Tell the Awful Truth: It's Not Just Global Warming, It's Global Disaster!

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The awful truth (and a most inconvenient truth) is that the present and future global warming of our common, shared, biosphere represents a global disaster in progress. The last 100 years (and the years of the immediate future) will be written in history (as long as the human race survives) as the period when some humans carelessly jeopardized the security of life on our planet. It will be recorded that we carelessly destroyed our oceans, fisheries and forests while removing immense amounts of carbon in the form of fossil fuels from the Earth and placing the combustion products into the atmosphere and the planet's waterways. The last century (and this one) will also be remembered as a period of immense human population growth, to the overshoot level, exceeding the capacity of our common biosphere to provide even the essentials for the universal quality of life. The awful, inconvenient truth is that we have created a global preventable disaster without identifying the correct solutions. Solutions other than preventative ones may in fact be impossible to achieve.

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To correct the ills of our generations may be beyond the capabilities of all of science and technology. We do not know the life span of a technological society. Such corrective solutions may never be brought forward and implemented precisely because the problems we are creating are too immense and complex. Problems are typically created at a much simpler level than the solutions, which are several orders of magnitude higher in complexity and cost. We may have already passed the global tipping point for humanity. A reasonable planetary quality of life – for humans and for other species – may be beyond achievement with our continued population growth. The consequences will be continuously increasing poverty and misery for large segments of the world's human population, and increasing rates of species extinction. And the faster we destroy nature and use up the available resources, the more pervasive these conditions will become. The end of nature as we think we know it, is completely possible. Good examples include the rainforests, oceans and the drought conditions throughout areas of the world including the USA and Australia. The average standard of living will decline, and resource wars will be commonplace. Even the wealthiest and most greedy industrialists will lose their security. There will be no place for sympathy and humanistic feelings; survival will be the only goal.

Let's list the most important, complex, global problems facing humanity in today's world and the future world of our children. We are not borrowing

our children's future world from them, we are destroying it for them. How can any current political leader (the term leader is used in the general sense as many so called leaders are not leaders but part of the problem) who claim they love their children, act in the way they presently do? Do they not understand that the sum of all human activities has taken us to the tipping point for humanity?

1. First and foremost: the excessive human population and its continued expansion
2. Climate change/global warming and the environmental consequences including: drought and water shortage, crop and livestock failure, food shortages, species extinction and the loss of biodiversity. Three crops – rice, corn and wheat – stand between humans and hunger
3. Poverty, misery, inadequate infrastructure and health care and increasingly frequent premature death
4. Infectious diseases and pandemics affecting humans and other species as well as their food sources
5. Loss of democratic principles with increasingly fascist regimes prevailing; failure of governments to create transparency and represent the people
6. The rise of pervasive discrimination and intolerance at the hands of specific power groups
7. A lack of intelligent, informed, visionary and morally correct leadership
8. An inability of well intending governments to ameliorate local, national and global problems
9. Failure of individuals and nations to alter their actions for conservation of the biosphere
10. Inefficiency, insufficient funding, incompetence and graft in educational systems, resulting in decreased quality and quantity of learning
11. A lack of competent research and innovation that could facilitate the formulation of correct solutions
12. Rapid urbanization without adequate infrastructure; loss of public communication and travel; increasing prevalence of slum cities within cities
13. Intentional perpetration of misinformation by individuals, agencies, governments and industries
14. Lawlessness, corruption, crime, discrimination, violence and war; unequal and unjust allocation of scarce resources

15. Lack of participation by some countries in international accords
16. Religious leaders who should be educating their membership on the moral responsibility they have to ensure a common future for all of humanity

Developing countries have argued they want to improve their standards of living to match those of existing developed countries. This is to be achieved via economic growth and an increase in consumption of energy and other natural resources. In some cases it is to be achieved without restricting population growth. Some of these countries may approach this objective, but if so, there will be no future for the next generations because the fundamental laws of thermodynamics will prevail. Increased resource consumption is nothing more than a temporary solution to one of our many problems. It will increase the time of onset of the pending global biosphere disaster.

Developed countries, on the other hand, naturally want to maintain their high standards of living. However, without careful planning, this too, will promote global disaster. More, more, more – using the same destructive means of resource consumption accompanied by pollution production – is simply not acceptable. The awful truth is that humans are creating a global disaster and will continue to do so unless universal birth control is implemented so that the human population can first stabilize and then begin its requisite decline. Our population must decrease by several billions until we achieve sustainability. The alternative is immense human suffering and death. This is true because Natural Selection is cruel and will continue until a sustainable population emerges, if this ever becomes possible. The weak, young, old and undernourished members of society will be the first to die. However, no country or economic class of people will be spared. And no one wants to experience this consequence.

The most immediate, rationally, recognized solutions are:

1. To make universal birth control available, with the financial means provided by the richest countries of the world – so that the human population can stabilize and then decline
2. To implement conservation measures involving the three environmental Rs: reduce, reuse and recycle – as applied to every aspect of society

including energy, transportation, local organic farming, construction of green residential and commercial buildings, preservation of existing forests and marine habitats and restoration of destroyed ecosystems. Transportation of food products over immense distances must also be reduced, unless absolutely necessary

3. To use alternative energy sources such as wind, solar, wave, tidal, fuel cells and geothermal power, each of these alternatives being used when and where most practical
4. To DECREASE economic growth while INCREASING prosperity, a goal that is possible only with a decrease in the human population, better planning, and the instigation of universal health care with proper disease control programs
5. To improve the quality of education for all world citizens, attempting to eliminate ignorance, irrationality and planetary irresponsibility
6. To create urban and rural infrastructure, permitting a gradual decrease in city size while maintaining accurate information transfer and allowing requisite travel
7. To promote research and innovation leading to more sustainable ways of life for humans and other species on the planet
8. To establish responsible governments based on democratic principles with intelligent, environmentally well-educated officials at the helm
9. To maintain financial responsibility at all levels with taxation according to ability to pay in order to empower governments to fulfill their responsibilities to their citizens and the world

10. Cessation of discrimination, threats, violence and wars with implementation of measures that insure international cooperation with international law dominant over national law

The awful truth we must recognize is that there are too many humans on the planet, consuming too many irreplaceable resources and producing too much pollution. The fundamental laws of thermodynamics rule in the natural world, not human made artificial, economic rules. Human-made rules can be broken, but the laws of nature cannot. Every living organism must obey them, from the simplest bacterium to a complex human being. The laws that govern energy and matter transformations and the production of heat as a waste product spare no living organism. For example, a gasoline-powered vehicle is at best 20% efficient with the remainder of the fuel being converted to heat and gaseous pollutants. And to squeeze out this 20% efficiency, a massive amount of oxygen must be consumed for every liter of fuel used.

No unwanted child should ever be born, and every woman should have the right to make her own reproductive choices. No rational, thinking human being can believe that our current human activities can continue indefinitely. Corrective measures are paramount. Technology cannot provide solutions for the billions of humans on this small planet with guarantees of a reasonable quality of life. We must embrace change and decrease our human numbers. This one goal must be our number one priority. Then and only then can humans work towards the ultimate goal of sustainability.