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State of the World

We Are Living Beyond Our Means

According to the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment (MA), a UN report backed by 1,360 leading scientists from 95 countries released in March 2005, unless we change our policies and practices substantially, human race faces a major environmental catastrophe this century.

The assessment analyses the connections between ecosystems and human well-being focusing on "ecosystem services." An ecosystem is "a dynamic complex of plant, animal, and microorganism communities and the nonliving environment interacting as a functional unit." The MA examines the continuum of ecosystems including the "relatively undisturbed, such as natural forests, to landscapes with mixed patterns of human use, to ecosystems intensively managed and modified by humans, such as agricultural land and urban areas." The benefits that people obtain from ecosystem services include "provisioning services such as food, water, timber, and fiber; regulating services that affect climate, floods, disease, wastes, and water quality; cultural services that provide recreational, aesthetic, and spiritual benefits; and supporting services such as soil formation, photosynthesis, and nutrient cycling."

The MA correctly identifies humans as integral parts of ecosystems dynamically interacting with all ecosystems both directly and indirectly. Changes in human conditions including social, economical and cultural changes create changes in ecosystems, which in turn cause changes in human well-being, as well as in other species. Regardless of its ingenuity and technological achievements, which provide some protection against environmental changes, human race cannot survive on Earth without the ecosystem services.

According to the MA report 15 of the 24 ecosystems vital for supporting life are in danger of collapsing including fresh water, fisheries, air and water purification systems, and the systems that regulate climate, natural hazards, and pests.

Survival of Our Fragile Biosphere

The precarious survival of our fragile biosphere hangs by a thread as Global Heating threatens to consume us.

A study by a 19-member international team reports that global warming will doom up to 37 percent of all living species to extinction this century, if global temperature rises at currently predicted rates.

The looming omnicide - the killing of everything - is called "The Sixth Great Extinction" and is entirely of our own making... The odds are heavily stacked against the human civilization. The chances of anyone surviving the cataclysm beyond 2050 are infinitesimal.

To create a sustainable future we need a new social and cultural milieu in which we can eliminate the factors accelerating our collision course with the planet:

- **Switch to Renewable Energy.** Let's stop Global Warming. Global temperature is rising; the ice and mountain glaciers are melting; sea levels are rising, destructive storms and floods are devastating our lives. In 2005 we consumed 460 exajoules of energy (**equivalent to the energy**

released by about 7.3 million Hiroshima bombs). Last year alone we pumped about 30 [30 billion metric tons - about 100 times the combined total weight of the entire world population] to the atmosphere from the consumption and flaring of fossil fuels and cement production. Nonrenewable energy sources are being depleted exponentially. A renewable energy policy will prevent the depletion of nonrenewable energy sources. World oil production is nearly 85 million BPD (barrels per day). Peak Oil is looming, possibly as early as 2006. Yet the projected demand for 2015 is 135 million BPD.

- **Select Ecological Economy.** The existing cabalistic, expansionist Economy –capitalism– is not sustainable. Capitalism is creating billions for the bankers and debts for the people, and is destroying the biosphere. The control of the monetary system by a small minority is creating debt, misery, inequity, pain, hunger, poverty and disease for the majority. Capitalism is killing the earth.
- **Create a New System of Organization.** Global Eco-Centered Social Organization System (GSOS) will adopt a renewable energy policy and promote ecological economics as its central tenets. GSOS will eliminate war and genocide. It would eliminate the need for volatile stockpiles of nuclear, biological, chemical and conventional weapons. GSOS will clean up deadly debris of DU, biological, and toxic contaminants, and will put an end to military adventurism. GSOS will end racial violence and ethnic cleansing. Under GSOS terrorism (ideological, corporate, and state), criminal networks and gang violence (created by narcomoney and lawlessness) will not thrive. GSOS will disable corporate hegemony–rule by corporations–which is made possible by a fraudulent system of politics and lack of judicial accountability – corrupt politicians and judges.
- **End Consumerism.** Hyperconsumerism and overconsumption are shaking the foundations of human civilization. Worldwide we are converting 57 trillion pounds of materials to garbage, which is rapidly engulfing us – like sinking in quicksand. The race to produce more and more is causing irreversible contamination of soil, water, and air. Our blood contains about 200 measurable chemicals that shouldn't be there - caused by releasing into biosphere millions of tons of industrial, agricultural and municipal wastes; nuclear, chemical, and oil spills. Not smart! The consumer lifestyle is creating shortages and widening the gap between the haves and the have-nots giving rise to greed, ignorance, disease, famine, hunger, and poverty. Not smart!
- **Stop Unsustainable Production.** Unsustainable production exacerbated by unrestrained population growth (every week 1.6 million are added to world population) is creating severe water shortages. Based on the United Nations projections, by 2015 nearly 1.4 billion people in up to 48 countries will face severe water shortages. Meanwhile, water quality continues to deteriorate globally from pollution and rising temperatures. The urge to consume more than we need is irreversibly depleting our natural food reserves (collapsing fisheries, disappearing species...) The pressure to produce more is degrading the soil productivity resulting in desertification, eroding soils, mudslides... contamination of the food chain (pesticides, synthetic chemicals, BSE from Canada and elsewhere, radiation, antibiotics...) More and more of the tropical rainforest is destroyed to provide land for cultivation resulting in the loss of innumerable plants and animal species. Annually we are losing nearly 10 million hectares of forest and possibly as many as 27,000 species that inhabit them. The demand for increased production coupled with the urge to control the means of production is used as a pretext for tampering with the genetics of life (plant, animal, and human).

Our living planet cannot withstand the devastation caused by industrial civilization for much longer. Life "as usual" is no longer an option - at the current rates of decline our life support systems will collapse within one generation.