



Biopolicy – Leading the Race against Climate Change

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At the **COP21 meeting in Paris**, in December 2015, **global leaders are expected to conclude negotiations for a new agreement to tackle climate change** and address its impacts. To ensure political leaders know there is strong public support for binding commitments to help countries **achieve climate smart development**, we must **generate the necessary momentum** to guarantee that what is agreed upon is actually implemented.

The figures are striking. As observed by NASA satellites and last measured in August 2015, sea level has been rising at 3.24 mm per year since 1993. **Glaciers and ice sheets are shrinking** almost everywhere around the world. Antarctica has been losing approximately 134 billion metric tons of ice per year, while the Greenland ice sheet is retreating by an estimated 287 billion metric tons per year. The amount of **carbon dioxide absorbed by the upper layer of the oceans is increasing** by about 2 billion tons per year leading to alarming levels of ocean acidification.



In 2014, losses from weather and climate disaster events reached trillions of US\$. Between 1994 and 2013, more than 530,000 people died worldwide as a direct result of over 15,000 extreme weather events. **The year 2015 ranks as the warmest ever recorded** while the 10 warmest years on a 134-year record have all occurred since 2000. There are already **people being officially called “climate refugees,”** and conflicts exacerbated by climate change and extreme weather events are on the rise.

In view of this compelling evidence, **leadership in the 21st century** needs to irrevocably take on a new role, one linked with connecting the **mitigation of global warming to a moral imperative for future generations.** **If you want to be called a leader, you have to lead the race against climate change.**

Time is running out, and the **urgency of addressing the implications of a catastrophic shift in the global climate system** is made obvious every second. To respond to this challenge, **leaders have to be inspired to uphold a vision for change.** If a future of hope is to be achieved, a **life-supporting paradigm** needs to be placed at the core of policy, politics and education, and to form the basis of thinking and action for every citizen.

Climate change comes at a cost, **burdening the global economy with trillions of dollars.** Children, the elderly, and the poor are most vulnerable to a range of climate-related effects, including heat stress, air pollution and vector-borne diseases. This makes it all the more **urgent to view GDP from a different perspective,** a perspective factoring in all the dimensions of climate change on both lives and livelihoods: rising sea levels, loss of biodiversity, resource scarcity, air and water pollution, extreme weather events, increased flooding, health risks, migration and conflict.



Even **highly polluting super-powers** are now **deposing and changing their policies.** The USA, China, and Brazil have secured agreements to cut emissions drastically by 2030 and to increase renewable energy production. Furthermore, the upcoming Paris **climate talks** are a **unique occasion to open up a new pathway of**

hope, as participating nations will be convening to formulate an ambitious, binding agreement on climate change that applies globally.

Times of **crisis can also become unprecedented opportunities**, and can spur the search for the proper perspectives and responsibilities. We must **mobilize all our creativity and resources** to develop dynamic incentives that help the environment and mitigate climate change. Meeting the **meta-capitalism challenge** and moving from **stagnant and bureaucratic patterns to an era of inspiration** relies to a great extent on inspiring the **1% of the population who hold 50% of the world's wealth to make a voluntary commitment to invest in securing the continuity of the unique gift of life**, an investment with staying power that will be appreciated for millennia.

Science and technology offer unlimited solutions to our current problems. We just need to take action. The choices are endless: **renewable energy, ocean clean-up, environmental technologies, food security, health, education, zero-emission cities, better living conditions for all**. Leaders must **draw inspiration from the miracle of bios** – all life on our planet, as it is our ability to be inspired that will **turn the tides and make a difference**.

Education is a powerful tool that **can shape the future generations of world changing leaders**. It can help to achieve an inclusive approach to climate change mitigation by instilling **environmental values and ethics** in all academic disciplines and professional initiatives. It can also **promote a new concept of “profit,”** comprising the environment, culture and quality of life, as well as a unifying **bioculture, where *techne* and technology, science and the arts, can stimulate a global appreciation of bios**.

The world has to act forcefully and quickly to ensure a climate-resilient and sustainable future. **Differences** in biodiversity, culture, religion, philosophy, are the **wealth of humanity**. In the whole cosmic scheme, on the scale of space and time, Earth is the only planet we know of where life exists. **Leaders** need to understand that they have to **reevaluate their strategies** in the context of **saving life**. We should **deploy technology to protect environmental resources, and to build peace and mutual understanding**. We have to cease viewing our neighbor as the enemy, and **join forces in the war against climate change**.

Biopolicy – **policy with the environment at the core of every sector** – and **biodiplomacy** – with a focus on our **interdependence with each other and with all forms of life** – can motivate people, governments and organizations everywhere to espouse a **new vision** in leadership. Awakening this urgency for **inspired leadership** can help to defend humanity against the challenges of today while **making the most out of the opportunities of tomorrow**.

Read More at: [Biopolicy: the bioethics of climate change mitigation](#)

