

# **Global Governance and Sustainability**

**Arthur Lyon Dahl**

**International Environment Forum  
Webinar  
6 December 2020**

# Plan of the webinar

- Present existential threats including climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and mass population displacements
- The problems are interrelated and can only be managed effectively at the global level
- Present mechanisms for global environmental governance are woefully inadequate to the need for urgent action all around the world
- The good efforts of some are neutralized if not reversed by the contrary actions of others
- Recent proposals for global governance for the 21st century that could finally manage the necessary transition to sustainability while embodying the principles of world federalism and the oneness of humanity.

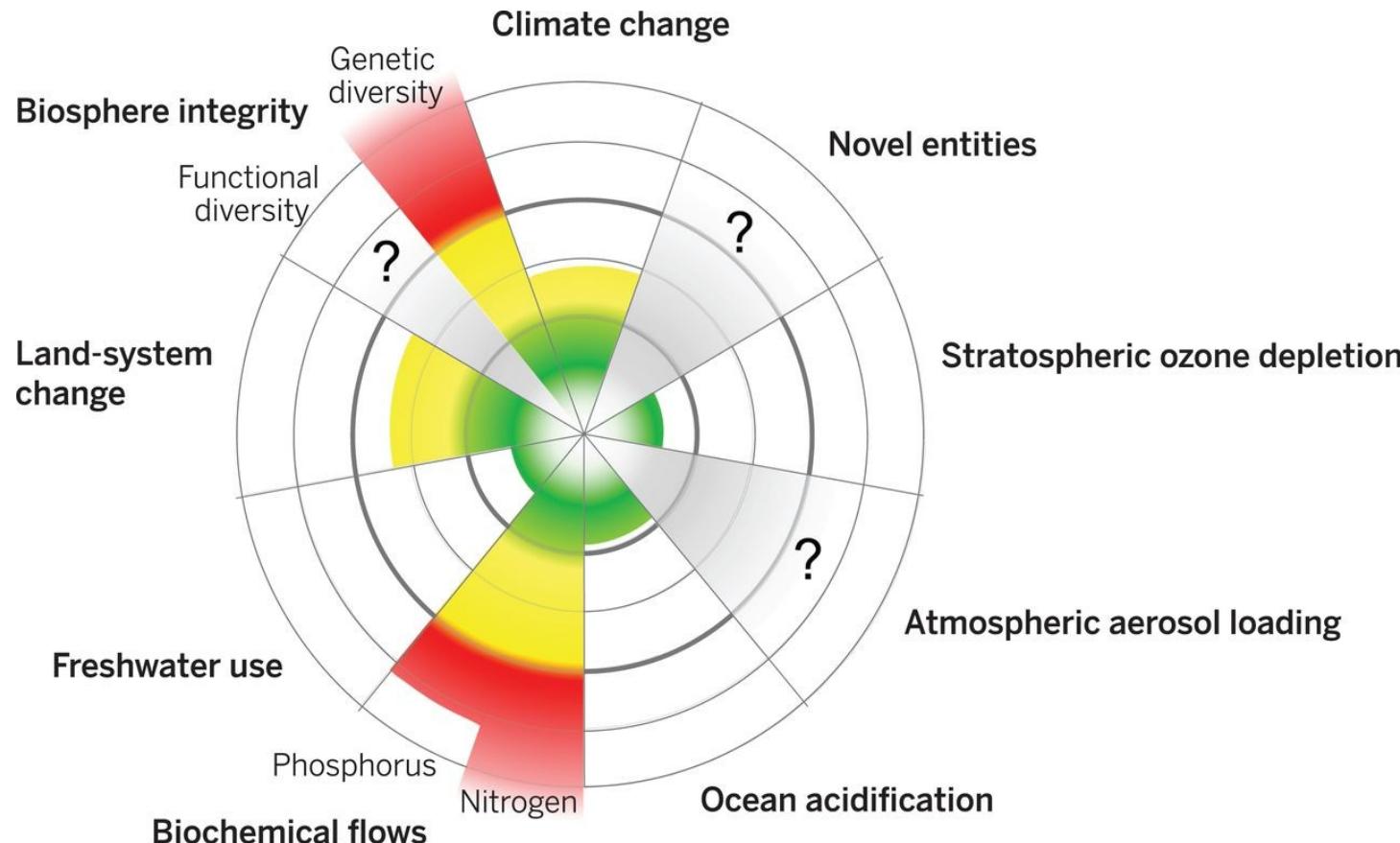
# The Sustainability Challenge

Many of today's existential threats including climate change, biodiversity loss, resource depletion, and mass population displacements are interrelated and can only be managed effectively at the global level

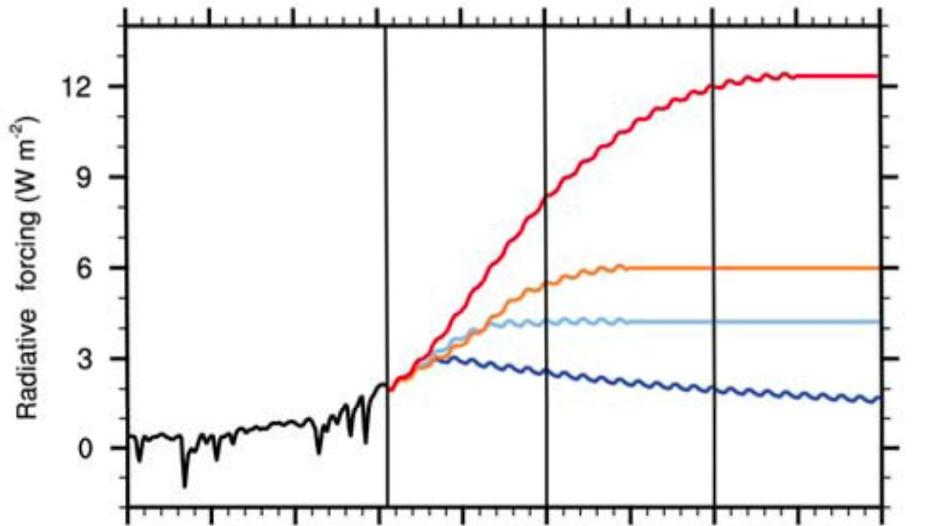
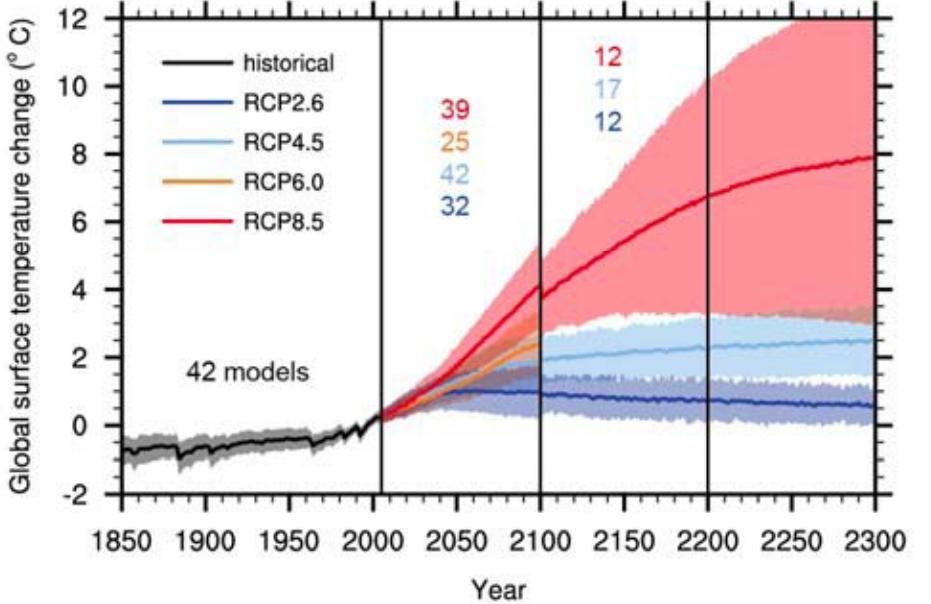
There are both outer and inner boundaries of sustainability



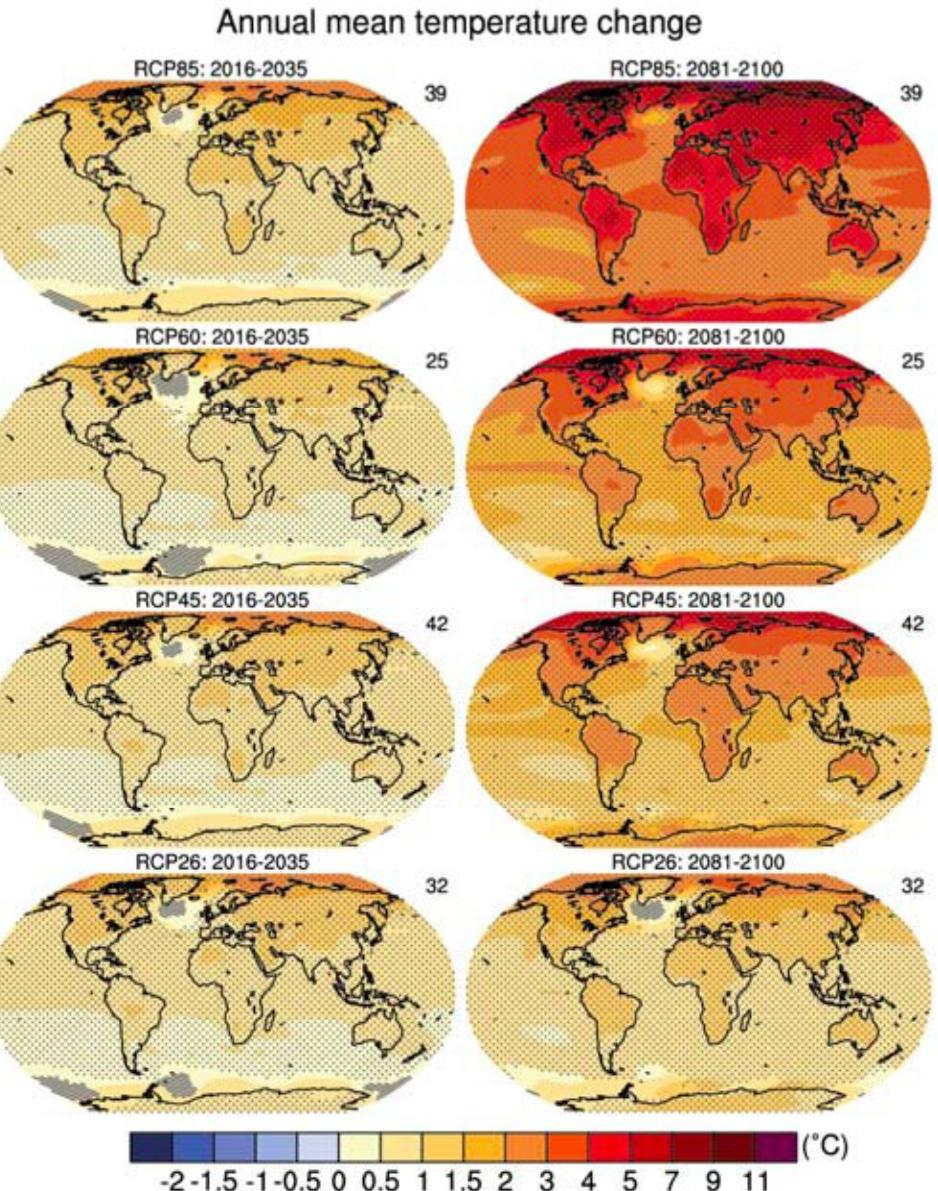
**Current status of the control variables for seven of the planetary boundaries. The green zone is the safe operating space, the yellow represents the zone of uncertainty (increasing risk), and the red is a high-risk zone.**



# Climate Change



Annual mean temperature change



# Fossil fuels and climate change

- The accepted limit for global warming without significant damage to the planet is 1.5°C and we are at 1.2°C (2°C in Switzerland)
- The estimated remaining capacity of the atmosphere to absorb carbon without going past this limit is 420-580 gigatons of CO<sub>2</sub>, which may be reached by 2030. **In 2019 we released 43.1 gt, a 3.1% increase over 2018**
- Proven oil, coal and gas reserves total 2,795 gigatons (not counting unconventional sources)
- To prevent catastrophic climate change, 80% of proven reserves need to be taken off asset accounts and left in the ground

# Corporate Polluters

- Between 1880 and 2010, the 90 biggest industrial carbon producers were responsible for half the rise in global temperature and a third of sea level rise
- By 1965, the climate impact of fossil fuels was known by both industry leaders and politicians
- The top 20 petroleum companies have since contributed 35% of all energy-related CO<sub>2</sub> and methane emissions, and planned to increase production to 2030 before the pandemic hit
- They have delayed national and global action for decades, and spend \$200 million each year lobbying to delay, control or block policies to tackle climate change

# Emissions Gap

- Incremental changes will not be enough and there is a need for rapid and transformational action.
- G20 members account for 78 per cent of global GHG emissions
- The emissions gap is large. In 2030, annual emissions need to be 15 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e lower than current unconditional Nationally Determined Contributions imply for the 2°C goal, and 32 GtCO<sub>2</sub>e lower for 1.5°C
- Dramatic strengthening of the NDCs is needed in 2020. Countries must increase their NDC ambitions threefold to achieve the well below 2°C goal and more than fivefold to achieve the 1.5°C goal.

(UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2019)

**This is not happening**

# Accelerating sea level rise

- Present estimate 1.2m to 2m by 2100 and continuing
- Sea level rise could displace 600 million people by 2100
- Many coastal urban areas are vulnerable
- With rapid polar warming, tipping points could make melting irreversible

# BIODIVERSITY LOSS



- Extinction rate (species per million species per year)  
preindustrial 0.1-1, actual **1000**
- Global warming  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  = 20% species loss;  $4^{\circ}$ =50%
- The annual cost of forest loss is \$2-5 trillion
- Loss of insect biomass in Europe 80%
- Global wild animal biomass reduced by 82%



Pollution of a coral reef



Destroyed coral reef

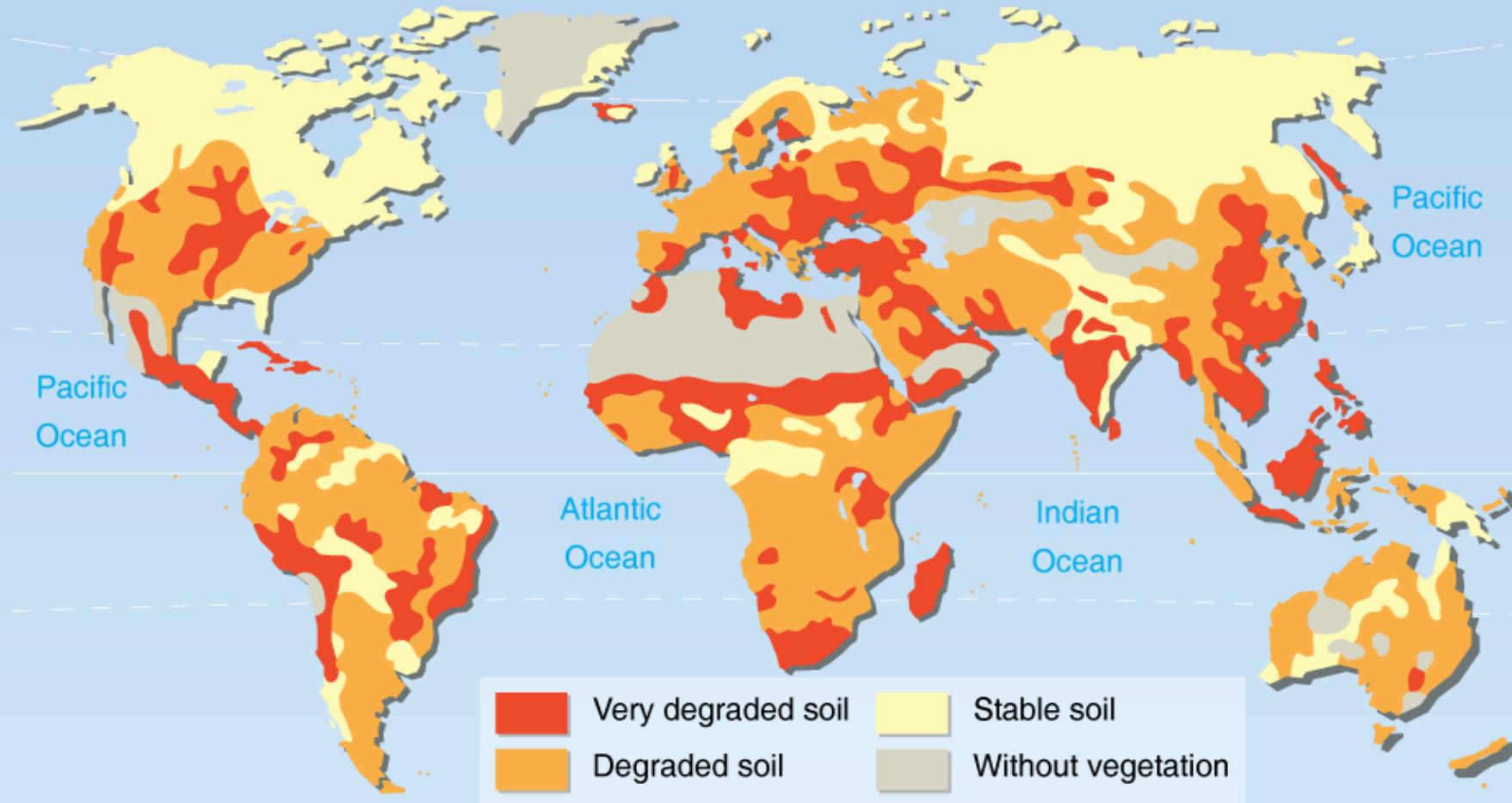
# Human Population

- The world population has tripled in one lifetime, and is projected to rise to 9.7 billion by 2050 and 11 billion by 2100, although others predict an ageing decline later in the century
- Caused by economy increasing wealth without addressing poverty
- A classic ecological pattern of overshoot and collapse
- The planetary carrying capacity depends on numbers versus standard of living; increasing one reduces the other
- Science may find ways to increase carrying capacity, but only at longer time scales
- Producing refugees, economic migrants, environmental displacement

# Food Production

- The Green Revolution of the 1970s postponed food supply as a limit to growth
- Crop production has improved in the last 20 years from 1.8 to 2.5 t/ha. but such intensive agriculture requires high energy, fertilizer and petrochemical inputs, driven by multinational agroindustries
- World cereal production per person peaked in the 1980s and has decreased slowly since
- Feeding the growing world population and reducing hunger by half will require doubling world food production by 2050; hunger is increasing again
- Water, phosphate and energy will all be limiting

# Soil degradation



Source: UNEP, International Soil Reference and Information Centre (ISRIC), World Atlas of Desertification, 1997.

Philippe Rekacewicz, UNEP/GRID-Arendal

# Soil Degradation

- 65% of all soil has been degraded by erosion, desertification or salinization
- Over 300 million hectares of former agricultural land can no longer produce food
- 10 million hectares more are degraded every year
- We are well past "peak soil"
- FAO estimates we are 60 harvests from collapse

# Water Shortage

- Most freshwater from streams and groundwater is used for agriculture
- Water use for crops will have to double by 2050 to halve the number of hungry
- But, by 2025, 1.8b people will live in regions with absolute water scarcity, and 2/3 of the world population could be subject to water stress as climate change reduces rainfall in these areas

# Pollution

(image IKONOS – Lang, ESRI 1998)

Man-made chemical pollutants and plastics have contaminated the entire planet, interfering with biological processes, upsetting hormonal balances and immune systems, causing cancers and other diseases, damaging the ozone layer, and having other as yet unknown effects



# Peak Debt

- Global credit orgy of last 50 years, especially since 2008, has kept growth going
- Levels of global debt were out of control (even before the pandemic)
- Consumers at all scales in all sectors are saturated with debt
- Quantitative easing by central banks purchasing government debt removed short-term pressure but created debt saturation of \$300 trillion in financial claims
- US government debt twice economic growth over last 40 years, interest on its debt will pass defence spending in 2022
- Growth in GDP is a debt-fueled mirage with industrial production per capita peaking, leading to a perfect storm

Need smaller, simpler and more local, regional economies

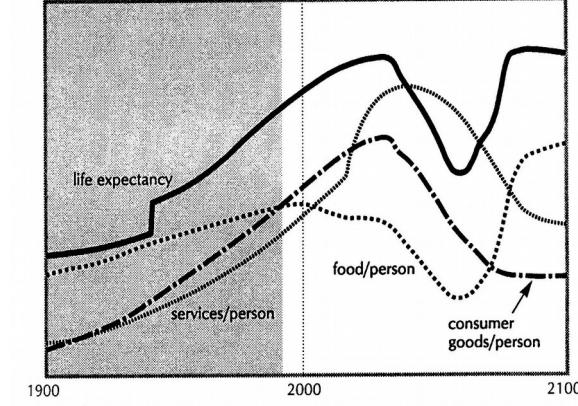
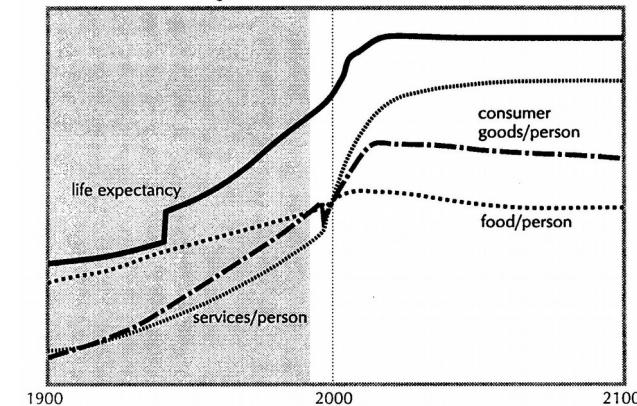
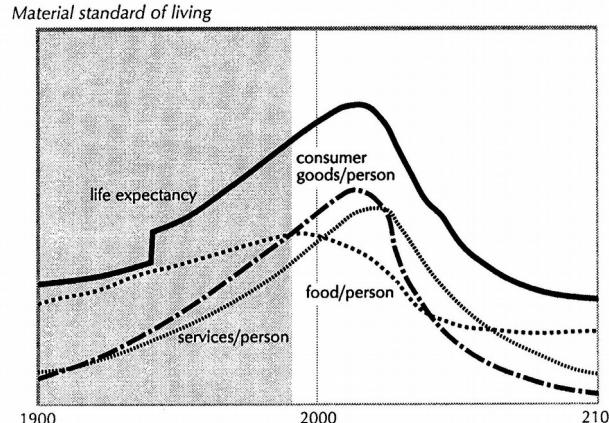
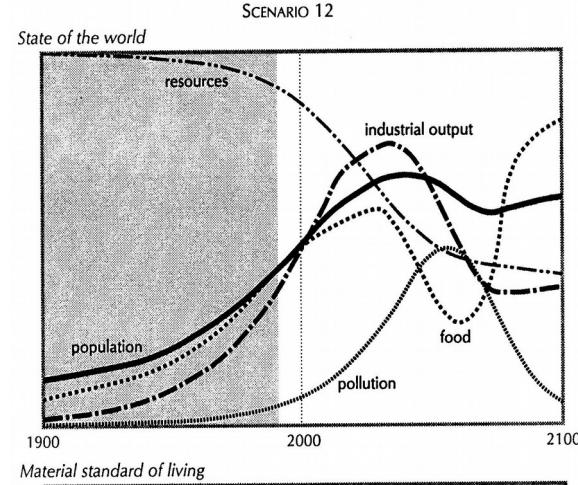
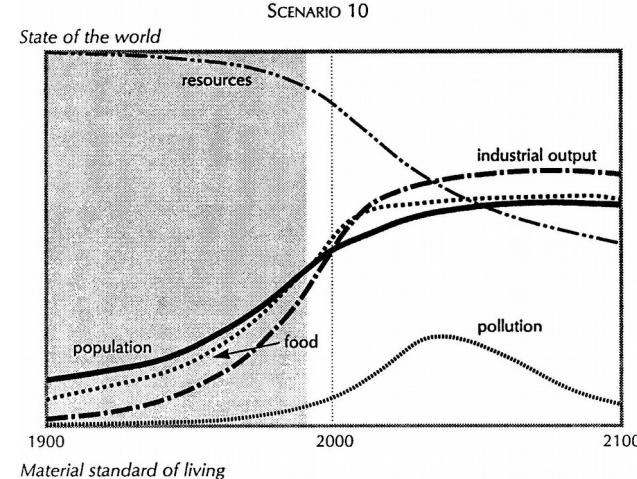
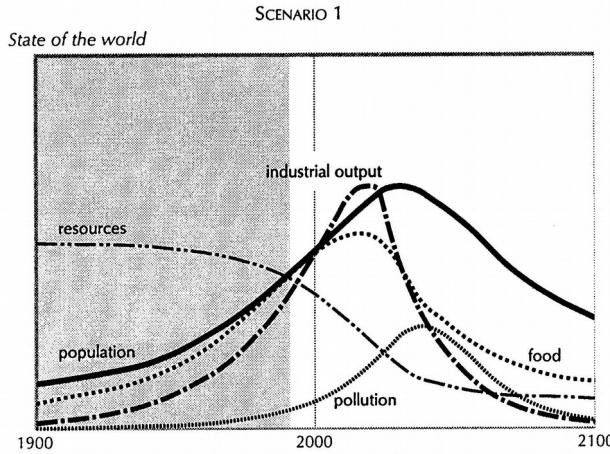
# Ecological footprint

- Surface needed to supply the needs and absorb the wastes of an individual, community, or country
- Global average 2.3 global hectares/person
- USA 8.1 gha/person, China 3.6 gha/p.
- France 4.4 gha/person, Switzerland 4.6 gha/p.
- Resources available 1.9 gha/person
- We overshot the earth's capacity in 1970

<https://www.footprintnetwork.org/>

# Limits to Growth: Scenarios from World 3

(Meadows et al. (1992) *Beyond the Limits*)



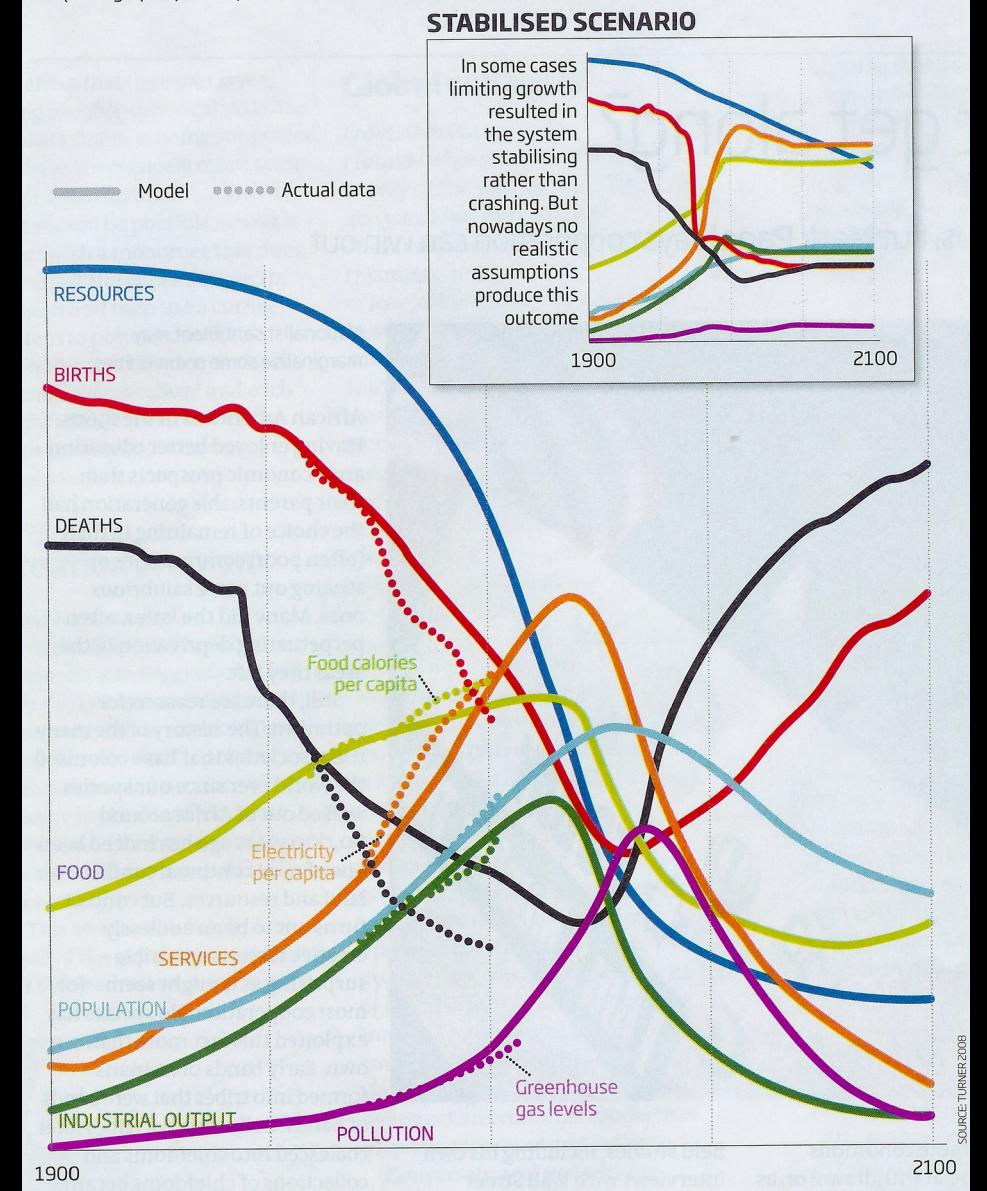
Business as usual

Transition 1995

Transition 2015

# Where are we now?

MacKenzie, Debora. 2012 Doomsday Book. *New Scientist*, 7 January 2012, pp. 38-41.



# Risks of Systemic Collapse

Multiple eco-crises could trigger 'systemic collapse'

Five top risks in likelihood and impact: Climate change, extreme weather events from hurricanes to heatwaves, the decline of life-sustaining ecosystems, food security and dwindling stores of fresh water

Potential to impact and amplify one another in ways that might cascade to create global systemic collapse

Marlowe Hood, **6 February 2020**, Phys.org: <https://phys.org/news/2020-02-multiple-eco-crises-trigger-collapse-scientists.htm>

This was just before the pandemic

# Is this the promised apocalypse?

- Pandemic, deaths, society in chaos
- Climate catastrophe and biodiversity crisis
- Coming financial crisis – overwhelming debts
- Famine on the horizon
- The only thing missing is war (for the moment)

# Impact of the Pandemic

- Brakes slammed on the economy with massive unemployment
- The consumer society at a halt
- We found we really could live without all those “necessities”
- The social dimension has taken on new importance
- Solidarity appeared everywhere

**This is the opportunity for a fundamental transformation**

# Systems experience crises and renewal

- Institutional inertia, multinational corporations, vested interests are blocking change
- Like the dinosaurs
- The global environment is evolving rapidly
- The old system must collapse to make way for a new one to take its place
- We need governance at the scale of the problem

# Governance for Sustainability

Recent proposals for global governance for the 21st century could finally manage the necessary transition to sustainability while embodying the principles of world federalism and the oneness of humanity

# Defining the problem

- National sovereignty: war is the final recourse to impose one state's will on others
- International anarchy, no rule of law
- Struggle for power and world domination
- Push back against multilateralism
- Warfare increasingly dangerous to the survival of the human race
- People fear war and long for peace
- World filled with ego, corruption and aggression
- Rise of reckless political leaders, retreat of democracy

# World Peace – Global Governance

*The international governing body of the Bahá'í Faith, the Universal House of Justice, has addressed the challenges of achieving world peace through global governance. It noted that after the First World War and the Paris Peace conference, the Guardian of the Bahá'í Faith, “Shoghi Effendi could discern ‘the progress, however fitful, of the forces working in harmony with the spirit of the age’. These forces have continued to move humanity towards an age of peace—not merely a peace which rules out armed conflict, but a collective state of being, manifesting unity.”*

(Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)

# Three historical moments

A long journey in fits and starts

Three historical moments reaching for real, lasting peace  
but always falling short:

1. The Paris Conference and the establishment of the League of Nations

(based on Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)





# Three historical moments

2. The United Nations Organization formed from the ashes of the League, a system of international economic institutions, and historic advances in human rights and international law

(based on Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)



# Three historical moments

3. The end of the cold war and explicit calls for the establishment of a new global order. Universal peace seemed to be within grasp.

(based on Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)

# Rise in global consciousness

“These various advances—despite their many limitations and imperfections and the horrifying conflicts that continued to unfold during this time—stand nonetheless as signs of a widespread, gradual but inexorable rise in global consciousness on the part of the earth’s peoples and their attraction to universal justice, to solidarity, to collaboration, to compassion, and to equality.”

(Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)

# New challenges in this century

A retreat from the promising steps forward

Many of the dominant currents in societies everywhere are pushing people apart, not drawing them together

These currents include:

- exorbitant wealth
- intransigence in thinking
- religious fundamentalism
- a decline in public trust
- vested interests seeking to undermine the credibility of all sources of knowledge
- resurgent forces of racism, nationalism, and factionalism.

# Forces of disintegration

“Thus do the forces of disintegration regroup and gain ground. So be it. The unification of humanity is unstoppable by any human force...”

“...there is no reason to doubt that the world’s current state of disorder and confusion will worsen—possibly with catastrophic consequences—until a chastened humanity sees fit to take another significant step, perhaps this time decisive, towards enduring peace.”

(Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)

*In September, the Bahá’í International Community issued a statement for the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the United Nations, entitled*

**A Governance Befitting:  
Humanity and the Path  
Toward a Just Global Order**

**A Governance  
Befitting**

*Humanity and the Path  
Toward a Just Global Order*

A STATEMENT OF THE  
BAHÁ’Í INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY  
ON THE OCCASION OF THE  
75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE UNITED NATIONS

# Turbulence and opportunities

...rapidly shifting global realities prompt a deeper appreciation of humanity's interconnection and interdependence. Amidst the disruption created and accelerated by a world-engulfing pandemic, numerous possibilities are opening for marked social change that can bring stability to the world and enrich the lives of its inhabitants. Throughout history, periods of turbulence have presented opportunities to redefine collective values and the assumptions that underlie them.

# Need for radical transformation

A growing chorus of voices is calling for decisive steps forward in our collective trajectory toward enduring, universal peace.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Oneness

The human family is one.... Its profound implications for our collective behavior must now give rise to a coordinated movement toward higher levels of social and political unity. As Bahá'u'lláh declared over a century ago, "*True peace and tranquility will only be realized when every soul will have become the well-wisher of all mankind.*" The perils of a global community divided against itself are too great to countenance.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Current arrangements insufficient

...recent events demonstrate that current arrangements are no longer sufficient in the face of cascading and increasingly interconnected threats. Integration and coordination must therefore be extended further. The only viable way forward lies in a system of deepening global cooperation.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# More complex levels of integration

In recent years, reasoned critique of multilateral arrangements has, at times, been eclipsed by rejection of the very idea of a rules-based international order. Yet this period of pushback is embedded in broader historical processes carrying the global community toward stronger unity. At each stage in human history, more complex levels of integration become not only possible, but necessary. New and more pressing challenges emerge, and the body politic is compelled to devise new arrangements that address the needs of the time through greater inclusivity, coherence, and collaboration.

# Purposefully organizing

We therefore find ourselves at the threshold of a defining task: purposefully organizing our affairs in full consciousness of ourselves as one people in one shared homeland.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)



# Common values and principles

What is needed today is a settled consensus that, while preserving the various systems and cultures around the world, embodies a set of common values and principles that can attract the support of every nation.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# A measure of agreement

There is a measure of agreement around these shared principles and norms, such as the universality of **human rights**, the imperative to eradicate poverty, or the need to live within environmentally sustainable limits.

(based on Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Diversity of approaches

A framework that accommodates a diversity of approaches, built on a commitment to unity and a shared ethic of justice, would allow common principles to be put into practice in countless arrangements and formulations. Within such a framework, differences in political structure, legal system, and social organization would stand not as points of friction but as sources of potential insight into new solutions and approaches.

# Global interdependence

True acknowledgement of global interdependence requires genuine concern for all, ...for the welfare of any segment of humanity is inextricably bound up with the welfare of the whole.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Holistic and coherent approach

Whatever benefits have accrued from past conceptions of state sovereignty, present conditions demand a far more holistic and coherent approach to analysis and decision-making. What will be the global implications of domestic policies? What choices contribute to shared prosperity and sustainable peace? What steps foster nobility and preserve human dignity?

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Genuine partnership

As awareness of the oneness of humanity is increasingly woven into processes of decision-making, nations will find it easier to see each other as genuine partners in the stewardship of the planet and in securing the prosperity of its peoples.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Spiritual and ethical advancement

...progress for all is not attainable if material advancement is divorced from spiritual and ethical advancement.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Inequality and suffering

...economic growth over recent decades has indisputably brought about prosperity for many, but with that growth unmoored from justice and equity, a few have disproportionately benefited from its fruits and many are in precarious conditions. Those living in poverty are at the greatest risk from any contraction of the world economy, which exacerbates existing inequalities and intensifies suffering.



# Moral assumptions

Every effort to advance society, even if concerned with material conditions alone, rests on underlying moral assumptions.

Only by ensuring that material progress is consciously connected to spiritual and social progress can the promise of a better world be fulfilled.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)



# Necessity of a global order

Movement toward more coordinated and genuinely cooperative international relations will eventually require a process in which world leaders come together to recast and reconstitute the global order. For what was once viewed as an idealistic vision of international cooperation has, in light of the obvious and serious challenges facing humanity, become a pragmatic necessity.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Global civic ethic

Objectives incompatible with the pursuit of the common good will need to be set aside. Until this is the dominant ethic, lasting progress will prove elusive.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Reforming the United Nations

A world council on future affairs could institutionalize consideration of how policies might impact generations to come and give attention to a range of issues such as preparedness for global crises, the use of emerging technologies, or the future of education or employment.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Common stewardship of the planet

Strengthening the legal framework relating to the natural world would lend coherence and vigor to the biodiversity, climate, and environmental regimes and provide a robust foundation for a system of common stewardship of the planet's resources.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Experimentation and innovation

Progress toward the goals enshrined in global agendas... calls for a conscious orientation toward experimentation, search, innovation, and creativity.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Integrity and trustworthiness

Respect for international law, upholding fundamental human rights, adherence to treaties and agreements—only to the extent that such commitments are honored in practice can the United Nations and its Member States demonstrate a standard of integrity and trustworthiness before the people of the world.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Words and deeds

Barring this, no amount of administrative reorganization will resolve the host of long-standing challenges before us.

As Bahá'u'lláh declared, “***Words must be supported by deeds, for deeds are the true test of words.***”

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)



# Cooperation and unity

Collaboration is possible on scales undreamt of in past ages, opening unparalleled prospects for progress. Yet failure to reach an arrangement supporting effective global coordination risks consequences far more severe—potentially catastrophic—than those arising from recent disruptions.

(Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# Remedy for a diseased world

***“Let them take counsel together and, through anxious and full deliberation, administer to a diseased and sorely afflicted world the remedy it requireth.”*** (Bahá'u'lláh)

(quoted by Bahá'í International Community, *A Governance Befitting*, 21 September 2020)

# What can we do?

*This year, the Universal House of Justice has helped us to see what we can do to contribute to a path to a just and sustainable global order.*

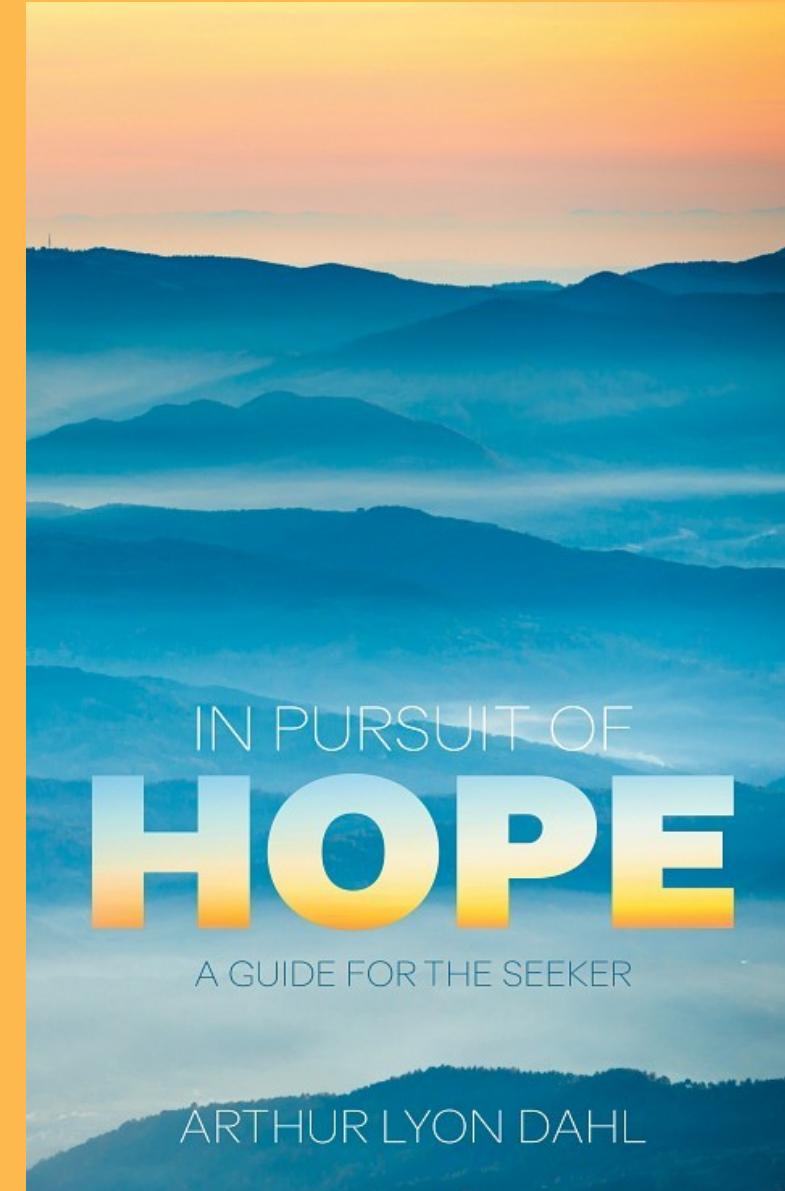


# Hope and strength of spirit

Seldom has it been more evident that society's collective strength is dependent on the unity it can manifest in action, from the international stage to the grassroots...

The world stands more and more in need of the hope and the strength of spirit that faith imparts.

(Universal House of Justice, Naw-Ruz 177 – 20 March 2020)



# Greater insight

However difficult matters are at present, and however close to the limits of their endurance some sections of societies are brought, humanity will ultimately pass through this ordeal, and it will emerge on the other side with greater insight and with a deeper appreciation of its inherent oneness and interdependence.

(Universal House of Justice, Naw-Ruz 177 – 20 March 2020)

# Bold aspirations

Leaders, prominent thinkers, and commentators have begun to explore fundamental concepts and bold aspirations that, in recent times, have been largely absent from public discourse. At present these are but early glimmerings, yet they hold out the possibility that a moment of collective consciousness may be in view.

(Universal House of Justice, Ridvan 2020 – 20 April 2020)

# World unity is possible

“World unity is finally possible. A global order that unifies the nations with the assent of humanity is the only adequate answer to the destabilizing forces that threaten the world.

However, though world unity is possible—nay, inevitable—it ultimately cannot be achieved without unreserved acceptance of the oneness of humankind...”

“Fostering unity, by harmonizing disparate elements and nurturing in every heart a selfless love for humankind, is the task of religion.”

# Constructive action

“No matter how bleak conditions may appear at any given time, no matter how dismal the immediate prospects for bringing about unity, there is no cause for despair. The distressing state of the world can only spur us to redouble our commitment to constructive action. ***“These are not days of prosperity and triumph”*** cautions Bahá’u’lláh. ***‘The whole of mankind is in the grip of manifold ills. Strive, therefore, to save its life through the wholesome medicine which the almighty hand of the unerring Physician hath prepared.’”***

(Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)

# Education

“Consider Bahá'u'lláh's words:

***'Address yourselves to the promotion of the well-being and tranquillity of the children of men. Bend your minds and wills to the education of the peoples and kindreds of the earth, that haply the dissensions that divide it may, through the power of the Most Great Name, be blotted out from its face, and all mankind become the upholders of one Order, and the inhabitants of one City.'*** “

(Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)

# Promoting unity and peace

“Sensitized as they are to the importance of harmony and the fruitlessness of conflict, the followers of Bahá’u’lláh seek to cultivate those conditions that are most conducive to the emergence of unity in any setting. We are heartened to see the believers expanding their efforts to participate in the discourses of society—especially those friends who, in their professional capacity, are able to contribute to discourses directly related to peace.”

(Universal House of Justice, 18 January 2019)

# GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND THE EMERGENCE OF GLOBAL INSTITUTIONS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY



Augusto Lopez-Claros, Arthur Lyon Dahl, Maja Groff

# Global Challenges Foundation

New Shape Prize  
2019



# GLOBAL GOVERNANCE IN AN AGE OF TRANSITION: THE CURRENT AND FUTURE ROLE OF THE UNITED NATIONS

Featuring New Shape Prize Awardees\*

MONDAY, 5 NOVEMBER

1-3PM



Augusto Lopez-Claros is a Senior Fellow at Georgetown University. He was the Director of the World Bank's Global Indicators Group and Chief Economist and Director of the Global Competitiveness Program at the World Economic Forum in Geneva.

Dr. Arthur Lyon Dahl is a retired Deputy Assistant Executive Director of UN Environment (UNEP). He coordinated the UN System-wide Earthwatch at the science-policy interface and was in the secretariat for the 1992 Rio Earth Summit.



Maja Groff is an international lawyer based in The Hague. She serves on the United Nations Committee of the New York City Bar Association, and is a member of the Advisory / Elected Boards of BCorp Europe and ebbf.

Baha'i International Community  
866 United Nations Plaza  
Suite 120

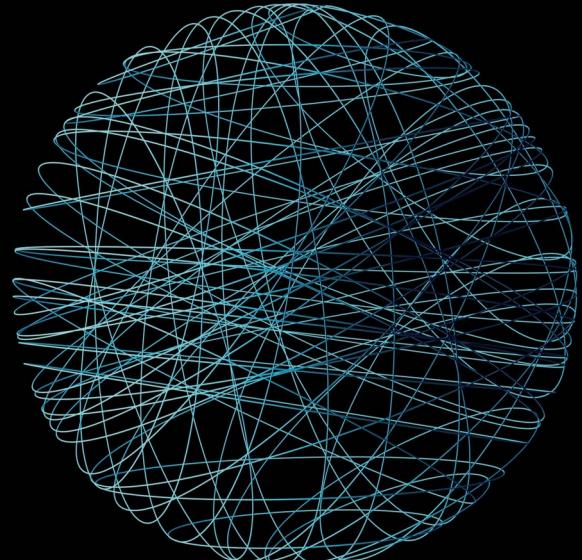
RSVP BIC-NYC@BIC.ORG

\*The New Shape Prize initiative has always had an ambitious goal: to inspire ideas and stimulate debate around new, more effective forms of global cooperation at the highest levels.



## Global Governance and the Emergence of Global Institutions for the 21st Century

Augusto Lopez-Claros, Arthur L. Dahl and Maja Groff



CAMBRIDGE

# Flaws in the UN Charter

- political compromises gave the victors of World War II a veto power in the Security Council, permanent members above the law
- refusal to give the Council independent means to enforce its decisions
- provision for review of the UN Charter ignored
- voluntary: conventions only binding on the states that sign and ratify them, can withdraw

# The approach

- effective governance requires legislative, executive and judicial functions
- nations will only give up right to make war in exchange for effective mechanisms of collective security and peaceful settlement of disputes
- gradual development of relevant international institutions and processes
- build confidence in their effectiveness in reducing national insecurity
- carefully coordinated disarmament
- trust that justice will be done
- States also have to become trustworthy
- collective sense of moral responsibility

# Addressing the fear of global government

- stronger democratic control
- increased representativeness and accountability in decision-making
- bill of individual human rights
- declaration of national rights and responsibilities
- checks and balances, judicial control
- clear ethical foundations for governance

# Limit scope for international governance

Limited to requirements for a coordinated global approach:

- peace, security, dispute settlement
- human rights
- protection of the global environment and areas and resources beyond national jurisdiction (atmosphere, high seas)

Principles of subsidiarity and unity in diversity

## Some elements of charter revision

- activate the provisions for charter revision
- replace the principle of national sovereignty by national autonomy
- primacy of the global common interest in peace and sustainability

# General Assembly as a legislative body

- representing people as well as governments
- weighting of membership by population, economy
- ensure balanced representation of regions, states of different sizes, and variety of cultures and peoples
- empowered to adopt legislation in the global interest binding on all countries

# Legislation supported by advisory mechanisms

- Chamber for Civil Society
- Scientific advisory bodies
- Office of Technology Assessment
- Office of Ethical Assessment

# Security Council replaced by a broader Executive Council

- Eliminate the veto and the consensus rule
- Broader management functions
- Develop the executive functions of the UN Secretariat and the UN Specialized Agencies and Programmes
- 24 members: permanent and collective seats
- Chaired by the Secretary-General

# Enforcement mechanisms

- Standing International Peace Force under UN control, plus Reserve Force
  - Disarmament Commission, phased disarmament
  - Mediation and Conciliation Commission

# Binding Rule of Law

- International Court of Justice given binding jurisdiction over all states, interprets international legal texts
- International Human Rights Tribunal
- International Anti-corruption Court
- Office of the Attorney-General

# Funding Mechanism

- Automatic contribution of 0.1% of GDP from each member
- \$ 70 billion, twice total UN funding, five times regular budget
- Possible Tobin tax or other revenue collection
- Eliminate opportunities for wealthy and private enterprises to escape from taxation

# Specialized Agencies for global risks

- Maintain (possibly consolidate) UN Specialized Agencies, Programmes, Convention Secretariats
- Reformed IMF, protect from financial collapse
- New organization for inequality, business regulation, tax harmonization
- Climate change, binding limits on emissions
- Environment, biodiversity, resource management
- Reformed IOM for migration

# Supporting Measures

- Education: representatives, civil servants, peace force members
- Wide public education to prepare for democratic elections
- Principles and values, based on existing declarations (UDHR, etc.) and conventions

# Trust and trustworthiness

States must trust that decisions are really taken in the common interest

- People must trust that their human rights will be protected
- Everyone should be able to develop their full potential to contribute to society
- Governments must be trustworthy
- Everything founded on justice for all
- Sacrifices should be shared equitably
- No one should be left behind

# How to get there?

Scenarios: act of consultative will in a conference of all states, leverage any crises to advance, or wait for a catastrophe to force the transformation

- Start with World Parliamentary Assembly subsidiary to GA
- Step-wise EU approach to supranational authority (starting with climate change?)

If great majority of nations move forward with UN Charter reform, with only a few hold-outs (permanent members with veto), second option is Charter replacement to create a new organization and abandon the old one:

- assets and subsidiary bodies could be transferred
- hold-outs would be left with an empty structure until they decide to join

# Build communities on spiritual principles

“The devoted efforts that you and your like-minded collaborators are making to build communities founded on spiritual principles, to apply those principles for the betterment of your societies, and to offer the insights arising—these are the surest ways you can hasten the fulfilment of the promise of world peace.”

# Pathway to Sustainability

The pathway to sustainability will be one of empowerment, collaboration and continual processes of questioning, learning and action in all regions of the world. It will be shaped by the experiences of women, men, children, the rich, the poor, the governors and the governed as each one is enabled to play their rightful role in the construction of a new society. As the sweeping tides of consumerism, unfettered consumption, extreme poverty and marginalization recede, they will reveal the human capacities for justice, reciprocity and happiness.

(Bahá'í International Community, *Rethinking Prosperity: Forging Alternatives to a Culture of Consumerism*, 2010)

# FOR FURTHER READING

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