

THE TEMENOS ACADEMY

"Facing the Future"

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Source: Temenos Academy Review 13 (2010)

pp. 9-22

Published by The Temenos Academy

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www.temenosacademy.org

Facing the Future*

HRH THE PRINCE OF WALES

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am delighted that you are able to join me here at St James's Palace and I am enormously grateful to Jonathan Dimbleby for what was a very well-crafted obituary!

Richard Dimbleby was, without doubt, one of the world's finest broadcasters. He combined a flair for language with great human insight to report on some of the most significant moments of the twentieth century—not least when he guided millions of viewers on the day television came of age, with the BBC's coverage of my mother's Coronation in 1953. And I remember that day well. I was about the age of four, and I also recall some wonderful lady coming up to me years ago and saying, 'I remember you so well at your parents' wedding, with your little head appearing over the pew.' And I said, 'I think it was the Coronation', and she said, 'No, no, your parents' wedding!'

Whenever he turned his powers of observation to those great occasions he always, to my mind, managed to stress that sense of the long-term view which duty and stewardship depend upon.

St James's Palace has been at the heart of that process ever since a seventeen-year-old Prince of Wales ascended the throne to become King Henry the Eighth exactly five hundred years ago this year. It was Henry who commissioned the building of this palace—exhibiting an interest in architecture that may possibly be hereditary! But towards the end of his reign he also showed an interest in sustainability. Perhaps it is not so well known that Henry instigated the very first piece of green legislation in this country.

In ordering the building of a great many ships, Henry effectively founded the Royal Navy. But shipbuilding needed vast amounts of wood and there came a moment when Henry realized that creating his new fleet was putting too much strain on the natural supply of wood, particularly oak; and if something was not done, the country would

* This is the text of the Richard Dimbleby lecture, as delivered by HRH The Prince of Wales at St James's Palace State Apartments, London, 8 July 2009.

run out of timber. And so, in 1543, he created a law, 'The Preservation of Woods', which stated that if any number of mature oak trees was cut down, twelve had to be left standing in the same acre, and none could be touched until each of them was of a certain maturity. It was a simple and rather elegant piece of long-term thinking.

What was instinctively understood by many in King Henry's time was the importance of working with the grain of Nature to maintain the balance between keeping the Earth's natural capital intact and sustaining humanity on its renewable income.

It is this knowledge that I fear we have lost in our rush to pursue unlimited economic growth and material wealth—a loss that was never more rapid than during the 1960s. At that time a frenzy of change swept the world in the wave of post-war 'Modernism'. There was an eagerness to embark upon a new age of radical experimentation in every area of human experience, which caused many traditional ideas to be discarded in a fit of uncontrollable enthusiasm—ideas that will always be of timeless value for every generation confronting the realities of life on this Earth.

Now, I remember it only too well—and even as a teenager I felt deeply about what seemed to me a dangerously short-sighted approach, whether in terms of the built or natural environment, agriculture, healthcare or education. In all cases we were losing something of vital importance—we were disconnecting ourselves from the wealth of traditional knowledge that had guided countless generations to understand the significance of Nature's processes and cyclical economy. It always seemed to me that in this period of change some subtle balance was being tragically lost, without which we would find ourselves in an increasingly difficult and exposed position. As, indeed, we have.

Now, I have been trying to point out ever since where I feel the balance needs righting and where some of the discarded but timeless principles of operating need to be reintroduced in order to create a more integrated approach. It has turned out to be a peculiarly hazardous pastime. But I have come to the inescapable conclusion that the legacy of Modernism in our so-called post-Modern age has brought us to a crucial moment in history, prompting a lot of uncomfortable questions. And I just want to ask quite a few of them tonight. What I hope to do is give you some idea why these questions are so urgent, starting with what might appear to be the more philosophical aspects,

and then to describe what, in practical terms, a particular change in our thinking might lead to.

The first question I want to ask is: how have we landed ourselves and the rest of the world in the mess that it now struggles to overcome? Because it does struggle. We have more than enough scientific evidence that proves this to be so. But more than this, what is it that drives us on to exacerbate the problems? Why do we tip the balance of the Earth's delicate systems with yet more destruction, even though we know in our heart of hearts that in doing so we will most likely risk bringing everything down around us?

In the thirty years or so that I have been attempting to understand and address the many related problems, I have tried to dig deep and ask myself what it is in our general attitude to the world that is ultimately at fault. In doing so, of course, it must have appeared as though I was just flitting from one subject to another—from agriculture to architecture, from education to healthcare—but I was merely trying to point out where the imbalance was most acute; where the essential unity of things, as reflected in Nature, was being dangerously fragmented and deconstructed. The question that should surely keep us all awake at nights, as it still does me, is: what happens if you go on deconstructing? And I fear the answer is all too plain. We summon up more and more chaos.

Now, I have also spent a long time wondering whether, if we could identify the key fault, it would be possible to fix it. And if we could, what would that 'fix' amount to in practical as well as philosophical terms?

'Philosophy' is just as important as practical solutions. In fact the right solutions will come more readily if the philosophy is first of all framed by 'right thinking'. What worries me is that at the moment there is not a lot of attention given to the way we perceive the world. We take our mechanistic view of it for granted and believe that the language of scientific empiricism which so dominates our discussion is the only form of language we need to guide us. We seem not to worry that we have lost much of the discourse of the philosophical and the religious. Either that, or the empirical has chosen to claim that discourse for itself. So let's be clear—whereas the empirical view of the world makes observational deductions about the laws of Nature, the philosophical deals with the meaning of things; and the religious concerns itself with the sacred presence in things. They each have a role to play and they enjoyed much more mutual respect in former

centuries because—and this is most important—they each open up different aspects of reality. They can each be misused, too, if they are called upon to tackle questions that lie beyond their scope. And, in this, it has predominantly been empirical science that has come to claim ground that is not its to claim.

The way in which empirical enquiry has developed to this position of dominance since the Enlightenment has certainly enabled us to improve the material realm of the human condition. But let us also recognize that this progress was only possible because of an earlier and crucial shift which took us away from a traditional sense of participation in Nature to the claim of mastery and exploitation over the natural order that has reaped such a troubling and bitter harvest.

That earlier shift, away from seeing ourselves within Nature to us standing apart from it, gradually undermined what I have always felt, deep down, to be the true situation—that if we wish to maintain our civilizations then we must look after the Earth and actively maintain its many intricate states of balance so that it achieves the necessary, active state of harmony which is the prerequisite for the health of everything in creation. In other words, that which sustains us must also itself be sustained, and I am afraid that I have come to the unavoidable conclusion that we are failing to do that. We are not keeping to our side of the bargain and, consequently, the sustainability of the entire harmonious system is collapsing—in failing the Earth we are failing Humanity.

So, I wonder, is it the case that the problem lies first and foremost not in what we do but in a fracture within us that leads to a limited view of what and where we are in the natural order—and that, therefore, we need urgently to look deeply into ourselves and at the way we perceive the world and our relationship with it? If only because, surely, we all want to bequeath to our children and our grandchildren something other than the nightmare that for so many of us now looms on the horizon. But that threat will not go away just because we deny it. We are standing at a moment of substantial transition where we face the dual challenges of a world view and an economic system that seem to have enormous shortcomings, together with an environmental crisis—including that of climate change—which threatens to engulf us all.

Of course, we have achieved extraordinary prosperity since the advent of the Industrial Revolution. People live longer, have access to

universal education, better healthcare and the promise of pensions. We also have more leisure time; opportunities to travel—the list is endless. But on the debit side, we in the industrialized world have increased our consumption of the Earth's resources in the last thirty years to such an extent that, as a result, our collective demands on Nature's capacity for renewal are being exceeded annually by some 25 per cent. On this basis, last year we had used up what we can safely take from Nature before the end of September. Between then and the New Year we were consuming capital as if it was income. And, as any investment advisor will tell you, confusing capital with income is simply not sustainable in the long term.

What is more, countries that are undergoing rapid development are all assuming Western consumption patterns. By 2050 not only will there be 9 billion people on the planet, but a far higher proportion than now will presumably have Western levels of consumption. These are facts, Ladies and Gentlemen, which we really cannot ignore any longer. But we do so because we hang onto values and a perception of things that had developed before we realized the consequences of our actions.

Back in the 1950s and right up to the 1990s it seemed credible to argue that the human will was the master of creation; that the only acceptable way of thinking was a mechanistic way of thinking; that the Earth's natural resources were just that—resources—to be plundered because they were there for our use, without limit. It was on such terms that we founded our present 'Age of Convenience', a way of living that is now spreading around the world. But for all its achievements, our consumerist society comes at an enormous cost to the Earth and we must face up to the fact that the Earth cannot afford to support it. Just as our banking sector is struggling with its debts—and paradoxically also facing calls for a return to so-called 'old-fashioned', traditional banking—so Nature's life-support systems are failing to cope with the debts we have built up there too. So, if we don't face up to this, then Nature, the biggest bank of all, could go bust. And no amount of quantitative easing will revive it.

We know, for example, that already the thickness of the Arctic sea ice has reduced by 40 per cent in the last fifty years. The major ice caps on Greenland and Antarctica could soon begin a rapid melt as well, and this may cause sea levels to rise, thereby swamping some of the world's most heavily populated regions, instigating mass migrations.

We also know that global warming is thawing permafrosted ground where the release of methane, a very potent greenhouse gas indeed, has already gone up by 70 per cent in the last half-century.

Since the 1950s, we have also reduced the size of the world's rainforests by a third and we continue to do so at the rate of an area the size of a football pitch every four seconds. And, as the trees fall, we irretrievably lose species of plants and animals that may well prove essential to our survival. Hugging the equator, these rainforests are literally—literally—the planet's lifebelt. The Amazonian forests alone release 20 billion tonnes of water vapour into the air every day. This keeps the climate cool and makes rain that falls over vast areas of farmland. The trees also store colossal amounts of carbon, so their destruction releases yet more CO₂ into the atmosphere—more than the entire global transport sector. So we depend upon them for our water, our food and the stability of our climate. The myriad, invisible functions performed by these threatened ecosystems, operating in all their harmonious complexity, are a central element in the Earth's life-support system and yet we ignore the fact that without them we cannot survive—both physically and spiritually, for, with the rampant removal of biodiversity in all its forms, we also destroy the reflection of Nature's miraculous balance within ourselves.

We show the same scant regard for the thin and fragile layer of topsoil that grows most of our food. A recent UN report presented the very gloomy news that in just the last fifty years our heavily industrialized, chemically based farming techniques have so far managed to degrade to different degrees a third of the world's agricultural soil. I could go on, but wherever you care to look our industrial economic model is operating on the same damaging, diminishing return.

Our current model of progress was not designed, of course, to create all this destruction. It made good sense to the politicians and economists who set it in train because the whole point was to improve the well-being of as many people as possible. However, given the overwhelming evidence from so many quarters, we have to ask ourselves if it any longer makes sense—or whether it is actually fit for purpose under the circumstances in which we now find ourselves.

It seems to me a self-evident truth that we cannot have any form of capitalism without capital. But we must remember that the ultimate source of all economic capital is Nature's capital. The true wealth of all nations comes from clean rivers, healthy soil and, most importantly

of all, a rich biodiversity of life. Our ability to adapt to the effects of climate change, and then perhaps even to reduce those effects, depends upon us adapting our pursuit of 'unlimited' economic growth to that of 'sustainable' economic growth. And that depends upon basing our approach on the fundamental resilience of our ecosystems. Ecosystem resilience leads to economic resilience. If we carry on destroying our marine and forest ecosystems as we are doing, then we will rob them of their natural resilience and so end up destroying our own.

That is why it seems to me of such profound importance that we understand that we are not what we think we are. We are not the masters of creation. No matter how sophisticated our technology has become, the simple fact is that we are not separate from Nature—like everything else, we are Nature.

The more you understand this fact the more you see how our mechanistic way of thinking causes such confusion. The way we so often go about meeting people's needs invariably involves us seeking a solution to one problem without thinking of the impact this will have on the whole or the wider context of the situation—rather in the way that they tried to grow Brazil nuts in plantations some years ago. The entire crop in Peru and Bolivia comes from within the natural forest, which makes it a difficult and labour-intensive process. To try to ease the problem it was decided to establish Brazil nut plantations, but not one tree produced a single nut! This is because, as it happens, Brazil nut trees rely entirely on a tiny forest-dwelling wasp for their pollination. So, no forest, no wasp, no nuts.

If you think about it, this is the approach that is invariably taken in all aspects of our existence. Modern agroindustry, for instance, may have made enormous strides to feed the burgeoning world's population, but at a huge and unsustainable cost to ecosystems, through massive use of artificial fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and water. As an example, we put plenty of nitrogen on the fields to make the crops grow quickly but, nitrogen being nitrogen, it makes the weeds grow too, so out come all the herbicides. When it drains into the streams, the nitrogen also makes the algae bloom, which sucks all the oxygen out of the water, suffocating many of the other forms of life in a vital food chain—to the extent that a recent UN survey identified four hundred so-called 'dead zones' which have now appeared around the world where polluted rivers meet the sea and nothing grows at all. It is a reductive approach to one issue that is patently not durable because

it sustains nothing but its own decline, solving one problem by creating countless others.

This, of course, is not the way Nature operates. In Nature the entire system is a complex unfolding of inter-dependent, multi-faceted relationships and to understand them, we have to use 'joined-up' thinking.

The ancient Greek word for the process of joining things up was *harmonia*. So, 'joined-up thinking' seeks to create harmony, which is a very specific state of affairs. In fact it is the very prerequisite of health and well-being. Our bodies have to be in harmony if they are to be healthy, just as an entire ecosystem has to be. This is the way Nature operates.

Natural sciences like microbiology and botany tell us very clearly that every kind of organism, be it big or microscopic, is a complex system of interrelated and interdependent parts—which makes each organism a microcosm of its local environment; the very essence of it, in fact. The sum of these parts builds and maintains a coherence—an active, harmonic unity—with no waste. No one part operates either in isolation or beyond the limits set by the whole. But, Ladies and Gentlemen, our culture has developed a resistance to that word 'limit' because we continue to make what have become conventional assumptions about unlimited growth and prosperity.

So much, it seems to me, depends on how you define both 'growth' and 'prosperity'. Most would agree, I think, that the main result of progress should be less misery and more happiness. But in our modern situation these 'ends' have become dangerously confused with the 'means', to the point where, now, wealth, innovation and growth have become the final goals. They have become the destination, when they were only ever at best a vehicle for getting there. It seems that through a drift of ethics, the direction of our economic system has ended up being an end in itself—an entity that must be grown, rather than directed and honed to reflect the aspirations of communities, human well-being and the limits of ecology.

I think it is worth reflecting that the recent Stern Review on the economics of climate change set out the case as to why, even in traditional economic terms, it is quite irrational to continue as we are; while the UN's Millennium Ecosystem Assessment—perhaps the most comprehensive review yet of the state of Nature—told us why we might not meet the millennium development goals on poverty alleviation if we continue to destroy and degrade natural habitats and ecosystems in the way that we are doing now.

It is certainly the case that, as we have liquidated natural assets in pursuit of what we call 'progress', many of the social challenges that we hoped economic growth would solve remain deeply resistant to resolution. Experience now tells us that poverty, stress, ill health and social tensions cannot be ended by economic growth alone.

So, Ladies and Gentlemen, we may well be told that we live in a 'post-Modernist' age, but we are still conditioned by Modernism's central tenets. Our outlook is dominated by mechanistic thinking which has led to our disconnection from the complexity of Nature, which is, or should be, equally reflected in the complexity of human communities. But in many ways we have also succeeded in abstracting our very humanity to the mere expression of individualism and moral relativism, and to the point where so many communities are threatened with extinction.

Facing the future, therefore, requires a shift from a reductive, mechanistic approach to one that is more balanced and integrated with Nature's complexity—one that recognizes not just the build-up of financial capital, but the equal importance of what we already have—environmental capital and, crucially, what I might best call 'community capital'. That is, the networks of people and organizations, the post offices and pubs, the churches and village halls, the mosques, temples and bazaars—the wealth that holds our communities together; that enriches people's lives through mutual support, love, loyalty and identity. Just as we have no way of accounting for the loss of the natural world, contemporary economics has no way of accounting for the loss of this community capital.

And this is why we need to ask ourselves whether the present form of globalization is entirely appropriate, given the circumstances confronting us. I mean there are, clearly, benefits, but we need to ask whether it requires adaptation so that it also enables, as it were, globalization from the bottom up. This, after all, is the way Nature operates! It grows things from the roots up, not from the sky down. At the moment we operate under a form of globalization that tends to render down all the rich diversity of a culture into a uniform, homogenized monoculture. And this is where the Modernist paradigm needs to be called into question before the damage being done is irretrievable . . .

It seems to me that one of the problems of a form of globalization that relies entirely upon maximizing the economic rather than the

social and environmental values of markets is that it leads us to a frightening state of uniformity, and perhaps ‘conformity’, to a model that we now know cannot be sustained. However, we each have within ourselves, as do our communities, more than one aspect to our identities—a complexity which is one of the defining characteristics of our common humanity. In fact, I have a hunch that this cultural diversity may provide us with the intellectual and social resilience to the challenges that we face in this moment of transition, just as biodiversity provides resilience to the domination of diseases found in monocultural systems. And this is why I have again and again been at such pains to convene communities of understanding across different disciplines and economic sectors.

Now, one of the chief architects of our present economic model was Adam Smith; and this year happens to be the 250th anniversary of the publication of his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, in which he sought to define the balance between private right and natural freedom. Interestingly, he was another who recognized that, although individual freedom is rooted in our impulse for self-reliance, it must be balanced by the limits imposed by Natural Law. As he prepared his book, he moved away from the notion that we are born with a moral sense and preferred the principle of there being a sympathy in all things. It is this sympathy that binds communities together.

But there is little chance of such sympathy if what people need is provided through commercial structures that place an ever greater distance between the supplier and the consumer, because economies of scale can destroy the economics of localness. It has become, again, a purely mechanical process with no room for the complexity and multi-faceted dimensions of a proper local relationship between a community and the suppliers that serve it. Once again, there has to be a balance between the market on the one hand and society on the other, otherwise real problems occur . . .

So, with that in mind, how could we better empower all sorts of communities to create a much more participative economic model that safeguards their identity, cohesion and diversity—one that makes a clear distinction between the maintenance of Nature’s capital reserves and the income it produces? That is the challenge we face, it seems to me—to see Nature’s capital and her processes as the very basis of a new form of economics and to engage communities at the grass roots to put those processes first. If we can do that, then we

have an approach that acts locally by thinking globally, just as Nature does—all parts operating locally to establish the coherence of the whole.

Could this, then, be part of the solution to the problems we face? Might such an approach give us hope—for we do still have within our societies and within our existing technologies the solutions that will enable us to transcend our current predicament? All we lack, perhaps, is the will to establish a more entire and connected perspective. Without such a systemic approach, I fear we will continue to deal with each individual crisis without seeing the connections between them. Arguably, this makes our response to our immediate problems tactical rather than also strategic. I think it was the Chinese military strategist, Sun Tzu, who memorably wrote in the fifth century BC that ‘Strategy without tactics is the slowest route to victory. Tactics without strategy is the noise before defeat.’ Defeat in this instance, Ladies and Gentlemen, would be catastrophic.

Now, there are many examples where communities have replaced the short-term impulse with the long-term plan. But part of that strategy—to my mind at least at the heart of it—is the need for a new public- and private-sector partnership which includes NGO and community participation. To work effectively this will require governments to provide policies which support community participation. That way we might achieve the long-term economic returns that are commensurate with the behavioural changes we need in order to attain sustainable levels of development. It seems to me that for this to work we need to ensure that community and environmental capital is indeed put alongside the requirements of financial capital and that we also develop transparent means to measure the social and environmental impact of our actions.

We certainly need to refine our ability to measure what we do, so that we become more aware of our responsibility. This has been the impulse behind the concept of Corporate Social and Environmental Responsibility which I have been trying to encourage for the past twenty-four years and which is now substantially integrated into many economic sectors. It also validates the need for ‘Accounting for Sustainability’—a method by which businesses can take proper account of the cost to the Earth of their products and services and which I initiated and launched some four years ago. It is encouraging that this approach is being tested by a range of companies, government departments and agencies, and I hope that it can be adopted

more generally so that well-being and sustainability can be measured, rather than merely growth in consumption.

We also need, dare I say it, new forms of international collaboration to value ecosystem services. In this regard I have been heartened by the progress of my Rainforests Project, which has sought to build a consensus around the need to provide massive interim financing to help slow the rate of tropical deforestation. The basic premise of this project has been that the world must recognize the absolutely vital utility that the rainforests provide by generating a real income for rainforest countries—where, incidentally, some 1.4 billion of the poorest people on Earth rely in some way on the rainforests for their livelihoods—an income which can be used to finance an integrated, low-carbon development model. Paradoxically, the answer to deforestation lies not solely or even mainly in the forestry sector, but rather in the agricultural and energy sectors. And we must also recognize that rainforest countries are responding rationally to the demands we create—the economic price signal that we send out in our seemingly ever-increasing demand for agricultural commodities like soya, palm oil and beef. But by dint of working with governments, NGOs, leading companies and local communities, it does appear that a solution could be in sight.

It is also heartening to see that it is increasingly possible to enhance efficiency and economic rates of return by linking different sectors together in what are called ‘virtuous circles’. You can see this in the relationship between the waste, energy and water sectors where the waste product of one process becomes the raw material of another, thereby mimicking Nature’s cyclical process of waste-free recycling. The trouble is, at the moment, that so many of these brilliant ideas sit on the fringes of our economy. They are seen as ‘alternatives’ when they need to become mainstream. But for that to happen, and for them to be effective, will require a system of long-term consistent and coherent financial incentives and disincentives—otherwise how will we achieve the urgent response we need to rectify the situation we face? By the way, I said in Brazil back in March this year that we had one hundred months left to take the necessary steps to avert irretrievable climate and ecosystem collapse, and all that goes with it. I will say it again—but now we only have ninety-six months left . . .

Now, Ladies and Gentlemen, another example of an alternative that needs to become mainstream, and which would enhance both com-

munity and environmental capital, lies in the way we plan, design and build our settlements. I have talked long and hard about this for what seems rather a long time—and look what it has done to me!—but it is yet another case where a rediscovery of so-called ‘old-fashioned’, traditional virtues can lead to the development of sustainable urbanism. This approach emphasizes the integration of mixed-use buildings and the use of local materials to create local identity which, when combined with cutting-edge developments in building technology, can enhance a sense of place and real community.

As it happens, my Foundation for the Built Environment is involved in the building of a ‘Natural House’ at the Building Research Establishment in Watford. This is suggesting a new model for green building that is built on-site and easily adapted for volume building. Its design has a contemporary, yet timeless, feel even though it is based on the time-honoured, geometric principles of balance and harmony. And it uses, instead of bricks, new, inter-locking, clay blocks which are low-fired, and therefore low-carbon, much quicker to lay and moulded in such a way that they breathe, but also have an astonishing capacity to insulate.

In a similar vein, the emerging discipline of biomimicry puts what zoologists and biologists know about natural systems together with the problems engineers and architects are trying to solve, in order to produce technology that mimics how Nature operates. There are some remarkable examples—by studying the surface of lotus leaves, an exterior paint has been developed that enables walls to clean themselves when it rains; and from a tiny desert beetle comes a sheet that can harvest moisture from the lightest of mists in the driest parts of the world. They all blend the best of the old with the best of the new to produce highly efficient technology that works with the grain of Nature rather than against it.

Ladies and Gentlemen, our need for these solutions is going to grow exponentially as our global population rises and our ecological and economic crises deepen. Is this not a rationale for investing massively in these new and more integrated approaches which, thereby, could help to create the kind of ‘virtuous circles’ based on environmental and community capital that I have mentioned this evening? Such investment would also, I can’t help thinking, have the added benefit of creating many new jobs.

But are we prepared to take such a step? As Mahatma Gandhi pointed out, ‘The difference between what we do and what we are

capable of doing would suffice to solve most of the world's problems.' Therefore it is not so much a matter of capacity, but of deciding to do something. However, the starting point is to see things differently from the current, dominant world view which in so many ways is no longer relevant to the situation in which we find ourselves. The worst course would be to continue with 'business as usual' as this will only compound the problem. We must see that we are part of the Natural order rather than isolated from it; to see that Nature is, in fact, a profoundly beautiful world of complexity that operates according to an organic 'grammar' of harmony and which is infused with an awareness of its own being, making it anchored by consciousness. It is an interconnected, interdependent function of creation with harmony existing between all things.

We are, Ladies and Gentlemen, as I said at the beginning, at an historic moment—because we face a future where there is a real prospect that if we fail the Earth, we fail Humanity. To avoid such an outcome, which will comprehensively destroy our children's future, we must urgently confront the issues and then make choices which carry monumental implications. In this, we are the masters of our fate.

On the one hand, we have every good reason to believe that carrying on as we are will lead to a depleted and divided planet incapable of meeting the needs of its nine billion citizens, let alone sustaining its other life forms. On the other hand, we can adapt our technologies, our lifestyles and, crucially, our way of thinking and perceiving the world so as to transform our relationship with the Earth that sustains us. The choice is certainly clear to me.

