

The Extinction Paradox

**Bart Flos**

**The  
Extinction  
Paradox**



***Why We Are Killing Ourselves  
When Nobody Wants To Die***



In conjunction with 'The Death Cult'

**Previously published by Bart Flos:**

*Het anti-klaagboek – Het anti-sleurboek – Het perfecte project*

*De kenniskermis – Vooruitkijken voor gevorderden*

*De mens als grens ('Our Inner Limits')*

*The Anti-Complain Book – The Perfect Project*

*De hoogvolwassen organisatie – De klimaatconfrontatie*

*De zelfmoordsoort – The Suicide Kind*

*The Fragmentation Problem Hypothesis*

*The Extinction Paradox – The Death Cult*

*As addenda to 'De mens als grens':*

*Addendum I – Het begin van het einde: onwetendheid*

*Addendum II – De frontale confrontatie: klimaatverandering*

*Addendum III – Het grote probleem: overconsumptie*

*Addendum IV – Het laatste taboe: ineenstorting*

*As addenda to 'Our Inner Limits':*

*Addendum V – The Beginning of The End: Ignorance*

*Addendum VI – De Frontal Confrontation: Climate Change*

*Addendum VII – The Big Problem: Overconsumption*

*Addendum VIII – The Final Taboo: Collapse*

*Addendum IX – The Next Step: Collapse Awareness*

*Addendum X – The Last Resort: Collapse Acceptance*

*Addendum XI – The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience*

*Addendum XII – Sixty Signs of Societal Collapse*

*Addendum XIII – Another Sixty Signs of Societal Collapse (audiobook)*

*Addendum XIV – Global Societal Collapse: The Musical*

*Newspaper: A machine that cannot distinguish between a  
bicycle accident and the collapse of a civilization.*

**George Bernard Shaw**

*Animals suffer and their wails fill the air. Forests fall prey to  
destruction. Mountains are torn open for the metals that grow  
in their veins. And man praises and glorifies those who do the  
greatest harm to nature and to humanity.*

**Leonardo da Vinci**

*Humanity must rise above the Earth, up into the atmosphere,  
and beyond, for only then will we fully understand the world  
in which we live.*

**Socrates**

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I N C O N J U N C T I O N W I T H ' T H E D E A T H C U L T '

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# Introduction

My name is Bart Flos and I'm advocating collapse awareness, acceptance and resilience.

— I'm advocating *collapse awareness*, because we have no idea what's coming our way and we're totally unprepared. Lacking awareness of our immanent future, with environmental pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change being mere symptoms of ecological overshoot, will make us go down screaming and yammering, because, as a species goes, we are ignorant, shortsighted and stupid.

— I'm advocating *collapse acceptance*, because we're too late, we've waited too long. We've analyzed it to the bone, talked about it a zillion times in as many conferences, but we failed to act on a global scale. Collapse is now locked into the system by matter of natural law. I call it *suprasystemic collapse* and it is brutal, all-destructive and completely indifferent about our feelings on the matter.

— I'm advocating *collapse resilience*, because when push comes to shove, when the shit finally hits the fan, we won't have a clue what to do. We've become fat, lazy and complacent. We dwell in our luxuries and have completely forgotten how to defend ourselves against the forces of nature. We think renewables technology is going to redeem us, that the AI's Almighty Algorithm will provide us with all the answers and solutions we need. That will be our undoing.

Now that we've got that out of the way, let's continue.

I've been saying it for over five years now: we've waited too long, it's too late. Our living environment is going from cascade failure to collapse and we just watch it unfold right before our eyes. We've been talking about environmental pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change for over half a century now, and still it gets worse and worse at every turn. We've published a zillion books, analyses, assessments, articles, scientific papers, podcasts and TED(x)-talks, organized a zillion international conferences, and we debated the issue until the cows came home. But we didn't act. Not on a global level we didn't.

I always felt kind of isolated in my frontally confrontational stance on ecological overshoot or overconsumption, when a species exceeds the carrying capacity of its habitat (Rees e.a.). It seems like we just don't want to grasp the idea that environmental pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change are mere symptoms of overshoot, that they are not core problems. When we try to handle these problems in splendid isolation, we, the human species and that means all of us, are guilty of symptoms fighting. It's a complete waste of effort, resources and capital.

Even when we isolate the symptoms of overconsumption and try to fight them, we fail to act as one on a global level, which is to say, across all 200 nations of the world. We are not globally united at all, we are fundamentally divided. There are very few problems we actually solve on a global level, and when we do it is usually to protect the neoliberal, capitalistic, consumerist, growth-economic free market, or it is 'collateral benefit' from that system. Be that as it may, there is an explanation for all the craziness that is happening around the world right now, and in this book I will try to pull the wool off of our eyes.

Let me provide you with just seven of these global events:

1 – Environmental pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change, the symptoms of ecological overshoot or overconsumption, when a species exceeds the carrying capacity of its habitat, are getting worse at every turn, independent of our good intentions and the promises and pledges we keep making to mitigate our existential predicament.

2 – Our worship of the neoliberal, capitalistic, consumerist, growth-economic free market has gone completely out of control. We're consuming like there's no tomorrow, whilst procreating like rabbits. Whenever our Holy Trinity of Liberties – free speech, free will and the free market – appears to be under threat, we bend over backwards to keep it exactly the way it is.

3 – We are growing the global population with 1% each year, bringing us from 8 tot 10 billion people by the year 2050. All these people want to get wealthy, healthy, happy and grow old. Nobody wants to decline or reduce. We all want to at least keep what we've got, preferably get a little bit more at the next iteration.

4 – We are tugging to the extreme right of the political spectrum, where climate change is categorically denied and where we seem to perceive totalitarianism as a positive change. We fall unto our knees before demagogues, tyrants and dictators, whistling to their dark tunes of danger and damnation.

5 – We have engaged in an armaments race to prepare for World War III, like that is the sanest, logical and rational thing to do. We're not even questioning our motives anymore, we just keep following the narrative that crisis, conflict and war are a normal part of human interaction.

6 – Pseudoscience, anti-intellectualism and quackery are embraced to the point where it has become completely normal to say, 'Science is just another

opinion'. It's almost impossible to explain how stupid that is. We think we can wash away 500 years of scientific revolution with one short ignorant, shortsighted and stupid post or comment on our social media platforms.

7 – We have surrendered ourselves, our skills and our unique attributes as human beings to Artificial Intelligence (AI), the Almighty Algorithm that we adore like it's an omnipresent, omniscient, omnipotent deity. AI is developing exponentially and not only drives us directly into the open arms of the Big Tech Conglomerates, but we also seem to think it is able to solve all of our problems, even climate change.

I have already covered these highly disconcerting global events in my other books, for example in *(Another) Sixty Signs of Societal Collapse*, *The Suicide Kind*, *Global Societal Collapse: The Musical*, *The Fragmentation Problem Hypothesis* and *The Death Cult*. In *The Extinction Paradox* however, I would like to crank it up another notch and make it clear once and for all what kind of species we actually are. Because let's face it: we have no idea what's coming our way, we're totally unprepared and it's going to get a whole lot worse before it never gets better again. We'd better batten down the hatches and buckle up, because the perfect storm is coming.

Duly noted. As you were. Carry on.

Bart Flos.

Helmond, The Netherlands.

October 2026.

# About this book

For authors like me, the great thing about writing a message (a post) on *LinkedIn* is that, unlike Facebook or Instagram, we are forced to limit our message to about 500 words (3,000 characters) for a post and about 200 words (1,250 characters) for a comment. The concept of *Schrijven is schrappen* ('To write is to delete' – thank you, Simon Carmiggelt, Dutch journalist, author and poet) is thereby enforced, and limited to a single punctuation mark. That's actually a good thing, because it's educational. It forces us to shorten our messages to a length that should be manageable to even the most hurried, overloaded, *busy-busy-busy* reader.

*The Extinction Paradox* contains a collection of LinkedIn posts authored between May and August 2026. All posts are based on science, the scientific method and the scientific community, but as a self-pronounced climate 'confrontalist' I have taken great liberty to crank it up a little. I like to yank your chains and rattle your cage, because I firmly believe that only a frontal confrontation with truth and reality might open our eyes for what's coming our way.

The ten steps or chapters in this book cover a variety of subjects concerning environmental pollution, biodiversity loss, climate change and accelerating global warming, the symptoms of ecological overshoot or overconsumption. But it touches on geopolitics as well, especially the rise of totalitarianism, the proliferation of pseudoscience, anti-intellectualism and quackery, and the exponential development of artificial intelligence in everyday life.

Please note that my work assumes that our addiction to the neoliberal, capitalistic, consumerist, growth-economic free market will inevitably lead to the cascade failure and subsequent suprasystemic collapse of human civilization as we know it today. When you are of the opinion that the renewables technology deployment movement will come to our rescue, and solar panels, wind turbines, heat pumps, electrical vehicles and batteries are going to save the day, or carbon capture and storage will do the trick, or geo-engineering, you should perhaps put this book to rest, because I might shatter your dreams.

Still, I challenge you to keep reading. I am attempting to change the narrative on our collective future as a species, as a suicide kind if you will, so perhaps you will be able to change along with it. You never know. For all who support the view that we cannot have infinite growth on a finite planet, I encourage you to keep reading too.

Please be aware: my work isn't meant to make you just roll over and die. I find no pleasure in the discovery that we actually are a death cult, expediting our own demise, and I truly wish we weren't that ignorant, shortsighted and stupid. But wishing it certainly does not make it come true. Instead, my work is meant to encourage collapse awareness, collapse acceptance and collapse resilience. It is my ultimate goal to prevent you from saying that you didn't see it coming, that you didn't realize that we actually are a death cult, bend on self-annihilation.

Perhaps you are still in denial. Perhaps you believe it's not too late, that we still have time to fix all this, that we can still do something. Perhaps you think that the very thing that got us into this mess will eventually get us out again: *technology*. Let me provide you with some cold facts and figures then. Because

yes, in 1950 we still could have done something. The global population was at 2.5 billion people, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels were at 310 ppm and the average global surface temperature anomaly was at 0.1 degrees Celsius. That was a good moment to fix it. But we didn't act, we were just getting started.

Perhaps we still could have done something in 1970, when the global population was at 3.7 billion people, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels were at 325 ppm, and the average global surface temperature anomaly was at 0.3 degrees Celsius. (Please note: pre-industrial CO<sub>2</sub> levels were at 280 ppm). Still we didn't act, we were just getting addicted to the free market.

And then, in 1990, we passed the critical threshold, when global population was at 5.3 billion people, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels were at 355 ppm and the average global surface temperature anomaly was at 0.5 degrees Celsius. That was our last chance to intervene, but only if we all worked together as one, across all 200 nations of the world. 'No more bashing in each others brains over power, influence, territory, resources, wealth or fossil fuels', we could have said, 'Let's pull our resources together and fix this damned thing'.

Nope. We didn't fix it, we just kept going.

We kept consuming like there was no tomorrow, whilst procreating like rabbits. And now it's 2026, and we're at 8.3 billion people, atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels are at 427 ppm and the average global surface temperature anomaly is at 1.6 degrees Celsius. In a matter of about half a century we have managed to raise the global population by almost 6 billion people, increase the atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> level by 115 ppm and raise the average global surface temperature anomaly by 1.5 degrees Celsius.

At the current rate of acceleration we will reach 10 billion people by 2050, when atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> levels will surpass the 500 ppm marker and the average surface temperature anomaly will skyrocket to 3.0 degrees Celsius. But that's a moot point. The way we're going right now, we won't even make it to 2050 in one piece. The global economy will have collapsed already before that time, unleashing a chain of events that will make 2026 seem like paradise.

It's preposterous, but it's true. No species in the 4.5-billion-year history of this planet, and the 500 million year history of animal life, has ever thought about expediting its own demise. The dinosaurs have roamed Earth's surface as the dominant species for 160 million years, and never once did they contemplate destroying their own habitat. They were wiped out by a cataclysmic cosmic event, which is a good excuse for extinction. But we, the human species? *Homo sapiens* has been around for about 300,000 years, that's just 0.2% of the time of the dinosaurs, and in just 200 years, or 0.07% of our own time here on this planet, we have forced our living environment into cascade failure and collapse. Knowingly and willingly. That makes us, by far, the most ignorant, shortsighted and stupid species that ever lived. It makes us a death cult.

But there is more. First I will provide with a quick summary of what you're about to dive into. Let's go to the 500-word summary of the content of my other book, *The Death Cult*, to provide you with just the right amount of doom and damnation to slap you in the face and wake you up.

# How To Accelerate Our Extinction In Ten Easy Steps

This is actually the subtitle of my book *The Death Cult*, also published in October 2026. I thought it useful to provide you with the nutshell of that book here, since both books are closely related, almost like a Siamese Twin.

“Let’s face it, it’s getting ridiculous with climate change and accelerating global warming. Extreme weather and climate disasters are roaming the planet in increasing frequency and intensity and it’s literally out there for all of us to see. It’s almost like we’re following some kind of checklist to expedite our own demise. So I thought, let’s look at this problem from the perspective of a death cult and examine the steps we have to follow to achieve our ultimate goal: extinction, the death of the last member of the human species.

Here are 10 easy steps to accelerate our own extinction:

## *1 — Be ignorant*

Ignore all the reports, analyses, articles, science papers and international conferences about environmental pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change. Make lots of pledges and promises, but don’t keep them.

*2 – Be shortsighted*

Make sure to limit climate policy to the current election cycle. Claim that renewables and carbon removal technology will eventually cool down the planet. Seriously commit to geo-engineering.

*3 – Be stupid*

Claim that the climate has always changed, that it was also hot in 1976, that 0.04% of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere is way too little to have any effect and that people walked with dinosaurs. Do I need to go on?

*4 – Pollute the environment*

Get as many micro/nano plastics into the environment as possible, and add plenty of PFAS molecules. Ensure that no environmental laws get in the way. Don't forget industrial heavy metals, oil spills, agriculture nutrient runoff, pesticides and herbicides, electric and textile waste.

*5 – Destroy the biodiversity*

Make sure to expedite the extinction of other species a thousand fold, especially bee populations. Get rid of any restrictions in terms of environmental law and make sure thousands of fossil fuel lobbyists can do their job properly.

*6 – Change the climate*

Increase the global average surface temperature, atmospheric greenhouse gases, the Earth's energy imbalance, ocean acidification and deoxygenation and sea level rise. Make sure to accelerate these processes.

*7 – Sustain population growth*

Keep growing the population with 1% yearly and reach 10 billion people by 2050. Ensure that all these people want to get wealthy, healthy, happy and grow old. Don't let anybody reduce or decline.

*8 — Normalize capitalism*

Praise the neoliberal, capitalistic, consumerist, growth-economic free market and make it sacred. Promote economic growth at all times and treat the global GDP as a deity.

*9 — Promote consumerism*

Increase advertisement tenfold, make sure everything is for sale via web shops, limit restrictions on spending and credit. Make people feel extremely guilty when they don't consume.

*10 — Renounce reality*

Encourage the proliferation of pseudoscience, anti-intellectualism and quackery. Make it perfectly normal to say, 'Science is just another opinion' and equate science with gut feelings.

Do you see? It's not that difficult. We just have to keep following these ten steps to the letter and keep repeating them, and we're all going to reach that ultimate goal of cascade failure and collapse before we reach the year 2050. By then our world will look much different, much more chaotic, but we can rest assured that we will still be doing all of the above with a vengeance."

Being a death cult and getting extinct are two sides of the same coin. The ultimate goal of a death cult is to die, and when everybody dies, the human species goes extinct. Simple as that. But as horrible and repugnant that all seems, and before we dive into all that that, let me first explain to you why

## T H E   E x t i n c t i o n   P a r a d o x

there is only one problem, one cause and one solution for humankind by using my Problem Analysis Checklist or PAC.

I n   c o n j u n c t i o n   w i t h   ' T h e   D e a t h   C u l t '

# One Problem – One Cause – One Solution for Humankind

All through my career I have been working with a set of open questions to address any kind of problem, no matter how large or small. Heck, I even used it to structure some of the books I published over the years. I call it the *Problem Analysis Checklist* or PAC and I can tell you, applying it can turn out to be quite the analyzing challenge. After all, most of the time we're busy fighting the symptoms of a particular problem, circling the core endlessly without ever truly reaching it. So I thought, 'why not apply the PAC to our existential predicament here on this planet?' And so I did. Here goes:

## 1 — *What's the problem?*

Ecological overshoot or overconsumption, when a species exceeds the carrying capacity of its habitat (Rees e.a.).

## 2 — *What's causing the problem?*

Overpopulation. We are with 8.3 billion people on this planet here, all wanting to get healthy, wealthy, happy and grow old. Currently we are growing at about 1% yearly, bringing us to 10 billion people by 2050.

## 3 — *What are the consequences of the problem?*

I n c o n j u n c t i o n w i t h ' T h e D e a t h C u l t '

Environmental pollution, biodiversity loss and climate change. We treat these as separate problems, but they are mere symptoms of overshoot.

4 — *What needs to be done to solve the problem?*

We must voluntarily reduce the global population by 1% yearly.

5 — *Who needs to do it?*

All 200 countries in the world must submit their Mandatory National Population Reduction Plan (MNPRP) to the Global Population Reduction Committee (GPRC) tomorrow, according to the Global Guidelines for Population Reduction Strategy (GGPRS).

6 — *When does it has to be ready?*

When we revert global population growth to 1% yearly global population decline, we will reach 6.4 billion people by 2050 (a good start), 4.2 billion by the end of this century (excellent progress) and 1.4 billion people by the end of next century (the perfect number).

7 — *What must we do to prevent it from happening again?*

Once we have reduced the global population to 1.4 billion people we must apply a strict doctrine of Global Population Growth Control (GPGC), to be safeguarded by the Global Population Growth Control Committee (GPGCC), guided by the Founding Global Population Principle (FGPP):

*“The global population of the death cult Homo sapiens must be maintained between 1.1 and 1.4 billion people at all times, to avoid any more suicide attempts, thereby saving the species from extinction”.*

## T H E   E x t i n c t i o n   P a r a d o x

There you have it, folks. A neat little problem analysis for our dreadfully large problem. You're welcome. To continue, I would also like to provide you with a short explanation of the concept of *suprasystemic collapse*.

I n   c o n j u n c t i o n   w i t h   ' T h e   D e a t h   C u l t '

# The Concept of Suprasystemic Collapse

Before we dive into all the singing, dancing, laughing and playing I would like to highlight a specific aspect of this musical of mayhem. I am going to use the term 'suprasystemic collapse' quite a lot, and for good reasons, so an explanation upfront is in order.

And yes, you are right, 'suprasystemic' is not spelled right. It must be 'supra-systemic', with a hyphen. But when you look that up on the internet you will probably find something like 'supra-systemic pulmonary hypertension'. And when you look up 'supra' you will find something like 'an academic and legal citation signal used when a writer desires to refer a reader to an earlier-cited authority'. Both valid definitions, but not quite what I mean.

When you look up 'suprasystemic collapse' (without the hyphen) you will find the same as above, and you will find references to my work (books, articles, websites, posts, comments). That is because I have cornered the phrase 'suprasystemic collapse' in the context of 'the ultimate consequence of human-caused climate change and accelerating global warming'. 'Supra', by the way, is latin for 'above'.

I was searching for a term that would emphasize the ultimate, the 'highest' consequence of the collective actions of the human species on and around this planet. 'Super(-)systemic' didn't cover it, because it sounded just a tad too

cheerful ('Super! Gimme some collapse now, why don't ya?'). So, to be clear, concise and succinct, in my definition, 'suprasystemic collapse' is:

*The total, fatal and final collapse of human civilization as we know it today, as a result of ecological overshoot or overconsumption, when a species exceeds the carrying capacity of its habitat (Rees e.a.).*

'Cascade failure' precedes 'suprasystemic collapse'. 'Extinction' follows suprasystemic collapse. According to Wikipedia 'cascade failure' or 'cascading failure' is, 'a failure in a system of interconnected parts in which the failure of one or few parts leads to the failure of other parts, growing progressively as a result of positive feedback. Such a failure may happen in many types of systems, including power transmission, computer networking, finance, transportation systems, organisms, the human body, and ecosystems'.

'Extinction' or 'species extinction' is, 'the termination of an organism by the death of its last member". I like that definition, because it doesn't mince words. By the way, the extinction of the human species is the ultimate, but not the *guaranteed* consequence of suprasystemic collapse. Suprasystemic collapse is the result of an escalating, accelerating chain of global events:

- *Overpopulation leading to overconsumption*
- *Overconsumption leading to cascade failure*
- *Cascade failure leading to suprasystemic collapse*
- *Suprasystemic collapse leading to the downfall (and possible extinction) of humankind*

Now, you might ask, why do we allow this to happen? We have a perfectly good deal here on this beautiful blue marble (thank you Carl Sagan), so why would

we wreck up the place beyond repair? To answer that question we have to dive deep into the nature of the beast Homo sapiens. I therefore present to you, dear reader, the Fragmentation Problem Hypothesis.

# The Fragmentation Problem Hypothesis

Yes, I published a book with that title, and subtitle 'One Problem, One Cause, One Solution For Humankind'. And I know, it's not the sexiest title, but it says what it's about. If you don't like it you can always choose one of my other books, for instance:

*'Global Societal Collapse: The Musical | Let's All Go Down Singing And Dancing'.*

Or:

*'The Suicide Kind | Why We Are All Doomed (And You Too!)'.*

For those of you that are still intrigued by the title of my latest book I offer you this management summary:

"The fragmentation problem hypothesis dictates the following:

The 'global community' does not exist. The 200 countries of the world do not exist either. Both are abstract entities held together by laws, rules, and regulations invented by humans to create the illusion of a global community.

The human species is fragmented across hundreds of millions of small social groups of family, household, friends, colleagues, and teammates. Every individual belongs to multiple overlapping small social groups, regardless of their position in human hierarchies. Rich or poor, or somewhere in between, it makes no difference. As far as our small social groups are concerned, we are all equal.

Every individual and every small social group has one set of vested interests to secure survival and reproduction: personal, social, cultural, material, economic, financial, and fanatical. Those vested interests always come first.

We only make use of the global community when it serves the vested interests of our small social groups. We only care for others when the vested interests of our small social groups are safe and secured. That is the true root cause of our existential predicament. At our core, we are still hunter-gatherers in small social groups, focused on survival and reproduction. This has been programmed into our brains by our genes over millions of years of evolution and natural selection.

The fragmentation problem explains why individuals and their small social groups can become so powerful at the very highest level of human hierarchies. What we do there is exactly the same as what we do at the very lowest level. The only difference is power and influence.

The human species on this planet has only one problem: ecological overshoot or overconsumption, when a species exceeds the carrying capacity of its habitat (Rees et al.). That problem has only one cause: overpopulation. There is only one solution: voluntary global population reduction.

If we convert the current 1% annual population growth, which will take us from 8 to 10 billion people by 2050, into a 1% annual reduction, we reach 6.5 billion people by 2050 (a good start), 3.9 billion by the end of the century (excellent progress), and 1.4 billion at the end of the next century (the ideal number).

There you go".

Before we dive into the thick of the matter, let's look at one more interesting attribute of the human species: categorically denying climate change exists, even when you just have to take a peek out of your own window to witness the extreme weather and climate disasters roaming the planet in increasing frequency and intensity. How must we engage them? What are the do's and don'ts? How can we rattle their cages and yank their chains? Let's find out, shall we?

# On Climate Change Denialism

## Climate Change Deniers Are Still Winning The Debate: Don't Allow Them To Mount The Stage

When climate scientists, journalists and authors engage a climate change denier, rejectionist or skeptic, they immediately respond as they were taught: when the science is rejected, throw more science at them, relentlessly. Under normal circumstances I would agree wholeheartedly. When people aren't familiar with how the scientific method works, we explain it to them, to we can have a rational discourse with them, right? Wrong.

Denying that climate change is wrong, that accelerating global warming isn't real, that it is a leftist woke lie, a HOAX, a Chinese concoction, isn't rational, it's emotional, it's ignorant. Shortsighted and stupid. We mustn't allow ourselves to be lured into their trap, we must understand how they operate first. You see, climate change deniers and skeptics don't have to explain why climate science is wrong, nor do they have to prove that their own assertions are right. The only thing they have to do is sow doubt. It's the oldest rule in the book and

many have become before them: the tobacco industry, the pharmaceutical industry, the fossil fuel industry.

What do we do when we are in doubt? We retreat, hesitate and procrastinate. We put our opinions on hold, and with that we put our actions on hold. We get confused, because climate change is a complex subject with many angles and many details. Our daily business doesn't concern the entire planet, it concerns our direct surroundings and our immediate needs and responsibilities.

Even now, when extreme weather and climate disasters are roaming the planet in increasing frequency and intensity, for everybody to see by just taking a peek out of the window, the climate change denialism movement is still winning the debate.

We must STOP:

— *Throwing climate change facts and figures at climate change deniers.*

They love it. Because there is so much information out there - true, untrue, half true - that they can't wait to throw at least as much information back at you. Most of it is complete bullocks, but that doesn't matter. They will completely ignore what you are saying and keep throwing more climate garbage at you.

— *Taking them seriously.*

They're not. They are laughing at you. They love the fact that you think that your facts and figures are going to convince them that we have a problem here that we need to solve. The more serious you get, the uglier they get. They will call you names, apply the ad hominem method and ridicule you until the cows come home.

We must START:

— *To fight them on their own terms, their modus operandus.*

Don't engage them substantively. Ignore what they are throwing at you. Address what they are doing.

— *To change our message to them.*

Just say, 'See what you just did? You completely ignored my facts and figures and gave me more of yours. That is exactly what a climate change denier does'. And: 'There you go again, repeating the same message over and over again. But everything you say has been debunked many times over. Everything'.

Once, after a public debate with a climate change denier during a conference, I approached the guy in person, one to one, and said, "I'm not sure what's worse in what you are doing: that you actually believe it's true that climate change isn't a real problem, and therefore deny it, or that you actually know it's a big problem, but deny it anyway. Perhaps both are equally bad".

STOP engaging climate change deniers. They are still winning the debate. Don't allow them to mount the stage and sow doubt. When you must, engage them on their modus operandus and expose them for what they are.

And on that bombshell I suggest that we proceed to Step 1 in a hurry. Let's go!

# 1

## **We Just Don't Get It Now Do We?**

I saw a post written from a sunny Holiday location in Greece. She had taken a photograph from herself in her comfortable sunbed, suntanned legs in view, on a luxury beach resort packed with other sunbeds and sun lovers, drinks and food within arms length, and a beautiful view on the Mediterranean sea, glistening in sunlight. You could almost smell the sunscreen greased bodies, the hot sand, the souvlaki, moussaka and tzatziki. It was very sunny indeed.

She mentioned that whenever she was on Holiday, she couldn't concentrate. She would just doze off, fall asleep after half a page in her book, enjoying the little buzz from her Mastiha cocktails. In other words, 'she couldn't get any meaningful task done'. Naturally, because this was a LinkedIn post, she inquired about similar experiences.

This was my comment:

*"Can you see the forest fires from your position?"*

She instantly blocked me.

Just a few days before, I came across another post from someone listing all the extreme weather and climate disasters roaming the planet in increasing frequency and intensity. Het expressed his worries about climate models rendered obsolete because of the sheer acceleration of events that even the most radical climate change rejectionist would have a hard time denying.

Still he was hopeful. 'Because', he wrote, 'when push comes to shove humanity will find a way to fix all this existential mayhem'. To underscore his optimism he mentioned the Corona pandemic, which, according to him, proved that we, the human species, when confronted with devastating odds, could pull together and solve all our problems in unison, assuring that we could be liberated from lockdowns, to once again exercise our liberties of free speech, free will and the free market.

This was my response:

"In 2020, the height of the Corona pandemic, we reduced CO2 emissions of fossil fuels and industry by a mere 7%. But we didn't gladly voluntéér to go into full global lockdown. We hated it, grounded our teeth in utter agony and protested it all the way, taking to the streets and social media platforms nagging and whining.

In 2021 we matched the CO2 emissions of 2019 and in 2022 we exceeded them. We have been exceeding them ever since. We couldn't wait to pick up our filthy habits again. Everybody wanted to regain lost turnover and profits, go out, visit restaurants, bars and clubs, buy stuff online and go on Holidays to sunny luxury Greek resorts to bathe in the sun and drink cocktails.

And so we did. As a collective, the entire human species, all 8.3 billion of us, we keep exceeding the carrying capacity of our habitat with a vengeance, polluting the environment, destroying the biodiversity and changing the climate. But we hate being confronted with it. So we deny, reject, ignore, curse and block anyone that tries to point out the bitter irony of it all. Do you see?"

Never heard from him again. Now do you understand why I am not invited to many parties anymore?

# 1.2

## **When A Worst Case Scenario Becomes The Understatement Of The Millennium**

Someone commented on one of my lesser optimistic posts about the future of humankind, and wrote:

*“However, human civilization will collapse before we hit 3C, and therefore, depending on ecosystem resilience, there is a possibility that warming stabilizes as human activities rapidly die down.”*

This was my response:

“The physics will always balance out. That is the nature of physics.

We are forcing our living environment to seek a new equilibrium, whether we're in it or not. She is completely indifferent about our feelings on the matter. Us screaming and yammering, billions perishing under apocalyptic circumstances, she doesn't give a damn.

## The Extinction Paradox

[...]

In conjunction with 'The Death Cult'