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Back to Index: <http://gaiapc.ca/PI/1a-Index.pdf>

***Blue Planet Governance***



The era of global *tragedy of the commons* ends.  
The new paradigm begins when Interdependent Regional Governments unite!  
To form a chaordic organization called,  
**The *United Regions***  
Where coordinated expertise in Earth Science, Human-Nature and Economics  
Provide Regional Guidance to Maximize *Real Wealth*:

*Real wealth is a measurement of a robust ecology  
and of the general health and happiness of the people!*

Acronyms used within this text:

BPG (Blue Planet Governance)

MCP (Money Corporations Politics),

AbRealities (Abstract Realities – human created entities such a government or a ball game)

In his 2010 book, *Zero Point Of Systemic Collapse*, Pulitzer Prize winner Chris Hedges opens the text with this comment:[\[R1\]](#)

“Aleksandr Herzen, speaking a century ago to a group of anarchists about how to overthrow the czar, reminded his listeners that it was not their job to save a dying system but to replace it: “We think we are the doctors. We are the disease.” All resistance must recognize that the body politic and global capitalism are dead. We should stop wasting energy trying to reform or appeal to it. This does not mean the end of resistance, but it does mean very different forms of resistance. It means turning our energies toward building sustainable communities to weather the coming crisis, since we will be unable to survive and resist without a cooperative effort.”

People in the business of envisioning

Before getting into our own envisioned sustainable future, it is instructive to look at what others have said when considering this area of thought.

For the past half century, Donella Meadows [\[R2\]](#) was a leading-edge thinker about future issues. She was co-researcher and writer of the controversial book, *Limits to Growth*, in 1972. The basic criterion for this book was specified by the Club of Rome (COR). At that time, Donella worked with her husband Dennis Meadows, both were MIT researchers. They created a computer program that used systems dynamic principles to analyze such things as changing global statistics in population, resource use (both renewable and non-renewable), and also ecological change rates. The program analyzed these data and projected them graphically over time to see where past trends take us in the future. Various projections were made to show what would happen in the future if: we reduced population and consumption rates; if business-as-usual continued and if we increased population and consumption rates. The business-as-usual graph indicated that peak-energy and food would become serious issues in about 50 years from that time, during which both pollution build-up and resource depletion would herald the beginning of the down slope. It is now about 40 years later and it appears the projections were correct. The denial industry that vocally discredited and smeared the COR projections, in the years after publication, was very wrong.

Three decades later, in 1992, the Meadows team published, *Beyond The Limits: Confronting Global Collapse and Envisioning a Sustainable Future*. Gro Harlem Brundtland, chairperson for UN-commissioned 1987 *Brundtland Report*, [\[R3\]](#), says this about the Meadows' book:

*This book is essential reading for everybody who is concerned with the central issue of our times: how to achieve a transition to a sustainable global future.*

The late Donella Meadows was quite experienced in the business of the future, quoted here is an abstract of a keynote speech she gave at a meeting of the *International Society for Ecological Economics*, in 1994.

Vision is the most vital step in the policy process. If we don't know where we want to go, it makes little difference that we make great progress. Yet vision is not only missing almost entirely from policy discussions; it is missing from our whole culture. We talk about our fears, frustrations, and doubts endlessly, but we talk only rarely and with embarrassment about our dreams. Environmentalists have been especially ineffective in creating any shared vision of the world they are working toward -- a sustainable world in which people live within nature in a way that meets human needs while not degrading natural systems. Hardly anyone can imagine that world, especially not as a world they'd actively like to live in. The process of building a responsible vision of a sustainable world is not a rational one. It comes from values, not logic. Envisioning is a skill that can be developed, like any other human skill. This paper indicates how.

The envisioned society must be based on what has been established as real and can be justified in terms of both science and human nature. *Blue Planet Governance (BPG)*, as described in the next few chapters, describes such a system. We hope our envisioned outline of Blue Planet Governance (BPG) at 50 years After Paradigm Change (050APC) will be a clear enough alternate system to gather the teams of specialists needed to begin building the prototype infrastructure models.

Envisioning is recommended by Robert Costanza [\[R4\]](#), for the *Institute for Ecological Economics*, in developing their policy analysis techniques. This organization promotes changes to the monetary system.

Lester Brown, founder of *Worldwatch Institute and Earth Police Institute*, has written several Plan B's, most recent being Plan B4 [\[R5\]](#). Brown has made heroic efforts at awakening society to its destructive course into

the future, starting with his annual *State Of The World* books in the '80s. These books were essential reading for those of us beginning to learn about the human predicament.

A long-time friend and one time director of the *Gaia Preservation Coalition*, the late Dr. Bruce Buchanan (psychiatrist, systems thinker, member of Noetic Institute), had written a series of articles for COMER ([Canadian Monetary Reform Organization](#)). Quoted here is the lead-in to a section on visioning called *The Vision Thing*:

In politics a vision usually implies some kind of idealized aim, able to structure and guide hopes and plans to satisfy fundamental human needs, and attract votes. If the vision is not to be empty its realization requires, in effect, a systems approach: goals must be articulated, efforts evaluated, and information provided to remedy inevitable problems and errors.

An adequate vision must be more than an expression of hope. While it must be grounded in specifics, it must also reflect a holistic view and new possibilities. It will likely call for increased understanding among stakeholders. This may entail some risk, and bring about some anxiety. Yet the greater risks may lie in hunkering down with the familiar, for some problems cannot be solved within traditional frameworks of understanding. What is required is a leap out of the box, to a new level or paradigm and expanded possibilities.

The remaining sections of the envisioning sections will endeavour to follow Dr. Buchanan's criteria as closely as possible. The chapter called, *UR – The Wheelhouse*, will give an overview of the proposed dynamic governance, while the sections called, *The view from O5OAPC* and *Dynamic flows*, will be, grounded in specifics'.

In his '98 book, *Earth at a Crossroads: Paths to a Sustainable Future*, [R6] Professor Hartmut Bossel uses the term, *pathways to the future*, in his envisioning effort. Bossel's book is primarily about dynamic systems and also how dynamics can apply to social organizations such as governments. As such, Bossel's *pathways scenario* has many details that are closely aligned to this troubleshooter's vision of BPG, including the need for a new and different monetary system. A changed monetary role is lacking in other Plan B's, although some do call for reform to the old. In a paragraph to justify the need to change society to operate by dynamic principles, Bossel explains why something less will simply not work. In a "Reality Check for Path B" he states:

Path B flies in the face of current mainstream economic thinking. It would require drastic changes in the current system. It would have to turn around very strong current development trends. So is it realistic? And above all, is it really necessary to change the current system so much to make it sustainable? Couldn't we perhaps just introduce small changes in the present system to achieve the same result? No.

"In looking for another riverbed of future development, one tries to find a solution that is as close as possible to the old one. Path B is as close to the old one as sustainability would allow. If one compromises on this or that, the path is no longer sustainable."

Even though the dynamics of the monetary system would be significantly changed, Bossel goes to great lengths to assure the reader that he is introducing nothing different from others who envision change toward sustainability. He points out that suggested different social scenarios do not need to be immediate, and can evolve over time, at different paces in different places. These thoughts are in close alignment with this BPG proposal, which also gives details of the interactive system function, and how the social transition may occur by dovetailing with many of the growing number of localization movements.

Here is a list of 14 comments based on Bossel's book that are in line with the background thinking for BPG, as I understand his intent:

- Globalisation in its current form should be seen as evil. p10
- We have common understanding of the nature of and importance of systems thinking.
- Individuals can learn to accept a feeling of moral responsibility toward our common future and of those who will follow.
- We must accept that we are a part of nature, not a special species.
- Global standards must be developed and respected with regard to the environment, trade and other areas of common interests.
- While some common standards are essential, a robust system requires diversity of subsystem components such as diverse local cultural practices within communities.
- "The unaccountable shareholder", must be removed from control of local resources, e.g., absentee landlords.
- Private ownership of the commons must end.
- Money available for human activity must be dynamically tied to the availability of replenishable resources to support the activity.
- Trade sanctions, tariffs and education must be the primary tools to coerce reluctant regions into participation in the global BPG agreements and standards – instead of war.
- Subjects related to sustaining the living systems of Spaceship Earth must be taught in schools from an early age. And understanding of foundational issues must become a prerequisite to the right to vote.
- Regions need to have control over their populations.
- Regions need to have their own currencies.
- There needs to be an agreed balance between one's personal right to procreate, and the right of people of the region to have a sustainable future.

All of these points will be addressed in the following chapters that describe the political layout of a society 50 years after Paradigm Change. At this time the world is divided into highly autonomous regional units where the monetary wealth of each region is based on a number of measured wealth-factors that represent real wealth (details in Chapter 4d). Regional wealth is expressed as wealth per capita to bring regional population levels into the mental-sphere. Development of the monetary/economic system took into account the wisdom of many others, including enlightened economist Manfred Max-Neef who states:

One, the economy is to serve the people and not the people to serve the economy. Two, development is about people and not about objects. Three, growth is not the same as development, and development does not necessarily require growth. Four, no economy is possible in the absence of ecosystem services. Five, the economy is a subsystem of a larger finite system, the biosphere, hence infinite growth is impossible. And the fundamental value to sustain a new economy should be that no economic interest, under any circumstance, can supersede the reverence for life.

Prior to launching into the envisioning session, here's a little background on an organization called the *Gaia Preservation Coalition* (GPC) [\[R7\]](#). GPC was formed by myself and others about 1988. It became an official federally registered NGO in 1992, and has existed since that time. It was Canada's first official NGO approved to conduct all meetings and decision-making via internet. GPC has directors in Canada, USA and

New Zealand. The Toronto Ontario group held by-monthly meetings in Toronto and made efforts to reach out to others to share the news that all was not well in our world, particularly our future world. We made public presentations with data explaining the human population growth issues, we provided data illustrating widespread ecological decline, and pointed to article explaining that we have an unstable economic and banking system that is incapable dealing with zero growth or negative growth. While most individuals seemed to accept the reality of individual components of the message most people would not accept that these data would affect them personally and would impact on their future life expectancies, and especially affect their children and grandchildren's future. Denial, cognitive dissonance appeared to generally prevailed. In one group a woman spoke out almost tearfully saying, "How can you live with horrible this information?" She did not deny the information; she just found it quite upsetting. I never saw her again.

In order to help more people make the personal journey to consciously accept the big-picture implications of what our current paradigm's apparent future appears to hold, GPC members developed a [12 step approach](#), collectively developing the *12 Personal Gaia Principles*. The concept was borrowed from the *Alcoholics Anonymous* organization where the 12 step approach has been an effective addiction recovery tool to help those who have [bottomed out](#), a descriptive term describing the point when an individual finally realizes that alcohol or drugs are destroying their world and they accept that their survival depends on a significant change in lifestyle. The AA support group offers hope to the addict with a shared vision of a sober life.

However, about that time, GPC meetings in Toronto ended as some members moved elsewhere. The 12 step approach was never tried in this application. The official GPC registration was dropped and GPC has been mostly an internet exchange think-tank-like group. Ongoing discussions have a wide range of subjects, but most relating to the human predicament, with a constant flow of relevant new information from around the world. Many of the background thoughts and ideas going into the envisioned dynamic society have been germinated by participation with the GPC group, and also from other list servers on related issues. This information sharing continues today.

In the past 20 years, there have been significant areas of awakening in new waves of enlightenment, leading to social unrest, amplified by social media. In 2011 [The Occupy Movement](#), was in the headlines. Thousands of NGOs and individuals lobbied the public on the issues of their primary focus, but are the times ripe for a sea-change in social attitudes, such as the significant political/economic changes that would be needed to deal with the 13 points above?

Perhaps there has been some improvement in general acceptance, but recent experience of some acquaintances who have made big-picture overview presentations about the human predicament to university level groups suggest only a few percent appear ready to acknowledge that [The Future is Not What It Used To Be](#) [R8].

Perhaps a reminder of the 12 Steps of the *Gaia Personal Principles* could become a common bonding element within community or student group discussion sessions? But but we also need shared vision of what a viable sustainable future could be like. The following chapters propose such a vision.

The Personal Gaia Principles as agreed by consensus 20 years ago:

**Principle 1:** To acknowledge that uncontrolled human population growth in conjunction with the unrestrained consumption of earth resources have brought about a crisis that threatens all life on

earth. To work toward reducing the human impact on nature so that future generations can enjoy and share the fruits of this unique planet.

**Principle 2:** To recognize that humans, individually and collectively, possess characteristics that may blind our objectivity regarding an unpleasant reality. By interacting with fellow humans we can help each other recognize, acknowledge, and understand these weaknesses, enabling us to deal with unpleasant reality.

**Principle 3:** To modify our personal expectations in life from expectations based on the past, to expectations consistent with a sustainable future.

**Principle 4:** To assume responsibility for personal change because in a free society no government or world-wide organization can force upon us the required behavioral and attitudinal changes. Personal long-lasting freedom requires personal responsibility and compromise.

**Principle 5:** To be undaunted by the enormity of the task at hand and to work around problems that cannot be dealt with effectively and immediately.

**Principle 6:** To establish the common good as the highest priority, while preserving individual human freedom and rights where possible. The long-term well-being of Gaia will be the primary consideration.

**Principle 7:** To work toward living within our global means with regard to energy usage and to recycle consumer goods rather than extract non-renewable resources from Earth.

**Principle 8:** To work toward the elimination of man-made classification barriers that have historically caused conflict between groups of humans.

**Principle 9:** To work for the maintenance of the democratic process in countries where the democratic process is functional, and to bring about change within the rule of law.

**Principle 10:** To recognize that humans must become stewards of the planet, but that stewardship does not make humans superior to other life forms.

**Principle 11:** To lobby governments to assess all legislation considering the full dimension of time, including life on Earth in the distant future.

**Principle 12:** To accept personal responsibility, and to help in one's own way toward communication of the GAIA PRINCIPLES, either individually or collectively to others both at home and abroad.



Back to Index: <http://gaiapc.ca/PJ/1a-Index.pdf>

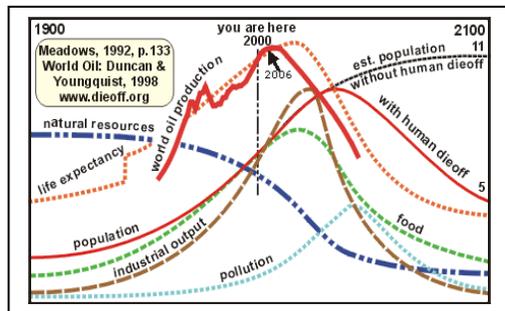
To next Chapter <http://gaiapc.ca/PJ/4ba-050APC.pdf>

[R1] Chris Hedges: Zero Point of System Collapse  
<http://www.adbusters.org/magazine/88/chris-hedges.html>

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[R2] Donella H. Meadows  
Adjunct Professor, Environmental Studies Program, Dartmouth College  
Hanover NH 03755 USA  
Written for the Third Biennial Meeting of the International Society for Ecological Economics,  
October 24-28, 1994, San Jose, Costa Rica  
<http://www.pelicanweb.org/solisustv07n01page2.html>  
Before her death in 2001 she was Adjunct Professor of the Environmental Studies Program at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire.  
The Meadows team worked along with Jay W. Forrester, an early thinker in cybernetics and dynamic systems.

This graphic, from Meadows' '92 book, *Beyond The Limits To Growth*, gives a look at projections from data available in 1992 compared with what was predicted in 1972. The standard run of business as usual shows little change from their original projections of events (Note: a projection is not a forecast). Human die-off from Mother Nature's cull has started well before 2050.



On April 2012, 50 years after *Limits* were published, the *Smithsonian Magazine* again brought the graphs of the past up to date and projected them into the future. Review the [Smithsonian study here](#). The graphs remain virtually unchanged from the original.

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[R3]  
Brundtland Report, a UN commissioned study of the state of the world, resulted in a 1997 book called *Our Common Future*. In my earlier, *A 21<sup>st</sup> Century Steward's Handbook*, I made reference to this book in a chapter called, *Evidence of the SCSyndrome*. I used this expression, Sacred Cow Syndrome, to allude to the seemingly large-scale avoidance of key issues such as the human population issue or the physical impossibility of the economic growth era to continue much longer. Reference was made to writings by Al Gore, Lester Brown and other well-known writers. Here's a quotation from the Brundtland Report:

"The period ahead must be regarded as transitional from an era in which energy has been used in an unsustainable manner. A generally acceptable pathway to a safe sustainable energy future has not yet been found. We do not believe that these dilemmas have yet been addressed by the international community with a sufficient sense of urgency and in a global perspective."

Despite the fact that the energy issue has not been solved, the book then carries on with plans for global business-as-usual as it coins the much touted oxymoron, *Sustainable Development!*

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[R4]

Robert Constanz, Institute for Ecological Economics, University of Maryland

<http://www.consecol.org/Journal/vol4/iss1/art5/index.html>

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[R5]

Lester Brown of World Watch Institute and Earth Policy Institute.

[Plan B4](#) recommends a zero growth economy. However, it appears that this is not good enough.

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[R6]

[Hartmut Bossel](#) was professor of environmental systems analysis and director of the [Scientific Center for Environmental Systems Research](#) at the University of Kassel, Germany

Author of *Earth at a Crossroads: Paths to a sustainable future*. And many other publications.

<http://www.hartmutbossel.de/>

[R7]

[Gaia Preservation Coalition](#) was formed in late 1988, and became an official NGO in 1992. On this web page you will find the 12 step personal principles.

[R8] [Joerg Friedrichs](#), associate professor at Oxford wrote, [The Future is Not What It Used To Be](#), and indicates that only a few students are willing to discuss seriously the issues that relate to our common future. Similarly, [Nate Hagins](#), who has had a diverse career, had made many [presentations to university students](#), recently to University of Minnesota. Nate also indicates a very low rate of acceptance of the data presented as being meaningful to themselves.

[The "but-not-yet" syndrome. MS]

>>>>Notes

This four minute video with Hans Rosling shows how general health of the people increases with a rising income per capita.

[http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com/archives/2010/12/200\\_years\\_in\\_4\\_minutes.php?more?ref=fpblg](http://www.talkingpointsmemo.com/archives/2010/12/200_years_in_4_minutes.php?more?ref=fpblg)

[Ted Trainer](#) Senior Lecturer, School of Social Work, University of New South Wales (Australia):

<http://www.arts.unsw.edu.au/tsw/D75.ThoughtsonTrans.html>

<http://ssis.arts.unsw.edu.au/tsw/TheTransitionProcess.html>

Trainer's envisioned list of requirements for a sustainable society.

<http://ssis.arts.unsw.edu.au/tsw/>