G LOBAL F UTURES F ORUM

"People's Pact for the Future"

Environmental Governance Track

R E A D I N G   L I S T

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: they are complex and a bit impenetrable, so read either of these useful summaries by ***Client Earth*** or ***For Tomorrow***;)
- 1992: **Rio Earth Summit – Agenda 21** (read PCI's 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: The UN's **Our Common Agenda** commits 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…."* Read the Exec. Summary and Chapter 21: Options for Change.
- 2022: the **Kunming-Montreal** pact, signed in Montreal in December at the 15th Meeting of the Biodiversity COP signatories, it agreed a "30-by-30 Target" to protect 30% of the planet's natural resources by 2030. Again, it is essential reading as it highlights the extreme difficulty that the UN works under: enforcement of its 23 targets, even through economic sanctions, let alone the courts, seems 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."* They might have said: *"If it's not too much trouble…"!!*

That – ladies and gentlemen – is the Challenge of Global Environmental Governance!

Now read about some of the Brilliant campaigns & initiatives that are rising to that Challenge:

- **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 UN Charter revisions 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 all participants in this track to see the issues through young people's eyes. Start with our 2020 1-minute animation: ***Grab the Wheel*** – introducing the 21st Century's generational challenge. Then look at our **2022 State of the Planet Update**. Everyone needs to start from a sound basis of knowledge on:

1. The perilous State of the Planet as it is now
2. The State of the Planet as it needs to be in 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 here to there?

Watch the short- or Long-form videos or the animated intro. and outro comparing the State of the Planet NOW and in 2100. After interviewing experts for this programme, the Peace Child students came up with some basic recommendations to the Youth Future track of the UN's Hi-Level Advisory Panel on Effective Multi-lateralism whose report will help shape the UN Pact for the Future. They proposed:

- **Make the UN 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.
- **Regulate capitalist markets more strictly**: outlaw and criminalise illicit financial flows, human trafficking, and industries that are dangerous to humanity and the environment like drugs and fossil fuels. Also further incentivise a 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.
- **Develop an Education Curriculum** that gives our generation the passion to learn in detail about the 3 x main threats to life on our planet: 1) climate change; 2) Air and Water pollution; 3) Biodiversity loss. That education must also give us the passion to eliminate these threats in our lifetimes, starting with explaining to us why previous generations have so obviously failed to do so in their's.

However you look at it, that failure is due to our failure to set up robust systems of Environmental Governance