

CITIZENS' INPUT TO THE UN SUMMIT OF THE FUTURE

DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE RECOMMENDATIONS

PREAMBLE: From the written and spoken answers to the 5 x questions explored in this E-consultation, we are convinced that Environment must be at the centre of the recommendations made in the People's Pact for the Future. There is no more important task for the human family than protecting and regenerating the biosphere and global commons which will come under increasing existential threat from this, and future, generations. Our recommendations fall under 4 x Headings:

ONE: QUICK WINS - make the following tweaks to existing global governance structures:

1. **First Step:** Accept the concept of a [common heritage of mankind](#) to establish the principle that some planetary features (atmosphere, oceans, water, forests) belong to all humanity and must be available for everyone's use and benefit, especially developing countries and future generations. Accepting this principle in relation to climate as recommended in the [Vanuatu resolution](#) soon to be heard at the International Court of Justice (ICJ) can open the door to the ICJ making rulings on many other threats and destructive incursions into the global commons. We recommend that the ICJ take on that role and require that all future treaties signed at the UN include provision for arbitration by the ICJ. We further urge other UN Bodies, notably the Security Council, the General Assembly and the ICC to back up its rulings with sanctions and other enforcement measures.
2. **Second Step:** Include Ecocide as a 5th crime against peace in the Rome Statute of the Intl. Criminal Court (ICC) and in all national and regional governance legislation, as the European Union has now done. We recommend adoption of the [Stop Ecocide](#) suggestion of a polycentric system of regulation and enforcement through multiple jurisdictions cascading down from a global body (the ICC & ICJ) to national, state and local bodies + transnational regional bodies to protect eco-systems (river basins, mountain ranges, forests, coastal eco-systems etc.) through culturally appropriate, local enforcement mechanisms. This polycentric approach should form a central part of the proposed Declaration for Future Generations to be agreed at the Summit of the Future: as well as a UN Global Commission or Commissioner for Future Generations, each UN Member state should appoint its own National Commissioner to protect and regenerate the Biosphere for future generations.
3. **Third Step:** by 2035, require all 119 UN Member Governments that have not yet done so to accede to the compulsory jurisdiction of the Intl. Court of Justice, joining the [74 UN Member Governments](#) that have already filed commitments to that effect (*which includes the UK & India*).
4. **Fourth Step:** The convention that only UN Member State Governments can contribute funds to the United Nations system entrenches the dictatorship of governments in the UN System and means that the secretariat cannot act in the best interests of the planet's biosphere and future generations. We therefore recommend that the UN System massively diversify its sources of funding in order to deliver better environmental government. The International Maritime Organisation (IMO) provides a precedent for doing this: it collects a percentage on the registration fees paid by shipping companies to register their ships. Other UN Agencies should be encouraged to do the same building on the model of the Tobin tax – which offers win-win-win solutions in terms of 1) calming global financial markets; 2) raising funds for UN Poverty Reduction and Biosphere protection and regeneration schemes – and – 3) reducing UN Systemwide dependence on government subventions.

TWO: Set up a new Environmental Governance Regulatory Agency: Though some feel that such an Authority can be achieved by a radical transformation of UNEP into a World Environment Authority, many (the majority) felt that now is the time to set up a new global level institution – a [Global Environment Agency](#) (GEA) or equivalent – that has binding, supranational authority in certain essential areas. We recommend that, following the strategies employed in the setting up of the ICC and the Landmine ban, a [Smart Coalition](#) of like-minded organisations working on Global Governance issues be co-created ahead of the UN Summit of the Future, to advocate for such an Agency to be set up to deliver a system of polycentric governance with responsibilities allocated across governance levels (from local to global) based on the principle of subsidiarity. The [Climate Governance Commission](#) recommends that such an Agency would be able to orchestrate the many parts and multiple levels of environmental governance in all their diversity while ensuring that the global environmental commons is protected for the benefit of all, including

future generations. At the same time, it would analyse and debate the very real obstacles to progress exposed by Earth Systems scientists, indigenous wisdom, and the principles of [Earth Trusteeship](#). Current super-power rivalry make the setting up of such an Agency politically difficult: however, a glance at the scientific analysis of Planetary Boundaries and approaching Tipping Points + IPCC and IPBES reports confirm the urgency of setting up such an Agency, and that doing so might, in turn, ease the rivalry. In addition to scientists, the Agency should recruit members and staff from amongst representatives of UN Member State parliaments; Indigenous peoples; civil society, youth and women's groups – *and* – creative artists and media professionals communicate the Authority's decisions in fun, compelling ways to all members of the human family. The Agency should aim for a balanced membership – with equal representation from North and South, developed and less-developed nations, male and female + elder and younger generations.

THREE: Issues to be tackled by Strengthened Environmental Governance: in order to protect and regenerate the Biosphere for this, and Future, Generations, new regulations are needed, along with stronger enforcement of those regulations, in the following areas:

- **A De-Carbonisation Agenda:** the threat of catastrophic climate change makes the de-carbonisation the priority imperative of the next few years. However, this must be accompanied by substantial investments and technology transfers to deliver a green, sustainable industrialisation and job creating transformation in the Global South. The solar rich countries of the Global South must be given the investment they require to leap-frog into EV car fleets, natural gas networks – that can easily be transitioned to Green Hydrogen networks and an 100% renewable electricity network that achieves a just transition and skills re-training of all former employees of the coal and fossil fuel industries. International financing must be made available immediately through SDRs from global and regional financial institutions, bilateral donors and favourable development loans from friendly corporations and private banks. The De-Carbonisation agenda must also seek to reduce consumption, outlaw planned obsolescence, reduce waste and development more sustainable production and manufacturing opportunities, particularly in the Global South. The externalities or all products and services should be priced into the cost price of everything and encourage the transition from a society based on private property ownership to one based on shared user-ship.
- **A just transition from industries that pose an existential threat to the Biosphere,** most obviously fossil fuel production – to renewable and non-polluting sources of energy. That “just transition” must result in an acceleration of development in the Global South through increased financing and technology transfer, while at the same time constraining and reducing consumption in the Global North as proposed in SDG 12. The authority should seek just transitions in many other fields including a transition away from industrial farming to regenerative farming, sustainable construction and urban planning, eco-tourism, and a transition away from military and nuclear industries through effective multi-lateralism and peace-building.
- **Decisions on how regulate global geoengineering and techno-fix experiments:** A Global Environment Authority is urgently required to police and, when necessary, to prevent un-proven, un-peer-reviewed geo-engineering initiatives. For example: many argue for the installation of mirrors in the atmosphere to reduce global warming, ignoring the science that explains that any deployment of such machinery in the atmosphere would reduce photo-synthesis from the Sun on which all plant life depends to grow, and feed people.

FOUR: Transformative education: Transformative education means *lessons that live in the mind for a lifetime*. The Youth of today are the Ancestors of tomorrow and, if those ancestors are to survive to raise future generations, they need to be ready to adopt levels of global governance that protect and regenerate the biosphere on which all future life will depend. To do this, governments must implement SDG Goal 4, Target 7 and “ensure that, by 2030, all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development,” and the Transforming Education Summit’s Action Track 2’s call to “empower learners with knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to be resilient, adaptable and prepared for the uncertain future – through an emphasis on foundational learning for basic literacy and numeracy, education for sustainable development which encompasses environmental and climate change education + skills for employment and entrepreneurship.” To deliver on these commitments, National Curricula must be adjusted to put the Planetary Emergency at the heart of every child’s education from Grades 1 thru’ 12. Where possible, young people and teachers must then be empowered to deliver transformative education programmes to their communities and help generate the [universal solidarity](#) needed to protect the Biosphere from further degeneration, and regenerate to meet the needs of future generations.

GLOBAL FUTURES FORUM

“People’s Pact for the Future”

Environmental Governance Track

BRIEFING / WELCOME NOTE

prepared by

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Background / Context:

The Central Challenge of Environmental Governance is no different from the challenge that people have faced throughout history: how to find a balance between what we take from the biosphere and what we leave behind for our descendants. The difference now is that we are taking so much out we are in great danger of leaving a hollowed-out husk of a planet for our descendants. The modern history of our recognition of this fact starts in 1987 with the UN’s adoption of the concept of Sustainable Development.

- 1987: The Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future*, which articulated the principle of Sustainable Development: *“Meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”*
- 1990: First IPCC Climate Report (we now have 6 IPCC peer-reviewed Reports)
- 1992: Rio Earth Summit – Agenda 21 (and the Children’s Edition: *Rescue Mission : Planet Earth*)
- 1997: Kyoto Protocol
- 2000: Millennium Development Goals
- 2007-8: *The Economics of Eco-Systems and Biodiversity (TEEB)* - a global analysis of the economic significance of biodiversity, the costs of the loss of biodiversity and the failure to take protective measures versus the costs of effective conservation led by economist, Pavan Sukhdev;
- 2015: [Sustainable Development Goals](#): Check out [Goal 8 Target 4](#), which calls for all governments to *“Improve progressively global resource efficiency and endeavour to decouple economic growth from environmental degradation...”* That ‘decoupling’ has to be a key goal of Environmental Governance.
- 2015: Paris Climate Agreement
- 2020: UN 75th Anniversary Global Conversation
- 2021: Our Common Agenda commitment to [“Protect Our Planet”](#) through a [Quintet of Change](#) Strategy which requires the UN to become a *“state-of-the-art Data Analyst and Communicator for the benefit of the world; to discover and implement new ideas to enable the UN to do its job in a digital world; to design forward-looking policies and programmes to enable us to take anticipatory action; to focus on impact, learning and continuous improvement; - and - to leverage behavioural science to improve policy effectiveness.”*
- 2022: Partha Dasgupta’s [Biodiversity Review](#) – essential background reading. He states: *“Governments almost everywhere exacerbate the problem by paying people more to exploit Nature than to protect it. A conservative estimate of the total cost globally of subsidies that damage Nature is around US\$4 to \$6 trillion per year. And we lack the institutional arrangements needed to protect global public goods, such as the ocean or the world’s rainforests*
- 2022: the [Kunming-Montreal](#) pact, signed in Montreal in December at the 15th Meeting of the Biodiversity COP signatories agreed a *“30-by-30 Target”* to protect 30% of the planet’s natural resources by 2030, contained in 23 Global Targets. Again, essential reading as it highlights the extreme difficulty that the UN works under: enforcement, even through economic sanctions, let alone the courts, is impossible. Clause 37 of the Pact states: *“The mechanisms will be undertaken in a facilitative, non-intrusive, non-punitive manner, respecting national sovereignty and avoiding placing undue burden on the parties.”*

That – ladies and gentlemen – is the Challenge of Global Environmental Governance. Several courageous NGOs are trying to rise to that Challenge, amongst them:

- [Stop Ecocide](#) Campaign: this seeks to add Ecocide to the [Rome Statute](#) as a Crime Against Humanity and enable the prosecution of such Crimes in the same way as the [International Criminal Court](#) currently prosecutes War Crimes or Genocide.
- ICE([International Court for the Environment](#))
- [Client Earth](#) and others around the world to set up some kind of '[Environmental Security Council](#)' should also be explored.
- [Global Governance Forum](#)
- [Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability](#) (FOGGS)
- **UN Charter Review Process:** One of the things that some of these NGOs are calling for is for UN Member Governments to agree to an Article 109 UN Charter Review process. [Article 109](#) calls for: *"A General Conference of the Members of the United Nations for the purpose of reviewing the present Charter. Any alteration of the present Charter recommended by two-thirds vote of the Conference shall take effect when ratified...."* Though the Charter Review was supposed to be scheduled in 1955, it never happened. Recently, several these leading think tanks agreed that the only way to create a global institution capable of protecting and conserving the Global Commons is to convene a Charter Review meeting to discuss and deliver the revisions to the UN Charter required to achieve such protection.
- [Nordic Council's Circular Business Model](#) for sustainable growth.
- [Sustainable Estonia 21](#) - the Estonian government's plans to integrate the implementation of the SDGs at all levels + locally relevant indicators to measure their success.
- [European Green Deal package](#) has a bold ambition of making Europe the first climate neutral continent by 2050, reducing emissions by at least 55% by 2030 through its [Emissions Trading System](#) (ETS), its [border adjustment mechanisms](#) and a [Carbon Dividend Plan](#).

Finally, as the Summit of the Future is designed to correct the failure of previous generations to make sufficient effort to ensure that future generations can meet their needs, we urge participants in this track to read young people's proposals on these issues. They start with the imperative of requiring everyone to have access to the same information about

1. The State of the Planet as it is now
2. The State of the Planet as it needs to be in 2050 and 2100 if it is to be capable of meeting the needs of a Global Population of +/- 10 billion people;
3. What we have to do to create such a planet?

The initial investigations of Peace Child International into these issues can be found at:

www.whatnext4un.org. A 1-minute Video animation summarising what young people need to do can be found here: . And, based on that information, the Peace Child team of students who made that State of the Planet programme came up with these recommendations to the Youth Future Series of the Hi-Level Advisory Panel on Effective Multi-lateralism – the Panel drafting content for the Summit of the Future:

- We must strengthen the UN and make it completely Democratic by creating an E-democracy Peoples Platform through mobile phone technology. We must use it to hold Global Referenda to generate consensus on how to deal with the biggest threats to our future. We must give the International Court of Justice power to deploy UN Peace-Keeping Forces to enforce its rulings.
- Enforce stricter regulation of capitalist markets to outlaw and criminalise illicit financial flows, human trafficking, and industries that are dangerous to humanity and the environment like drugs and fossil fuels. We also have to incentivise the rapid transition to clean renewable and fusion energy through subsidies and tax breaks and require an immediate end to all subsidies to fossil fuel and environmentally destructive industries, replacing them with punitive taxation.
- We must develop an Education Curriculum that creates a passion in our generation to learn about the detail of the triple threats of climate change, pollution and biodiversity loss. We must learn how to resolve them with a passion to save Life on this Planet by learning the truth about how and why previous generations failed to do so.

ESSENTIAL READING:

ONE: KUNMING-MONTREAL PROTOCOL:

<https://www.cbd.int/doc/c/e6d3/cd1d/daf663719a03902a9b116c34/cop-15-l-25-en.pdf>

TWO: PARTHA DASGUPTA BIODIVERSITY REVIEW – *Read Chapter 21: “Options for Change”*

[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962785/The Economics of Biodiversity The Dasgupta Review Full Report.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/962785/The_Economics_of_Biodiversity_The_Dasgupta_Review_Full_Report.pdf)

THREE: STOP ECOCIDE CAMPAIGN – *“Activating a Law to Protect the Earth”*

<https://www.stopecocide.earth/>

FOUR: THE ANTARTIC TREATY(1959) – *A Framework for the Environmental Protection of a Continent*

<https://www.bas.ac.uk/about/antarctica/the-antarctic-treaty/the-antarctic-treaty-1959/>

FIVE: CLIENT EARTH – *Using the power of the law to protect the Earth and its inhabitants*

<https://www.clientearth.org/about/who-we-are/>

SIX: ICE COALITION – *Creating an International Court for the Environment*

environmentalists, lawyers, business leaders, academics and NGOs advocating for an international rule of law to protect the global environment for present and future generations

<http://www.icecoalition.org/>

Possible Interviewee Suggestions:

1. Pavan Sukhdev – Economist & Architect of TEEB; (*Week ONE or TWO - Background*)
2. Johan Rockström – Planetary Boundaries; (*Week ONE or TWO - Background*)
3. British Antarctic Survey (*Week ONE or TWO - Background*)
4. Jojo Mehta - Stop Ecocide (*Week ONE or TWO - Background*)
5. James Thornton – Client Earth (*Week ONE or TWO - Background*)
6. ICE (Intl. Court for the Environment) (*Week ONE or TWO - Background*)
7. Sir Partha Dasgupta – author, Biodiversity Review (*Week ONE or TWO - Background*)
8. Richard Heindorf – Post Carbon Institute (*Week TWO - Priorities*)
9. Mark Lynas – Author, Six Degrees; leading environmental author; (*Week TWO - Priorities*)
10. Jonathon Porritt – Leading Environmental Activist and thinker; (*Week TWO - Priorities*)
11. Rupert Read – Philosophy Professor; Founder Extinction Rebellion; (*Week TWO - Priorities*)
12. George Monbiot – Journalist, The Guardian; ; (*Week TWO - Priorities*)
13. Akhim Steiner – Administrator, UNDP; formerly Director, UNEP; ; (*Week TWO - Priorities*)
14. Justin Rowlat – BBC Correspondent ; (*Week TWO - Priorities*)
15. Stuart Bruce, Legal Research Fellow, Centre for International Sustainable Development Law
16. Peers for the Planet
17. Kadi Ristok

PUBLIC DIPLOMACY

The United Nations was set up in the name of “We the peoples...” Yet, because the UN, like most diplomatic activity is secretive and shrouded in mystery, we the Peoples have precious little knowledge of, and thus little interest in, what goes on inside the four walls of the Security Council or General Assembly Chambers.

A commitment to Public Diplomacy in the New Agenda for Peace would throw open the doors of those chambers to allow the public to witness, and pose questions to, those debates that directly impact their future. It would also allow We the Peoples to take advantage of the Digital Infrastructure which has been constructed to link peoples across the planet in a way unimagined when the original Charter was drafted. In San Francisco in 1945, the UN was created with 3-legs: its main leg is the Member State governments – its paymasters and major decision-makers. The 2nd leg is the Secretariat, drawn from very well-qualified citizens of every UN Member State. The 3rd leg is civil society – interest groups, activists, NGOs and Business leaders who have an interest in the smooth running of the global family. To these 3, we must now add a 4th leg: the Digital UN. Though still in its infancy, connectivity is advancing rapidly, and soon, every member of the human family will be connected, opening the UN up to the possibility of running Global Referenda – the ultimate way to engage “We the Peoples...”

Before that happens, we can build on the [Liechtenstein Veto Initiative](#), and require that if any UN Member State seeks to call upon its citizens to fight and die, and kill another member states’ citizens, in a war that UN peace-keeping efforts have failed to prevent, (like the war in Ukraine) – the UN should have the power to convene a publicly-broadcast, deep-listening process. This process would allow each side in the conflict a generous amount of time to explain WHY they feel compelled to require their citizens to make that sacrifice and the right to murder another member states’ citizens, WHAT their goals in the conflict are, and HOW they propose to achieve them.

The Deep-listening process, developed at the [Presencing Institute](#) in Cambridge Massachusetts, requires each participant to move through [4 x levels of listening](#), thus:

1. **Downloading** - (*skimming: looking for information to confirm what we already know or expect*)
2. **Factual Listening** - (*focused on learning the facts we don’t already know*)
3. **Empathic Listening** - (*connecting with the speaker on an emotional level; putting ourselves in their shoes; seeing things from their perspective*) - and -
4. **Generative Listening** - (*moving beyond connecting with the speaker to connect with their core ideas; dropping the ego and other barriers to the generation of new ideas; generating a shared energy and enthusiasm to articulate and agree them - and start bringing them into reality*)

Each partner in the conversation has to commit to these 4 x levels of listening – and do all that they can to reach level 4 with each speaker. They can do this knowing that the other participants in the conversation will have to move through the 4 x levels of listening to them when they have their turn to speak. At the end, an expert facilitator must try to build the conversation towards a consensus conclusion.

Deep Listening and Public Diplomacy are just two of the many different approaches to Diplomacy which we urge the UN to explore, as it develops a New Agenda for Peace – and re-invents itself for the 21st Century to better achieve “effective multilateralism.” The [US Institute of Peace](#) and the [Institute of Multi-Track Diplomacy](#) have identified several Track 1.5 & Track 2.0 approaches to diplomacy – and initiatives like the [Harvard Negotiation Project](#) started by William Ury, and the [One Earth Future Foundation](#) + many, many others have developed techniques for arbitration and “Getting to Yes!” that could be usefully employed alongside – and in addition to – traditional forms of secret, inter-governmental diplomacy – which some refer to as ‘Monastic diplomacy.’

The approach that Peace Child International championed – large-scale youth / cultural exchanges – is also a good enabler of post-conflict reconciliation and peace-building. While impossible while war is still raging, such exchange schemes should form a bed-rock part of all post-conflict reconstruction activities proposed by the UN’s New Agenda for Peace. It could be argued that a failure to introduce exchanges of this kind in the post-Cold War era almost guaranteed the re-emergence of violent conflict that we see now.

So – we urge the drafters of the New Agenda for Peace to be bold and courageous about looking beyond the silos of Member State government diplomacy to the wider possibilities for creative and impactful diplomacy that exist in the non-governmental sphere. We can – and we want - to help you!

