest of mankind. We can be certain, however, that sooner or later it will end (only the precise time and circumstances are in doubt) and that it will do so in one of two ways: either against our will, in a succession of famines, epidemics, social crises and wars; or because we want it to – because we wish to create a society which will not impose hardship and cruelty upon our children – in a succession of thoughtful, humane and measured changes.'

FROM THE OPENING PARAGRAPH OF *A BLUEPRINT FOR SURVIVAL*.



*If you feel powerless to make a difference think again.*

*Helena Norberg-Hodge explains how eating local food will change the world*

# Think global... Eat

Some will find the claim that going local is the single most effective response to globalisation to be exaggerated and unrealistic.

But how *realistic* is it to continue pulling the entire global population into a single economy?

Today, local economies still meet a large proportion of the needs of roughly half the world's people, mostly in the 'developing' countries. Will their lives be improved if we destroy these economies? What can globalisation offer the majority, other than unrealistic promises?

Localisation involves less social and

environmental upheaval than globalisation, and is far less costly to implement. In fact, every aspect of the local, whether at the policy level or in our communities brings with it a whole cascade of benefits.

Localisation essentially means shifting economic activity into the hands of millions of small- and medium-sized businesses instead of concentrating it in fewer and fewer mega-corporations.

Localisation doesn't mean that every community has to be entirely self-reliant; it simply means shortening the distance between producers and

consumers wherever possible.

Since food is something everyone, everywhere, needs every day, a shift from global food to local food is the best place to start. People all over the world are learning that global food is too costly – socially, environmentally, *and* economically. They are beginning to seek out local food, and a whole movement is gaining ground.

## **The benefits of going local**

But what, exactly, is 'local food'? If the essence of global food is a plastic-wrapped, highly processed slab of junk



ALL PICS THIS SPREAD: CORBIS

# local

that has been transported thousands of miles, a local food system means fresh produce grown on nearby farms and sold at farmers' markets and in independent local shops. For that reason, 'food miles' (the distance food travels from farm to plate) are relatively small, which greatly reduces fossil fuel use and pollution.

There are other environmental benefits as well. Global markets demand intensive and uniform (monocultural) production which eliminates all but the cash crop from the land. On the other hand, local markets give farmers an

incentive to diversify, creating niches on the farm for wild plant and animal species. Also, diversified farms cannot accommodate the heavy machinery used in monocultures, thereby eliminating a major cause of soil erosion. Diversification also lends itself to organic methods, making crops less susceptible to pests and thus reducing the need for artificial pesticides.

Rural economies in particular benefit from local food systems, since most of the money spent on food goes to the farmer, not distant corporations. Juan Moreno, a farmer in the Andalusian region of Spain, told us, 'When we sold our vegetables to supermarkets we got almost nothing for them. Now, through the local co-op, we're getting much more – three times as much for some vegetables.'

Small diversified farms benefit local economies through job creation as well, since they are suited to human labour rather than to massive equipment. For example, in the UK, farms under 100 acres provide five times more jobs per acre than those over 500 acres. And, wages paid to farm workers benefit local communities far more than money paid to run heavy machinery that is almost immediately siphoned off to equipment manufacturers.

## Food quality

Local food is almost always fresher – and therefore more nutritious – than global food. It also needs fewer preservatives or other additives, and organic methods can eliminate pesticide residues. Farmers can grow varieties that are best suited to local climate and soils, allowing flavour and nutrition to take precedence over extended shelf life and the whims of global markets.

Animal husbandry can be integrated with crop production, providing healthier, more humane conditions for animals and a non-chemical source of fertility. And if countries in the South were encouraged to use their labour and their best agricultural land for local needs rather than for luxury crops for Northern markets, hunger would diminish as well.

But even those who acknowledge its negative effects believe that the global food system is necessary because it produces more food and delivers it at a lower price. But this simply isn't true. Studies carried out all over the world show that small-scale, diversified farms produce a greater yield than large-scale monocultures. In fact, if providing food for the world's hungry is the priority, 🐦

## GLOBAL FOOD

### THE REAL COSTS OF 'CHEAP' FOOD

**Global food is based on an economic theory: instead of producing a diverse range of food crops, every nation and region should specialise in one or two globally-traded commodities – those they can produce cheaply enough to compete with every other producer. The proceeds from exporting those commodities are then used to buy food for local consumption. According to the theory, everyone will benefit.**

**The theory, as it turns out, is wrong. The global food system has been a major cause of hunger and environmental destruction around the world.**

- By the time it arrives on the table, the average American meal has accumulated 1,500 miles of transport.
- In the UK, imports of food and animal feed use 1.6 billion litres of fuel, and emit more than 4m tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.
- In 1997 126m litres of milk was imported into the UK. The same year the country exported 270m litres.
- For every calorie of carrot flown into the UK from South Africa, we use 66 calories of fuel.
- The six founding countries of Europe's Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) had 22m farmers in 1957; today that number has fallen to about 7m.
- In the US, 6.8m farms were in operation in 1935; today there are only one-fourth as many.
- In the US, distributors, marketers, and input suppliers take 91 cents out of every food dollar, while farmers keep only 9 cents.
- Today just two companies, Cargill and Archer Daniels Midland, control 70 to 80 per cent of the world's grain trade.
- One agribusiness, Philip Morris, gets 10 cents out of every American food dollar – more than earned by all US farmers combined.
- In the 1990s alone, some 1,000 independent food shops – grocers, bakers, butchers and fishmongers – closed in the UK each year.
- 10,000 new processed food products are introduced into the US each year.
- In 1996 1.5bn tonnes of fruit were destroyed to keep the overall market price down.
- UK government statistics reveal a 600 per cent increase in cases of food poisoning over the last 15 years.
- We each consume an estimated 3 kg of additives a year.

then the shift towards local food systems should begin immediately, since they do a far better job of feeding people.

Although the cost of global food does not show up in the supermarket price, we pay for it in our taxes – to fund research into pesticides and biotech, to subsidise the transport, communications and energy infrastructures the system requires, and to pay for the foreign aid that pulls Third World economies into the destructive global system.

We pay in other ways for the environmental costs of global food, which are degrading the planet our children will inherit.

### How do we go local?

Sadly, despite the evidence, most policymakers support the further globalisation of food – in the belief that more trade is always better. As a result, identical products are criss-crossing the globe, with no other purpose than to enrich the corporations that control the global food supply.

An immediate first step would be to ensure that identical products are not being both imported and exported. If we eliminate needless trade in everything from wheat, milk and potatoes to apple juice and live animals, the reduction in transport alone would

bring immediate benefits.

Such a step would require trade treaties to be rewritten, re-establishing the rights of citizens to protect their economies and resources.

Subsidies that now support the global food system would need to be shifted towards more localised systems. Governments have spent tremendous sums of taxpayers' money to prop up a costly food system which pretends to provide 'cheap' food. If even a fraction of that sum were devoted to supporting small-scale economies instead, the cost of local food would decrease, and its availability would grow.

Shifts in energy policy are critically important. In the South, where the energy infrastructure is still being built up, a shift towards a decentralised renewable energy path could be easily implemented, at a fraction of the cost in dollars and human upheaval that heavily subsidised huge dams, nuclear power and fossil fuels entail.

Today, a one-size-fits-all educational model is being imposed worldwide, eliminating the knowledge and skills people need to live on their own resources, in their own places on the earth.

Changes in tax policy would also help to promote food localisation. Now, tax

### Q: WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE THERE?

**A: 'Proceed without the US where that is necessary. Support others who wish to avoid trading with those who promulgate destructive policies. Go back and read all the 1960s literature on "less is more". Support seed savers – send them your money, not the big enviro groups. BUY LESS.'**

BETH BURROWS,  
*President, The Edmonds Institute*

**A: 'Eat locally where possible to reduce food miles (energy use). Celebrate, cherish and nurture food culture and differences. Resist the rise of culinary blandness.'**

TIM LANG,  
*Professor of Food Policy  
Thames Valley University*

credits favour global producers whose methods demand a massive investment in energy use. Meanwhile the more labour-intensive methods of small-scale diversified producers are penalised through income taxes, payroll taxes and other taxes on labour.

### Re-regulating Global Trade, Deregulating Local Trade

The growth of global trade and finance has led to the emergence of giant corporations whose activities are highly polluting and socially exploitative. This, in turn, has created a need for ever more social and environmental regulations, along with a massive bureaucracy to administer them. That bureaucracy is strangling smaller businesses with paperwork, inspections, fines, and the costs are needless, yet now compulsory. The burden is too great for the small business to bear, while the big happily pay up and grow bigger as their smaller competitors die out. How many dairies have gone out of business because they had to have stainless steel sinks, when porcelain had served them well for generations?

Today, there is an urgent need for national and regional governments to control the activities of multinational corporations. At the same time, there is an equally urgent need to relax the controls on local trade, which by its nature is far less likely to damage human health and the environment.

## MAKING FOOD MILES FAIR

BY COLIN HINES

While the majority of food can be produced and traded locally, certain crops, such as coffee, tea and bananas, can only be grown in certain areas of the world. If they too are to contribute to the rediversification of local economies and environmental protection, their trade must follow the principle of 'Fair Trade Miles'. 'Fair trade' involves the linking up of consumers and producers in such a way that the suppliers on the ground get a price that ensures them an adequate livelihood. 'Miles' ensures that the price paid by consumers covers the cost of a production process that protects the environment and reflects the distance the food has had to travel.

It is also crucial to ensure the exporting nations and their producers have as secure a level of earnings as is feasible with which to contribute to the

overriding goal of re-diversifying local production. To achieve this 'Fair Trade Miles' will also need to ensure that a guaranteed quantity of goods from specified exporting countries are being purchased by specified buying countries. The transactions must also take place within a guaranteed range of prices

Another advantage of Fair Trade Miles is that it allows the multinationals that dominate global trade to be controlled. They will no longer have the power to play one producing country off against another, since the latter has a guaranteed market at a guaranteed price. This also strengthens the bargaining power of exporters and consumers.

Colin Hines is the author of  
*Localisation- A global  
manifesto* (Earthscan)

CORBIS

# LOCAL FOOD

## THE BENEFITS OF GOING LOCAL

- Smaller farms are from 200 to 1,000 times more productive per hectare than larger farms.
- Since local foods are more often than not consumed fresh they require far less packaging, processing and refrigeration; in the UK at least 25 per cent of all waste is food packaging.
- There are now nearly 200 produce box schemes in the UK, providing food to more than 45,000 households and generating sales of £22m.
- In Japan there are now some 800 to 1,000 consumer co-ops, with a total membership of 11 million people and an annual turnover of more than US \$15 billion.
- The UK went from having no farmers' markets in the mid 1990's, to having over 270 by the end of the decade. They now turnover more than \$65m a year. In the US there were over 2,800 farmers' markets by the year 2000, a rise of 63 per cent on 1994.
- In a recent study of Community Supported Agriculture in the USA 60 per cent of farmers said the most successful aspect of their operations was the strengthened bonds between people, resulting in networks that 'reconnected people with the land and reconnected farmers with the people who eat the food they grow'.



CORBIS

### Turning the tide

These shifts would open up space for thousands of community-based initiatives – many of them already underway – to flourish. From Community Supported Agriculture and

**Q:** WHAT ALTERNATIVES ARE THERE?

**A:** 'Hold ourselves accountable as both citizens and consumers. It's too easy blaming everybody else. Don't let go. Increase the power of taking personal responsibility by joining with others, who won't let go on our behalf. And wherever and whenever possible, celebrate the extraordinary beauty and mystery of the Earth – while we still can.'

JONATHON PORRITT,  
*Forum for the Future*

box schemes to farmers' markets, food co-ops, and buy-local campaigns, people have already begun the hands-on work needed to rebuild their local food systems. But these efforts will fall short if government policies continue to favour the large and global.

When government ministers blindly promote trade for the sake of trade, while at the same time discussing reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, it is easy to despair. But activists and citizens alike need to unite and exert powerful pressure from below.

Already, unprecedented alliances have been created. Environmentalists and labour unionists, farmers and deep ecologists, people from the North and South – are saying 'no' to a system that destroys jobs as quickly as it destroys species, that threatens the livelihood of farmers while driving up the price of healthy food in the marketplace.

Still more work is needed to reveal the connections between our many crises.

We have to spell out the truth about trade and the way we measure progress, and we have to graphically describe the ecological, social, psychological and economic benefits of localising and decentralising our economies.

Shortening the links between farmers and consumers will bring about fundamental change for the better. It should satisfy and empower us to know that by taking a step which is so good for us and our families, we are also encouraging diversity, protecting jobs and preserving the environment, all over the world.



**HELENA NORBERG-HODGE** is director of the International Society for Ecology and Culture, and co-authors with Todd Merrifield, the report 'Bringing the Food Economy Home'.

# Reforming Global Finance

BY CAROL WELCH

If governments are serious about preventing further environmental destruction, they have to fundamentally redesign the major global financial institutions.

## Changing the economic model

**1** The World Bank and IMF should end policies of export-oriented production and trade and investment liberalization as a condition of financial help. These exert huge pressure to export natural resources, while giving multinational companies privileged access to exploit them. In agriculture, they also encourage the chemical intensive cultivation and export of cash crops.

Developing countries must be given room to design their own economic programs, appropriate for their countries, including economic strategies that differ from the IMF and the Bank's.

**2** The process of negotiating IMF and World Bank Structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs) must be dramatically opened up, so that all relevant stakeholders are involved in loan negotiations. This would include a full range of ministers, including environment ministers, as well as parliamentary officials. Information disclosure must also be improved so that civil society can participate adequately.

**3** It is critical that Bank and IMF policy-based lending be shaped by environmental assessments that are publicly released and discussed prior to finalizing loan agreements.

**4** Another key step is definitive debt cancellation (without which highly indebted countries will continue to turn to their natural resources to service their debts). The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative is utterly inadequate in this regard. Many impoverished countries, including Bangladesh, Haiti, and Nigeria, will get no debt relief under HIPC. For the countries that qualify, debt relief

promised to date reduces debts, on average, by about one third. HIPC also ignores illegitimate debts, such as those contracted by dictatorships and requires countries to adopt adjustment policies that are destroying the environment.

**5** The IMF (which is supposed to promote budget transparency in borrowing countries) should encourage borrowers' to publish details of what they spend on the environment in government budgets. This would put pressure on governments to protect such spending and enhance the power of citizens to hold their governments accountable.

**6** The IMF should work with governments to develop 'green accounting systems' that integrate the environment and environmental services into countries' national accounts.

Currently, the IMF gathers data on the economic health of countries based on GDP, which ignores environmental externalities. This approach is flawed: it assumes that natural resources are infinite and does not recognise the environmental destruction resulting from unsustainable development.

**7** The IMF should include green taxes as part of its fiscal policy advice. This could generate revenue and influence economic activity to have positive impacts on the environment.

## Financing Sustainable Projects

**8** There should be an 'exclusion list' of projects that will not be financed because of their intrinsic environmental risk. The list should include projects in or impacting on protected areas, such as primary forests; oil, gas and mining investments; projects involving the production or use of persistent organic pollutants; and large dams.

**9** The resources this would free up should be spent on environmentally sustainable projects. Positive lending targets should be set for investing in such projects. For example, in the energy sector, a target of 20 per cent could be set for investment in renewable energy and energy efficiency programs. Targets could be set similarly for the transport, water, and agriculture sectors.

**10** ECAs must overhaul their loan policies, which, in terms of environmental and social standards, are mostly inferior to the World Bank's. These allow ECAs to finance destructive projects that the Bank might reject, and then not even inform the public.

As a first step, all ECAs should adopt World Bank guidelines and operational directives/policies as a minimum standard. All ECAs should also make public Environmental Impact Assessments and consult with local communities. The World Bank's Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency should make similar reforms.

CAROL WELCH is International Policy Analyst at Friends of The Earth U.S.A.

# ...and Global Trade

BY STEVEN SHRYBMAN

**Environmentalists can learn a lot by understanding the power of international trade agreements that enlist the coercive force of international economic/ trade sanctions.**

Just imagine if the WTO were as concerned about the impacts of climate change as it is currently with the intellectual property rights of multinational pharmaceutical companies. If that were the case all members of the WTO would be required to:

- Adopt and implement a domestic legal framework to stabilise greenhouse gas emissions at 1990 levels;
- Provide for customs inspection, seizure, and even the disposal of goods that were produced in ways that violate the provisions of the Agreement;
- Establish administrative civil remedies and criminal sanctions for any breach of the legislation or regulations mandated by the Agreement; and
- Authorise the use of trade sanctions, including cross-retaliatory measures such as prohibiting the export of energy or energy products, against any jurisdiction that was in breach of its obligations under the Agreement.

Farfetched? Draconian? Onerous? Well maybe...but they are precisely the rules of WTO TRIPs Agreements, which if applied to climate change would

drastically improve our chances of tackling the world's greatest single environmental threat.

So it is vital that in Johannesburg and elsewhere that our governments be pressed to explain why they consider patent protection a much higher priority than global warming, biodiversity loss, the accumulation of toxic chemicals in the environment, or any number of other pressing ecological and social problems.

## **Do We Need Trade Rules At All?**

For environmental purposes, binding international agreements, even at the price of national sovereignty, are essential. First, to control trade in such things as ozone depleting substances, hazardous wastes, endangered species, weapons, and nuclear materials. And secondly, to protect the global commons from threats such as climate change and biodiversity loss, which make coordinated and collective action among all nations, absolutely mandatory.

Moreover, trade sanctions represent the only device for compelling an environmental renegade, such as the United States, to live up to its obligations as a member of the international community.

In many other areas of environmental law and policy however, the sovereignty of nations should be left intact. International efforts should be designed to strengthen the democratic capacity of all nations to respond to the enormous environmental challenges that each confronts. WTO rules and regimes, such as the Agreement on Technical Barriers to Trade, which is now playing a key role in frustrating local environmental initiatives, should simply be abolished.

The challenge now, is to force our governments to take the goal of assuring global ecological security, as paramount, not the interests of their corporate clients and masters. This will mean dismantling much of the edifice of free trade and replacing it with a much leaner framework of international law focused explicitly on specific outcomes such as: reducing greenhouse gas emissions; preserving diversity; and fostering food security for all peoples.

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## **STEVEN SHRYBMAN**

Former Executive Director of the West Coast Environmental Law Association & Author of *The World Trade Organization: A Citizen's Guide*, 2nd ed. (Toronto:James Lorimer and the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 2001)

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# The world is

**As corporations rush to buy up everything from water to seeds, we need to protect the world's shared resources for the good of all.**

Water. Air. Plants. Trees. We take their existence for granted. They belong to everyone and no one. They are what is known as The Commons.

Some may be thought of as global, such as the atmosphere, the oceans, outer space, and, because they have no territorial claimants, Antarctica and the moon.

Others are community commons – public spaces, common lands, forests, the gene pool, local innovative knowledge with respect to medicinal

plants, and seeds that communities have developed over centuries.

In today's world we need to add another category – the 'modern commons' of public services like health, education and information.

## **All at risk**

Now, under the rules of economic globalisation, these and many more areas of life

traditionally considered out of bounds are being carved up for private ownership or global trade.

Furthermore if the Global Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) agreement is finalised\*, then most of the services we have listed here as fundamental rights of

citizens and obligations of governments will be subsumed under its rules. The United States might find Mitsubishi running public broadcasting while

Deutsche Bank runs social security; France might have Disney operating the Louvre; Enron or WorldCom could be running the German health care system; and Shell could be in charge of the Japanese railroads, and perhaps child rearing as well.

The obligations of governments to provide services for their citizens may soon be all but gone – replaced by some distant corporation's decision whether or not to charge an affordable rate for people to drink water and send their children to school or a doctor.

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France might soon have Disney operating the Louvre; Enron could be running the German health care system; and Shell could be in charge of the Japanese railroads, and perhaps child rearing as well.

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## **WHO OWNS YOUR HEALTH?**

The UN Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights includes the right to education and health. Of all services, these are shaping up as the most potentially lucrative for the global corporations pushing the GATS agreement. Global expenditures on education now exceed \$2 trillion, and global expenditures on health care exceed \$3.5 trillion. Global corporations are aiming at nothing less than the dismantling of public education and health care systems. Already, they have succeeded in lobbying over forty countries, including all of Europe, to be listed in the GATS.

## **\*MAKING THE PUBLIC PRIVATE**

The GATS was established in 1994 with the aim of dismantling government barriers to the privatisation of public services. It aims to make it impossible for governments to run public services on a not for profit basis, without the participation of private companies.

## **BITTER PILLS**

Pharmaceutical corporations are especially eager for access and the rights to patent genetic materials. Their representatives scour the globe, seeking out traditional native remedies in jungles and fields. They also extract blood and scrape "buccal mucosa" from the skin of native peoples wherever they can, hoping to find genes that contain natural resistance to certain maladies.

Usually they accomplish this without explaining why they are doing it or how much profit they stand to make. As a result the right of "free and prior informed consent" has become a major demand among indigenous peoples, .

The cynicism of such practices became especially clear when the giant pharmaceutical corporations refused South Africa to substitute low-cost, locally developed AIDS drugs for the expensive patented varieties the corporations controlled. Only after intense global protest did the patent holders agree to lower prices for AIDS victims in the country.

# not for sale

As the power of economic globalisation increases we need to establish certain key principles governing our relationship to those aspects of life which have, until recently, been taken for granted.

## The Authority of Trade Agreements Must Be Narrowly Defined

Global trade bureaucracies such as the WTO should not have authority over nations when it comes to the commons, natural heritage resources, the preservation of national choice in domestic services, or fundamental human rights.

Trade and investment agreements must not require a national government to privatize or commercialize remaining areas of the commons or public services. Nor can they force countries to open up these areas to foreign investment and competition, either by imposing rules requiring governments to conform or by penalizing them for not doing so.

## Decisions on Common Property Resources and Public Services Should Be Local or National

Local commons are the province of the communities affected.

National commons should be subject to that country's democratic decision-making processes.

Global commons should be addressed by multilateral agreements on issues of sustainability and equitable access.

No commons – whether local, national, or global – should be the subject of a multilateral trade agreement. Decisions about the ownership, control, and operation of fundamental public services – including health care, water management, natural resource use, education, transport, public broadcasting, agriculture, culture, social security, welfare, military, police, and jails – should be specifically excluded from multilateral trade and investment agreements.

Nor is it acceptable for any international agreement to force local or

national authorities to exclude individuals or communities from fair access to services and resources – such as clean water – that are essential to life.

## The Fundamentals of Life should Not Be Privatized or Monopolized

These include the atmosphere, bulk fresh water, and the genetic and molecular building blocks of life (including the human genome).

## Certain other Aspects of Life Should Not Be Patented or Otherwise Monopolized

Some areas of life that are now partly privatized and traded should never have been subject to corporate patent rights or monopoly ownership as offered by TRIPs.

These include genes, seeds, plant varieties, and animal breeds – with the possible exception of temporary rights to the exclusive production and sale of distinctive plant and animal varieties created through privately funded breeding programs. The general principle is this: *no patents on life*.

There is also a need to rethink patent rules on life-sustaining pharmaceuticals – for example, AIDS drugs – to ensure fair pricing and access to all who need them regardless of wealth.

## Trade in Pernicious or Harmful Goods Must Be Prohibited or Regulated

A country should have the right to ban the import or export of certain goods it considers to present a threat to health and safety. Examples include GMOs, toxins, weapons, and addictive drugs, as well as tobacco and alcohol (for which existing trade agreements now prohibit exclusions).

Some currently traded goods are so harmful that it may be appropriate to create an international agreement to ban them entirely. These include toxic and nuclear wastes, endangered species, and land mines.

Such issues should be addressed by international forums and agreements devoted specifically to these topics.

## International Agreements Are Needed to Protect Global and Transnational Commons

Because activities in one country can have serious consequences in other countries, a system is needed to regulate them.

For conditions such as acid rain, air pollution, ozone depletion, ocean pollution or overexploitation and climate change, negotiations are needed on a bilateral or multilateral basis to protect the threatened commons and ensure a just and fair allocation of benefits.

These negotiations should take place in forums dedicated to dealing with such issues and should be placed outside the jurisdiction and authority of trade bodies.

**It all comes down to one central principle: Any global trading system needs to recognize that not every aspect of experience should be subject to its centralized rules. In short, *The world is not for sale*.**

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**A: 'We need the direct involvement of the people and consideration of indigenous communities throughout the world. There is no way we can forget the people when we talk about sustainable and economic development.'**

MANDLA MENTOOR  
Activist, Soweto

# CORPORATE PUNISHMENT

Adapted from *Alternatives to Economic Globalization: A Better World is Possible*.

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At the dawn of the 21st century, the planet and all human activity on it revolve around powerful global corporations. Their might cannot be overstated; their disregard for the traditional thinking that sees a multitude of healthy small and medium-size enterprises competing with each other staggering. And the casualties in the empire-building of corporations? Democracy, economic justice and environmental values.

Republican conservative Robert Monks makes this observation in his book *The Emperor's Nightingale*:

'From the perspective of company management today the decision whether to obey the law is simply a cost-benefit calculation. The corporation in effect asks whether the costs of disobedience – discounted by the probability of being discovered, prosecuted, and fined (there is almost no risk of jail) – equal the costs of compliance. In many cases, the costs of disobedience are lower than the costs of compliance, and so many corporations find it to their economic advantage to break the law... Corporations are not people; they have no conscience. Although corporate acts are carried out by individuals, even individuals with high moral standards often find themselves caught up in a corporate action that is beyond their control – or even, in some cases, their knowledge.'

It is for these reasons that fierce global protests have brought millions of people onto the streets to demand that corporations change the way they operate.

Efforts must be made to transform corporations so that they can no longer rule society.

To reduce corporate power and ensure greater corporate accountability the following actions are needed:

## ACTION 1: GET CORPORATIONS OUT OF POLITICS

It is the place of corporations to observe rules and restrictions established by elected representatives. A corporation has no rightful role in making those rules. Appropriate legislation would establish the following:

- A ban on any for-profit corporation providing political funds or favours. This includes giving to a political candidate, public official, political action committee, political party, lobbyist, ballot initiative, political convention, meeting of public officials, issue ad, policy group or institute, or any organization that engages in public education or advocacy on matters of public policy.
- Employers found guilty of breaking laws would be subject to criminal penalties, including imprisonment. This applies to any person who acts on behalf of a corporation to solicit political contributions.

## ACTION 2: END CORPORATE WELFARE

Most large corporations depend for their profits and survival on a complex regime of public subsidies, exemptions, and externalised costs.

Ralph Estes, accountant and professor-turned-corporate-critic, estimates that in 1994 corporations extracted more than \$2.6 trillion a year in such subsidies in the United States alone. This is roughly five times their reported profits, and suggests that the global public costs of corporate welfare may exceed \$10.7 trillion annually.

It is one of the basic principles of marketing that the full costs of a product or service be borne by the seller and passed on to the buyer. Yet many corporations would be forced to close their doors if they had to bear the true costs of their operations.

It is time to test the corporate claim of market efficiency by eliminating all subsidies and enforcing regulations that compel corporations to account for social and environmental costs, and eliminate corporate tax exemptions.

## ACTION 3: REVOKE CORPORATE CHARTERS

A corporation comes into being only when a government grants it a corporate charter. Without that, the corporation does not exist as a legal entity and therefore cannot own property, borrow money, sign contracts, hire and fire, or accumulate assets or debts.

Revoking a charter—the corporate equivalent of a death sentence—begins to put some teeth into the idea of accountability. Eliot Spitzer, Attorney General of New York State, declared in 1998: "When a corporation has been convicted of repeated felonies that harm or endanger the lives

of human beings or destroy the environment, the corporation should be put to death, its corporate existence ended, and its assets taken and sold at a public auction." Although Spitzer has not won a death sentence against a habitual corporate criminal, he has taken up battle with several giants, including General Electric.

Although dechartering a major corporation and selling off its assets at public auction would not solve the larger structural problem, it would certainly send a strong signal to corporate managers and shareholders that obeying the law may be a financially prudent choice.

## ACTION 4: ELIMINATE LIMITED LIABILITY

When Union Carbide caused the deaths of over ten thousand people in Bhopal because of a plant explosion, or when Exxon destroyed a coastline as a result of the Valdez oil leak, the shareholders who invested in these corporate giants were not held liable.

Changing the rules to make investors liable for

harm done to others in their name would make investing a more serious affair and would greatly change financial calculations made by corporations when deciding what actions to take to protect people and nature.

Investors would be compelled to evaluate the environmental, labour, and human rights track

record of a corporation before becoming shareholders. Similarly, the CEO and management would give such concerns a higher priority.

Some activists are developing legal strategies to challenge and change the laws that grant limited liability to corporate shareholders. Changed laws would truly transform corporate accountability.

## ACTION 5: GIVE PREFERENCE TO LOCAL, INDEPENDENT ENTERPRISES

To build sustainable communities, it is vital that local citizens exercise substantial control over the means of production and distribution on which their livelihoods depend.

This can be done by giving priority to smaller businesses in which people know each other, are dedicated to a common purpose, and share rewards more equitably.

To achieve this we need to:

- Rethink taxation from the global to the local level – to favour ownership of productive resources by local workers, community members, customers, and suppliers.
- Educate citizens about the dangers of absentee ownership.
- Encourage local communities to assume responsibility for their own economic and environmental revitalisation. Set clear economic priorities favouring local ownership and self-reliance; deal with industrial pollution, housing shortages, land use, and transportation issues;

hold corporations with local operations accountable to local social and environmental priorities; and use industrial, environmental, and tax policies to encourage the responsible use and maintenance of local natural resources, including forests, fisheries, and water.

Smaller-scale enterprises have shown they can collaborate with one another to deal with new technologies and sophisticated markets, and achieve some efficiencies of scale.

In Denmark, the entire industrial sector has traditionally been made up of small firms that have sometimes formed consortiums to deal with larger projects.

For example, a group of apparel firms jointly employ a designer who has turned once – uncoordinated product lines of clothing into a tailored collection aimed at the larger German market. A consortium of small furniture makers, woodworkers, and interior designers have undertaken joint bidding on the furnishings of convention centres

and other projects that are larger in scale than any one company can handle.

Similarly, Northern Italy's furniture industry is built on networks of small firms supported by a producers' association that helps provide common services such as warehousing, purchasing, and inventory management.

In fact millions of local, independent businesses now organised as sole proprietorships, partnerships, co-operatives of all types, and worker-owned businesses meet our daily needs, with very little government support. And all of them operate without the benefits of stock market investing or limited liability, so crucial to large corporations.

So from the point of view of sustainability and democracy, there is no reason why giant multinational corporations are needed. In truth, the largest corporations often contract out many of their actual production processes to networks of smaller, independent producers.

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# Imagine a world where our leaders are educated

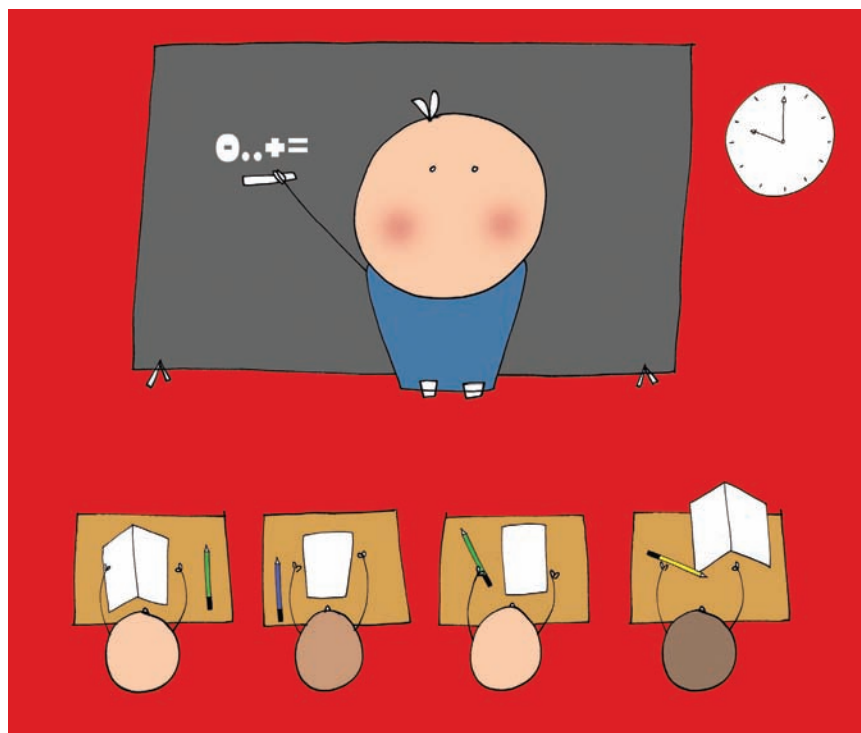
BY DAVID W. ORR

To secure a future on this planet, we have first to learn how it works.  
And the people who most need to learn this lesson are our leaders.

Pollution from the use of coal in China falls on the US. Carbon dioxide from US power plants reduces rainfall in the Sahel. Radioactivity from Chernobyl can be detected all over the globe, and TV and radio screens the world over regale us with the tantalising, unattainable joys of western consumerism. Once diverse and separate, we are fast becoming one – unhappy – family.

Never has the need for genuine leadership been greater, and seldom has it been less evident. We are still governed as if we exist in separate worlds even though we no longer do. We cannot survive another century of vacillating leaders such as those who allowed us to drift into World War I, or monsters such as Adolf Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Mao, dangerous tyrants like Idi Amin and Saddam Hussein. We cannot be ruled by ignorant, malicious, greedy, and shortsighted people and expect things to turn out well.

If we are to navigate the challenges of the decades ahead, (what E. O. Wilson calls 'the bottleneck'), we need leaders of great stature, clarity of mind, spiritual depth, courage, and vision. We need leaders who see



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decent livelihood, and education for all.

Most of all, we need leadership that is capable of energising genuine commitment to old and venerable traditions as well as promoting new visions for a global civilisation that preserve and honor local cultures, economies, and knowledge.

Even in so-called democratic countries, citizens have little real say over those who govern them – and none at all over those who rise to power elsewhere.

Instead, we assume that the emergence of real leadership is a random occurrence, and hope that the right

person(s) will somehow emerge at just the right place and time. But in business, education, and the non-profit sectors, we know that chance is not good enough. That is why we train people in the arts and science of leadership. Yet our political leaders need only prove that they are beneficial for the wealthy, and look good on television.

'... we cannot survive another century of vacillating leaders such as those who allowed us to drift into World War I, or monsters such as Adolf Hitler, Stalin, Pol Pot, Mao...'

patterns that connect us across the divisions of culture, religion, geography, and time. We need leaders who draw us

together to resolve conflicts, move us quickly from fossil fuels to solar power, reverse global environmental deterioration, and empower us to provide shelter, food, medical care, a

## Another world is possible

But imagine a world in which those who claim to lead us must first make a pilgrimage to Hiroshima, Auschwitz and

the Killing Fields of Cambodia, and publicly pledge 'never again'.

Imagine a world in which leaders must go to Bhopal and say to the victims 'We are truly sorry. This will never happen again, anywhere.'

Imagine, too, those pilgrim leaders going to sites where love, kindness, forgiveness, sacrifice, compassion, wisdom, ingenuity, and foresight have been evident. What might they learn from Assisi, the home of St. Francis? From Le Chambon where French villagers acted to save Jews during the Nazi occupation? From a night in a shelter for the homeless in New York? Or from the research center of Las

Gaviotas in Colombia, where Paolo Lugari and his team are forging a truly sustainable path in a country torn apart by guerilla warfare and the international drug cartels?

Imagine a time when our leaders would have to describe publicly how they proposed to create a decent and sustainable path out of the social and ecological catastrophes looming ahead before they were elected. The speech would need to be both visionary and specific. They could have the pathos of Pericles' 'Funeral Oration'; the kindness of St. Francis' 'Sermon to the birds'; the power and conciseness of Lincoln's 'Gettysburg Address'; the quiet defiance of Gandhi's speech on 'Non Cooperation', or the scope of vision in Martin Luther King's 'I have a Dream'.

The point is to give each an opportunity to think as widely and deeply as possible about the large issues on the human agenda, and to announce themselves to all of those who will be affected by their decisions. Refusal to do so would signal a lack of commitment.

Imagine a world in which those who claim to lead us must help identify places around the world degraded by human actions and initiate their restoration, even if no change will be visible when next they are up for reelection.

Indeed some such projects might take as long as 1,000 years to restore. These include the Aral Sea; the ecology of the Harrapan region in India; the forests of Lebanon; soil fertility in the Middle East; the Chesapeake Bay in the US; or the North Atlantic cod fishery.

Yet we also have to imagine and demand a world in which those who lead, help lift our sights above the crises of the daily headlines and the annual vote grab to what could be.

A world in which we expect leaders to be knowledgeable people who meet each year, not to talk about economic growth, but about ecology and human health would be a wonderful place to

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**'...for good reason do we penalize those who drive when drunk. The same should be true of those intoxicated by ego, power, and ideology. We should not ask less of our leaders than we do of drivers.'**

---

live. As would a world in which they read widely and thought deeply about the technology, nature, agriculture, ethics, war and the human condition.

Imagine leaders with minds informed through conversations with the wisest thinkers of our time. (And by wise we do not just mean those who endorse a market-led world.)

Oddly, we require more of prospective car drivers than we do of our leaders. The former at least must pass a test about the rules of the road, but leaders' understanding of leadership is untested until they are already in the driver's seat. If only our 'World Leaders' would have first to understand how the world works as a physical system, the policies necessary for sustainability, the economics suitable for a small planet, the principles of ecological design, and applicable techniques of conflict

resolution. If only our leaders had to actually spend time living in homeless shelters,

barrios, and refugee camps.

So too for good reason do we penalize those who drive when drunk. The same should be true of those intoxicated by ego, power, and ideology. We should not ask less of our leaders than we do of drivers.

'Realists' will dismiss the idea of better leadership as muddle-headed or naive. Some will see in it some global conspiracy. Prospective leaders will profess sympathy but say that they do not have the time to improve themselves. And those least qualified to lead will pay no attention at all.

But it is not up to any of them to prescribe for us. We are now citizens of the Earth joined in a common enterprise. We have every right to insist that those who claim to lead us be worthy of the task. In fact it is our duty.

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**DAVID W. ORR** is Professor and Chair of the Environmental Studies Program at Oberlin College, USA

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## CUBA GOES IT ALONE

As a result of a US trade embargo in 1959 and the subsequent collapse of Soviet support, Cuba saw an 80 per cent drop in fertiliser and pesticide imports and a 50 per cent drop in food imports, resulting in it effectively being cut off from the global economy it had previously depended on. Instead of withering, Cuba adopted a range of strategies that drastically lessened its dependence on chemical inputs and fossil fuels. These included widespread participation in agricultural self reliance and food security. The Cuban government relaxed price controls, the Cuban Army started to produce its own food and the agricultural headquarters in Havana turned its extensive lawns into banana, bean and lettuce gardens. Cuba now has surplus instead of starvation.



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## SAVING THE WORLD FROM NUCLEAR WEAPONS

Trident Ploughshares began in '97, with the remit of trying to rid the world of nuclear weapons through peaceful acts of practical disarmament. As 'global citizens' they pledged to begin their mammoth task with the UK nuclear weapons systems called Trident. Their pledge is based upon the right under international law, conventions and principles to peacefully, safely and without violence take action against British Trident nuclear weapons system. On June 8 1999, Angie Zelter, Uylla Roder and Ellen Morley set out for the 'Maytime' barge, in a home-made speedboat to disarm the 'Maytime' of its Trident nuclear capabilities. The three women managed to disarm the winches and cranes and an expensive electrical control box used for testing. They threw all the computers, telephones, spare parts, paperwork, faxes and computer discs into the loch on which the 'Maytime' was moored. They would have been undiscovered had they wanted to be, but they had previously arranged for a press release to be issued and arrest ensued. The judge ruled that the grounds for their particular protest was reasonable and arguable in a court of law, that there was no criminal intent, because it was based on sincere belief, backed by evidence, that they were acting against a criminal conspiracy to contravene international law.

# Sorry Goliath but

SEBASTIAO SALGADO/AMAZONAS/IMAGES.COM

If we take our news in the wrong context it can be completely immobilising. Take the recent report released by the World Wildlife Fund, which said that, 'Earth's population will be forced to colonise two planets within 50 years if natural resources continue to be exploited at the current rate... The human race is plundering the planet at a pace that outstrips its capacity to support life.'

Grim news. And all on the back of lots of other grim news of fisheries depletion, melting glaciers, spreading disease ... it all starts to have the bleak ambience


of the Old Testament. Makes you want to pour a strong drink and wait for the locusts.

Combine all this bad news with the fact that the elected officials charged with solving some of these problems and reining in the perpetrator, make those ancient Roman Senators from Gibbon's *Decline and Fall* look like model citizens. Politics seems to be swinging to anti-civil rights pro-free trade parties in Europe, and leadership in the US is held hostage by two calcified, corrupt parties. Both, needless

to say, are addicted to corporate donations, with figurative leadership coming from a president with a history of self-dealing and blindly pro-corporate stands.

Nor should President Bush's Cabinet give us any cause for confidence, run by a team of old buffaloes from the oil, nuclear and auto industry.

But actually there's good news in all of this. As the optimistic child who found a barn while on a walk through the country said:




**The head of Greenpeace US, John Passacantando, explains why he is confident that, in the end, the growing worldwide movement of anti-globalists, environmentalists and disaffected citizens will succeed.**

## GETTING RID OF THE MAI

The Multilateral Agreement on investment (MAI) was designed to constrain governments' power to regulate the activities of foreign investors – for example by limiting restrictions on foreign ownership of key domestic industries.

In 1997, after two years of secret negotiations, a draft was leaked to Public Citizen, the public interest group founded by Ralph Nader, which immediately published it on the internet. Straight away 600 groups worldwide expressed their opposition.

Over the next two years, leading up to the WTO meeting in Seattle, successive drafts were similarly publicised and analysed, accompanied by a worldwide online anti-MAI campaign.

In November 1997, talks over the MAI were permanently suspended. As the French delegation commented: 'For the first time, we are witnessing the emergence of a "global civil society"'.  


## RESISTING PHARMACEUTICAL POWER

When the chemical giant DuPont attempted to relocate a hazardous nylon manufacturing plant from the US to the Indian state of Goa during the early 1990s, the US trade representative was dispatched to apply pressure at high levels of the Indian government to facilitate the process. As a result, the central government of India not only approved the application but also provided DuPont with land in the village of Tamil Nadu, without consulting the local government. The villagers rose up and refused to accept the plant, forming an anti-DuPont committee to lead the resistance. When the villagers organised a blockade, corporate representatives and the local police attacked; one youth was shot while dozens more were injured in the clashes. After the land was repossessed by village squatters, the local government decided to overturn the planning permit, an act later upheld by a ruling of the high court of India. It was a stunning demonstration of the ability of an organised community to block the entry of a powerful corporation backed by the US government.

# David always wins

'Great. With all this manure there must be a pony in here somewhere.'

The pony in this case is the fact that the hucksters have gone too far. They pushed a complacent public over the edge and now a global reform movement is inevitable. The Battle of Seattle was the first sign to the rest of the world that activists in the US would join their colleagues globally and take control back from the corporations. Bush is pulling out of global treaties on nukes and global warming. The

US is working hard to make the Earth Summit in Johannesburg a failure. Let them try. It just strengthens the movement that is determined to overcome these deranged interests.

Activists in the US are redirecting their pressure tactics to target corporate brands and the corporations' customers, protesting at their stores – in other words, they are targeting the puppeteers now that the elected

officials have completely turned their backs on the public interest. And that is good news. If this sounds like an overdose of Yankee optimism, well, it may be, but it is not without historical precedent. Examples abound from the past centuries showing that, almost as a rule, David does beat Goliath.

The ragtag American colonists were able to send the British packing, even with an ill-equipped army and a



## EXPOSING MCDONALDS TO THE LAW

Londoners Helen Steele and David Morris were central figures in the longest running court-case in history. After distributing leaflets entitled 'What's wrong with McDonalds' and refusing to apologise publicly they were unceremoniously handed writs for libel. Unassisted by legal aid and without the benefit of a jury, the defendants succeeded in achieving a highly damaging outcome for McDonalds. The judge stated in his verdict that McDonalds 'exploited children' with advertising, was 'culpably responsible' for cruelty to animals and was 'antipathetic' towards unionisation and workers' low wages. Though they won in principle, they still were ordered to pay £60,000 court costs, which to this day they have not done and McDonalds know better than to take them to court for it. As a consequence of this case the anti-McDonalds campaign blossomed, negative press coverage increased, a McLibel website was born and a 60-minute documentary was produced. It was the biggest corporate PR disaster in history.



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## THE POWER OF SILENT PROTEST

Chico Mendes was the organiser and leader of the Brazilian Rubber workers (tappers) union. He was there to protect their interests, namely, the trees in the Amazonian rainforest. As the vast production of synthetic rubber continued to drive the price down, the tappers were forced to employ other forms of rainforest harvest – mostly clearing the forest to make way for pasturing for cattle. However, at the same time, the Brazilian government was encouraging new laws and subsidies for settlement onto the tappers' land.

Mendes initiated a form of peaceful process of resistance called the *empade* ('stand-off'). Whenever a crew came to clear any of the rainforest, a group of tappers would silently surround them. The very presence of people watching them fell the giant trees caused most to surrender their chainsaws.

Chico was eventually shot by what is thought to be settlers, so immortalising and publicising the tappers plight in the same stroke. The publicity encouraged land laws to be changed. The tappers now have permanent rights to continue with their work. The story reached the World Bank and the Inter American Development Bank, who at the time were funding the paving of the only major road going through the Amazon region. They both removed their funding.



general (Washington) who only won three of his nine major battles with them. Gandhi, too, led his people to throw off the shackles of colonialism, and this effort was even more impressive as it was achieved through non-violent protest. And let's not forget the Civil Rights movement in the US. Through the 1950s racism was still an integral part of American society, from schools to the courts to the electoral system. Only a few years

later, however, there was a Civil Rights Act, a Voting Rights Act and racism was on its way to being as alien to mainstream culture as it was once a part of it.

The environmental movement in the United States is no exception. Although it had its roots in the long-running Civil Rights and anti-Vietnam War protests, it had quick, early successes. In 1969, after Rachel Carson published her account in of the

horrifying impacts chemicals were having on our world (*Silent Spring*), and Earth Day 1970 showed lawmakers a massive public uprising, even President Richard Nixon was inspired to push through new laws. These included the creation of the Environmental Protection Agency, the Clean Water Act, the Safe Drinking Water Act, the Clean Air Act, and on and on.

That pace couldn't last, of course. Sure enough, the dirtiest industries learned how to greenwash themselves, create fake environmental groups, and most importantly, buy off politicians who increasingly needed to raise campaign contributions as electoral races got more



## SAVING BOUGAINVILLE FROM THE MINES

In 1965 Cozinc Rio Tinto of Australia (CRA) located a huge copper-ore deposit on the island of Bougainville, part of the Solomon Islands. Through a subsidiary (Bougainville Copper Party Ltd) CRA began a highly profitable drilling programme, at the same time displacing the Bougainville villagers. A billion tonnes of poisonous waste products were dumped into the two supporting rivers, the Jaba and the Karewong. All plant and marine life was poisoned turning lush green mountains to a desolate wasteland. The surrounding communities were showered in toxic chemical dust and had only polluted water to drink.

The Bougainville people spent 17 years undertaking various peaceful protests, as well as lobbying and petitioning the Papua New Guinean government for environmental controls and some form of amends for their suffering from both the CRA and the government. Ignored, they formed the Bougainville Revolutionary Army (BRA) and in 1989 they blew up the mines power supply.

The government imposed a land, sea and military blockade and suspended government and social security services in an effort to make the Bougainvillian people turn on the BRA. The government effectively waged war on it's own people and denied them education and fuel, along with any humanitarian assistance or access to journalists. The Australian-armed Papua New Guinea Defence Force (PNGDF) flattened villages by air attack and tortured and killed

the Bougainvillian people.

Instead of giving in, they fought back. They built and administered their own health and education systems from natural, recycled and discarded materials, which also gave them both hydro and solar power. They ingeniously reinvented vehicles and other objects to suit their varied needs. Of the war a Bougainvillian woman said; 'It was like University, it made us creative. We thought for ourselves and discovered alternative ways to survive.' They achieved a cease-fire, a new constitution and plans for a referendum on independence.



CORBIS

and more expensive.

In the United States at least, this is where we are now. We are being weaned from our dependence upon friendly legislators and forced to figure out how to pressure the corporations directly. The US environmental movement was once filled with smart lawyers from Yale and Harvard who knew how to negotiate a bill through Congress or a state legislature.

Now, the movement is being rebuilt with mercenaries who know how to pressure corporations. No more hiding behind your legislators and regulators Mr Chief Executive Officer, this

movement is going to deal with you directly for the next few years.

Market campaigns against Mitsubishi and Home Depot were just a start, the first rumblings of a movement finding its feet. In the coming struggle you will see activists co-ordinating globally to pressure companies in their beloved emerging markets, and you will see class action lawsuits for environmental damages that will make some of these CEOs

envy the small tobacco settlements. You will see all this and more.

Why? Because David always beats Goliath. The only question is how fast? We are in a race against time. As much as I like watching NASA's space probes bring back pictures of other planets, my hunch is that if we can't take care of this planet, we are going to have a hell of a time exploiting ones without air, water, plants and animals. (Plus the security for boarding a ship to another planet would be hell.)

In the meantime, keep your eyes on the activists. They have a habit of pulling off victories in the nick of time, and you can get some pretty good odds on them from the London bookmakers.



**JOHN PASSACANTANDO**  
is Executive Director of  
Greenpeace

Additional box text by Molly Heinrich

# 50 books to change your world

## FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Herman Daly & John Cobb  
Beacon Press, 1989

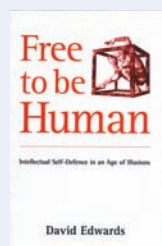
Economist Herman Daly and theologian John Cobb demonstrate how conventional economics and a growth-orientated, industrial economy have led us to the brink of environmental disaster. 'If we are to put the earth and its inhabitants back at the centre of the economic universe, *For the Common Good* brilliantly points us in the right direction' – *World Watch*



## FREE TO BE HUMAN

David Edwards  
Green Books, 1995

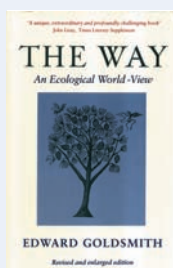
Edwards shows that the corporate-controlled mass-media of western democracies serve as a giant filter system distorting our understanding of personal, ethical and spiritual issues. He argues that this ensures our remaining passive, conformist and confused. In response to this disempowerment, he gives us the tools needed to master the arts of 'intellectual self-defence', and thus challenge the deceptions of this destructive system.



## THE WAY

Edward Goldsmith  
Green Books, 1992

First published in 1992, *The Way* is a radical critique of the world-view of Modernism with which we have all been imbued, and whose role the author sees as being primarily to rationalise and legitimise economic development or 'progress'. All-embracing in scope, *The Way* lays out an intellectually rigorous and emotionally compelling ecological world-view.



## CAPTIVE STATE

George Monbiot  
Pan, 2000

Corporations have become so powerful they now threaten the foundations of democratic government itself. Many of the untold stories within this book show that the British government has effectively collaborated in its own redundancy by ceding power to international bodies controlled by corporations. *Captive State* is a devastating indictment of the corruption to which our political leaders have succumbed.



## NINETEEN EIGHTY-FOUR

George Orwell  
Penguin, 1949

In Orwell's frightening vision of the future, society is under the control of Big Brother. Every aspect of life is closely monitored, all hints of unorthodoxy ruthlessly suppressed. 'Orwell united style with substance, innocence with experience... he described the compromised lives we recognise as our own.' Andrew Motion, *Observer*.



## THE LORAX

Dr Seuss  
Collins, 1971

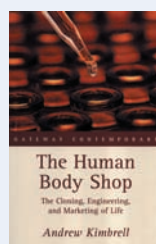
'A Dr Seuss fable for the slightly more able'. This classic story tells of greed and corporate profits at the expense of communities and the environment. Perhaps most importantly however, it speaks of hope. For 1957 – when it was first prophetically printed – read 2002. A sad but beautiful read. Where is the Lorax now? Who will speak for the trees?



## THE HUMAN BODY SHOP

Andrew Kimbrell  
Harper Collins, 1998

It is argued that cloning is symptomatic of a bigger picture whereby the human body has become a commodity, with blood, organs, genes and foetuses for sale. This book incorporates the most recent developments in the biotechnology industry that are changing the way we live, but also our most fundamental conceptions of life.



## SILENT SPRING

Rachel Carson  
Penguin, 1962

One of the most influential books of the twentieth century, *Silent Spring* exposed the destruction of wildlife through the widespread use of pesticides. Despite attempts by big business to ban its sale, Carson succeeded in creating a new public awareness of the environment, which led to government policy changes and inspired the modern ecological movement.



## THE GROWTH ILLUSION

Richard Douthwaite  
Green Books, 1992

Douthwaite argues that strategies used by governments to raise national income often increase poverty and unemployment. Moreover, in western countries, each increase in national income consumes more resources than it creates on a sustainable basis. In response he shows how the capitalist system can be redirected by restructuring economies to be based on local rather than global imperatives.



## GREENWASH

Jed Greer & Kenny Bruno  
Third World Network, 1996

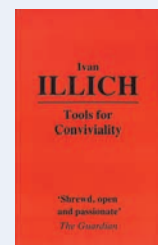
Scrutinising the environmental claims of 20 multinational corporations spanning across four continents, this book shows how big businesses remain the primary creators and peddlers of dirty, dangerous and unsustainable technologies. It then goes on to suggest ways that citizens can fight against destructive corporate activities, and by doing so, win back control of their environment and their lives.



## TOOLS FOR CONVIVIALITY

Ivan Illich  
Marion Boyars, 1973

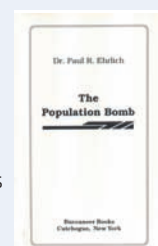
Using the term 'Conviviality' to designate the opposite of industrial productivity, Illich's penetrating analysis seeks a way for mankind to regain control of our lives from the systems of industrialised production that dominate the contemporary world.



## THE POPULATION BOMB

Dr Paul R Ehrlich  
Buccaneer Books, 1968

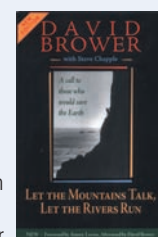
A classic of its time, Ehrlich's explosive book still rings true today. He sees overpopulation as the dominant problem in the world today. This issue is comprehensively described through the dimensions of the crisis in all its aspects – air, food, water, birth control, death control and ultimately our total finite environment. He then provides the reader with a realistic evaluation of the remaining options.



## LET THE MOUNTAINS TALK, LET THE RIVERS RUN

David Brower & Steve Chapple  
New Society Publishers, 1995

In this passionate and witty memoir, David Brower reflects on his decades of controversial environmental activism as former Sierra Club director and Friends of the Earth founder. With the help of Steve Chapple, he recalls the victories and disappointments of the environmental movement, outlines future battles, and points the way forward to the key challenge of the 21st century – restoration.



## WHERE THE WASTELAND ENDS

Theodore Roszak  
Faber, 1972

Roszak argues that the repression of religious sensibilities in western culture over the past few centuries has been mandatory for the development of the urban-industrial society we live in today. He predicts that the 'energy of religious renewal... will generate the next politics, and perhaps the final radicalism in our society'.



## THE MONKEY WRENCH GANG

Edward Abbey  
Perennial, 1975

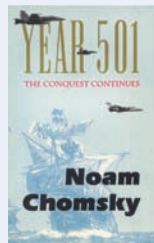
Anarchic and infinitely mischievous, Abbey's fictional tale tells of a ramshackle group of people united in their determination to put the Earth first, through outwitting and outraging the forces of industrialisation. They undermine road building, dam building and anything else that threatens the wild places of Utah, in any way they possibly can. This novel spawned a fresh generation eager to 'throw a spanner in the works'.



## YEAR 501

Noam Chomsky  
Verso, 1993

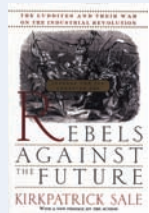
Year 501 is a devastating critique about the US role in the world, placed in the long historical perspective of the 500 years that followed the voyages of Columbus. The result is a vital single-volume education in history and world politics.



## REBELS AGAINST THE FUTURE

Kirkpatrick Sale  
Perseus Publishing, 1995

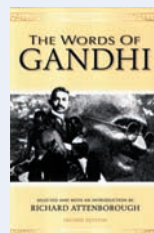
Kirkpatrick Sale tells the compelling story of the Luddites' struggle to preserve their jobs and ways of life by destroying the machines that threatened to replace them. He then invokes a neo-Luddite spirit in response to today's technological revolution and calls for another sort of rebellion: not one of violence but rather of intellectually and ethically sound protest.



## THE WORDS OF GANDHI

Richard Attenuborough (ed)  
Newmarket Press, 1982

With extracts taken from his speeches, letters and published writings, this best-selling volume explores the prophet's timeless thoughts on daily life, co-operation, non-violence, faith and peace. 'He lived, thought, and acted, inspired by the vision of humanity evolving toward a world of peace and harmony. We may ignore him at our own risk.' – Dr Martin Luther King, JR.



## THE GREAT TRANSFORMATION

Karl Polanyi  
Beacon Press, 1944

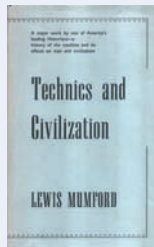
In this seminal work, Polanyi analyses the economic and social changes brought about by the 'great transformation' of the Industrial Revolution. His analysis explains not only the deficiencies of the self-regulating market, but also the potentially dire social consequences of untempered market capitalism. In this era of free trade and globalisation, Polanyi's analysis has renewed importance today.



## TECHNICS AND CIVILISATION

Lewis Mumford  
Routledge, 1934

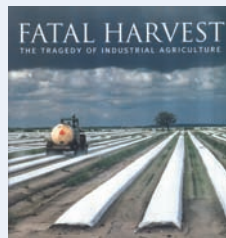
Mumford's dazzling and visionary work is in essence a history of the machine. Starting with the dawn of the modern industrial system, it progresses through the developments of Adam Smith and James Watt towards the then present day.



## FATAL HARVEST

Andrew Kimbrell (ed)  
Island Press, 2002

As visually beautiful as it is painful, this wonderful book illustrates the ecological and social impacts of industrial agriculture's fatal harvest. Beyond this it goes on to herald a new ecological and humane vision for agriculture; how millions of people are now engaged in the new politics of food as they fight against the chemical and biotechnological take-over of our food system.



## FAST FOOD NATION

Eric Schlosser  
Penguin, 2001

Eric Schlosser's explosive bestseller, by turns funny and terrifying, tells the story of our love affair with fast food. He visits the lab that re-creates the smell of strawberries; examines the safety records of abattoirs; reveals why the fries taste so good and what lurks between the sesame buns – and shows how fast food is transforming not only our diets but our world.



## WHEN CORPORATIONS RULED THE WORLD

David Korten  
Earthscan, 1995

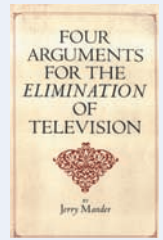
Korten's thoughtful analysis of modern corporate power exposes the harmful effects of economic globalisation with well-reasoned analysis. He sets out the underlying causes of today's social, economic, environmental and political crises and outlines a strategy for creating localised economies that would empower communities within a system of global co-operation.



## FOUR ARGUMENTS FOR THE ELIMINATION OF TELEVISION

Jerry Mander  
Morrow Quill, 1978

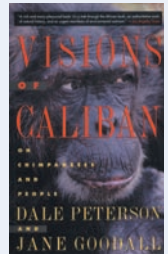
Mander argues that the medium of TV is unreformable, that its problems are inherent in technology itself and that it is so dangerous – to personal health and sanity, to the environment and to the political process, that it should be eliminated forever. The book casts profound doubt on the accepted notion that all technologies are neutral.



## VISIONS OF CALIBAN

Dale Peterson and Jane Goodall  
Houghton Mifflin, 1993

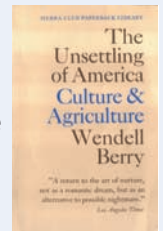
Subtitled 'On chimpanzees and people' this extraordinary portrait of the complex lives of humans and chimpanzees shows how our relationship with these apes, with whom we share 99 per cent of our genes, epitomises both our kinship with and alienation from the rest of the natural world.



## THE UNSETTLING OF AMERICA

Wendell Berry  
Sierra Club Books, 1986

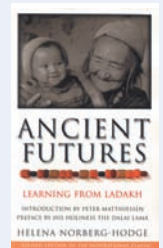
A probing analysis of the way we use the land and the integral position of farming in culture at large, Berry's suggestions for change are both radical and traditional. The *LA Times* called it 'a return to the art of nurture, not as a romantic dream, but as an alternative to possible nightmare.'



## ANCIENT FUTURES: LEARNING FROM LADAKH

Helena Norberg-Hodge  
Random House, 1991

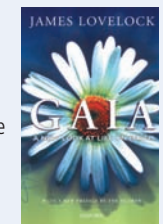
In Ladakh, a wild, beautiful desert land in the western Himalayas, centuries of ecological balance and social harmony are under threat from the pressures of Western consumerism. The author celebrates the traditional Ladakhi way of life, and asks important questions about the whole notion of progress. Ultimately inspiring, *Ancient Futures* suggests that it is possible to return to the local and the small-scale – in short, a kinder, gentler pattern of living.



## GAIA, A NEW LOOK AT LIFE ON EARTH

James Lovelock  
Oxford University Press, 1979

Lovelock sees the evolution of life and the evolution of the Earth as a single, tightly-coupled process from which the self-regulation of the environment emerges. He provides compelling arguments demonstrating that the earth is a living, self-regulating organism. 🐦

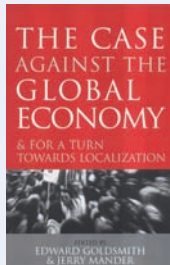


## THE CASE AGAINST THE GLOBAL ECONOMY

Edited by Edward Goldsmith & Jerry Mander

Earthscan Publications, 2001

In *The Case against the Global Economy*, twenty-four leading economic, agricultural, cultural and environmental experts, drawn from across the globe, passionately argue the need to move away from globalisation, with its devastating social and environmental implications, and towards a revitalised democracy, local self-sufficiency and ecological health.

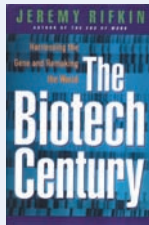


## THE BIOTECH CENTURY

Jeremy Rifkin

Penguin Putnam, 1998

Rifkin argues that the computer revolution is a mere prelude to what is to come – the age of biotechnology. This revolution will force us all to reassess our most deeply held values, and question the purpose and meaning of existence. This, Rifkin argues, may turn out to be its most significant legacy.

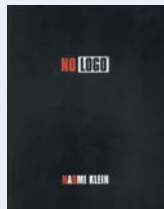


## NO LOGO

Naomi Klein

Harper Collins, 2000

Filled with first hand accounts of everything for the McLibel trial, Reclaim the Streets and the reality of sweatshops, *No Logo* is the book that brought antiglobalisation to its widest audience. The analysis of brands and their effects is written by one who has also felt the strength of their pull.

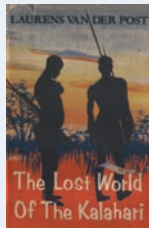


## THE LOST WORLD OF THE KALAHARI

Laurens Van der Post

The Hogarth Press, 1958

*The Lost World of the Kalahari* is the moving chronicle of the author's search for what remained of Africa's First People, the Kalahari Bushmen. No less spiritual than physical, the book is an account of an extraordinary journey through Africa and the author's encounter with a unique and deeply ecological people whose brutal collision with the modern world has proved near-fatal.



## THE DREAM OF THE EARTH

Thomas Berry

Sierra Club Books, 1988

Itself dedicated to 'the great red oak, beneath whose branches this book was written' *The Dream of the Earth* argues passionately for a holistic and respectful understanding of nature in place of the static, mechanised world view of Descartes and Newton.

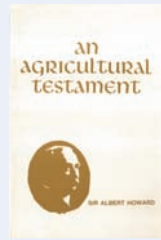


## AN AGRICULTURAL TESTAMENT

Sir Albert Howard

Oxford University Press, 1943

'Can mankind regulate its affairs so that its chief possession – the fertility of the soil – is preserved? On the answer to this question the future of civilisation lies.' So begins an extraordinarily wise book, that decades after it was first published, could not be more relevant. Sir Albert Howard is regarded to be the father of the organic movement.



## THE POLITICS OF CANCER

Samuel S Epstein

Sierra Club Books, 1978

This book is a shocking indictment not only of the industrial world's dependence and routine use of cancer-causing chemicals, but of what the author refers to as the cancer establishment itself. Far from waging a war against cancer, as the charities declared, the cancer establishment has systematically refused to acknowledge the true causes of this modern day epidemic.

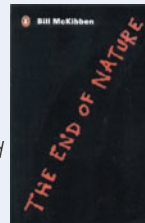


## THE END OF NATURE

Bill McKibben

Penguin Books, 1990

A truly remarkable book, finely written, passionately argued and impressively documented. *The End of Nature* tells us that an ecological holocaust is underway, and that we must act immediately. A wake up call for even the hardest of sceptics.



## HIDDEN AGENDAS

John Pilger

Vintage, 1998

'Reading between the lines' takes on a new meaning in this book. *Hidden Agendas* peels away the layers of deception that prevent us from understanding how the world works. Pilger provides disturbing alternatives to mainstream explanations of world events, and leaves the reader in no doubt that power, unchallenged, seriously corrupts.

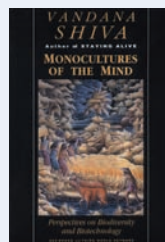


## MONOCULTURES OF THE MIND

Vandana Shiva

Zed Books, 1995

*Monocultures of the Mind* is a powerful counter to the global pre-eminence of Western-style scientific knowledge. The Western approach to science, Shiva argues, has led to an agricultural system being imposed on the South that has displaced ecological indigenous methods, disrupting viable social systems, impoverishing millions of people, and rendering much of the planet sterile.

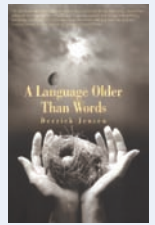


## A LANGUAGE OLDER THAN WORDS

Derek Jensen

Souvenir Press, 2002

*A Language Older than Words* relates the extraordinary journey of one man striving to save his own spirit and our planet's. Comparing his abusive father's destruction of his family with mankind's systematic destruction of civilisation, Jensen tells a story about hope for regeneration in a landscape of human and natural desolation.



## THE DECLINE OF AN ENGLISH VILLAGE

Robin Page

Davis Poynter Limited, 1975

For thirty years, Robin Page lived in the village of Barton in Cambridgeshire. Here he writes about the many changes he has witnessed, from the arrival of the supermarket to the decline in neighbourliness. Poignant and timeless, *The Decline of an English Village* expresses the authors regret for the passing of people, places and traditions, and his desire to see new generations give life and spirit to the village.

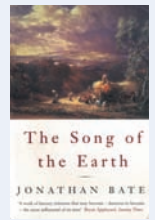


## THE SONG OF THE EARTH

Jonathan Bate

Picador, 2000

This is a book about why poetry continues to matter as we enter a new millennium that will be ruled by technology. It is a book about modern Western man's alienation from nature. It is about the capacity of the writer to restore us to the earth that is our home. 'Professor Bate is at his brilliant best when analysing individual poems...' *Independent on Sunday*

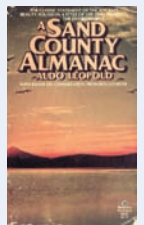


## A SAND COUNTY ALMANAC

Aldo Leopold

Ballantine Books, 1949

Written from the vantage of his summer shack along the banks of the Wisconsin River, Leopold's book mixes essay, polemic, and memoir in his book's pages. Published in 1949, shortly after the author's death, *A Sand County Almanac* is a classic of nature writing.

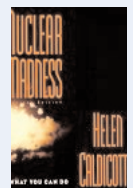


## NUCLEAR MADNESS

Helen Caldicott

Norton, Revised 1994

In this completely revised, updated, and expanded version of her 1978 classic, Dr Caldicott defines for the 1990s the dangers of 'nuclear madness' – spotlighting what she sees as the insidious influence of the nuclear power industry – and calls on us to accept the moral challenge to fight against it, both for our own sakes and for that of future generations.



**A BLUEPRINT FOR SURVIVAL**

*The Ecologist, 1972*

Signed and endorsed by 34 eminent biologists, ecologists, doctors and economists, the *Blueprint* put ecology fiercely on the map.

'Unless we minimise the disruption of ecological processes and stabilise the population,' it warned, 'we shall inevitably face the collapse of society as we know it.' The *Blueprint* provided a disturbing chronicle of the effects of our species on the planet and more importantly it offered a comprehensive way out.

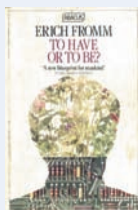


**TO HAVE OR TO BE?**

*Eric Fromm*

*Continuum, 1976*

Fromm's thesis in this remarkable book is that two modes of existence are struggling for the spirit of humankind. 'Having', concentrates on material possession, acquisitiveness, power, and aggression and is the basis of such universal evils as greed, envy, and violence. 'Being' is based on love, in the pleasure of sharing, and in meaningful and productive rather than wasteful activity.

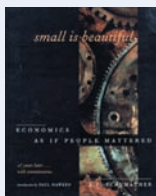


**SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL**

*EF Schumacher*

*Harper Collins, 1973*

*Small is Beautiful* is the perfect antidote to the economics of globalisation. As relevant today as when it was first published, this is a landmark set of essays on humanistic economics, the classic of common-sense economics upon which many recent trends in our society are founded. This is economics from the heart rather than from just the bottom line.

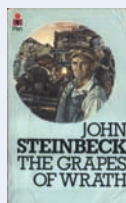


**THE GRAPES OF WRATH**

*John Steinbeck*

*Pan Books, 1975*

The story of the great migration of thousands of homeless families from the dust-bowl of Oklahoma to California. *The Grapes of Wrath* traces the fortunes of the Joad family who, lured by the promise of unlimited work, pile their belongings on to a dilapidated truck and head for the 'Golden West', the land of plenty – only to find their hopes shattered.



**THE MAN WHO PLANTED TREES**

*Jean Giono*

*The Harvill Press, 1953*

Written in the 1950s, and a tale whose message was ahead of its time, *The Man Who Planted Trees* weaves the parable of the life-giving shepherd who chooses to live alone and carry out the work of God. Over forty years the desolate hills and lifeless villages which so oppressed the traveller are transformed by the dedication of one man. All with the help of a few acorns. 'One of the greatest writers of our generation.' – André Malraux



**GLOBAL SPIN**

*Sharon Beder*

*Green Books Ltd, 1997*

In this important contribution to the environmental debate, Sharon Beder shows how corporations are using their influence to reshape public opinion, to weaken gains made by environmentalists, and to turn politicians against increased environmental regulation. The sophisticated techniques being used are changing the way the public and politicians think about the environment.



**THE HIDDEN CONNECTIONS**

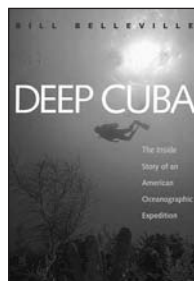
*Fritjof Capra*

*Harper Collins, 2002*

Both the rise of global capitalism, and the creation of sustainable communities will have a defining impact on the future of humanity. But these two movements are set on a collision course. Fritjof Capra makes it clear that it is vital to organise the world according to beliefs not driven solely by the economic imperative, nor merely for the wellbeing of human organisations if we are to ensure the survival of mankind.



**Send your suggestions for Ecologist reviews to Jeremy Smith at [jeremy@theecologist.org](mailto:jeremy@theecologist.org)**



**Deep Cuba**

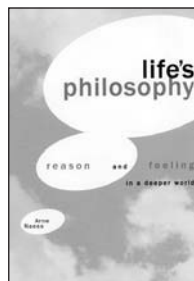
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*Bill Belleville*

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— Tom Miller, author of *Trading with the Enemy: A Yankee Travels through Castro's Cuba*



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*Reason and Feeling in a Deeper World*

*Arne Naess*

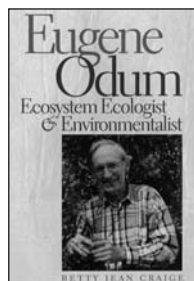
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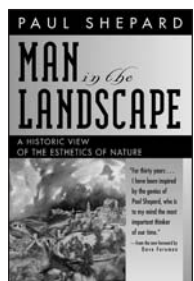
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the information web site that promotes care of the environment

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- And There's More

The site offers serious commentaries on selected topics. There's space for news and contributor's articles and loads of photo backgrounds to download.  
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And there's still more.



To work as an intern at  
*The Ecologist*, please email:  
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**VOLUNTEERS WANTED**

# THE Directory

## BIODIVERSITY LOSS

### WWF

www.wwf-uk.org  
+ 44 (0) 1483 426444

### American Lands Alliance

www.americanlands.org  
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### TRAFFIC

www.traffic.org  
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### The World Conservation Union

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## CHEMICAL POLLUTION

### Friends of the Earth

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### WWF

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+44 (0) 1483 426444

### Greenpeace

www.greenpeace.org.uk  
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### Pesticides Action Network

www.pan-uk.org +44 (0) 20 7274 8895

## CLIMATE CHANGE

### Climate Action Network

www.climateactionnetwork.org  
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### Friends of the Earth UK

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+44 (0) 20 7490 1555

### Sustainable Energy and Economy Network

www.seen.org  
+1 202 234 9382

### Global Commons Institute

www.gci.org.uk  
+44 (0)771 282 6406

### National Environmental Trust

www.environment.net  
+1 202 887 8800

### Transnational Institute

www.tni.org  
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### Corp Watch

www.corpwatch.org  
+1 415 561 6568

## DEFORESTATION

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www.ran.org  
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### Rainforest Foundation

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### Friends of the Earth US

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### Greenpeace UK

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### Development Alternatives

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### War on Want

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### New Economics Foundation

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## ECONOMIC GLOBALIZATION

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### Public Citizen

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### Bretton Woods Project

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### 50 Years Is Enough

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### Whirled Bank Group

www.whirledbank.org

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### World Resources Institute

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### UN Oceans Atlas

www.oceansatlas.org

## HEALTH

### Public Citizen

www.citizen.org  
+1 202 546 4996

## LAND DEGRADATION

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+44 (0) 117 929 0661

### World Resources Institute

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### Worldwatch

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### GrassRoots Recycling Network

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## WATER

### International Rivers Network

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www.npwa.freemove.co.uk  
+44 (0) 1924 254433

### European Environmental Bureau

www.eeb.org  
+32 (2) 289 1090

### Worldwatch Institute

www.worldwatch.org  
+1 202 452 1999

# The Alternative to Logging Primary Forests

Much has been said about the unsustainable nature of logging primary forests and there is a great deal of justified concern over the irreversible damage that this can do. However, there is a viable alternative, which can provide a sustainable source of quality timber, whilst ensuring environmental protection and social responsibility. Leaders in positively green investment, **QUADRIS Environmental Investments**, are pioneering the way to a sustainable financial future through ethical, social and environmental considerations.



For centuries, wood has been used as a source of energy and raw material for buildings, furniture and tools. This has resulted in the staggering depletion of primary forests throughout the world and is undoubtedly unsustainable, given current levels of deforestation. What is equally clear is that global demand for wood products places enormous pressure on surviving natural forests, unless viable alternatives are found.

## A new perspective

**QUADRIS Environmental Investments** have launched a fund, which invests only in sustainable forestry projects that meet strict environmental, ethical and social criteria. All plantations in which the fund invests are required to be Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certified. In addition to this the fund will not invest in

operations that exploit primary forests. To meet the strict criteria set by the fund, investment is only made in operations which plant on land that does not require the clearance of natural forests. A pre-requisite to investment are Environmental and Social Impact assessments to ensure the highest standards of environmental protection and social responsibility. As a result all plantations invest in protected areas for the reforestation of degraded land, to reintroduce biodiversity and provide an appropriate social infrastructure that includes educational, health and transport facilities for workers and their families.

## Positive benefits

This business model relieves pressure on logging of primary forests, contributes to the rehabilitation of previously degraded areas, produces a renewable energy efficient material and supports the local social infrastructure, in addition to providing sustainable long term returns for investors.

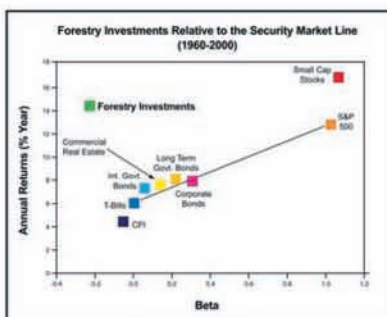
## A near perfect asset

In addition to the clear environmental and social

benefits of investing in sustainable forestry, this class of investment has a volatility more akin to bonds than stocks, but over the long term is capable of outperforming the S&P 500. It also tends to perform best when stocks and bonds are depressed, making it an ideal counterbalance in a spread portfolio. As the graph demonstrates a forestry portfolio would have returned 13.3% annually over the past 40 years, compared with 11.6% from the S&P 500. This indicates that timber is a near perfect asset.

## A record of success

Since its inception in the Netherlands in the early 1990s, the **QUADRIS Group** has established a proven track record in investment in this class. Consequently, their expertise and experience is unparalleled and has resulted in a value of assets currently under management exceeding \$250 million.

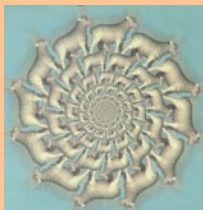


Source: James W. Sewell Company



For more details about **QUADRIS Environmental Investments** contact: **Ian Hook** on 01483 756800; [invest@quadrisc.co.uk](mailto:invest@quadrisc.co.uk) [www.quadrisc.co.uk](http://www.quadrisc.co.uk)

# Compassion in World Farming Trust



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## AFTER DOLLY: Art, Science, Ethics

FUSE: a forum where art meets science and technology meets ethics



### PANEL DEBATE: *Biotechnology: the future of animal farming?*

Thursday 10 October, Reception: 6.30 pm, Debate: 7.15 pm, Venue: The Royal Society, London

A unique opportunity to voice your thoughts and concerns at this cutting-edge debate about the impact of genetic engineering and cloning of farm animals — an issue that may have huge consequences for the future of farming and the natural world. Our expert panel leading the debate on the evening are:

Harry Griffin — Roslin Inst., Ron James — PPL Therapeutics, Peter Melchett — Soil Association,  
Ben Mepham — Univ. of Notts., Martina Newell McGloughlin — Univ. of California, Jacky Turner — CIWF Trust

Entrance by ticket only – see below for details.

### ART EXHIBITION VIP LAUNCH & RECEPTION

Friday 11 October, 6.30–10.30 pm, Venue: ICA, London

Be one of the first to preview a new series of works of art, specially created for this exhibition (*organised by CIWF Trust and Littoral*), in response to the potential widespread use of animal biotechnologies. This thought-provoking event will include an illustrated talk by Sue Coe, farm animal artist, writer and activist.

Entrance by ticket only – see below for details.

Art Exhibition Opening Times: 12 October 10 am — 11 pm 13 October 10 am — 5 pm

Nash & Brandon Rooms, ICA, Carlton House Terrace (entrance), London SW1. Entry to the exhibition is free of charge.

### TICKET BOOKINGS:

Panel debate: Tickets - £10, concessions £5 (price includes drinks reception and debate)

VIP launch/reception: Tickets - £20 (or £10 if booking(s) made before 20 September), concessions £5  
(price includes entrance to exhibition launch and finger buffet/drinks reception)

To book by credit card call Angie on **01730 237 370** or complete the coupon below. Book early to avoid disappointment.

*CIWF Trust is an educational charity specialising in research, educational and awareness-building work to help build a better future for farm animals (Reg. No. 295126). FUSE is a series of cultural events, co-ordinated by CIWF Trust, to stimulate public debate about new animal biotechnologies such as genetic engineering and cloning. The FUSE art exhibition is being organised jointly with Littoral Arts, a non-profit-making organisation linking art, the environment and social issues.*



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