

**REPORT OF THE CLIMATE
GOVERNANCE COMMISSION**



Governing Our Planetary Emergency



Research Team and Acknowledgements

Research and Production Team

Maja Groff (Climate Governance Commission Convenor), Richard Ponzio (Global Governance Innovation Network Co-Director), Eoin Jackson (Climate Governance Commission Chief of Staff and Legal Fellow), Nudhara Yusuf (Global Governance Innovation Network Executive Coordinator), Emma Broholm (Research Associate & Executive Assistant), William Durch (Editor and Distinguished Fellow, Stimson Center), Lotta Stokke, Johanne Hobel, Nina Trcek, and Luke Haubenstein (Researchers), and Masters Group Design (Lisa Weinberger, Claire Zellin, Vicki Gray-Wolfe, and Benjamin Brown).

Previous Commission Work

Please see [Other Reports](#) and the [Interim Report \(2021\)](#)

Acknowledgements

The Climate Governance Commission would like to express its appreciation for the academic and practitioner expert input, support, encouragement, and collaboration of the following individuals, in addition to the Commissioners (see [Annex I](#)), and [Commission Contributing Experts](#) who contributed substantively to three gatherings in March, June, and November 2023, beyond further reviewing and commenting on successive drafts of this Report: Bosselmann, Klaus; Bummel, Andreas; Burrows, Louise; Chandrasekhar, Chandru; Cunningham, Andrew; Dahl, Arthur; Day, Adam; Ellis, Amanda; Falk, Johan; Gaffney, Owen; Ghosh, Jayati; Giri, Chaitanya; Hanks, Kiri; Harihar, Nandini; Ireland, Claire; Johnson, Rob; Karliner, Josh; Kostakos, Georgios; Kotzé, Louis; Le Goff, Françoise; Luteijn, Sjoerd; Lynch, Ian; Maalouf, Sylvie; Magalhães, Paulo; Monkelbaan, Joachim; Montgomery, John; Muller, Christine; Obura, David; Perell, Dan; Peries, Sharmini; Peringer, Christine; Rajamani, Lavanya; Redhal, Gaurav; Reid-Henry, Simon; Rietig, Katharine; Samandari, Mahmud; Schaffer, Janin; Simon, David; Steiner, Roy; Strauss, Andrew; Sykes, Matt; Tubiana, Laurence; Vaughan, Kit; Vlasto, John; Ware, Alyn; Warszawski, Lila; and Willenswaard, Hans.

The Climate Governance Commission would also like to thank, in particular, its close collaborators at the Stimson Center, The Elders, International Environment Forum (IEF), Global Governance Forum (GGF), the Villars Institute, Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), World Resources Institute (WRI) Africa, Plataforma CIPÓ, Earthna, the Exponential Roadmap Initiative (ERI), the Institute for New Economic Thinking (INET), the World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Policy (WFM/IGP), the Club de Madrid, and the Rockefeller Foundation Bellagio Center for their steadfast support and encouragement throughout the consultations for and preparation of this Report.

The Climate Governance Commission is grateful for the generous financial and in kind support of the Wayfarer Foundation, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Villars Institute, Global Challenges Foundation, Earthna, the Stimson Center, the Global Academy Foundation, the Future Economy Forum, Global Futures Conference (GF22/GF23), and the Bahá'í International Community, among other partners, without which it could not have pursued this vital project.

Dedication

This Report is dedicated to John Emmert Groff (April 1943–September 2023), a lifelong dedicated science educator, in the hope that it will contribute to the well-being of all people, and of all life on Earth, as he would have wished.

Please Cite this Report As

Climate Governance Commission. *Governing Our Planetary Emergency*. November, 2023.

Copyright © November 2023, The Climate Governance Commission



Governing Our Planetary Emergency: Charting a Safe Path for a Workable Future

The world faces a deepening planetary emergency—and is on a reckless path toward runaway, catastrophic climate change—having already over-shot six of nine scientifically-identified Planetary Boundaries. Collectively, we must chart a safe and sustainable path for a workable future for all of humanity.

The world is currently experiencing the initial impacts of catastrophic climate change. Facing a crossroads in human history, we need novel approaches to global governance in support of unprecedented policy, private sector, and citizen-led actions, to shift course this decade and avert the worst of the emergency. Human interference in the life-supporting functions of our planet have already caused intense suffering and heightened inequality. Employing new and existing governance levers in more creative and technically robust ways—that harness the combined talents and commitments of governments and non-state actors—is necessary to meet our shared, colossal challenges. The Commission aspires to contribute to the thought leadership and norm entrepreneurship necessary to safeguard humanity’s future. Our current challenges—although daunting—are solvable, and there are many powerful, positive trends on which to build our efforts. This Report sets forth near- and medium-term proposals for vital and substantial governance improvements across the international system. The Commission will form diverse, high-level working groups to refine its recommendations and advocate for their associated transformations; we value our myriad partners in this important effort for just climate governance.

“We stand at the cusp of a green energy transformation, poised to shape a fairer, cleaner, healthier future. The means to finance the climate action we need to see are within reach, but it is good governance that holds the key. We must remain hopeful—but hope is not just a passive sentiment in our hearts, it must be manifested in our actions.”

— Mary Robinson, Lead Chair of the Climate Governance Commission,
Chair of The Elders.

Foreword

The world faces a deepening planetary emergency—and is on a reckless path toward catastrophic climate change—having already over-stepped six of nine scientifically-identified Planetary Boundaries. A continued failure to address the underlying causes of this emergency, including entrenched dependence on fossil fuels, destruction of nature, pollution, and resource waste and overconsumption, will have dangerous social and ecological consequences for planetary stability, potentially leading to irreversible and devastating changes to our environment. At the same time, the world is experiencing grave setbacks in the fight against hunger, poverty, and inequality. A system-wide and just approach to solving the climate crisis is the moral and practical imperative of our time.

The Climate Governance Commission aims to meet this imperative by proposing, developing, and building partnerships to promote feasible, high-impact ideas for urgent and effective collective action to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C or less. Our premise is that new perspectives on global governance—deploying new levels of collective wisdom and political courage—are needed urgently to address current existential planetary risks, complementing ongoing intergovernmental negotiations. Informing the upcoming COP 28 meeting in Dubai and September 2024 Summit of the Future in New York, solutions recommended by the Commission seek to move the planet through a swift and just global transition. Such a transition should leap beyond carbon-based energy to clean energy technologies and catalyze other key sectoral transformations (e.g., land use/food, nature restoration, materials circularity, and an energy efficiency revolution), while promoting jobs and holistic economic and social well-being, with a special focus on those most affected by poverty or vulnerable to climate change.

At this unique juncture in human history, we need unprecedented action *this decade* to shift course and avert the worst of the emergency. The crossing of Planetary Boundaries has already heightened inequality, intensified human suffering, and accelerated the extinction of many other species. Employing new and existing governance levers in more creative and technically robust ways is necessary to meet our shared challenges.

The International Energy Agency this year confirmed that global investment in clean energy was, for the first time, higher than investment in fossil fuels. This is both a message of hope that we may be on the cusp of a green energy transformation and a reminder of why we must embrace new planetary governance models to ensure that this transition is not only achieved, but equitable.

We wish to express our appreciation to the secretariat team, led by Maja Groff, which worked tirelessly and in a highly professional manner with our fellow Commissioners, to bring out this carefully researched report in time for COP 28, following earlier this year two in-person and one virtual meeting of the full Commission. By working with diverse and pro-active partners and contributing to smart coalitions of governments, civil society groups, cities, businesses, and others worldwide, the Climate Governance Commission aims to advance the near- and medium-term innovation proposals presented in this Report. In doing so, we seek to initiate a shift in global governance and provide a practical path forward for ambitious and doable climate action, ensuring a safe, flourishing, and sustainable future for all.

Mary Robinson

*Lead Chair | Chair of The Elders,
Former President of Ireland*

María Fernanda Espinosa

*Co-Chair | Group of Women Leaders,
C4UN, 73rd President of the United
Nations General Assembly*

Johan Rockström

*Co-Chair | Director,
Potsdam Institute for
Climate Impact Research*

Purpose of the 2023 Report

This 2023 Report, *Governing Our Planetary Emergency*, draws from commissioned policy briefs and reports and wide-ranging international expert, civil society, and other stakeholder consultations conducted over Phase I and II of the Commission’s work (for further background information, see [Annex II](#), as well as the [Commission website](#), with [multiple sub-reports](#) and the Commission’s full [Interim Report](#)). The Commission has benefited tremendously from the experience, insight, and creativity of the high-level Commissioners engaged in Phase II (see [Annex I](#)). The 2023 Report represents a synthesis of key ideas, analytical findings, and proposals that arose over the preceding consultations. In particular, two principal meetings of the Commission were convened on 7 March 2023 in Doha (hybrid format), in connection with the inaugural [Earthna Summit](#); and 27–28 June 2023 near Geneva (hybrid format) at the [Villars Institute](#), in connection with the [2023 Villars Symposium](#).¹ A third virtual meeting of the Commission was convened on 2 November 2023.

The United Nations Secretary-General (UNSG) has underlined that, in the face of intersecting global challenges, “humanity faces a stark and urgent choice: a breakdown or a breakthrough.”² Such a breakthrough, he notes, must be firmly grounded in global solidarity—we must work together as a “global family.”³ Due to the colossal emergency represented by the triple planetary crisis and related global ecological challenges in need of governance solutions (see [Parts I and II](#), below), this 2023 Report of the Climate Governance Commission sets forth proposals that could be characterized, in their implementation horizon, as near-term (one-to-three year timeframe), and medium-term (three-to-five year timeframe); see [Parts III and IV](#), below, respectively. These recommendations are labeled as “Working Proposals,” as they are intended to be further prioritized, developed, adjusted, coordinated, and/or combined, as appropriate, with additional focused diplomatic, expert, citizen, and stakeholder working groups.

The generous range of proposals presented reflects the fact that—from a governance perspective—much work remains; our institutional responses are dramatically lagging behind the pace of change required to adapt to the acute demands of the planetary emergency. In the face of growing climate and social catastrophes, it is important to put various ideas and options for coping with these crises on the table, including from both official and (often) under-appreciated non-governmental sources. Failures of imagination and conceptual poverty, as well as underestimations of human collective capacity, also constitute significant risks for the international community.

Finally, we offer this Report in the hope of leaving a flourishing world to future generations, while protecting all peoples and life on Earth today from the accelerating effects of the degradation of planetary systems. By preventing the worst consequences of climate change, enormous resource savings will follow and the most severe levels of human suffering can be avoided. Through the proposed climate governance innovations outlined in the following pages, and guided by science and sound principles of governance, opportunities abound for all peoples and nations to contribute meaningfully.

Table of Contents

Foreword.....	2
Purpose of the 2023 Report.....	3
List of Illustrations.....	6
List of Abbreviations.....	7
Executive Summary.....	9
I. The Climate Problem-Set: Understanding Our Current Predicament.....	17
A Historic Crossroads for Our Climate and Well-Being: Life on the Precipice.....	17
What the Science Tells Us.....	18
A Planetary Emergency and the Crucial Importance of the Next 6–7 Years.....	18
The Anthropocene and the Holocene: The Key Task of Returning to a Holocene-Like State.....	20
Erosion of Earth Resilience.....	22
Dangerous Tipping Points.....	23
Maintaining Planetary Boundaries: A Planetary Task.....	23
II. Conceptual Frameworks: International Governance Perspectives as a Vital Necessity.....	25
Introduction: Needed Paradigm Shifts.....	25
Transcending Geopolitics and Traditional Notions of Security.....	27
The Enormous Positive Potential Ahead.....	29
Equity, Justice, and Trusteeship Perspectives: Central Principles to Planetary Emergency Governance.....	30
The Importance of Norm Entrepreneurship and Responsible Leadership:	
Addressing the Power-Foresight Gap.....	32
III. Near-Term International Governance Innovations: “TOP 10” Working Proposals.....	35
1. Urgent Improvement of Climate COPs to Focus on Delivery, Action, and Accountability.....	35
Climate COP Improvements and Reform.....	35
The Use of Mediation and Facilitation Tools.....	37
Enhancing Compliance Mechanisms under the Paris Agreement.....	38
2. Declaration of Planetary Emergency, Planetary Emergency Platform, and Broadening	
International Security Paradigms.....	39
Declaration of Planetary Emergency.....	40
Planetary Emergency Platform.....	40
Broadening International Security Paradigms.....	42
3. Responsible Action of Powerful Actors: “Servant Leadership”.....	44
“Big Four, Grand Bargain”.....	45
The Responsible Engagement of Fossil Fuel Companies, Executives, and Associations.....	45
Company Supply Chain Scale-Up and Corporate Accountability.....	46
4. Enhance International Scientific Capacity for Earth System Governance.....	47
Establish a Science-Policy-Action Network (SPAN) for Earth System Risks	
With Technical and Policy Functions.....	48
5. Elevate Environmental Governance Within the Multilateral System and Strengthen	
Accountability for International Obligations.....	49
Enhancing the UNEP and the UNEA.....	49
6. Near-Term International Economic and Financial Measures.....	51
Renewed Efforts to Raise the Needed International Public Finance.....	52
Debt Relief.....	53
MDB/IFI Lending Reforms and De-Risking of Climate Finance.....	54
A Green Technology Licensing Facility.....	55

7. More Innovative International Law, International Legal Institutions, and Citizen Participation in Global Governance	56
Global Pact for the Environment.....	56
ICJ Reform and Advisory Opinion Referral Facility.....	56
UN Parliamentary Assembly and Citizen Participation.....	57
Addressing Individual Responsibility for Environmental Crimes: Including Ecocide as a Crime under the International Criminal Court	58
Strengthening the Implementation of the Right to a Clean, Healthy, and Sustainable Environment.....	58
Other Mechanisms of Legal Accountability: International Anti-Corruption Court, Treaty on Trans-National Corporations and Human Rights	58
Grand Corruption and the Climate Crisis.....	59
8. Connecting Trade and International Investment Law With Climate and Broader Ecological Priorities	59
Global Carbon Tariffs	59
Aid-for-Trade Strategy: Expanding Links to Climate Adaptation	60
Major Economies Taking Responsibility: Reforming the G7 Climate Club.....	61
Reforming the WTO and Bilateral Investment Treaties to Account for Climate Priorities.....	61
9. Facilitating Business as a Force for Good through Effective Multistakeholder Commitment	62
Catalyzing Paradigmatic Economic Shifts.....	63
Building and Scaling Up a Powerful Green Lobby with Integrity and Credibility	65
10. Boosting “Next-Generation” City and Regional Alliances	67
Next-Generation City Alliance Example: Urban Climate Change Governance in Vulnerable Hot and Arid Zones	68
IV. Building Out Planetary Governance: Next-Generation Working Proposals	71
1. Establish A Global Environment Agency (GEA)	72
2. Establish An International Court for the Environment (ICE)	73
3. Adapt Environmental Law to the Anthropocene	74
4. Reform Bretton Woods Institutions and Enhance Multilateral Development Bank/ National Development Agency Collaboration	75
5. Other Key Medium-term International Institutional Reforms	76
UN Executive Council.....	76
Enhancement of the International Rule of Law and International Human Rights.....	77
Strengthening the UNPA	77
Establishing a New UN Funding Mechanism	77
V. Theories of Change and a Strategy for Climate Governance Innovation	79
Smart Coalitions and the Role of Norm Entrepreneurship	80
Reflections and Success Stories from International Civil Society	80
Engaging Businesses.....	81
The Importance of Public Communications, Crisis Leadership, and Education	81
Environmental Psychology, Public Support, and Risk Perception.....	81
Crisis Leadership, Public Emergency Communications, and Information Ecosystems	85
VI. Toward Effective and Just Earth System Governance	87
Climate Governance and the Global Summits	87
Building a Dedicated “Smart Coalition” for Effective Global Governance of the Environment.....	89
Endnotes	90
Annex I: Commissioners of the Climate Governance Commission	105
Annex II: Commission Background and Interim Report	106
Bibliography	110

List of Illustrations

Figures

Figure 1.1: Current Status of Control Variables for All Nine Planetary Boundaries	19
Figure 1.2: Possible Hothouse Earth/Stabilization Trajectories.....	21
Figure 2.1: The Climate Regime Complex.....	26
Figure 2.2: Exponential Emission Reduction Pathways to Limit Global Warming to 1.5°C	28
Figure 3.1: The Four Pillars of Company Climate Action	65
Figure 6.1: Roadmap to the 2024 Summit of the Future & SDG Summit Follow-through.....	88

Boxes

Box 2.1: Key Perspectives to Consider Within International Governance Systems.....	31
Box 3.1: Policy Clearinghouse: Employing New Levels of International Learning and Knowledge/Solution Generation and Diffusion	44
Box 3.2: From Supply Chains to “Responsibility Chains”	66
Box 3.3: Case Study: RITA as an Emerging Platform.....	69
Box 5.1: Connecting Higher Education to Planetary Well-Being	84
Box 7.1: Key Governance Conclusions, Interim Report of the Climate Governance Commission:	107

List of Abbreviations

ACN.....	Arid Cities Network
AfT	Aid-for-Trade
ASU.....	Arizona State University
BIT	Bilateral Investment Treaty
BOGA	Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance
CBAM	European Union Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CDRI.....	Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI)
CETP	Clean Energy Transition Partnership
CGC.....	Climate Governance Commission
CGIAR.....	Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers
CGS.....	Citizens for Global Solutions
CICC.....	Coalition for the International Criminal Court
COPs.....	Conference of the Parties
COP 28	28th Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
DRGR	Debt Relief for Green and Inclusive Recovery
ERI.....	Exponential Roadmap Initiative
ESG.....	Environmental, Social, and Governance
ESJ.....	Earth System Justice
EU.....	European Union
EV	Electric Vehicle
G20.....	Group of 20
G7.....	Group of 7
GBO	Global Biodiversity Outlook
GCF.....	Green Climate Fund
GCI-RMM	Global Clean Investment Risk Mitigation Mechanism
GEA	Global Environment Agency
GEO.....	Global Environment Outlook
GIIN	Global Impact Investing Network
GGIN	Global Governance Innovation Network
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GPI.....	Global Public Investment
GRC	Global Resilience Council
GRI	Global Reporting Initiative
HLAB	High-Level Advisory Board
IACC.....	International Anti-Corruption Court
ICAN.....	International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons
ICC.....	International Criminal Court
ICCN.....	International Climate Councils Network
ICE	International Court for the Environment
ICJ.....	International Court of Justice
ICLEI.....	Local Governments for Sustainability
IEA.....	International Energy Agency
IEF	International Energy Forum
IFI.....	International Financing Institution

IFRSInternational Financial Reporting Standards
 IMFInternational Monetary Fund
 IPBESIntergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services
 IPCCIntergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
 IPE.....Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs
 IPPB.....International Panel on Planetary Boundaries
 ISSB.....International Sustainability Standards Board
 ITLOS.....International Tribunal on the Law of the Sea
 MDBs.....Multilateral Development Banks
 MEA.....Multilateral Environmental Agreements
 MEGAMobilizing an Earth Governance Alliance
 MNEs.....Multinational Enterprises
 NDC’s.....Nationally Determined Contributions
 NGO.....Nongovernmental Organisation
 ODAOfficial Development Assistance
 OECD.....Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
 OPECOrganisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries
 PAICCParis Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee
 PDBsPublic Development Banks
 PPCA.....Powering Past Coal Alliance
 RITA.....Regional Impact Trade Alliance
 SASBSustainability Accounting Standards Board
 SBSTA.....Scientific Body for Technological and Scientific Advice
 SDGsSustainable Development Goals
 SDRs.....Special Drawing Rights
 SPAN.....Science-Policy-Action Network
 TESSDTrade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions
 TRIPSAgreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights
 UCLGUnited Cities and Local Governments
 UDI.....University Design Institute
 UN.....United Nations
 UNCACUnited Nations Convention Against Corruption
 UNCTAD.....United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
 UNEA.....United Nations Environmental Assembly
 UNESCO.....United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation
 UNEPUnited Nations Environment Programme
 UNFCCC.....United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
 UNGAUnited Nations General Assembly
 UNHRCUnited Nations Human Rights Council
 UNICEFUnited Nations International Children’s Emergency Fund
 UNPA.....United Nations Parliamentary Assembly
 UNSC.....United Nations Security Council
 UNSG.....United Nations Secretary-General
 WEOWorld Environment Organisation
 WFMWorld Federalist Movement
 WHOWorld Health Organisation
 WRI.....World Resource Institute
 WTOWorld Trade Organisation

Executive Summary

*“We are at an inflection point in history...
The disastrous effects of a changing climate—
famine, floods, fires, and extreme heat—
threaten our very existence.”*

— UN Secretary-General António Guterres, *Our Common Agenda*.

Against the complex backdrop of Great Power tensions, human rights violations, expanding poverty, deepening inequality, and more concurrent violent conflicts than at any time in decades, the climate crisis, according to the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), requires *rapid global action to transform the world economy* at a speed and on a scale unprecedented in human history. In response, calls abound for large-scale global resource mobilization efforts analogous to the Marshall Plan or World War II. While some jurisdictions have declared a state of climate emergency, this has not translated into widespread concrete action plans and the governance reforms needed.

Innovative global governance solutions to effectively combat climate change and to address the triple planetary crisis of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution are humanity’s chief moral and practical imperative. A continued failure to address the underlying causes of this emergency—such as a lack of concerted, accountable collective action, economic short-termism, greed, flawed definitions of economic success, entrenched dependence on fossil fuels, resource waste, overconsumption, and the destruction of nature—will have further devastating effects for all of humanity.

A basic premise of the Climate Governance Commission is that new perspectives on global governance—deploying new levels of collective wisdom and political courage—are required to tackle current existential planetary risks. Such efforts should complement and enhance ongoing intergovernmental negotiations. By prioritizing fundamental global collective action innovations, we can protect our common home for present and future generations in a just, equitable, and sustainable manner. We therefore set forth near- and medium-term governance reform proposals in Parts III and IV of this Report for consideration at upcoming Conferences of the Parties of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, the September 2024 Summit of the Future, and other policy fora. Together, our recommendations strive to harness the talents and respond to the exigencies of all peoples and nations, while repairing our relationship with the natural systems on which we all depend.

What the Science Tells Us: A Planetary Emergency and the Crucial Importance of the Next 6-7 Years

The world faces a deepening **planetary emergency**—and is on a reckless path toward runaway, catastrophic climate change—having already over-shot six of nine scientifically-identified Planetary Boundaries. This human interference in the life-supporting functions of our planet have *already* caused

intense suffering and heightened inequality, including through, among other factors, extreme heat, frequent and fierce flooding and storm surges, and desertification.

At this unique juncture in human history, we likely have, at best, only six-to-seven years to execute the far-reaching actions needed to avert the worst of this unprecedented emergency. The world has an *extremely limited* global carbon budget and a rapidly diminishing time-frame to attempt to stabilize global temperatures as near to 1.5°C as possible—which the IPCC has underlined represents a **scientific limit** and not a target or aspiration. In fact, even in the absolute best-case scenario over the next decades, *if* the world takes bold and decisive climate action, we will still likely break through the 1.5°C temperature limitation by about 2035, the consequences of which are anticipated to take decades to correct, with uncertain outcomes dependent on various unknowns.

This challenge takes place within a context of alarming gaps in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development’s implementation. The UN’s comprehensive review, in 2023, of the Sustainable Development Goals underlines that half of the approximately 140 targets evaluated showed weak to severely limited progress.

THE ANTHROPOCENE AND THE HOLOCENE: MAINTAINING PLANETARY BOUNDARIES AS A PLANETARY TASK

While the Holocene provided a stable climate and environment for humanity, returning to its “pristine” state is impossible due to far-reaching anthropogenic changes. Phasing out greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2050–2060 is necessary but insufficient to prevent global warming beyond 1.5°C by the end of the century; a comprehensive planetary governance approach is also imperative, with parallel management of multiple biosphere boundaries, including for climate, biodiversity, freshwater, land use, and nutrient overloading, while meeting essential societal objectives as well. The growing risks of further exceeding societal adaptation limits and crossing biophysical tipping points further underscores the need to accelerate progress, simultaneously, within the United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change and its Paris Agreement. Additionally, a new planetary emergency plan is required, combined with a new **planetary emergency plan**, combined with governance innovations to manage the Earth system adequately.

Conceptual Frameworks: International Governance Perspectives as a Vital Necessity

The advent of the Anthropocene upends the notion that the nation-state alone, relying on loose and often weak international cooperation arrangements, is commensurate with the task of addressing our current challenges. The present global governance system is not yet equipped to deal fully with our planetary emergency, which now encompasses “polycrisis” conditions with concurrent international conflicts, financial instability, global inequality, and pandemic risk and recovery. We are facing a critical moment for international governance, requiring a paradigm shift in relations among and between countries to prioritize cooperation and shared responsibility in the face of complex, global existential risks. Empowered with new authorities and capabilities, current and new international governance

institutions must exert competent crisis leadership, developing and deploying emergency plans, disaster preparedness, and a new generation of effective policies. Importantly, they should do so while pursuing a more equitable allocation of resources, in the face of ongoing erosion and potential collapse of critical planetary systems.

THE ENORMOUS POSITIVE POTENTIAL AHEAD

The current planetary emergency, despite its dire nature, presents an extraordinary transformative opportunity by addressing governance shortcomings, extractivist economic models, and other root causes that have brought our shared natural environment close to an irreversible breaking point. GHG emissions continue to rise at an alarming rate. However, we fortunately now wield the science, technology, and local and Indigenous knowledge required to achieve climate stability. Further, the world *could* be on the cusp of a major green energy transition, if leading technologies, solutions, and green business trends are mainstreamed, transcending “Global North and South” divides.

EQUITY, JUSTICE, AND TRUSTEESHIP PERSPECTIVES: CENTRAL PRINCIPLES TO PLANETARY EMERGENCY GOVERNANCE

The concept of “Earth System Justice” plays a crucial role in this context, demanding an equitable provision for human needs within the boundaries of the Earth system. This approach aligns with “just transition” thinking, alongside principles of intergenerational justice and “Earth Trusteeship,” to recognize and fulfill joint responsibilities toward both the environment and future generations.

THE IMPORTANCE OF NORM ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND RESPONSIBLE LEADERSHIP: ADDRESSING THE POWER-FORESIGHT GAP

Humanity finds itself at an important crossroads where its growing power, fueled by technological advances, has outpaced its capacity for wise and future-oriented decision-making. This gap poses an unsustainable risk. While achieving international political and economic structural changes is not easy, the power of norms, values, and “norm entrepreneurship” can aid in transforming global ecological governance, especially when preferred actions are backed by citizens-led “smart-coalitions.”

Near-Term International Governance Innovations: “TOP 10” Working Proposals

As a matter of urgency, the Climate Governance Commission offers its TOP 10 near-term proposals, for implementation within the next one-to-three years, pursued at the same time as work begins on deeper, medium-term governance upgrades (see “TOP 5,” below). Civil society alliances and citizen engagement are embedded in each proposal, which together *are all* feasible with political will mobilized by champion governments together with civil society partners.

1. URGENT IMPROVEMENTS OF CLIMATE COPs TO FOCUS ON DELIVERY, ACTION, AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Climate COPs should be streamlined and rationalized as a *catalytic and results-focused forum*, with more effective inclusion of diverse stakeholders through the formation of high-ambition, multistakeholder coalitions. Professional mediation and facilitation tools should be employed, and new Paris Agreement accountability mechanisms introduced.

2. DECLARATION OF PLANETARY EMERGENCY, PLANETARY EMERGENCY PLATFORM, AND BROADENING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY PARADIGMS

The UN General Assembly should declare a planetary emergency. The UN Secretary-General's proposed Emergency Platform should also convene to tackle existential climate and Earth system risks, including by developing a Planetary Emergency Plan. Global security norms should be updated to reflect the planetary security risks and realities that the world faces.

3. RESPONSIBLE ACTION OF POWERFUL ACTORS: "SERVANT LEADERSHIP"

Powerful actors must now assume greater responsibility and better serve the collective interests of all humanity, life on Earth, and future generations: major GHG-emitting nations should fashion a "grand bargain"; a responsible phase-out of fossil fuel production and shift to clean energy, aligned with climate science, should be undertaken with concrete and collaborative efforts among governments, fossil fuel industry leaders, international organisations, and civil society; reliable (multinational) corporate climate performance evaluation tools should be strengthened, linked, and/or established where lacking.

4. ENHANCE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CAPACITY FOR EARTH SYSTEM GOVERNANCE

Staying within Planetary Boundaries is crucial to keep humanity within a "safe operating space," and international policymakers require robust and comprehensive scientific advice for this task. A Science-Policy-Action Network (SPAN) should be established, focusing on real-time assessments and tracking, global and country-specific reports, and science-driven policies to stay within Planetary Boundaries.

5. ELEVATE ENVIRONMENTAL GOVERNANCE WITHIN THE MULTILATERAL SYSTEM AND STRENGTHEN ACCOUNTABILITY FOR INTERNATIONAL OBLIGATIONS

Recognizing the environment as a fourth pillar of UN activity (alongside sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights) acknowledges its fundamental role in international society, adding momentum for addressing urgent climate challenges and Earth system stewardship. To this end, the roles of and international institutional connections with the UN Environment Programme and UN Environment Assembly should be enhanced, along with a public accountability platform / special rapporteur group and measures to give a voice to future generations.

“A Science-Policy-Action Network (SPAN) should be established, focusing on... science-driven policies to stay within Planetary Boundaries.”

6. NEAR-TERM INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC AND FINANCIAL MEASURES

To bridge the “great finance divide” for urgent climate mitigation and adaptation, international organisations, states, and the private sector must mobilize, employing new ingenuity and focused efforts to raise unprecedented resources for the swift transitions required, including through, for example: a Global Public Investment arrangement, reforming outdated international aid paradigms; progressive and fairly-designed taxes; removal of fossil fuel subsidies; debt relief; multilateral development bank lending reforms and de-risking of climate finance; and facilities for international green tech transfer for urgent diffusion of breakthrough climate-friendly technologies.

7. MORE INNOVATIVE INTERNATIONAL LAW, INTERNATIONAL LEGAL INSTITUTIONS, AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN GLOBAL GOVERNANCE

There must be forward motion to catalyze a much more robust international legal response to the pressing issues of climate change and the triple planetary crisis, including by finishing the Global Pact for the Environment, better use of the International Court of Justice, new citizens voice and participation mechanisms, and other international legal measures to improve the effective governance of the environment and interlinked areas (e.g., concerning corruption and the conduct of multinational enterprises).

8. CONNECTING TRADE AND INTERNATIONAL INVESTMENT LAW WITH CLIMATE AND BROADER ECOLOGICAL PRIORITIES

In a highly globalized and unequal economy, global trading and investment regulatory institutions can drive critical climate and ecological transformation, within the paradigm of a just transition. As such, a fair global carbon tariff system, an Aid-for-Trade strategy, expanding climate adaptation links, reform or enhancement of the G7 Climate Club, and ensuring that the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and Bilateral Investment Treaties account for planetary priorities should be considered.

9. FACILITATING BUSINESS AS A FORCE FOR GOOD THROUGH EFFECTIVE MULTISTAKEHOLDER COMMITMENTS

Businesses must be held accountable through robust regulation and encouraged to drive the transition to a sustainable global economy, supported by updated legislation and fiscal incentives at all levels of governance. Creating movements of pioneers in a “race to the top” is essential, as well as building a credible “green lobby” to advocate for climate and Planetary Boundary-positive markets and policies. Businesses can serve as chief providers of climate solutions, engaging through a “conveyor belt” of high-quality voluntary to mandatory standards.

10. BOOSTING “NEXT-GENERATION” CITY AND REGIONAL ALLIANCES

Action-focused city and regional networks should be better represented at multilateral venues, and strengthened or created for underrepresented geographies, such as the proposed new Arid Cities Network, to better address the specific needs of vulnerable communities and pursue opportunities across urban areas in the fight against climate change.

Building Out Planetary Governance in the Medium-Term: “TOP 5” Next-Generation Working Proposals

Given the urgency of the planetary crisis, planning for next-generation planetary governance is needed, in parallel with the implementation of the above near-term governance innovations. Specifically, the international community should leverage next year’s Summit of the Future and COP 30, in 2025, to deliberate upon and initiate processes toward implementing medium-term (next three-to-five years) climate and broader Planetary Boundary governance reforms.

1. ESTABLISH A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT AGENCY,

evolving from the UN Environment Program to address the climate crisis comprehensively, functioning as a central hub for global climate and environment governance.

2. ESTABLISH AN INTERNATIONAL COURT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT,

closely tied to the proposed Global Environment Agency, tasked with resolving relevant international environmental law disputes and providing authoritative advisory opinions.

3. ADAPT ENVIRONMENTAL LAW TO THE ANTHROPOCENE,

to shift environmental law toward enhanced safeguarding of the Earth’s life-support system for sustainable development and to recognize Earth’s biophysical systems as vital functions serving all nations and peoples.

4. REFORM BRETTON WOODS INSTITUTIONS AND ENHANCE MULTILATERAL DEVELOPMENT BANK/NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY COLLABORATION,

to transform the global financial and economic system with a multifaceted strategy (e.g., incorporating stricter regulations and incentives for private capital to support climate and development objectives, while also expanding public development finance). Adopt a new narrative focusing on the Global Public Investment paradigm to foster greater international collaboration in the financing of global public goods and protection of the global commons.

5. OTHER KEY MEDIUM-TERM INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTIONAL REFORMS:

Enhancements in overall global governance inclusivity, accountability, and effectiveness are long overdue and are needed to address the “polycrisis”; for example, targeted UN Charter reform for a more effective and representative Security Council, strengthening the international rule of law and human rights machinery, strengthening the UN Parliamentary Assembly, and creating new UN funding mechanisms.

“...international civil society ‘smart coalitions’ with like-minded governments have shown that small groups with powerful ideas can drive change over an accelerated time-frame...”

Theories of Change and a Strategy for Climate Governance Innovation

While humanity has lacked the wisdom, heretofore, to address the planetary emergency, we must quickly make up for lost time and ensure that present and all future generations have the opportunity to not only survive, but to flourish. Moving beyond past failures of imagination, and overcoming political, economic, sociological, psychological, and other barriers to progress is essential.

SMART COALITIONS AND THE ROLE OF NORM ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Breakthroughs in global collective action often encounter seemingly insurmountable obstacles, but examples of successful international civil society “smart coalitions” with like-minded governments have shown that small groups with powerful ideas can drive change over an accelerated time-frame. Given the urgency of the planetary emergency, the need for a broad-based state and non-state actor coalition for climate governance is clear. International “norm entrepreneurship” is another effective strategy for such coalitions to nurture and realize timely and carefully calibrated global norms in the global public interest.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC COMMUNICATIONS, CRISIS LEADERSHIP, AND EDUCATION

Further, effective communication and education are essential for gaining public support for climate and broader planetary emergency action. Transformative education, particularly for the benefit of youth, can foster empathy and empowerment, driving demand for climate and planetary governance.

Toward Effective and Just Earth System Governance

Upcoming intergovernmental negotiations offer crucial opportunities to deliberate upon and advance near- and medium-term governance proposals. The 28th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 28), 30 November – 12 December 2023 in Dubai, and the Summit of the Future, 22-23 September 2024 in New York, are key forums. Discussions within the International Monetary Fund-World Bank Spring and Autumn Meetings in Washington, D.C. and the annual heads of state G20 Meeting, among other international fora, provide additional opportunities for advancing a progressive climate governance innovation agenda.

The Climate Governance Commission’s progress in the coming months and years will be measured by the extent it helps to catalyze positive shifts in global climate and broader Earth system governance. It plans to establish expert, diplomatic, and other high-level stakeholder working groups for the elaboration of key proposals and to collaborate with like-minded states.

The Commission is further pleased to partner with diverse partners across civil society. One such citizen-led initiative is the Mobilizing an Earth Governance Alliance (MEGA) campaign. Ultimately, MEGA aspires to unite state and non-state actors in a new kind of smart coalition to address the planetary emergency, leveraging international law and the emergence of a global civic ethic to protect the Earth’s delicate ecosystems. This combined enlightened, top-down leadership with skillful, bottom-up citizen engagement aims to safeguard the well-being of present and future generations, while also protecting our life-giving planet.



I. The Climate Problem-Set: Understanding Our Current Predicament

A Historic Crossroads for Our Climate and Well-Being: Life on the Precipice

UN Secretary-General António Guterres has proclaimed that the scientific findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) represent a “code red for humanity,”⁴ and that the “gates to hell” have been opened due to decades of grossly insufficient climate action.⁵ In *Our Common Agenda*, he noted:

“We are at an inflection point in history. In our biggest shared test since the Second World War [...]. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is upending our world, threatening our health, destroying economies and livelihoods and deepening poverty and inequalities. Conflicts continue to rage and worsen. The disastrous effects of a changing climate—famine, floods, fires, and extreme heat—threaten our very existence.”⁶

Scientific bodies, climate advocates, and scholars have similarly underlined the momentous nature of the historical crossroads at which we now find ourselves, and the magnitude of the swift, transformative effort needed. Yet the general awareness level of the extreme and unprecedented risks we are currently running (see below, *What the Science Tells Us*) remains low. Often, where there are levels of awareness, the willingness and preparedness to take appropriately urgent, substantive steps in response is lacking. Already, in the vital functions of the Earth system (the Earth’s interacting physical, chemical, and biological processes that support all life⁷), we see strong signs of exceeding the planet’s ability to avert more extreme events and—most troubling—irreversible, catastrophic tipping points.

The IPCC has emphasized that the climate crisis requires rapid global action to transform the international economy at a speed and on a scale that has “no documented historic precedent.”⁸ In this respect, some have suggested a Global Marshall Plan or moonshots for the planet.⁹ In *A Good War*, author Seth Klein argues that the coordinated efforts needed to manage the climate emergency can only be compared with World War II “in terms of mobilizing society and resources for coping with an emergency.”¹⁰ While only eighteen national governments and the EU have declared a climate emergency,¹¹ thousands of smaller jurisdictions have done so.¹² However, these declarations have yet to translate into widespread concrete action plans and a full recognition of the governance reform needed to address the planetary emergency.¹³

Youth across diverse geographies of the world have called out the “empty promises” of current multilateral processes,¹⁴ and leaders of nations most affected by the climate crisis have queried how the international community could be so “blinded and hardened that we can no longer appreciate the cries of humanity.”¹⁵

Philosopher Toby Ord suggest that this time in human history can be likened to a fundamentally dangerous “precipice” for all of humanity, full of both grave danger and extraordinary promise as humankind begins to grapple with a range of human-caused and natural “existential risks,”¹⁶ including those represented by climate change and other environmental damage:

“If all goes well, human history is just beginning. Humanity is about two hundred thousand years old. But the Earth will remain habitable for hundreds of millions more—enough time for millions of future generations; enough to end disease, poverty and injustice forever; enough to create heights of flourishing unimaginable today... Such a lifespan places present-day humanity in its earliest infancy. A vast and extraordinary adulthood awaits... [Yet we] see a species precariously close to self-destruction, with a future of immense promise hanging in the balance. And which way that balance tips becomes our most urgent public concern... [H]umanity will be tested: it will either act decisively to protect itself and its long term potential, or, in all likelihood, this will be lost forever... To survive these challenges and secure our future, we must act now: managing the risks of today, averting those of tomorrow, and becoming the kind of society that will never pose such risks to itself again.”¹⁷

It is up to present generations to respond in accordance with the magnitude of the challenges that we currently face, acting with equity in service of the vision of the world we would like to create.

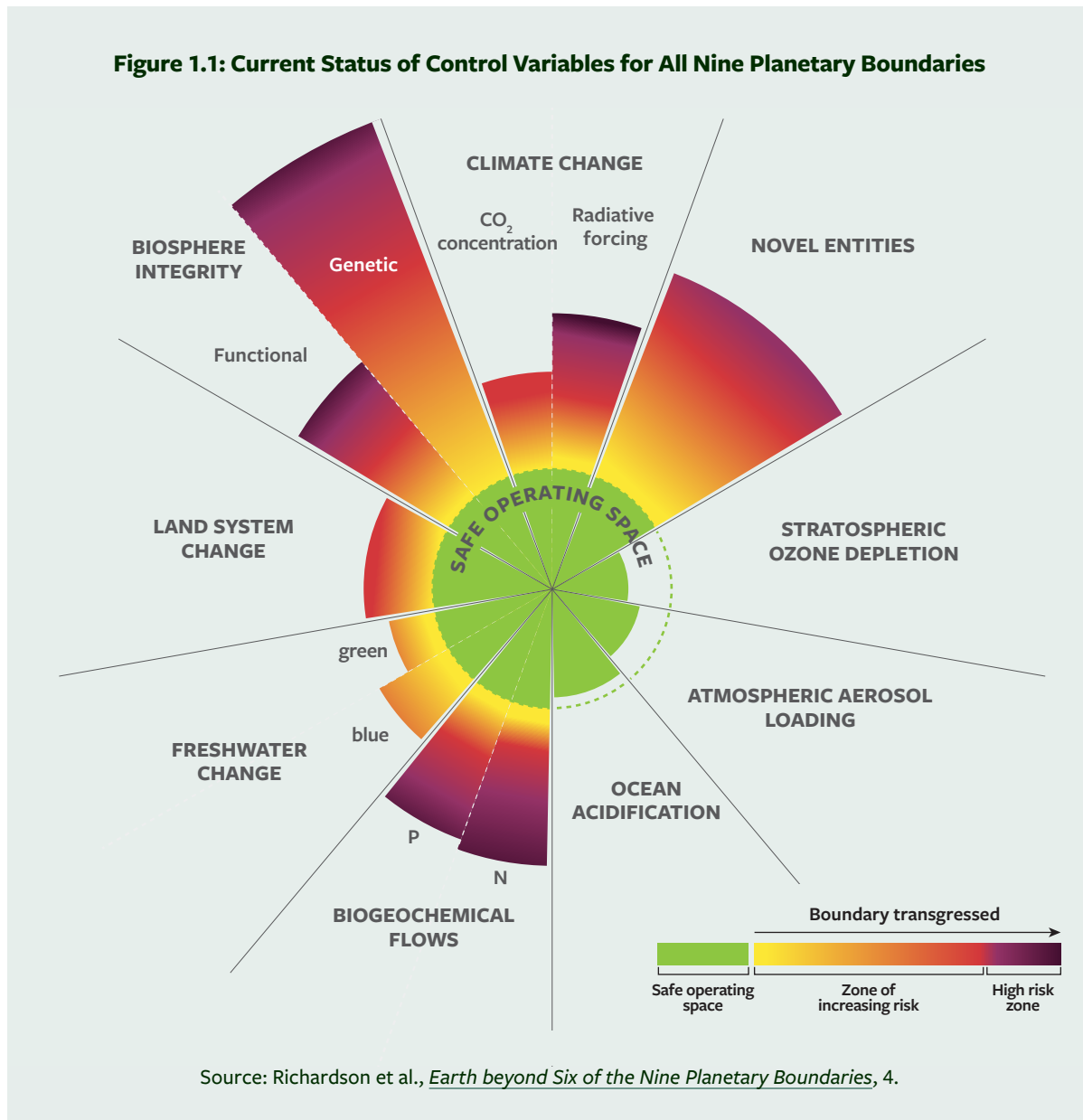
What the Science Tells Us

A PLANETARY EMERGENCY AND THE CRUCIAL IMPORTANCE OF THE NEXT 6–7 YEARS

The sixth assessment of the IPCC concludes that not only are we already threatening human well-being, we are also threatening “planetary health,” i.e., the stability of the entire Earth system.¹⁸ This is a new juncture in the advancement of climate-related Earth system research.

Humanity has created a large energy imbalance on Earth, while at the same time eroding the resilience of the living biosphere, transgressing six of nine “Planetary Boundaries,” or physical and ecological limits beyond which the ecosystem may no longer be able to self-regulate in ways that favor humanity (see [Figure 1.1](#)).¹⁹ As a result, humanity faces two simultaneous threats: (1) a global climate crisis caused by greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and land-system change (e.g., transformation of 50% of land area for agriculture, cities, and infrastructure); and (2) the simultaneous erosion of Earth’s capacity to buffer and adapt to these changes.²⁰ In short, precisely when we need a healthy planet to cope with the climate crisis, the Earth’s resilience and ability to support human life is fast waning.

Figure 1.1: Current Status of Control Variables for All Nine Planetary Boundaries



Combine this with the time factor: the remaining global “carbon budget” to have even a fifty-fifty chance of stabilising the global mean surface temperature at 1.5°C by the end of the century is extremely limited (only some 250 GtCO₂), and shrinking, which corresponds (under the current global emissions rate of some 40 GtCO₂/yr), to less than seven years.²¹ This corresponds to merely half of the remaining global carbon budget reported by the IPCC sixth assessment in 2021, with, alarmingly, the budget for stabilising at 1.5°C with a high degree of probability (e.g., 90%) *already exhausted*.²²

In fact, even in the absolute “best-case scenario” over the next decades, *if* the world does shift course and take decisive and dramatic climate action, we will still likely break through the 1.5°C temperature limitation by about 2035, the consequences of which would then take decades to correct, with uncertain outcomes dependent on various unknowns. And even *if* global temperatures can eventually be brought back below

1.5°C, the intervening decades (e.g., between 2040 and 2070) will be tough. Every year would be marked by disruptive and extreme conditions, which would get much worse before they begin to get better. The international community must advance beyond present governance limitations if the Paris Agreement’s guardrail of 1.5°C is to be respected, which will necessitate unprecedented international efforts.

Together, these factors—the climate impacts, the risks of irreversible changes due to erosion of Earth resilience, and the rapidly vanishing time window to secure a manageable climate state, a “safe landing,” for humanity—leads to the conclusion **that we face a planetary emergency**.²³ An emergency occurs when risks (impact X probability) are unacceptably high, and when time is a serious constraint. *We are at that juncture.*

THE ANTHROPOCENE AND THE HOLOCENE: THE KEY TASK OF RETURNING TO A HOLOCENE-LIKE STATE

In some parts of the world, limits to our ability to adapt to a changing environment have already been surpassed, with devastating impacts on local populations. The rising risks of further transgressing the limits of adaptation and crossing tipping points that would trigger irreversible and potentially unmanageable changes with catastrophic impacts—such as greater than ten meters sea level rise and collapse of large biomes, including the Amazon rainforest—are a result of the rising global pressures humanity is putting on the planet.²⁴ These unsustainable pressures are now so large that science concludes that humanity has triggered the beginning of a new geological epoch: we are leaving the previous Holocene epoch and have, since the start of the “great acceleration” in the 1950s, entered the Anthropocene.²⁵

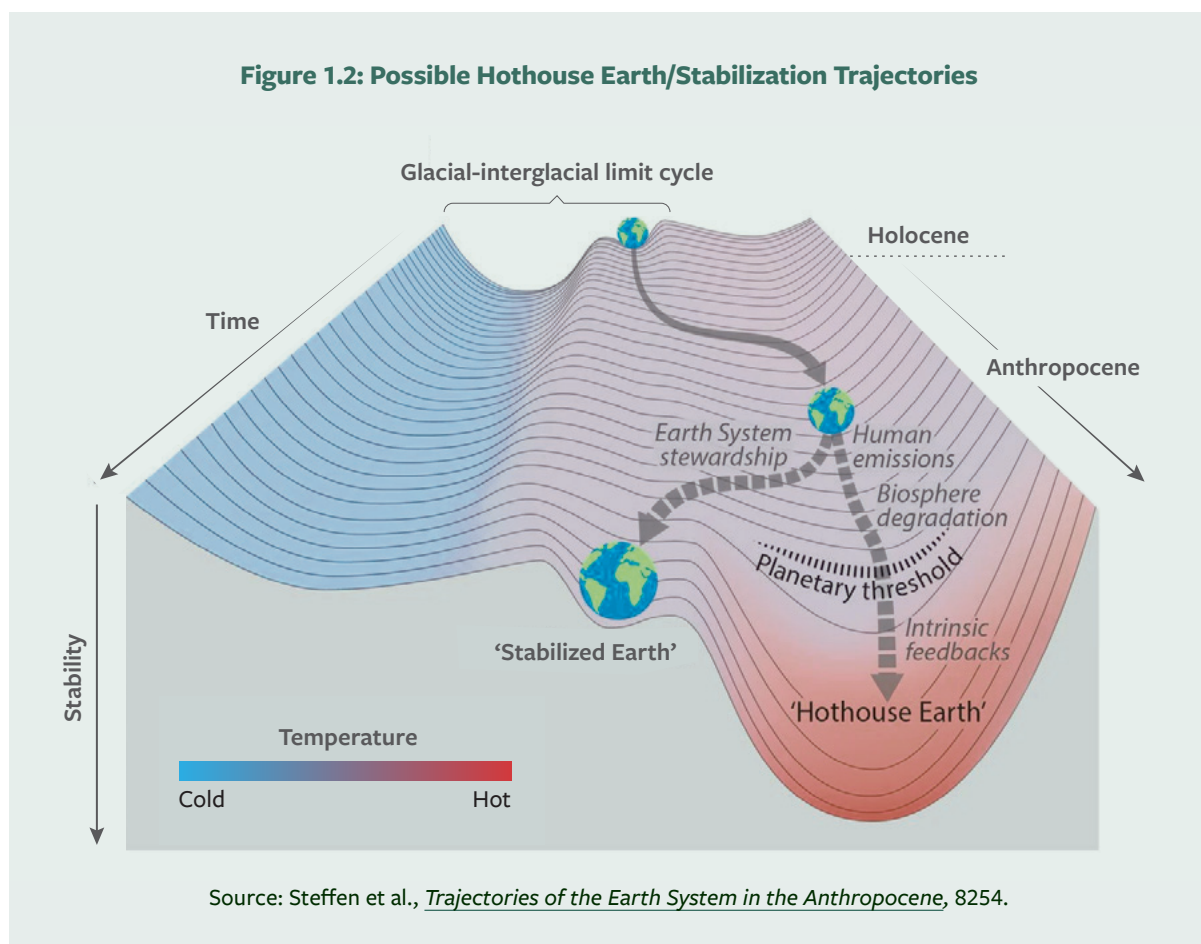
The Anthropocene means that humanity has become the dominant force determining the state of the Earth system. We have “filled up” all environmental space—in terms of pollutants and GHGs in the atmosphere, hydrosphere and land system, in terms of over-exploitation of natural habitats and loss of species, and in terms of withdrawal and consumption of finite natural resources like fresh water. In short, seventy years into the Anthropocene, we see strong signs of hitting the ceiling of what the planet can cope with, without activating self-reinforcing (rather than dampening) feedback loops by crossing tipping points.²⁶

This reality calls for a planetary emergency plan,²⁷ alongside genuinely reliable mechanisms for long-term planetary stewardship; in short, it calls for a new era of effective international governance to manage both the Earth system and interrelated human social and economic systems. We, in the modern world, are now so deep into the Anthropocene that all local aspirational objectives—for well-being, or economic development, or equity and poverty alleviation and health—can no longer be accomplished in isolation. What was once considered an already critical climate emergency has quickly evolved into a planetary emergency, which requires a whole-of-system approach to governance to account for the need to preserve, maintain, and restore Planetary Boundaries.²⁸ At this stage of the Anthropocene, we now all depend on the strength or weakness of our collective governance of the entire planet and the global commons that keep the Earth system intact.²⁹

In leaving the Holocene, we are leaving the only state of the planet that we know for certain can support humanity. The Holocene is the remarkably stable state of planetary climate since the end of the last Ice Age some 12,000 years ago. The average temperature on Earth has been 14°C ± 0.5°C throughout this warm interglacial period,³⁰ which saw the transition of modern humans (existing on Earth as fully

modern humans for over 200,000 years, through two Ice Ages) from a few million hunters and gatherers to sedentary farming communities, following the Neolithic revolution, on which we embarked early in the Holocene some 10,000 years ago. The Holocene is the only benchmark we have of a desired state of the planet, and all efforts at safeguarding a manageable future for humanity on Earth should have the Holocene as the reference point for a sustainable future.

That said, there is no return to a “virgin” Holocene state: humanity has changed the Earth too much (e.g., transforming 50% of land area for human use, increasing atmospheric greenhouse gases to a level not seen for 3–5 million years). This means that our charge is to keep Earth as close as possible to “Holocene-like” conditions, not allowing the Anthropocene to turn into a self-reinforcing new equilibrium state, which could resemble a *Hothouse Earth*.³¹ So far, the Anthropocene is a trajectory, a pressure. We are still, as far as we know, on a planet that remains dominated by biogeochemical and biophysical feedbacks and interactions that keep the planet within interglacial Holocene boundaries. This is our hope and global challenge: to return Earth—now in the depths of the Anthropocene—to within the range of interglacial Holocene-like conditions to ensure a “safe operating space” for humanity (see Figure 1.2).



EROSION OF EARTH RESILIENCE

To have a chance of keeping the planet in a state hospitable for humans requires safeguarding the biological, chemical, and geophysical resilience of the Earth system, to uphold the capacity of Earth to remain in a Holocene-like state. For climate stability, this translates to securing and restoring carbon stocks and sinks in the biosphere.³² During the entire period of rapidly rising GHG emissions over the past 150 years, Earth has responded biophysically with a remarkable degree of resilience, through negative (dampening) feedbacks: roughly half of human CO₂ emissions from fossil fuel burning and land degradation are taken up by nature, land and ocean, with the latter suffering major acidification as a result; and 91% of heat caused by the “climate forcing”³³ generated by human GHG emissions has been absorbed in the ocean. Only 1% of the heat caused by humans has so far remained in the atmosphere, causing 1.2°C of global mean temperature rise, from pre-industrial times to the present. This is evidence of a remarkably resilient Earth system applying biogeochemical and physical processes (feedbacks and interactions) to remain in a Holocene equilibrium state so far.

We are today seeing increasing signs of losing this resilience, both in terms of reduced carbon uptake capacity in forest systems,³⁴ and in terms of more frequent heat release from the ocean (super-El Nino events 1998, 2016, and potentially 2024)³⁵ and rapid ice loss (changing albedo).³⁶



DANGEROUS TIPPING POINTS

The global urgency to solve the climate crisis is manifested by the looming potential of triggering irreversible, potentially unmanageable (catastrophic) impacts, if we continue loading more climate forcing and lose Earth’s resilience capacity. The IPCC, in its sixth assessment, concludes that risks of triggering climate tipping points between 1.5°C and 2.5°C of warming transition from moderate to high³⁷; the latest science (post-IPCC AR6) concludes that multiple climate tipping points are likely to be crossed at 1.5°C (the West Antarctic Ice Sheet, the Greenland Ice Sheet, tropical coral reef systems, and abrupt thawing of Boreal permafrost).³⁸

The scientific trendline is clear. The more we understand how the Earth system functions, the lower and nearer are the understood safe thresholds to keep Earth in a manageable state. Over four IPCC assessment reports, from the third in 2001³⁹ to the sixth in 2021,⁴⁰ the likely temperature change threshold for triggering dangerous large events has dropped from 5–6°C to 1.5–2°C—the then-assumed safe range aspired to by the 2015 Paris Climate Agreement.⁴¹

And after a northern hemisphere summer of three straight months of record high temperature, when average global warming has yet to surpass 1.2°C, it is clear that even the Agreement’s lower aspirational limit (1.5°C) may be too high for human tolerance.

MAINTAINING PLANETARY BOUNDARIES: A PLANETARY TASK

Phasing out fossil fuels and all other sources of GHGs by 2050–2060 are necessary, yet insufficient, steps on the road ahead. Even if greenhouse gases are phased out by mid-century, failing to secure carbon, methane, and nitrous oxide stocks and fluxes in the living biosphere will, on their own, cause global warming exceeding 1.5°C.⁴²

This is why a system-wide approach to solving the planetary emergency is essential, implying a climate governance approach for the entire planet (see Part II, below). The Planetary Boundaries framework provides scientific guardrails for all biophysical processes and systems that regulate the stability and resilience of the planet, as explained above. Six key boundaries for a “safe” climate future, in addition to the Planetary Boundaries for the climate, are the biosphere boundaries on biodiversity, freshwater, land-use change, overloading of nutrients (phosphorus and nitrogen), and the introduction of novel entities into the environment. All these biosphere boundaries regulate the ability of terrestrial and marine ecosystems to buffer climate forcing. Global management of climate change, a centuries-long product of human activity, thus translates to enhanced governance of the planet to have a chance of holding to safe limits on climate, while also achieving essential social and economic goals.



II. Conceptual Frameworks: International Governance Perspectives as a Vital Necessity

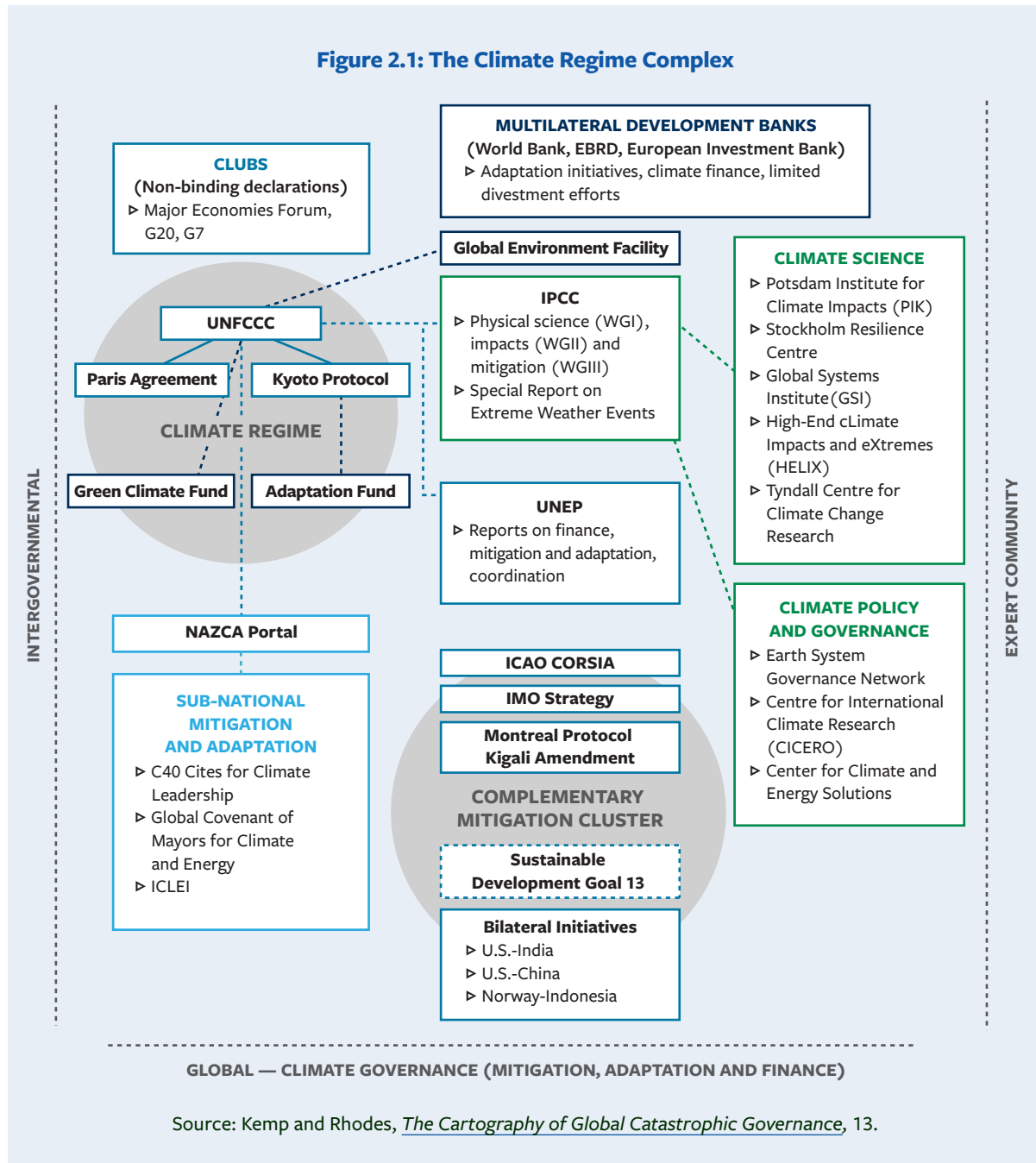
Introduction: Needed Paradigm Shifts

The triple planetary crisis (of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pollution)⁴³ and the breaching of Planetary Boundaries can be understood fundamentally as an international governance crisis. In 2015, the Albright-Gambari report diagnosed a “Crisis of Global Governance,”⁴⁴ with recent reports and statements also underlining that current international institutions are insufficient to deal with global issues.⁴⁵ In the words of the UN Secretary-General, the world faces a “surplus of multilateral challenges, and a deficit of multilateral solutions.”⁴⁶ No current governance structure is equipped to address a planetary emergency encompassing both the risks to Planetary Boundaries and the underlying “polycrisis” of “conflict, COVID, and climate” (among other global challenges), while also building sufficient resilience against future shocks.⁴⁷ The compounding effects of the polycrisis, including growing inequality, poverty, and rising geopolitical tensions, increase social tensions and instability across countries and regions; such interconnected risks also distinguish the planetary emergency.

A key premise of the Commission’s work is that governance enhancements are needed at the international level because of the nature of the climate and inter-related global ecological problems; simply put, quintessentially global problems require adequate global solutions.⁴⁸ Moreover, an understanding of the gravity of planetary ecological conditions,⁴⁹ and connecting this gravity to governance needs, is crucial, with the requirement that planetary science informs and motivates the urgent identification of the governance innovations that could prevent disastrous outcomes for the planet and humanity.⁵⁰ Ecological limits must replace what have been considered political imperatives; frameworks such as the scientifically-identified Planetary Boundaries should be understood as they are intended—as precautionary biophysical limits, identified for our own safety and well-being, within which societies can live, and on which our governance must be anchored.⁵¹

Crucial international social and well-being goals (e.g., the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)) must be accommodated within these limits (see discussion below on “Earth System Justice”). For instance, the United Nations’ comprehensive review, in 2023, of the SDGs underlines that half of the approximately 140 targets evaluated showed weak to severely limited progress.⁵² If present trends persist, by 2030, a staggering 575 million people will remain trapped in extreme poverty and an estimated 84 million children and young people will remain out of school.⁵³ Solutions to the planetary emergency must fully take these interlocking challenges into account.

The climate crisis affects all of humanity. Its effective management benefits all nations and peoples as well as future generations. However, nation-states and policy-makers have a tendency to neglect it, due to the classic “free-rider” problem and other dynamics: “[t]he management of existential risk is best done at the global level... the absence of effective global institutions for doing so makes it extremely difficult, slowing the world’s reaction time and increasing the chance that hold-out countries derail the entire process.”⁵⁴ Current governance of global catastrophic risks, including climate change, is insufficient and fragmented, divided between clusters of action with questionable effectiveness and areas with a severe gap in effective policy (see Figure 2.1).⁵⁵



Almost two decades ago, Princeton academic Anne-Marie Slaughter highlighted “the globalization paradox,” of “needing more government and fearing it.”⁵⁶ The tragic irony is that whole nation-states are now at risk of being swept away, or of having their territorial integrity or national ecological life-support systems compromised by forces far beyond their ability to avoid or control. We know that no country, no matter how wealthy, can escape the risks and transboundary effects of the climate crisis and related environmental changes.⁵⁷ *The advent of the Anthropocene upends the notion that the nation-state alone, relying on loose and weak international cooperation arrangements, is equal to our current challenges. Rather now, the collective influence of humanity on the planet, and our essential global interconnectedness across all human societies, demand that we take the international governance lens much more seriously.*⁵⁸

Further, nation-states competing for relative power still too often drives decision-making and overall behavior in world affairs. Yet, fundamental paradigm shifts in international relations are essential to addressing shared challenges, as set out persuasively in [The Good Country project](#).⁵⁹ At a time of converging existential risks culminating in the current polycrisis, each country’s ability to cooperate and to contribute constructively to international well-being and problem-solving, and to improve and to develop adequate institutions for the same—to serve the global common good—is essential for the survival and flourishing of every nation.⁶⁰

TRANSCENDING GEOPOLITICS AND TRADITIONAL NOTIONS OF SECURITY

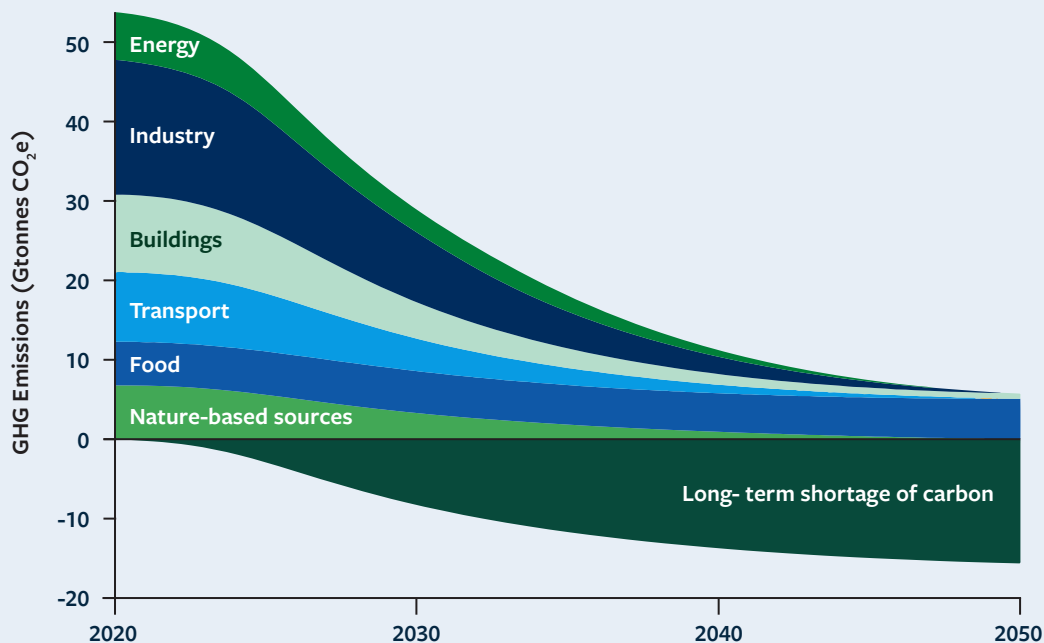
Indeed, in the pursuit of effective global climate governance, the backdrop of current geopolitics is often cited as an important barrier.⁶¹ Tensions between major economies have recently reached alarming levels, sometimes worsened by the shifting of national priorities to secure traditional fossil fuel-oriented energy supplies in the name of economic or energy security. However, on issues related to the planetary emergency, all leaders have a responsibility to recognize what is currently at stake for all of humanity and future generations. This requires practical and moral efforts to adopt new approaches and ways of understanding (energy) security and of the broader goals of international relations.

In short, the international community has little time to lose in shifting away from adversarial to collaborative patterns, to undertake the necessary measures to stabilize and protect the Earth system. Further, irrespective of the opposition of recalcitrant states, “smart coalitions”—of global civil society and majorities of (small/medium-sized) like-minded states—have repeatedly proven themselves successful in catalyzing significant international shifts in the global public interest (see [Part V](#), below).

Given the planetary emergency, a new understanding of “energy security,” based on reform of fossil fuel subsidies, energy efficiency revolutions, clean energy and *effective* net-zero pathways, and a new notion of “planetary security,” based on Earth system stability, are now vital dimensions of any definition of security (see [III.2](#), below). Collaborative and coordinated efforts among major economies are imperative (see, e.g., proposals under [III.3](#) and [III.8](#), below), with a central recognition that making the transition to clean energy sources, among other key mitigation and adaptation efforts, is indispensable to ensure energy and broader security in the Anthropocene. We need solutions across various sectors that scale up exponentially. For example, action on agriculture and land use has been slow compared to other sectors. We can address food security, feeding everyone on the planet and tackling food waste and unsustainable land and farming practices if we can garner the political will to implement the required policies and governance.

The [Exponential Roadmap Initiative \(ERI\)](#) has mapped out the immediate solutions to cut carbon dioxide emissions 50% by 2030, across energy, transport, land use, buildings, and industry (see Figure 2.2). From wind and solar power, to dietary shifts and reducing food waste, all the solutions have the potential to scale extremely rapidly with the right policies in place. Many are similar in price or cheaper than incumbent technologies and bring added benefits from energy security and clean air to healthy diets; that is, heightened levels of “human security” (see [III.2](#), below). Remarkably, here in 2023, it is still feasible to slash emissions in half globally by the end of the decade. What is missing is the political will.

Figure 2.2: Exponential Emission Reduction Pathways to Limit Global Warming to 1.5°C



Source: Exponential Roadmap Initiative, *1.5°C Business Playbook*, 12-13.

Further, Oxford University research has confirmed that a “decisive transition” to net-zero can in fact be easier, swifter, and more economically viable than thought. With adequate support for clean technology development and innovation, energy costs fall rapidly and renewables outcompete fossil fuels, and system change is possible at a fast pace.⁶² Such a fast transition (constituting an “efficiency and renewables” revolution, with just and inclusive governance of new materials and metals), could save the world \$12 trillion by 2050 in energy system costs alone, compared to business-as-usual.⁶³ *Earth for All: A Survival Guide for Humanity*, similarly underlines the affordability of the necessary economic transformations, with likely small investments needed, “in the order of 2-4% of global income per year for sustainable energy security and food security... Costs will be highest during the first decades after implementation starts, and then decline.”⁶⁴

Despite commitments in both the Paris Agreement and the Addis Ababa Agreement on Financing for Development for the provision of (still yet fully materialized) funding of \$100 billion per year each to enable low and lower-middle income countries to accelerate transformation, high-income countries have failed to deliver on even these inadequate targets. At the same time, fossil fuel subsidies surged to a record \$7 trillion in 2023,⁶⁵ further signalling the need for a transformative shift from funding what is harming us to funding a safer and fairer planet (see [III.6](#), below). As noted above, the impacts from the COVID-19 pandemic stalled three decades of steady progress in reducing extreme poverty, with the number of people living in extreme poverty increasing for the first time in a generation. There are risks of accrual of greater monetary and societal costs from not addressing a broader definition of security and making the necessary modest investments in social and ecological health; for example, in the form of increased social tension, democratic and political stability, and further economic harm from climate effects.

THE ENORMOUS POSITIVE POTENTIAL AHEAD

The current planetary emergency, although dire—representing a colossal moral failure in collective action—also presents an immense opportunity for transformation, as it must drive new forms of social and economic activity. If we can address our governance shortcomings, and extractivist economic models and practices, there is the potential for unprecedented human development, and social and economic opportunities, for a new type of holistic well-being economy, operating within Planetary Boundaries.⁶⁶ As underlined by *Earth for All: A Survival Guide for Humanity*, in the context of shifts to new types of regenerative and circular economies that also tackle over-consumption, “it is possible for all to have a high standard of living within the limits of the planet.”⁶⁷

In this respect, the UNSG has called for a “new global deal” among nations large and small to “deliver global public goods and address major risks.”⁶⁸ Further, key constituencies within the private sector and markets are beginning to recognize the opportunities within the necessary economic transitions: “Companies that build climate leadership into their core strategies seem to be outperforming those that fail to do so and it also impacts market valuation,” and the financial sector seems to be “waking up to the systemic risks of climate change.”⁶⁹ And, a study of citizens of G20 countries found that the great majority (83%) are “willing to do more to halt climate change and protect and regenerate nature.”⁷⁰ Recent global surveys have also shown strong public support for robust government action, with people around the world saying “that climate change should be a ‘very high’ or ‘high’ priority for their governments in most areas within every region.”⁷¹

Such signs point to key actors and insights which help us to envision that the formation of a new era of integrated economic activity within Planetary Boundaries is possible. In doing so, major opportunities arise for the regeneration of nature, buttressed by successive waves of innovation, industriousness and transformation across countries, catalysed by both shared goals and a focus on collaborative solutions. *Earth for All* explores a scenario for humanity where “societies make extraordinary decisions and investments now, that enhance social cohesion, build trust, and establish a new social contract between people and the state... societies start to invest to truly value our collective futures on Earth.”⁷²

Equity, Justice, and Trusteeship Perspectives: Central Principles to Planetary Emergency Governance

“Climate action is not a Global North issue or a Global South issue. It is our collective challenge, and it affects all of us. We need to come together to find common, global solutions.”⁷³

—H.E President William Samoei Ruto of Kenya.

Connected with upgrading our shared governance architecture, new conceptions of global solidarity and global citizenship⁷⁴ are also urgently needed to cultivate the requisite awareness and values underpinning enhanced approaches to planetary governance.⁷⁵ Moreover, “just climate governance”—putting people at the centre yet not separated from nature—is an important core goal, to ensure that “no one is left behind” and that the SDGs are achieved.⁷⁶ *Earth for All* has found that global ecological goals will not be achieved unless economic inequality is addressed, highlighting the deep interdependence of social, economic and environmental goals, hearkening back to crucial connections highlighted in the 1987 Brundtland Commission report, *Our Common Future*.⁷⁷

As discussed above, scientifically-defined frameworks like the Planetary Boundaries are not mere “targets,” but hard limits and “red lines” within which humanity must function.⁷⁸ This also means that human needs, i.e., access to food, water, and energy, must be equitably provided for within these boundaries. The [Earth Commission](#), for example, through collaboration between natural and social scientists, has proposed the concept and approach of “Earth System Justice” (ESJ), which is needed to identify and live within Earth system boundaries.⁷⁹ The principle implies that conceptual boundaries may need to be adjusted to reduce harm, challenge inequality, increase well-being, and reflect substantive and procedural justice, at all levels of governance—from local to global. Hence, ESJ should enable living justly and safely within boundaries for both people and non-human species.⁸⁰

Reform of global governance should engage ESJ principles generally, and likewise uphold the identified specific need for a “just transition” when addressing climate and other ecological limits. The Paris Climate Agreement affirms “the imperatives of a just transition of the workforce and the creation of decent work and quality jobs in accordance with nationally defined development priorities.”⁸¹ A just transition involves maximizing the social and economic opportunities within the context of the needed action, while minimizing and carefully managing any challenges, including through effective social dialogue and stakeholder engagement, alongside respect for human rights and the International Labour Organisation’s fundamental principles and rights at work. As expressed by the Climate Justice Alliance, a just transition is “a vision-led, unifying and place-based set of principles, processes, and practices that build economic and political power to shift from an extractive economy to a regenerative economy. ... The transition itself must be just and equitable.”⁸²

ESJ has also become more relevant as investment in clean energy continues to increase in 2023, with the International Energy Agency (IEA) projecting a spend of some \$1.7 trillion.⁸³ If the world’s governments agree on a target at the 28th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP 28) to treble clean energy, then that will provide the certainty for further significant investment and real hope that we can achieve a 1.5°C pathway.⁸⁴ It will, however, require effective global

governance and industry and local transitions that put workers and community at the heart of just energy transitions, also as a practical matter so that those currently employed in legacy industries do not block the needed transitions. A just clean energy revolution also puts the power into the hands of those who need it the most. It would address the power imbalance of inequality and build a just green transition that is resilient and adaptable to future circumstances. As an example, we know that delivering power to some of the poorest and most vulnerable countries can be done faster and more efficiently by small scale micro grids, whereby communities' profit and share in the benefits directly. These shifts in energy structures can provide jobs, income, and energy sources that are more resilient to future shocks.⁸⁵

Finally, the concepts of intergenerational justice and “Earth Trusteeship” represent key value shifts, emphasising fundamental citizen responsibilities of being thorough and careful stewards of the natural environment.⁸⁶ New (international) legal doctrines and paradigms are evolving that seek to clearly acknowledge our current responsibilities to future generations.⁸⁷

In *Reflections on Earth Trusteeship*,⁸⁸ one of the first books on this theme, the concept is promoted as a model of planetary governance. It highlights the inseparable connections between rights, responsibilities, and trusteeship, and calls for a shift in environmental law, as well as in public awareness for a recognition of human responsibilities toward the Earth community and the Earth's systems. The German Basic Law (*Grundgesetz*) presents an example of this, stipulating in Article 20(a) responsibility toward future generations and the need for state protection of the natural foundations of life and animals.⁸⁹ Another example is the Constitution of Bhutan (2008) which states: “Every Bhutanese is a trustee of the Kingdom's natural resources and environment for the benefit of the present and future generations (...).”⁹⁰ The origin of this conception of planetary governance lies in Buddhist and numerous Indigenous cosmologies that do not separate humans from nature/environment but have an integrated perspective in which humans are trustees of the Earth.⁹¹

Box 2.1: Key Perspectives to Consider Within International Governance Systems

The quality and operational attributes of our global governance architecture is of central importance. Such attributes are within the frame of a strong conviction that our shared problems, while acute, are eminently solvable through human ingenuity and cooperation; in other words, “humanity is very big” (in talent, knowledge, capacity to influence the entire planet) and “the Earth is very small.” An incomplete list of “design features” desirable in international governance that have commonly arisen in Commission consultations includes:

The central place of human development, the SDGs, and other holistic well-being indicators in tackling the climate challenge—moving beyond siloed thinking of climate action as separate from economic, social, and human development;

The importance of addressing systemic dysfunction and injustice within current economic systems caused by short-term, wasteful, and extractivist models; and the needed transformations in finance and economic development to be in harmony with nature;

The central place of justice, equity, responsibility, values, Earth Trusteeship, and the rights of nature and future generations, as well as inclusive governance processes (i.e., just transition and the central inclusion of workers, citizen assemblies, robust democratic/participatory mechanisms); and effectiveness and accountability in climate and Planetary Boundary governance, moving beyond empty or weak promises for action and genuinely serving the global public interest/common good;

Connecting the sub-national and national to regional to global and vice versa, while employing principles of “subsidiarity,” to avoid excessive centralisation, yet allocate necessary governance functions to higher levels when needed, and to support diversity;

Harnessing and powerfully connecting the ideas, networks, and capabilities of three distinguished domains: state-based governance actors (national governments, international organisations), civil society organisations operating in supported, strong civil society independent spaces, as well as business actors;

Scaling up solutions to the global level via intensified peer learning and other techniques: exponential action/acceleration via knowledge, learning, and (international) cooperation.

The Importance of Norm Entrepreneurship and Responsible Leadership: Addressing the Power-Foresight Gap

“[W]e stand at a crucial moment in the history of our species. Fuelled by technological progress, our power has grown so great that for the first time in humanity’s long history, we have the capacity to destroy ourselves—severing our entire future and everything we could become... Yet humanity’s wisdom has grown only falteringly, if at all, and lags dangerously behind. Humanity lacks the maturity, coordination and foresight necessary to avoid making mistakes from which we could never recover. As the gap between our power and our wisdom grows, our future is subject to an ever-increasing level of risk. This situation is unsustainable.”⁹²

—Toby Ord, Senior Research Fellow in Philosophy, Oxford University.

Larger structural changes in our international political architecture, or significant progressive steps forward, are often considered a “heavy lift” given collective action problems, and indeed, the current geopolitical backdrop. “Realist” international relations philosophies that dominate public and policy discourse, argue that narrow self-interest will block significant collective efforts at enlightened self- and collective interest. However, the work of [Finnemore and Sikkink](#) and colleagues on this topic have shown how “norms” and values are a powerful force in international relations.⁹³ More focused and strategic attention to the work of “norm entrepreneurship”—and then advocacy—in service of our shared global ecological governance, for

the protection of all of humanity in a “safe operating space,” could bear unexpected fruit. These norms and values can be truly global, drawing from diverse sources of all peoples of the world.

Underlining the insights of Finnemore and Sikkink are the tremendous achievements of largely citizen and layperson-led “smart-coalitions” to effect significant international change (see examples under [Part V](#), below). The *Global Governance Survey 2023* conducted by the Stimson Center and Charney Research shows that there is widespread popular support for global governance, underscoring the gap between ordinary citizens’ attitudes and the views of global leaders.⁹⁴

At this time when societies and global governance regimes are in need of meaningful transformation, there is a pressing need for statespersons as well as non-state actors to provide visionary and ethical leadership. Further, crisis leadership, as we saw during the COVID-19 pandemic, not only demands clear action and effective global cooperation, but also role-modeling of ethics and integrity, alongside planning for the short-term and long-term requirements of resilience building, with clear plans of action. *The Elders*, founded by Nelson Mandela and currently chaired by former President of Ireland Mary Robinson, seeks to embody badly-needed values of empathetic and transformative leadership.⁹⁵ Consisting of former heads of state, leaders of UN and other intergovernmental organisations, and pioneering advocates, *The Elders* represent a socially, culturally, and geographically diverse collection of decades of collective wisdom (see Elders who are members of the Commission in [Annex I](#)). As a network of independent global leaders pursuing the shared goals of peace, justice, human rights, and a sustainable planet, *The Elders* exemplifies how leaders can break with decades-old political norms, and lead social change, showing unity in diversity.

Indeed, scientist Gustave Speth has noted:

“I used to think that top environmental problems were biodiversity loss, ecosystem collapse and climate change. I thought that thirty years of good science could address these problems. I was wrong. The top environmental problems are selfishness, greed and apathy, and to deal with these we need a cultural and spiritual transformation. And we scientists don’t know how to do that.”⁹⁶

Such a transformation in mindset needs to happen at all levels of society—from the local to the international—and become the foundation for political and geopolitical cultures that prioritize the common good.⁹⁷ We are in need of renewed and courageous “top-down” leadership, in service to the whole-of-society, within all levels of government, combined with generalized “bottom-up” citizen pressure and engagement,⁹⁸ to catalyze fundamental transformations. This is an *all-of-society* emergency effort requiring global, regional, national, and local systems of government that, simultaneously, work with and tap the ideas, networks, and capabilities of communities, financial institutions, citizens, business, and entrepreneurs. Together, they should work swiftly to safeguard current and future generations, and all life on Earth.

United Nations
Climate Change



UN CLIMATE CHANGE
CONFERENCE UK 2021

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH ITALY



III. Near-Term International Governance Innovations: “TOP 10” Working Proposals

The international community must urgently address the triple planetary crisis, representing the greatest crisis in the history of the human species, without historical precedent, threatening devastating consequences if we do not act swiftly. It is estimated that the Paris Agreement may have succeeded in bringing down the change in our climate from 4.3°C to 2.4–2.6°C by the end of this century if (and this is a big *IF*) current climate action pledges are implemented effectively by all UN Member States.⁹⁹ Recognizing that the present Agreement is necessary but insufficient, the CGC offers both near- and medium-term governance innovations to give the world a fighting chance of not exceeding a potentially catastrophic temperature rise of 1.5°C. As highlighted in the [Commission’s Interim Report](#), a “whole-of-system” response is called for, across various institutions, policy silos and existing global governance regimes.¹⁰⁰ All relevant actors should do their part, working to end gridlocks within the international governance landscape and to catalyze ecological action at all levels of government—both at scale and at the required speed, within a paradigm of Earth System Justice (ESJ) and key good governance principles.

The following ten proposals prioritized by the CGC represent important short-term steps, to be refined and implemented on a near-term (one-to-three year) time horizon. [Part IV](#) of this Report introduces “next-generation” medium-term governance proposals to ensure enduring climate and planetary health and stability, which would, ideally, be implemented over the next three-to-five years (nevertheless, the planning for these should commence now too in earnest, in parallel with the following near-term measures).

1. Urgent Improvement of Climate COPs to Focus on Delivery, Action, and Accountability

CLIMATE COP IMPROVEMENTS AND REFORM

Conferences of Parties (COPs) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) provide a platform for countries to join forces for mitigation, adaptation, finance, and other related efforts to combat climate change.¹⁰¹ Since the first COP in 1995, both the number and diversity of participants have grown,¹⁰² to include ever-greater numbers of key non-state actors such as independent experts, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs), and businesses, adding to the dynamism of the events. However, in light of the important recent shift of focus from (lengthy) negotiations of essential components of the 2015 Paris Agreement to its implementation,¹⁰³ joined by serious concerns about the lack of meaningful progress on the Agreement’s follow-through, the COPs are ripe for a comprehensive review. In essence, they need to be able

to act on, and respond to, our current emergency situation and to ensure a proper configuration and working methods to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement. The focus now must be on delivery and action, sharing best practices, holding countries to account (see proposal below on an enhanced Paris Agreement compliance mechanism), and financing the transition (see III.6, below on the latter).

The current structuring of COPs do not adequately “close the gap between science and action,”¹⁰⁴ enhance accountability, provide an adequate platform to exchange lessons and practical experiences, or welcome additional key relevant actors in the process in the most effective and impactful way.¹⁰⁵ The COPs should be rethought, for example, by reducing “the size of the COP meetings and repurpos[ing] them into reporting, accounting and working sessions,” with ongoing, results and implementation-focused intersessional work, as proposed by the Club of Rome and the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research.¹⁰⁶ Instead of one very large annual COP, the Club of Rome proposal calls for smaller, more frequent meetings to keep up momentum, focus on targeted deliverables, while ensuring that governments are not the only voices heard during official proceedings and other key discussions.¹⁰⁷

Results-oriented roles and responsibilities of the UNFCCC secretariat and the COP Presidencies should also be better coordinated and defined, with coordination between various UN entities (e.g., the secretariats for the Rio Conventions—the UNFCCC, the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), as well as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)) intensified on an ongoing basis, to focus on implementation of vital climate and related goals or targets (such coordination could happen by way of the proposed Planetary Emergency Platform; see III.2, below).

COP events could indeed be restructured to allow for the more central and influential participation of both non-state, international organisation, sub-national (e.g., cities; see III.9, below), and national governmental actors, including through the formation of “multistakeholder coalitions,”¹⁰⁸ with the aim to bring various siloed worlds together,¹⁰⁹ abandoning the current structure of COPs with different zones separated from the negotiations. COPs could reimagine joint participation in action-focused discussions between a wide range of stakeholders with well-defined roles, including NGOs, scientists, multilateral banks, and financial institutions. Multilateral banks and financial institutions, in particular, should have a central role in working sessions to ensure that pledges become tangible, deliverable work plans.

Reduced but regular sessions could revolve around six main pillars: 1) knowledge exchange and technology co-development; 2) aligning mitigation plans with Paris Agreement objectives and the latest science; 3) adaptation; 4) finance (including for loss and damage); 5) delivery; and, 6) accountability through measurement, reporting, and verification (see strengthened accountability proposals below).¹¹⁰

Proven mediation and facilitation techniques (see below),¹¹¹ as well as majority/supermajority voting approaches at the COPs for important issues, would help to avoid a watered-down, least common denominator dynamic (especially when a single country can *wield de facto veto authority* over proceedings – effectively holding the world to ransom). The roles of women, young people, and other vulnerable or under-represented groups should be strengthened at the COPs, thereby giving central attention to charting a just transition and ensuring the well-being of affected groups of peoples, such as workers, communities, and Indigenous peoples. Moreover, decisions and discussions should account for regional differences to ensure a just global transition, supporting localized transition pathways, knowledge

exchange, and technology co-development through international collaboration founded on equity and empowerment (see [III.6](#), below). Reformed COPs should also better align policy ambition to science to reflect the need for urgency during this time of growing complexity and polycrisis (see [III.4](#), below).¹¹²

Further, drawing on lessons learned from the world’s citizen’s assembly for COP 26, establishing a permanent and well-designed Global Citizens’ Assembly integrated into the multilateral process—e.g., as a subsidiary body of the UNFCCC—could help to accelerate action, enhance decision-making quality, and increase legitimacy and inclusion.¹¹³ The selection of the citizens by a global civic lottery is known to contribute to awareness-raising among (sometimes disconnected) citizens, while ensuring innovative ways to democratize climate change deliberations. Successful examples of such citizen’s assemblies are already implemented at the regional and national levels.¹¹⁴

THE USE OF MEDIATION AND FACILITATION TOOLS

The COP meeting processes themselves could also benefit more from modern tools commonly used in mediation and facilitation contexts, to avoid disagreements that have halted discussion among the parties and impeded their ability to move forward. The Presiding Officer of the COP and the UNFCCC Secretariat could lead in their utilization.¹¹⁵

In light of the significant number of signatories to the Paris Agreement and thereby delegates represented, the Presiding Officer has a challenging task to ensure that everyone who wishes to has the opportunity to be heard and, most importantly, to ensure that Parties can come to the necessary decisions and move forward. To achieve this objective, the Presiding Officer could make use of questions, restatements, and summaries to ensure mutual understanding and awareness of points that require further consideration, as well as informal non-binding, straw voting on issues in question to discern the level of support for a certain proposal.¹¹⁶

In addition, and similar to what has been done in the scope of discussions like the Talanoa dialogue circles of COP 23,¹¹⁷ participants could be divided into smaller groups, and issues to be considered could be parsed into less and more divisive ones.¹¹⁸ These could assist in addressing the “huddle” issue, i.e., where issues are discussed outside of formal negotiation in “huddles” in corridors or other informal forums in a manner not conducive to inclusive thought, and avoid the long-lasting working sessions desperate for a conclusion of the negotiation process.¹¹⁹

Furthermore, the Presiding Officer could also reinforce the understanding among state parties that consensus, when employed, is not a synonym for unanimous support, and that countries have an option of expressing their dissenting views while also not blocking the proposals.¹²⁰ More generally, countries with similar goals could use non-binding declarations to voice support for a proposal,¹²¹ or take this opportunity to identify possibilities for bilateral co-operation on a narrower set of issues.¹²²

The UNFCCC Secretariat could also employ new facilitation techniques by including experts—both scientific and facilitation—in the meetings, to be involved as necessary. The Secretariat could further support the negotiators by increasing communication and transfer of knowledge between former and newly-appointed delegates and between delegates and non-state actors, including by providing them with the relevant training and access to institutional knowledge. In particular, the Secretariat could play an enhanced role in

supporting a dialogue between state and non-state actors designed to achieve concrete objectives (e.g., in harmony with the reform proposals above for action-focused, multistakeholder working processes).¹²³

ENHANCING COMPLIANCE MECHANISMS UNDER THE PARIS AGREEMENT

At present, there is a facilitative compliance mechanism under the Paris Agreement, the Paris Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee (PAICC).¹²⁴ PAICC is limited to facilitating implementation and promoting compliance, and it lacks the capacity to ensure that states' fulfill their obligations under the Agreement. A fair, enhanced compliance mechanism would be a substantial addition to ensure the efficacy of the Paris Agreement, in the context of a deepening planetary emergency. Based on current extreme planetary conditions and the international crisis point at which we find ourselves (see Part I, above)—with implications for all of humanity, present and future—it is time for the international community *to take concrete steps to move beyond a merely voluntarist approach to governing our shared life-support systems*. In developing and embedding such a strengthened compliance mechanism, we might consider:

- ▶ Upholding procedural obligations of states to substantiate, on the basis of the best available science, both the *fairness* as well as the *highest possible level of ambition* of each individual country with regard to their NDCs (as described in Art. 4 of the Paris Agreement);
- ▶ The establishment of an independent Commission that: a) sets strengthened common standards for this reporting; and, b) systematically assesses submissions with regard to their fulfilment of these two obligations to substantiate fairness and highest possible level of ambition. The Commission could be established as a companion body or committee of the PAICC, and it would need its own secretariat and budget in order to be able to make such country-by-country assessments.

At present, NDC submissions require countries to explain in a written form how their climate ambitions are both fair and ambitious in light of national circumstances.¹²⁵ However, there is minimal scrutiny of these submissions, and many of the indicators that countries put forward with regard to the fairness of their efforts are not in line with principles of international law.¹²⁶ What is lacking in these submissions are quantifications of why countries consider their efforts to be fair. In other words, how do the efforts (cumulatively) translate into the share of the remaining global carbon budget?¹²⁷ Without such quantifications of “fair shares” there is no practical way to: a) compare efforts between countries; and, perhaps more importantly, b) assess the sufficiency of the efforts toward the temperature limit.

The same is the case for assessing the “highest possible level of ambition” metric. The recent report by the European Scientific Advisory Body on Climate Change shows that “highest possible level of ambition” can be quantified on the basis of existing scientific methodologies; based on a scientific assessment, the ESABCC advised an EU net emissions reduction target of 90–95% by 2040 compared to 1990.¹²⁸ Taking a decision to substantiate these commitments (e.g., through a decision of the relevant body within the UNFCCC architecture, catalyzed by a multistakeholder coalition) would create more transparency in how countries justify their level of ambition and thus provide a better basis for actors both domestically and internationally to judge (and hold to account) states for insufficient ambition.

To complement a sharpening of these procedural obligations, the independent Commission could also establish common standards for this heightened form of reporting, as well as assess the reports on their

fulfilment of the obligations to substantiate. Similar to the [UK Climate Change Committee](#), and various relevant [national models](#), and depending on other structures that are put in place, this Commission could also provide advice on how to strengthen both reporting, as well as the actions to be taken by each country, also assisting countries in conducting the analysis of their NDCs in cases where they do not have the capacity to do so in accordance with their obligations (see also [III.4](#) and [III.5](#), for institutional improvements which may assist in this process).¹²⁹ It could make recommendations for how to allocate responsibility and make concrete suggestions for national and collective goals, dividing the available carbon budget on transparent criteria.¹³⁰

As an alternative, given likely state resistance to heightened accountability, a “shadow” evaluatory council could be established rather than a Commission, through agreements between stakeholders with the cooperation of a group of like-minded states outside the COP process. The council could include for example, holders of Indigenous and local knowledge, a consortium of scientists, bodies and agencies of the UN system, and civil society organisations. It could produce reports and conduct assessments as the proposed independent Commission would, as well as linking with similar reporting processes under other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs), in which both public and private sector accountability could be highlighted and clarified (see also [III.4](#) and [III.5](#)).¹³¹

Ultimately, a credible international tribunal to ensure proper enforcement of international climate and other vital, related environmental obligations could be a successful general accountability mechanism, as shown by such examples as the Dispute Settlement Body of the World Trade Organisation (WTO) and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS).¹³² It is pressing to create regularized accountability for international climate and other environmental obligations—to ensure basic governance efficacy—both of a shorter-term nature, as well as permanent, longer term measures, such as an International Court for the Environment (see [IV.1](#)).¹³³

2. Declaration of Planetary Emergency, Planetary Emergency Platform, and Broadening International Security Paradigms

Regarding the peace and security sector, under “Shift Six” on “Anticipatory Action,”¹³⁴ the United Nations Secretary General’s (UNSG) High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism (HLAB) has called for the 2024 Summit of the Future to declare that the triple planetary crisis poses a grave risk to global stability and security. It also recommends that the UN Security Council (UNSC) do much better at addressing climate-driven security risks, calls for a strengthened Peacebuilding Commission to better identify climate-driven risks and promote resilience in its mandate, and asks for gender to be better incorporated across the board. It notes that “[t]he multilateral system should not be held hostage to a narrow definition of security limited to national borders and military power.”¹³⁵ Indeed, the state of planetary biophysical systems is so grave (see [Parts I](#) and [II](#), above), that fresh perspectives and approaches need to be taken to notion of global security, as well as to re-envisioning international bodies to marshal an appropriate emergency response.

DECLARATION OF PLANETARY EMERGENCY

The climate crisis has officially been recognized as an emergency in 2,349 jurisdictions in 40 countries, covering one billion citizens.¹³⁶ The UNSG has also called on all nations to declare climate emergencies, but the UN General Assembly has thus far refrained from seriously considering whether it should declare a planetary emergency in response to the climate crisis, together with the other interlinked ecological crises represented by the breaching of vital Planetary Boundaries.¹³⁷ The ever-growing body of science indicating our crossing of Planetary Boundaries and potentially irreversible tipping points, alongside the interconnected nature of the polycrisis we are facing (as recognized in the work of the Club of Rome Planetary Emergency Project),¹³⁸ reflects the scale of the present emergency.

We therefore urge the UN General Assembly, at the 2024 Summit of the Future, to declare a planetary emergency, recognizing that the triple planetary crisis poses a grave risk to global stability and security, among others,¹³⁹ to be reinforced in similar statements by bodies and agencies of the UN system, regional bodies, and national and local governments. Such a declaration could recognize the latest authoritative science and the momentous coordinated efforts needed on an urgent basis to stabilize the Earth system (within the frame of ESJ and a global just transition). It could further urge Member States, sub-national levels of government, and international organisations to adopt suitable emergency plans. Implementing the required actions and policies (see ERI action pathways in Figure 2.2, above, and policy clearinghouse proposal, Box 3.1, below), should assist the international community in catalyzing the necessary action at all governance levels, rallying it to new levels of close and dynamic cooperation.

PLANETARY EMERGENCY PLATFORM

The UNSG has proposed the establishment of an Emergency Platform, when needed, to address future global shocks, including those due to climate change, as the existing, conventional crisis response mechanisms cannot coherently and effectively manage multidimensional threats at the global level. Specifically, the existing architecture is too fragmented and sectorally-focused to respond effectively to complex global shocks.¹⁴⁰ As the effects of climate change have already caused interconnected global shocks (e.g., both the *unprecedented global shock of anthropogenic Earth system destabilization*, as well as cascades of many smaller—but already substantial—local, national, and regional shocks), a specific Planetary Emergency Platform, elaborating on—and going beyond, where necessary—the UN Secretary-General’s proposal, should be convened to address the rapidly accelerating consequences of climate change and the crossing of other inter-independent Planetary Boundaries (see Part I, above).¹⁴¹

Carefully synchronized with—reformed, results-focused (see III.1)—climate COPs and other relevant international processes, the Platform could bring together relevant national authorities, the UNFCCC and IPCC, other environmental convention secretariats, relevant international organisations, as well as the World Bank, Green Climate Fund (GCF), and other financing bodies (to ensure speed and scale in funding and project deployment), members of the private sector, and other appropriate stakeholders, involving already-established action-focused forums. The Platform would leverage existing mechanisms in its efforts to coordinate responses, serving as an apex coordination platform to harmonize and accelerate action across the international system.



The current proposal of the Secretary-General uses severity, scale, complexity, and the presence of existing mechanisms and their capacity to deal with the crisis as the determining factors for when a platform would be called. In this instance, the planetary emergency would meet all of these criteria, also taking into account the increasing occurrence of shocks caused by the climate crisis in vulnerable nations in particular; such localized shocks will only become more frequent and widespread in the coming years and decades across all nations (see [Part I](#), above). Such shocks in vulnerable constituencies are largely a result of emissions from high-income countries, and the Platform could set forth a set of protocols and policies conducive to lessening the severity of their impacts on particular target populations.

If activated at the Summit of the Future or shortly thereafter, a Planetary Emergency Platform could ensure that existing environmental governance fora and processes are sufficiently supported and buttressed by all parts of the international system. A key focus would be on identifying critical areas of the polycrisis that are in urgent need of addressing. Such a defragmentation and acceleration Platform may be necessary to ensure the imperative 50% global emission reductions by 2030 and a net-zero world by 2050, including, for example: the needed managed fossil fuel phase out; transformation of the global food system from source to sink, through regenerative agricultural practices, among others; safeguarding all natural carbon stocks and sinks; starting to scale negative emissions through carbon capture and storage and carbon dioxide removal; building climate resilience; and, marshaling adequate climate financing, while ensuring that governments have the capacity to swiftly access and effectively deploy such financing (see [III.6](#), below). 2030 could thus serve as the first date to evaluate the sunset clause of the Platform, with renewal as may be required until superseded by more adequate permanent bodies (see [Part IV](#), below), and/or the Earth system is sufficiently stabilized with the climate brought back within a safe level (see [Part I](#), above).¹⁴²

As a first step, the Platform could develop a Planetary Emergency Plan (to be updated/adjusted regularly, according to changing conditions and learning processes), with a mapping of the international system and existing key initiatives, for their effective coordination. It could assist in accelerating policies and governance approaches designed to immediately address the issue (e.g., vital, well-designed policies with respect to fossil-fuel phase-out plans and subsidy reductions, carbon pricing, green solution incentives; see [Box 3.1](#)). It could also work with existing mission-driven international alliances and other global projects (e.g., for solar, green hydrogen and other clean energy diffusion), catalyze an innovative science, technology, and educational (see [Box 5.1](#)) platform for urgent solution development and diffusion (e.g., a CERN-like entity for planetary solutions; see, e.g., the CERN spin-off “[PlanetWatch](#)”), and work with and strengthen existing high-level accelerators such as the [Breakthrough Agenda](#) and [Race to Zero](#).¹⁴³

An Emergency Platform could issue global policy recommendations that nations are strongly advised to implement,¹⁴⁴ as well as catalyze all key actors and relevant stakeholders to signal clear commitments that directly support the global response to the planetary emergency.¹⁴⁵ Similar to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), it could be considered whether these decisions could be binding on all members, but with an ability to abstain, provided the abstention was made during the decision-making process.¹⁴⁶ Unlike the OECD, however, this platform would be global in nature, embracing all regions.

Further, the Planetary Emergency Platform, constituting, among others, relevant international bodies (e.g., UNFCCC, UNEP, UNEA, World Health Organisation (WHO)), could provide the international community with periodic high-level international briefings (monthly or weekly) to share timely data on the status of Planetary Boundaries and the factors affecting the planetary emergency as, for example, the WHO and national health authorities have done during the COVID-19 pandemic, but with greater consistency and coherence. Such briefings, while to be informed by current international scientific advisory bodies (e.g., the IPCC, the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES)) or enhanced international scientific capacities for Earth system governance and risk assessment (see [III.4](#), below), should be more nimble, agile, and timely to both diagnoses risks and tipping points in the Earth system, and to support agents in addressing and foreseeing complex climate shocks and their effects. All jurisdictions, from the local and national to regional and global, should be encouraged to disseminate such briefings to citizens, sharing important information in the public interest.

There have also been recent, concurrent calls for a “[Global Resilience Council](#)” (GRC), as a more permanent body within the international system in order to sufficiently address non-military threats to society.¹⁴⁷ Aspects of this Council (such as stakeholder advisory groups, inclusion of regional integration bodies) could further enhance the proposed Emergency Platform, or the latter could inform the eventual design of a GRC.

BROADENING INTERNATIONAL SECURITY PARADIGMS

The intersection between the climate crisis and global and human security is becoming more apparent as the effects of climate change accelerate.¹⁴⁸ Increased natural disasters destabilize vulnerable regions, while damage to supply chains and food sources undermines the global social fabric, further reflecting the role security plays in the polycrisis. This results in more violence, a greater risk of human rights violations, and an increased likelihood of conflict within and between nations. While the UNSC has

integrated climate language across several peace operations mandates and other resolutions, it has not recognized climate change in and of itself as a threat to international peace and security.¹⁴⁹ At a February 2021 UNSC high-level open debate on climate and security, naturalist David Attenborough, called climate change “the biggest threat to security that modern humans have ever faced,” calling for governments to recognize climate change as a global security threat in order to “act proportionately—and in time.”¹⁵⁰ The WHO has stated that climate change is a fundamental threat to human health.¹⁵¹

A draft resolution proposed by Ireland and Niger in 2021 would have had the Security Council remedy this by recognizing climate change as a threat in and of itself. The draft resolution called for a comprehensive, whole of UN approach to address climate change and its effects, and for the Security Council to “integrate climate-related security risk as a central component into comprehensive conflict-prevention strategies.”¹⁵² The draft resolution enjoyed widespread support, but was vetoed by Russia, with India also voting against, and China abstaining.¹⁵³ This raises questions about the extent to which the Security Council can more fully recognize the effects of climate change and the planetary emergency under current understandings of their existing mandate, and when there has been an explicit rejection of such efforts through the veto.

In addition to the various other areas of crucial international concern where the veto paralyzes adequate response (e.g., various armed conflicts, referrals to the International Criminal Court (ICC), etc.), such dynamics highlight the need for UNSC reform (see [IV.5](#), below), and/or the establishment of a GRC, to address the broader range of threats to human security. In default of meaningful action by the UNSC on the climate and planetary emergency, the UNGA could “fill the gap,” under the Uniting for Peace Resolution.¹⁵⁴ Moreover, inadequate attention has been given to the climate and environmentally destructive effects of current and recent armed conflict, where existing conflict prevention and management mechanisms have shown themselves to be insufficiently robust, and in need of strengthening (see proposals under [IV.5](#), below).

Taking another approach, the Security Council, as currently configured, could integrate climate considerations into the existing concept of human security as part of a human security for all approach.¹⁵⁵ As noted in UNGA Resolution 66/290, “human security is an approach to assist Member States in identifying and addressing widespread and cross-cutting challenges to the survival, livelihood and dignity of their people.”¹⁵⁶ It advocates for “people-centered, comprehensive, context-specific and prevention-oriented responses that strengthen the protection and empowerment of all people.”¹⁵⁷ The original 1994 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) report that coined the term “human security” makes explicit reference to climate change as being part of this new dimension to security.¹⁵⁸ Human security seeks to move away from the traditional focus on conflict between states and military solutions, to one that focuses on the needs of individuals and their attempts to feel secure in their everyday lives.¹⁵⁹ Climate security solutions, indeed, would not require military intervention, but rather, for example, increased aid, access to new sciences and technologies, and support for rapid infrastructure transformation and technical assistance to shift whole societies to sustainable forms of living.

Box 3.1: Policy Clearinghouse: Employing New Levels of International Learning and Knowledge/Solution Generation and Diffusion

Climate change mitigation and adaptation will require an unprecedented degree of innovation and coordination between states to both keep global temperatures within a permissible level and to cope and adapt to fast-changing conditions.¹⁶⁰ As such, it will be helpful for nations to know and understand what peer nations are doing on climate change and what policies have proven successful or successful across a range of sectors. A climate policy clearinghouse or policy innovation hub, designed to accelerate policy diffusion, would accelerate the fulfillment of this objective.¹⁶¹

The clearinghouse or hub could build off of existing policy databases, such as the [OECD Climate Change and Environment Database](#),¹⁶² the [Climate Policy Database](#) of the New Climate Institute,¹⁶³ and the [Climate Change Laws of the World](#) database maintained by the LSE Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment,¹⁶⁴ connecting this data to one globally accessible active learning and exchange hub.¹⁶⁵ In turn, leaders at the clearinghouse could promote and engage with stakeholders on diffusing and scaling up policies globally, relying on proven successful policies at a national or local level.

There are already some smaller scale examples of this sort of initiative. For example, the International [Climate Councils Network \(ICCN\)](#) was set up to act as an international knowledge sharing forum for climate councils across the world.¹⁶⁶ In addition to engaging climate councils and state-based initiatives, the clearinghouse could engage with a multiplicity of stakeholders, including those from the private sector, to assess and provide information on ideas and actions being taken across the globe. By making the forum open access,¹⁶⁷ knowledge and data necessary for the implementation of successful climate policies would become available to stakeholders who may otherwise struggle to make data driven decisions.¹⁶⁸

3. Responsible Action of Powerful Actors: “Servant Leadership”

At this critical juncture in human history, it is important that key, powerful actors take adequate responsibility and act in service of the shared interests of all of humanity, life on Earth, and future generations. They must demonstrate and embody the highest levels of leadership maturity and competencies, which has been delineated as a type of “servant leadership” or “Level 5” leadership, contradicting current paradigms of ego-based and self-interested leadership, that can still dominate in both national/geopolitical and company contexts. Level 5—the highest level of leadership—has been described as “building enduring greatness through a paradoxical combination of personal humility and professional will.”¹⁶⁹

“BIG FOUR, GRAND BARGAIN”

The US, the EU, China, and India account for more than 50% of global carbon emissions.¹⁷⁰ Their governments exert tremendous influence on norms and standards for global climate governance. During World War II, the four Allied powers (the US, the UK, China, and the Soviet Union) joined as the “United Nations” to prosecute the war against the Axis Powers;¹⁷¹ in 1944, the US and UK hosted the Bretton Woods Conference, which outlined the postwar global economic order and institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank;¹⁷² and in June 1945, delegations assembled in San Francisco signed the United Nations Charter, to maintain peace and security in the postwar world.

Given the gravity of planetary challenges, a similar “grand bargain” could be declared by the modern day “Big Four”—ideally joined also by other high-emitting nations (such as members of [the top ten emitters](#))—to exemplify leadership in global climate mitigation.¹⁷³ This could involve the Big Four setting coordinated GHG reduction targets and fossil fuel phase out goals with concrete timelines and implementation plans, among other key measures.¹⁷⁴ Bold economic announcements, such as a significantly enhanced global climate mitigation and adaptation fund (see proposals under [III.6](#), below), and pledges to develop climate infrastructure and share climate friendly technologies would dramatically bolster global transition to a low-carbon economy.

We have seen the beginnings of such leadership with the G7’s launch of the “Climate Club” for cooperation on decarbonization (see [III.8](#)).¹⁷⁵ Such a “grand bargain” would go a step further by recognizing the need for the Big Four to take the lead on ending the use of fossil fuels, even though this may prove, in the short-term, economically and politically challenging for the players involved.¹⁷⁶ The Big Four, joined by collaborating nations, can reiterate their commitment to a just transition, acknowledging the disproportionate burden placed on low and middle-income countries. This “grand bargain” could be as detailed or as abstract as is necessary to reach consensus. The focus is to ensure the Big Four’s commitment to the same climate objectives and the new policies and institutions necessary to reach them at a planetary level.

This is not to downplay the political and economic differences between major powers. Rather, such a grand bargain would signal to the world that the Big Four are willing to set these differences aside to protect humanity from the potentially catastrophic effects of the climate crisis and the planetary emergency.¹⁷⁷ The grand bargain approach offers a path to transcend the usual geopolitical and economic rivalries.

THE RESPONSIBLE ENGAGEMENT OF FOSSIL FUEL COMPANIES, EXECUTIVES, AND ASSOCIATIONS

Responsibly phasing out fossil fuel production is a critical part of delivering on the Paris Agreement without sacrificing energy security. Yet, the issue of phasing out fossil fuel production—that is, the supply-side of the equation—has yet to receive sufficient attention in global climate negotiations. Many fossil fuel companies are expanding production until 2030, and some of the largest have been using their recent record profits to increase investment in fossil fuels. There have also been share buybacks with recent record profits, rather than investing in renewables and carbon recapture. Many oil companies are betting that carbon recapture will allow them to continue with business as usual, rather than transitioning toward renewables. Their climate pledges have also remained grossly insufficient.¹⁷⁸

To set an end date for fossil fuel production requires institutional and substantive changes. Institutionally, discussions on phasing out fossil fuel production should take a more central place at the COP and other multilateral platforms. States need to agree to gradually eliminate fossil fuel subsidies and divert investments to the renewables sector. This calls for high-level multistakeholder roundtables engaging executives from the fossil fuel sector, governments, international organisations, advocacy, and civil society to ensure an efficient and just way to redirect fossil fuel investments and shareholder payouts to clean energy. This could also include the combined efforts of the IEA, the International Energy Forum (IEF), and the Organisation of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) in convening high-level planning dialogues founded on the latest planetary science and the realistic need for a managed fossil fuel phase out by key dates.

Diplomatic and data-driven advocacy is key in driving the negotiations toward fossil fuel phase-out, which should be done in a way that is mindful of various national or regional needs and economic or technical capacity (see, e.g., III.6, below, on the need for adequate transition finance and clean technology diffusion). The Global Registry of Fossil Fuels is one such joint effort that draws from data from the IEA,¹⁷⁹ the Global Energy Monitor,¹⁸⁰ as well as models from the IPCC. The Registry keeps track of all operating fossil fuel sites and emissions in each country. Expanding on this work could involve providing data of leases for drilling and mining, which would enhance transparency and accountability of governments and fossil fuel companies. Another example of important government-led advocacy is the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance (BOGA), an international alliance of national/subnational governments and stakeholders who have committed to facilitate the managed phase-out of fossil fuel production and create an international community of best practice on this issue, also aiming to create new norms on this agenda and shift narratives from risks toward opportunities.¹⁸¹

Other key initiatives are the Powering Past Coal Alliance (PPCA), a coalition of national and subnational governments, businesses, and organisations working to advance the transition from unabated coal power generation to clean energy,¹⁸² and the Clean Energy Transition Partnership (CETP)—a transformative Research, Technological Development and Innovation (RTDI) program, designed to accelerate clean energy transition through annual funding calls.¹⁸³ These movements can be built upon to ensure that producers and fossil fuel companies are held accountable to engage concretely, without greenwashing, in the climate transition and encourage them to divest from fossil fuels in favour of renewable energy investments and the further development of climate friendly technologies. These movements will also serve to complement efforts to enact a Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, which is supported by a growing number of states and the WHO.¹⁸⁴

COMPANY SUPPLY CHAIN SCALE-UP AND CORPORATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Large corporate actors are important players, because their low-carbon, just transition, and sustainable development policies can strongly influence smaller corporate actors' climate behaviour and carbon footprints across the global economy (see also III.9). All multinationals should play a highly active role in comprehensive solutions to the planetary emergency (see, e.g., the four pillars of climate action set out in the *The 1.5°C Business Playbook*; Figure 3.1, below),¹⁸⁵ and be held accountable where they fail to deliver in the climate transition. Multinationals operating globally can make special contributions to the establishment of an equitable global carbon reduction system. When these businesses demonstrate their ability to deliver on climate goals with their local suppliers, governments in low and middle-income countries will be more

inclined to support their efforts that can bring social and economic development while avoiding the transfer of pollution to other regions. Shifting to a net-zero economy will require all value chains to be reinvented, and in turn will see companies clinging to outdated supply models be phased out. This transformation has begun, but the pace is too slow for the action needed to protect Planetary Boundaries. A focus on both movement-building, focusing on a “race to the top,” and accountability, are crucial to ensure that businesses deliver on their potential and direct future growth through climate solutions.

Institutional infrastructures can be established to evaluate the climate performance of goods and companies, so policy-makers and multinationals are held accountable in the decarbonization process. Some action has already occurred in this area through the work of, for example, the [Race to Zero](#),¹⁸⁶ and the [High-Level Expert Group on the Net Zero Emissions Commitments of Non-State Entities](#),¹⁸⁷ as well as the EU’s Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive.¹⁸⁸ These initiatives can be aligned and strengthened through relevant reform and refinement, and deployed at the global, regional, and national levels, across all regions.

For example, a corporate climate action index,¹⁸⁹ and climate accountability map,¹⁹⁰ have been launched by the Beijing-based Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs (IPE) to track companies’ progress in delivering on their climate commitments. With these digital climate accounting and target setting tools, the climate performance of major companies and their suppliers can be evaluated. Expanding on this work and cataloging carbon footprints of companies, as well as their products across scope 1, 2, and 3 of carbon emissions, can avoid greenwashing and facilitate decarbonization of global supply chains. This could be further achieved through the establishment of a Supplier Carbon-Disclosure Platform to facilitate the transition to low-carbon practices among supplier companies through knowledge exchange and the sharing of best practices.¹⁹¹

A low-carbon supply chain financing mechanism should also be devised.¹⁹² Given the level of investment required for global decarbonization, financial institutions should track their funded projects’ carbon footprints, extend climate risks to supply chains, and provide financing tools to support companies in their low-carbon transitions. All of these carbon accounting tools for the corporate sector provide a model to ensure the accountability of global corporate actors for climate and biodiversity targets.

4. Enhance International Scientific Capacity for Earth System Governance

“We are in for a bumpy ride. Just how bumpy depends on our ability to safeguard the buffering capacity of our planet. There’s no safe climate without protecting nature on land and in the ocean, reducing fertilizer run-off and pollution, and ensuring a robust hydrological cycle.”

—Johan Rockström, Co-Chair of the Climate Governance Commission.

The Earth’s Planetary Boundaries (see [Figure 1.1](#)) indicate the maximum human-induced disruption each environmental issue can sustain before the Earth system becomes unstable, potentially leading to irreversible changes and cascading effects in multiple domains; ensuring a stable global climate, for

example, is interdependent with the health of multiple Planetary Boundaries (see [Part I](#), above).¹⁹³ Transgressing these boundaries may trigger abrupt and non-linear environmental shifts, posing significant threats to human well-being and survival due to the tipping points associated with the boundaries.¹⁹⁴

Therefore, keeping human development within Planetary Boundaries should be an essential goal of international policymaking, framed in terms of what is necessary to remain or return within a safe margin for each boundary, not how much abatement is deemed politically convenient. To guide decision-makers in this area, new and enhanced scientific advisory panels will be needed to monitor and advise on Earth system governance and help decision-makers effectively inform and lead their publics.¹⁹⁵

ESTABLISH A SCIENCE-POLICY-ACTION NETWORK (SPAN) FOR EARTH SYSTEM RISKS WITH TECHNICAL AND POLICY FUNCTIONS

HLAB has recommended that UNEP and its governing body, the United Nations Environment Assembly (UNEA), be resourced to support a Science-Policy-Action Network (SPAN) as a forum for information exchange and consolidation, connecting to a policy clearinghouse (see [III.2](#), above, and [Box 3.1](#)).¹⁹⁶ SPAN could also track climate and progress, “in real time,” and issue country-specific reports designed to improve policy decision making, connecting to other scientific bodies assessing the condition of Planetary Boundaries. SPAN could suggest science-driven policies on how best to ensure that these boundaries are restored, maintained and not further compromised.¹⁹⁷ It could work with the proposed rapporteur group with mandates to investigate compliance with obligations under MEAs, and it should also support a global hub to preserve and transfer Indigenous knowledge (see [III.5](#)). To concretize these proposals, a number of suggestions have been put forward by David Obura.

Firstly, current international institutions are not designed to constrain human activities within Planetary Boundaries. Current assessment bodies such as the IPCC for the UNFCCC, the IPBES for the CBD, Global Biodiversity Outlook (GBO), and the Global Environment Outlook (GEO) are only beginning to consider Planetary Boundaries (or more formally, “Earth system limits”), though without their recognition as formal indicators for decision-support, efficient allocation to relevant institutions, or effective linkages among existing institutions. To leverage the existing strengths and facilitate integration across the existing bodies, a common assessment and reporting framework for Earth system risks could be designed.¹⁹⁸ Where an appropriate assessment process and/or policy framework already exists, it may be incorporated into existing working processes, with due regard for novel and emerging policy processes that may be needed to cover all Planetary Boundaries and tipping elements in the Earth system.

Establishing semi-autonomous, small, and more nimble Earth system risk task forces/working groups could address gaps not addressed by existing bodies, and emerging or tipping elements requiring a high degree of technical expertise.¹⁹⁹ The approach has been piloted with the IPBES workshop reports on pandemics and jointly with the IPCC on climate-biodiversity linkages,²⁰⁰ and more tangible hosting could be provided through existing institutions and/or science networks with recognized thematic expertise (e.g., on polar ice sheets, tropical rainforests, and coral reefs) and regional/global scope.²⁰¹

At global and regional levels, the policy relevance of findings from science and emerging knowledge need to be anchored in bodies with the relevant mandates and representation established through international

processes. This will involve reform to existing bodies (see near-term proposal [III.5](#) and deeper proposal [IV.1](#)) to take account of the science and ensure policies are interconnected across bodies to Earth system risks.²⁰²

Response bodies will also be needed to address the consequences and the impacts of Earth system hazards and crises. Potential responses will vary with each Earth system risk and its imminence and avoidability, the parts of the planet affected, and their vulnerability to impacts.²⁰³ This component may incorporate existing and new features. Existing thematic response bodies (such the International Red Cross/Red Crescent) have varied humanitarian, resilience building, and reconstruction mandates according to their current purposes, and interact with states in the jurisdiction of actions.²⁰⁴ These provide a foundation for new capabilities corresponding to emerging challenges from Earth system crises.

Finally, to take account of the different needs of various communities and regions, a vulnerability framework should be put in place. This framework would enable characterization of differential vulnerabilities to help countries and response bodies prioritize and target solutions, and equitably allocate resources across, within, and among countries, and in relation to different Earth system risks.²⁰⁵

Establishing effective assessment across and within tipping element domains will require strategic design across existing components, while building a model capable of responding to new global conditions in the coming decades.²⁰⁶ The urgent measures taken above, to give the international community the capacity, as soon as possible, to assess and manage Earth system risks, could mature into a dedicated International Panel on Planetary Boundaries (IPPB) (see [IV.1](#), below).

5. Elevate Environmental Governance Within the Multilateral System and Strengthen Accountability for International Obligations

For several decades, the UN's three main pillars of activity were always articulated as sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights—with sustainable development encompassing the environment. The adoption of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development deepened this connection with such Goals as No. 13 (Climate Action), 14 (Life Below Water), and 15 (Life on Land), among others, necessary for effective environmental stewardship and human well-being.²⁰⁷ Given how a stable and flourishing environment is fundamental to progress in all three UN pillars, coupled with the urgent need for the kinds of ambitious climate governance innovations introduced in this Report, it is time for the UN system to recognize, both conceptually and operationally, the environment as a distinct *fourth pillar* of activity for the world body, on par with sustainable development, peace and security, and human rights. In practical terms, this would help in garnering momentum for elevating environmental governance within the multilateral system, including by:

ENHANCING THE UNEP AND THE UNEA

To make planetary environmental governance a much higher priority in the international arena—commensurate with the challenges we face—and to generate the resources, accountability, and networked responses needed to manage vital global Earth system functions and stay within Planetary Boundaries, the UNEP should be upgraded into an effective Global Environment Agency, together with a dedicated

International Court for the Environment (see [IV.1](#) and [IV.2](#), below). This upgrade should involve resources and mandates equal to the functions it would fulfil, connecting to and finding close synergies with the UN's development, peace and security, and human rights institutions and the Specialized Agencies, among others. While such substantial institutional change is being architected, there are a number of pragmatic ways to strengthen current international environmental governance.

For example, the HLAB has stressed that there is great near-term potential to enhance the UNEP and the UNEA to address the climate and interrelated environmental crises, and to increase, as soon as possible, accountability, action incentives, and support for commitments under current key MEAs. While states have adopted major conventions on climate change, biodiversity, desertification, and hundreds of other MEAs, degradation of the planetary environment continues to accelerate, indicating that compliance and implementation are starkly insufficient. In addition to the enhanced Science-Policy-Action Network (SPAN) proposal (see [III.4](#), above), the CGC therefore supports proposals from the HLAB and the UNSG, including:

Increased Role in Accountability and Monitoring

The UNEP and UNEA could provide a special rapporteur group possessing mandates to investigate and report publicly on environmental violations.²⁰⁸ This body could also monitor gaps between international climate commitments and current trends on the fulfillment of these targets.²⁰⁹ (See [III.7](#), below.)

Integration With the International Financial System

The UNEP and UNEA could also be given an advisory role in key international institutions like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF),²¹⁰ helping to integrate the work of the bodies such that all funded projects help sustain Planetary Boundaries. The UNEP and UNEA could also play a role in advising on the creation of new financial instruments and institutions or the reform of current institutions to improve on climate and allied types of ecological finance (e.g., in relation to proposals under [III.6](#) and [IV.4](#), below).²¹¹

Provide a Public Accountability Platform for Our Planetary Commitments

Public accountability would require that countries be obliged to declare what they have and have not done to improve planetary outcomes, across the major environmental conventions, as well as provide an opportunity for transparent criticism and accountability on a global level.²¹² This could be achieved by establishment of a UNEP-supported platform containing publicly available information, capacity-building support for low and middle-income countries, information-sharing around best practices, and an annual reporting requirement to the UNGA for all conventions.²¹³ According to the HLAB, States Parties to key environmental treaties “should be held publicly accountable for their commitments and supported in their efforts to reach the core goals of net-zero carbon emissions, biodiversity protection and restoration, and a pollution-free planet.”²¹⁴

Establish Representatives of Future Generations and Repurpose the UN Trusteeship Council

The United Nations Secretary-General, in *Our Common Agenda*, has proposed to establish a United Nations Special Envoy for Future Generations to ensure that policy and budget decisions at the international level take into account their impact on future generations.²¹⁵ This could be expanded into a UN Office for Future Generations. Similar positions or institutions could be established at regional, national and local levels, for example as Ombudspersons, Commissioners or Guardians of Future Generations.²¹⁶



Photo by The UNFCCC.

In *Our Common Agenda*, the UNSG has also invited states to consider making the Trusteeship Council available as a “multistakeholder body to tackle emerging challenges and, especially, to serve as a deliberative forum to act on behalf of succeeding generations.”²¹⁷ The UNSG noted that “[a]mong other tasks, it could issue advice and guidance with respect to long-term governance of the global commons, delivery of global public goods, and managing global public risks.”²¹⁸ Such a body could ensure that the social and economic needs of populations of low and middle-income countries are a primary and integrated concern, as part of issues of present and future concern for all of humanity, and in line with key governance principles outlined above (see Part II). This could be established by a UNGA resolution without requiring UN Charter reform. The UNSG’s proposal is supported by a number of civil society networks including the Earth Trusteeship Initiative, World Future Council, and Parliament of the World’s Religions.²¹⁹

6. Near-Term International Economic and Financial Measures

“Today we say to the world leaders and the global financial institutions under the private sector, come together, and let us put the funds necessary to help the world’s most vulnerable countries adapt, transition, and withstand this climate crisis. Only then will we make sure that we leave a livable world for our children. Action needs to be taken today, today, today.”²²⁰

—Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados.

Solutions to the planetary emergency have been grossly under-financed, with a “great finance divide” between high-income and low and middle-income countries.²²¹ The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) estimates that the financial gap for low and middle-income countries is now \$4 trillion per/year for climate mitigation.²²² UNEP estimates the financial need for adaptation at \$160–340 billion annually by 2030, but finds that it stands at only \$28.6 billion as of 2020.²²³ The promised \$100 billion/year to low and middle-income countries by 2020 remains unmet, and the loss-and-damage fund is yet to be determined, with negotiations on the implementation of this fund reflecting tensions between high-income and low and middle-income countries on how to best govern climate finance.²²⁴ Current governance institutions should prioritize developing new and enhanced economic and financial measures, crucial to bridging this gap, as well as ensuring that there is a clear and internationally accepted definition of what constitutes climate finance with a transparent, open, accurate, and verifiable climate finance tracker.

As such, in order to achieve the SDGs while at the same time deploying effective climate mitigation and adaptation, joint efforts are needed at the global level that include and are supported by sufficient financial frameworks that are fair and address the great finance divide.²²⁵ In the words of UNSG Guterres, “we need a new global deal where power, resources and opportunities are better shared at international decision-making tables—and governance mechanisms better reflect the realities of today.”²²⁶ To realize this “global new deal,” giant leaps are called for, including unprecedented resource mobilization and allocation to where they are most needed.²²⁷ In line with Global Public Investment principles,²²⁸ international organisations, states, and the private sector must take urgent steps to bridge the great financial divide by releasing more resources and creating infrastructures to encourage the swift transition toward a decarbonized economy.²²⁹

Each of the proposals below, on taxation or SDR reallocations for example, comprise standalone policy options. They could also be aligned under the broader umbrella of a Global Public Investment (GPI) arrangement (see also IV.4, below). GPI recognizes that more public money needs to be raised for the global common good than is possible within the existing institutional architecture of Official Development Assistance (ODA). Unlike in-country (and predominantly bilateral) development finance, GPI finance better corresponds to the ways in which climate change is a global problem, particularly one that is unevenly made and experienced. GPI would provide additional and complementary financing to existing ODA flows, broadening the contributor base on global challenges such as the climate emergency by sourcing universal fair-share contributions from all countries and by democratizing the governance of such financing: putting lower- and middle- income countries in charge of the international arrangements that determine their fate. It could provide a vehicle for distributing the proceeds of global levies or transaction taxes, if such could be agreed, so that the burden of financing would be distributed not only more fairly among countries but among the world’s wealthiest and poorest as well.²³⁰

RENEWED EFFORTS TO RAISE THE NEEDED INTERNATIONAL PUBLIC FINANCE

Novel financial, fiscal, and regulatory tools can be devised to make it costlier to emit GHGs to incentivize business and individuals to take low-carbon paths. These should include the ending of subsidies to brown energy and the redirecting these funds to clean energy investments and other climate mitigation efforts. The world spends trillions on fossil fuel subsidies each year, surging to a *record \$7 trillion last year*, which amount to far more than what is spent on key developmental metrics such as education.²³¹ Redirecting these tools should also raise enough revenues for climate mitigation/adaptation activities as well as redistributive policy for climate justice.²³²

Further, a calibrated global carbon tax, carefully designed to ensure that fairness and equity concerns are addressed and when joined with strong regulation and an end to fossil fuel subsidies,²³³ can be a powerful and efficient fiscal policy to shift behavior toward energy efficiency and make green energy more economical (see III.8, below).²³⁴ Carbon taxes can be used domestically as well as regionally, as seen with the European Union Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) approved by the EU in May 2023, with its transitional phase beginning in October 2023.²³⁵

Moreover, a levy on the windfall profits of fossil fuel companies and states with large fossil-fuel based incomes has been proposed, as the imposition of even a very small global levy or tax on these profits would produce substantial resources to urgently address the triple planetary crisis.²³⁶ More generally, countries, working in concert, could also consider the Tobin tax on financial transactions in the form of short-term currency trading.²³⁷ The resources collected through such taxes—estimated variably to reach \$3.3 billion per day (as of 2020),²³⁸ or \$650 billion annually (as of 2023),²³⁹ if the tax is set at 0.05%—could be used to achieve climate and sustainability goals.²⁴⁰

These could supplement the recent global deal, led by OECD, to set the minimum corporate tax at 15% (although set at a too-low level) to prevent multinational enterprises (MNEs) from evading taxes.²⁴¹ Progressive taxes on the wealthiest individuals can be used to finance climate mitigation, adaptation, and loss and damage.²⁴² Moreover, through a “fee-and-dividend approach,” fees collected could be returned to citizens or reinvested in the green economic transition (e.g., via a GPI arrangement if employed at the international level), and the richest citizens’ collective wealth limited to no more than 40% of national incomes.²⁴³

Further, international taxation rules are outdated, developed a century ago when multinational corporations were not so significant and wealthy people could not move their assets across borders, taking advantage of tax havens. This creates an unequal system in which the poor pay more taxes than the rich.²⁴⁴ There must be a system that taxes multinational companies at the same rate as domestic companies, by treating all their global profits as one pool from which each country can tax its own share, depending on sales and employment. This will generate significant additional resources for all countries. Creating and sharing national asset registers of the true beneficial owners of all assets will also allow extreme wealth to be taxed wherever it is located.²⁴⁵ A UN tax convention could aim to do this in a way that benefits all countries and their people.²⁴⁶

Particularly in the light of recent geopolitical set-backs, several stakeholders also propose a Global Peace Dividend to decrease military spending and redirect those funds toward other goals, such as global health, climate change, and poverty eradication.²⁴⁷ Supporters of this dividend note that reduction of global military expenditures by only 2% for a five-year period would make available \$1.3 trillion.²⁴⁸ Such a dividend would likely be needed to be joined with serious efforts to strengthen the current international legal, conflict prevention, and peaceful dispute settlement architecture (see IV.5, below, on strengthened international rule of law and collective security, allowing the international community to move more definitively to a global “peace system,” avoiding traditional security dilemmas and arms build ups).²⁴⁹

DEBT RELIEF

Many low and middle-income countries are heavily indebted to international financial institutions (which may stem from factors for which the countries concerned are not responsible, with debt servicing, for

example, blocking pursuit of the SDGs),²⁵⁰ a significant limiting factor in their ability to adapt to and mitigate the planetary emergency. Many low and middle-income countries are already facing sovereign debt crises and fiscal stress worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic. Until now, global financial institutions have not addressed this systematic problem. The G20 Common Framework for Debt Treatments is a good start for measures in supporting low and middle-income countries' debt servicing post-pandemic, but it has had limited success in linking debt relief with development and climate goals.²⁵¹

The Debt Relief for Green and Inclusive Recovery (DRGR) Project proposes that public creditors should grant significant debt reductions to bring distressed countries back to debt sustainability and toward SDG and climate goals. For example, the Debt-for-Nature Swaps (which must be accompanied by strong regulatory and verification frameworks, to ensure benefits are realized) envisages “swapping unproductive debt for productive investment” by transmitting debt payments toward sustainable investments in exchange for partial debt relief.²⁵² Climate considerations can be incorporated into the debt settlement analysis that identifies countries' liabilities and vulnerabilities, national debt management, and, similar to one of the Bridgetown proposals, loan agreements, and similar instruments that would include a “hurricane clause,” which temporarily suspends debt repayments in the event of a natural or similar disaster.²⁵³ This debt relief should include public as well as private creditors.²⁵⁴

MDB/IFI LENDING REFORMS AND DE-RISKING OF CLIMATE FINANCE

To tackle the polycrisis, the required global financial system must be built with public money so that it answers to public will and is directed to public goods.²⁵⁵ Multilateral development banks (MDBs) and international financing institutions (IFIs) should take the lead in expanding financial resources to make them more accessible to low and middle-income countries. Currently, the supply of funds from MDB/IFIs is limited and low and middle-income countries are charged higher interest rates on loans than developed ones.²⁵⁶

To address this problem, MDBs should significantly increase lending for nations that need to finance development and climate. The Bridgetown Initiative calls for MDBs to expand lending to governments by \$1 trillion and prioritize the SDGs and building resilience in climate-vulnerable countries.²⁵⁷ The UN Secretary-General's proposed SDG Stimulus also calls for a boost in MDB lending. It suggests that with stronger capital bases and better use of existing capital, MDBs can increase lending from \$100 billion per year to at least \$500 billion per year. Utilizing their experience and knowledge of regional needs, MDBs should provide more long-term funding at better terms for low and middle-income countries.²⁵⁸ In addition, cooperation between MDBs and public development banks (PDBs) should be enhanced to enable greater impact and potentially higher lending through greater use of co-financing and other risk-sharing mechanisms.²⁵⁹ These reforms must be accompanied with increased international liquidity in the form of SDR allocations. In line with proposals from HLAB, there must be periodic allocation of SDRs as well as special allocations for countries in need of and requiring assistance for loss and damage and for adaptation.²⁶⁰

While public investment and lending lies at the core of tackling the climate crisis, it should be complemented by reduction of risk to catalyze greater private investments. The private sector has played an important role in bridging the climate finance gap (see III.9, below), particularly for projects with good returns, but so far private capital has not been unlocked for international climate finance.²⁶¹ MDBs, PDBs, and other developmental agencies can work with private partners through guarantees, first loss tranches,

and other blended finance, as proposed in the Addis Ababa Action Agenda.²⁶² States should task MDBs and PDBs to develop de-risking and blended finance projects to catalyze private and public investment,²⁶³ and to use innovative financing instruments to increase private investment in low and middle-income countries.²⁶⁴ However, such arrangements need strong monitoring and verification mechanisms to avoid greenwashing and to ensure that disproportionate risks are not shouldered by public entities, while significant profits accrue to private players.

Climate investment uncertainties and risks are multiple, and they need to be managed systematically. New financial tools targeting the private sector or furthering public-private partnerships should be developed to expand information available to investors and increase returns on investments, while also decreasing uncertainty and risks associated with such investments.²⁶⁵ Further, in addition to well-known project-specific risks, there are non-project risks, which stem from the wider economic and political situations in a country and that tend to be higher in low and middle-income countries.²⁶⁶

The Global Clean Investment Risk Mitigation Mechanism (GCI-RMM) proposes to manage non-project risks with a digital platform to facilitate access to information about clean energy tenders from the inception of the project to its realization and thereby increase transparency. It would work with financial institutions to de-risk finance by pooling risks across projects and countries to ease access to non-project risk management tools and reduce transaction costs. This would also assist in bringing down the cost of finance, particularly in emerging markets.²⁶⁷ Investment in emerging markets is also made more uncertain and risky by a lack of information; this could be remedied by having IFIs and MDBs share their data.²⁶⁸ These measures are particularly important in accelerating clean energy deployment and to increase the fiscal space to face crises now and in the future.

Additional dedicated urban green and climate funding of towns is also a priority. While some cities, such as Gothenburg (Sweden) and Ghaziabad (India), have the legal powers and creditworthiness to issue municipal green bonds, this is impossible in many countries. Accordingly, implementation of detailed existing proposals for a bespoke urban green sustainable development bank should be prioritized, in connection with other measures to accelerate the climate action of cities around the world (see III.10, below).²⁶⁹

A GREEN TECHNOLOGY LICENSING FACILITY

Global access to climate friendly technologies will be essential to fulfilling climate objectives and a green transition. To reduce barriers to this green transition, particularly in the low and middle-income countries, a Green Technology Licensing Facility should be established to harness private sector innovation and address licensing and IP restrictions in the technology sector.²⁷⁰ The facility should prioritize licenses for technologies that have been co-developed and offer an opportunity for countries to agree on bilateral municipal, state, or national licensing arrangements.²⁷¹ It could be accompanied by a “global green technology fellows program” to incentivize exchange and co-development of green technology,²⁷² as well as a “center for excellence and training” for the knowledge transfer to ensure actual technology transfer (e.g., see the WHO’s mRNA vaccine technology transfer hub in Africa).²⁷³ Further, equitable reform of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS), and addressing other legal regimes that currently constrain technology transfer and active climate alleviation, should be prioritized, as these currently impede rapid and comprehensive global uptake of breakthrough technologies for planetary (and public health) goals (see IV.4, below).

7. More Innovative International Law, International Legal Institutions, and Citizen Participation in Global Governance

Pioneering efforts, such as the Vanuatu International Court of Justice (ICJ) initiative, catalyzed by global youth including those from small island states, which succeeded in the adoption of a UNGA resolution calling for an advisory opinion on climate change from the ICJ,²⁷⁴ or the request for an advisory opinion on the impact of climate change on the ocean from the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS),²⁷⁵ have emerged as notable examples of forward motion to catalyse a much more robust international legal response to the pressing issues of climate change and the triple planetary crisis. Efforts to introduce a new international crime of ecocide,²⁷⁶ the Global Pact for the Environment campaign, and the recent recognition by the UNGA²⁷⁷ and the UNHRC²⁷⁸ of the human right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment are also ground-breaking. These developments illustrate a growing determination to protect our planet through legal means. Citizen groups are also pushing for more legitimate and inclusive international governance, such as through the “We the Peoples” campaign.

GLOBAL PACT FOR THE ENVIRONMENT

The intergovernmental process to establish a Global Pact for the Environment, which already possesses a General Assembly mandate, could be completed and fully implemented.²⁷⁹ The Pact seeks to unify international law that is currently fragmented between technical and sectoral treaties relating to the environment such as those on climate, pollution, and biodiversity, and consolidate them into the first international treaty to address the matter of environment as a whole.²⁸⁰ Full implementation of the Pact would consolidate previous efforts to effect transformative change in international law through movements like the Earth Charter,²⁸¹ the Universal Declaration on the Rights of Mother Earth,²⁸² and the Global Alliance on Rights of Nature (GARN).²⁸³

The Global Pact should also give citizens the necessary legal tools to become actors in the protection of the planet.²⁸⁴ It would recognize the fundamental principles of prevention and remediation of environmental damage and establish the tools to implement them (such as the right to information and to public participation, and the right to access to environmental justice). The Pact aims to favor the harmonization and clarification of the standards for companies in order to avoid, for example, environmental dumping, seek to drive legislators in each State to enact new protective environmental laws, and to inspire judges to adopt more ambitious legal solutions to address environmental issues.²⁸⁵

ICJ REFORM AND ADVISORY OPINION REFERRAL FACILITY

The ICJ currently resolves relatively few environmental law disputes, largely because of its limited, consent-based jurisdiction,²⁸⁶ and the relatively long time-frame for ICJ cases. Environmental cases could be dealt with more quickly by the ICJ if it reconstituted the ICJ Chamber for Environmental Matters which was discontinued in 2006.²⁸⁷ The ICJ’s jurisdiction for environmental issues could be expanded by increasing the number of States that accept the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ with the objective to achieve universal acceptance,²⁸⁸ and by including in environmental treaties (as an article or additional protocol) the option for any State party to refer a dispute under the treaty to the ICJ.²⁸⁹ In addition,

in *Reforming International Environmental Governance*, Joost Pauwelyn proposes allowing non-state actors to join litigation as amici or as plaintiffs and defendants, as well as to permit fellow international organisations, such as the UNEP and WTO, to request advisory opinions and preliminary rulings.²⁹⁰ UNDP, UNICEF, and UN-Habitat, among others, could also be added to the list.²⁹¹

Furthermore, to empower the ICJ to issue advisory opinions on interstate disputes without the requirement of state consent, Andrew Strauss proposes an even broader shift to refer more cases to the ICJ.²⁹² Strauss argues that to achieve such referral jurisdiction, the UNGA could bypass a veto from the Security Council by designating a Judicial Commission under Article 22 of the UN Charter, and by empowering the Commission under Article 96 to refer the requests of states to the ICJ for advisory opinions.²⁹³ Such a jurisdictional innovation would increase the prominence and development of international law, and also strengthen the ICJ's institutional position as the central arbiter of international disputes²⁹⁴—which could centrally include major climate and environmental legal issues.



Photo by The Elders

UN PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

There are also commitments by the UNSG to making global governance more inclusive and participatory.²⁹⁵ To pursue this aim, the “We the Peoples” Campaign for inclusive global governance is calling for the creation of a United Nations Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) that would give elected citizens’ representatives a role in the agenda-setting and decision-making of the UN. In the United Nations’ UN75 public consultations, it was among the most frequently offered ideas to renew the UN.²⁹⁶ The assembly would act as a complementary representative body and watchdog, connecting the people with the UN and reflecting a broad diversity of global viewpoints, informing, among others, urgent global climate and environmental governance issues.²⁹⁷ It can be established as a subsidiary body by the UN General Assembly with no Charter amendments necessary.

Through portfolio committees, the work of a UNPA over time could be connected to relevant bodies, institutions, and activities of the UN system and beyond as needed, making it a parliamentary umbrella of multilateral collaboration that helps overcome fragmentation. At first, the work could focus on select issues such as climate policy. Complementary to a UNPA would be the parallel, supporting mechanisms of a UN Under- or Assistant-Secretary-General-level Civil Society Envoy for the UN System,²⁹⁸ and a World Citizens' Initiative, an instrument to enable citizens to put forward proposals on key issues of global concern for discussion and further action at the highest political level.²⁹⁹ Any initiative proposal “that reaches a certain threshold of popular support should be put onto the agenda of the UN General Assembly, or Security Council” and/or a UNPA, once established.³⁰⁰

ADDRESSING INDIVIDUAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR ENVIRONMENTAL CRIMES: INCLUDING ECOCIDE AS A CRIME UNDER THE INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL COURT

Individuals involved in policies and/or activities that cause severe damage to the environment need to be held accountable regardless of whether they undertake these actions as government officials, legislators, military leaders, CEOs of corporations, or in other roles. Adopting a Treaty on Transnational Corporations and Human Rights (see [III.9](#), below) is one measure that could be taken. Another measure would be to adopt a UNGA resolution affirming that causing serious and irreparable damage to ecosystems constitutes the crime of ecocide, and adopting an amendment or protocol to the Rome Statute providing jurisdiction to the International Criminal Court (ICC) to investigate, prosecute, and try crimes of ecocide.³⁰¹

STRENGTHENING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RIGHT TO A CLEAN, HEALTHY, AND SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

The HLAB has proposed that UNEP and UNEA should be provided with a special rapporteur group that would be empowered to both investigate and report publicly on environmental violations, and to uphold the newly recognized right to a healthy, clean, sustainable environment (see [III.5](#), above).³⁰² As described, “these bodies should be mandated to issue more regular public reporting on the gaps between international commitments and current trends, including those related to carbon emissions, pollution, and encroachments on protected sea and land areas.”³⁰³ The HLAB proposal could also be expanded to encompass climate justice issues including the protection and inclusion of women, Indigenous peoples, and other minorities in the climate response. Structurally or operationally, these special rapporteurs could be connected to the UN Human Rights Council and key Human Rights Treaty Bodies, to avoid overlap and to produce important synergies crucial to an equitable approach.³⁰⁴

OTHER MECHANISMS OF LEGAL ACCOUNTABILITY: INTERNATIONAL ANTI-CORRUPTION COURT, TREATY ON TRANSNATIONAL CORPORATIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS

All corporations, including those operating across markets and jurisdictions, should be held to higher, internationally agreed standards of conduct and transparency in their operations (see also [III.3](#) and [III.9](#)).³⁰⁵ Furthermore, corporations and individuals behind them should be held accountable for practices harmful to the environment, by way of implementing a legally binding international agreement that seeks to address businesses' impact on human rights,³⁰⁶ including the human right to a clean, healthy,

and sustainable environment.³⁰⁷ Another example involves establishing an International Anti-Corruption Court (IACC) that would be empowered to prosecute corruption and recover illicitly obtained funds where high-level public officials and the private sector are implicated.³⁰⁸

GRAND CORRUPTION AND THE CLIMATE CRISIS

The climate crisis requires huge sums of public and private finance. The countries that have contributed the least to the problem will also face the most grave consequences. Unfortunately, many of those countries are also plagued by complex transnational networks that allow illicit outflows into the international financial system, where vast sums of stolen public funds are laundered and hidden. Ensuring the trust necessary to mobilize the needed climate finance and then protect it from corruption risks requires more effective accountability mechanisms.³⁰⁹

There are 190 State Parties to the UN Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC), which, among other important provisions, requires them to criminalize bribery of public officials, embezzlement and other misappropriation of public funds, and money laundering. However, in too many countries impunity for crimes of grand corruption persists. An IACC would hold accountable high-level public officials and their co-conspirators—those who pay bribes and those who help launder the proceeds—when they commit the crimes defined in the UNCAC.

The IACC would provide a fair forum for the prosecution of the most serious crimes of grand corruption. The Court would also lend its expert investigators and prosecutors to help national authorities carry out complex transnational financial investigations and build cases at both the domestic and international levels. By strengthening the enforcement of the crimes in the UNCAC at both the national and international levels, the IACC would help protect badly needed flows of climate finance, and return stolen funds. A growing coalition of states and civil society are working toward the creation of such a Court.

8. Connecting Trade and International Investment Law With Climate and Broader Ecological Priorities

In a highly globalized and unequal economy, global trading and investment regulatory institutions are crucial to encouraging investors from high-income countries to consider ecological priorities beyond borders, and to build low and middle-income countries' climate resilience by ensuring that investors pursue projects, infrastructure, and technology critical to a just transition.

GLOBAL CARBON TARIFFS

The European Union Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) is a substantial policy initiative intending to use trade policy to pursue domestic and regional climate goals. The mechanism requires an EU importer (of certain products, mainly raw materials such as steel, aluminium, fertilizer, and certain chemicals) to purchase CBAM certificates that correspond to the price that would be paid under the EU

Emission Trading System for the the carbon emissions that result from the production of the imported goods.³¹⁰ This builds carbon mitigation costs into the price of a traded product and levels the playing field with products made in the EU (that would otherwise be more expensive than imported products due to the emissions allowances that EU producers have to purchase). Because CBAM does not apply to exporting countries with emission reduction schemes that are equivalent to the EU's trading schemes or other carbon reduction measures, it incentivizes the EU's trading partners to adopt equivalent carbon trading schemes, thereby expanding its coverage. Concerns have been raised that this may discriminate against poorer countries without such equivalent schemes.

Hence, connecting CBAM and other national carbon-tariff-like measures into a global carbon tariff system would benefit climate while alleviating concerns regarding trade protectionism and non-tariff barriers that may disadvantage low and middle-income countries. Additionally, high-income economies could invest carbon tariff receipts in green development and mitigation and adaptation efforts in low and middle-income countries, as well as generally ensuring ample levels of climate finance and technology transfer (see III.6, above), as this would both level the playing field and reduce perceptions of trade protectionism.³¹¹ Currently, CBAM faces criticisms of protectionism and discrimination as well as allegations that it constitutes a violation of WTO rules, since it may (according to its critics) levy a new tariff outside the WTO framework.³¹² But the EU is involved in dialogue and constructive engagement with its trading partners on how best to implement CBAM.³¹³

A global carbon tariff (e.g., to be set by an independent international body), taking account of per capita incomes or wages, and the common but differentiated responsibilities of various countries, may be a more effective and fairer policy that addresses climate mitigation without jeopardizing the sustainable growth of low and middle-income countries. This could involve setting a single carbon price that varies depending on whether a country is low, middle, or high-income and compensating low and middle-income countries with additional green investment or technology or financial flows to offset the higher cost of carbon.³¹⁴

AID-FOR-TRADE STRATEGY: EXPANDING LINKS TO CLIMATE ADAPTATION

Aid-for-Trade (AfT) is another concessional policy in international trade architecture that can be used to help LDCs reach climate goals. The AfT initiative, originally designed to support low and middle-income countries in implementing trade policy commitments, has evolved to support LDCs to expand productive capacity and better integrate to the global economy. While the \$100 billion a year promise on climate finance has yet to be realized, AfT has disbursed \$400 billion since 2006.³¹⁵ Because climate finance has fallen short in volume, and AfT has incorporated climate and environmental considerations, improved coordination between the two forms of concessional finance can help LDCs to achieve green growth and reduce poverty in a low-carbon, climate resilient manner.³¹⁶

One potential case is the [Pacific Aid for Trade Strategy \(2020–2025\)](#), which aims to help small-island nations in the Pacific build and integrate a regional trading market for sustainable development and deepening connectivity.³¹⁷ This strategy could be used to link funding for climate adaptation to trade enhancement as an addition to preexisting actual and promised aid. A small island state may ask for funding for climate adaptation or loss-and-damage, but also to build its production/trading capacity. This would in turn strengthen its economic and climate resilience. The AfT strategy could also place a greater

emphasis on climate resiliency by linking trade in goods and services with the provision of funding for climate adaptation measures and support a just transition.³¹⁸

MAJOR ECONOMIES TAKING RESPONSIBILITY: REFORMING THE G7 CLIMATE CLUB

At the 2022 G7 Summit, the members of the G7 agreed to establish an international Climate Club to implement the Paris Agreement by advancing ambitious and transparent climate mitigation policies, transforming industries to accelerate decarbonization and expand markets for green products (such as green steel), and boosting international climate cooperation and partnerships.³¹⁹ The OECD, in tandem with the IEA, will host the interim secretariat for the Club. While the Club offers a good starting point to enhance climate-related coordination between major high-income countries, it has yet to make a positive impact on low and middle-income countries, for example, by proactively courting these countries for membership. In proposing the initiative, Germany was sincere in its quest for an open Club to which low and middle-income countries can accede and get benefits in exchange for commitments on emissions reductions, which are easier to achieve in these countries as their carbon intensity of their industries in general is higher.

In its current structure, the Club does not define the role of low and middle-income countries, or how it plans to contribute, for example, to the loss-and-damage fund agreed upon at COP 27, among other international financial commitments. There has been no discussion thus far of potential penalties for those who do not fulfil shared requirements of the Club. A “cooperative” approach has been emphasized as the way forward for tackling free-riders. However, the Montreal Protocol, which is regarded as the most successful environmental agreement, used trading sanctions against non-members to encourage participation.³²⁰ The Peterson Institute for International Economics has also suggested that the use of carbon tariffs on “holdout” members of the Club would ensure that they cannot divert trade to countries that are not as stringent in their regulation of emissions.³²¹ Similar penalties could encourage faster action and greater participation by those who would otherwise avoid ambitious measures.³²² In other words a member of the Club would face sanctions should they refuse to sign up to relevant global climate agreements.³²³

Many Club measures appear based on voluntary sharing of data, or provision of support through existing bilateral agreements.³²⁴ The Club does not at present appear to have considered whether there should be any additional funding instruments or capacity-building measures to support countries attempting to engage with the Club’s objectives. Linking the Club to climate adaptation and resilience funding could provide a useful forum through which other strategies like the AfT strategy could be consolidated and expanded upon.³²⁵

REFORMING THE WTO AND BILATERAL INVESTMENT TREATIES TO ACCOUNT FOR CLIMATE PRIORITIES

The WTO, as the overarching international trading structure and trade-dispute resolution institution, should be reformed to reflect climate priorities. Trade rules should not be used to challenge countries’ climate policies where they will assist with reducing emissions and do so in an equitable manner, or to block climate agreements. One proposal is the Climate Peace Clause, a moratorium on the use of trade or investment rules in international agreements to challenge governments’ climate policies. Such a clause should be used together with proactive climate commitments such as climate mitigation goals, financial and technology climate policy, etc., and the clause should last until there is a permanent solution

to harmonize trade/investment rules and climate policies.³²⁶ Along this line, in December 2020, 50 WTO members established the Trade and Environmental Sustainability Structured Discussions (TESSD) to complement the work of the Committee on Trade and Environment and to ensure trade rules facilitate climate goals. With progressing ministerial conferences and growing cosponsors,³²⁷ the TESSD can potentially make the WTO a policy clearinghouse for international trade laws. Besides the topics of trade-related climate measures, environmental goods and services, and subsidies, TESSD can create model trade standards while securing a position in decisions made by the WTO in relation to climate agreements.³²⁸

In addition to multilateral trade rules, many bilateral investment treaties (BIT) need reform to oblige investors to account for ecological and climate priorities. The Dutch model BIT, for example, requires investors to comply with domestic laws and to conduct environmental impact assessments.³²⁹ This could be expanded upon by adopting differentiated requirements for high- and low-emission investments. Low-emission investments could grant a higher degree of protection, better investment standards from states, and a higher likelihood of succeeding in ISDS if a state attempts to change policy in a manner that may conflict with the investment.³³⁰ High emission investments would be obligated to conduct more stringent impact assessments and not be entitled to protection in the same manner as their low emission counterparts.³³¹

The concept of investors being required to receive fair and equitable treatment could be reinterpreted and reconceived such that the “fair and equitable” standard is applied in accordance with ecological priorities.³³² It means that low-carbon investors would be capable of challenging states that sought to roll back their climate commitments or one that subsidizes its fossil fuel industry over renewable counterparts.³³³ This would place climate at the center of dispute resolution and reduce protection for climate-unfriendly investments, as well as ensuring that the cost for the clean-up of any existing pollutants can be covered as part of a broader rethink of investors’ obligations.

The Pan-African Investment Code, a template treaty developed by the African Union, allows states to submit counterclaims in arbitral proceedings.³³⁴ The idea of a state counterclaim could further be expanded upon to allow states to justify changes in policy on environmental grounds. In other words, states would be entitled to change policies in a manner that may affect fossil fuel investments where such policy is deemed to be necessary or relevant to compliance with the Paris Agreement.³³⁵ This would allow States to avoid the threat of Investor-State Dispute Settlement in the event of greater climate action.

9. Facilitating Business as a Force for Good through Effective Multistakeholder Commitment

Business actors should be both held accountable through robust legislation at all levels of governance, *and*, of their own initiative, take up the challenge to act as central protagonists of transformation to a low-carbon, circular, nature positive, and energy efficient global economy, implementing and accelerating the changes needed to stay within Planetary Boundaries. All levels of governance should create updated legislation and fiscal incentives (e.g., such as preferential tax treatment for certified BCorps and other companies or impact investors adhering to high-quality voluntary standards), in order to quickly catalyze and mainstream leading business trends such as those sketched below.³³⁶

Business should be considered as a key force to innovate for and scale up climate and nature solutions, as well as accelerating climate action in society (see below, on a “green lobby”), while serving human needs with goods and services. The Exponential Roadmap Initiative (ERI) offers a leading framework, with member companies representing over \$1 trillion in revenue, on how businesses can accelerate these solutions in their *Business Playbook*, including:³³⁷

“It is critical to mobilise the entire business sector for the 1.5°C ambition to halve emissions by 2030. Businesses must contribute in four ways. First, by rapidly reducing their own emissions. Second, by reducing emissions in their value chains. Third, by providing climate solutions (products, services and projects) that enable others to avoid and remove emissions. Finally, by accelerating climate action in society and helping to protect and restore nature.” (See [Figure 3.1](#))

As a practical and welcome example, of a visionary, “next-generation” corporation, in 2022, Yvon Chouinard transferred the entirety of Patagonia’s shares into a new [Patagonia Purpose Trust](#), with remaining shares donated to climate solutions. Chouinard hopes “this will influence a new form of capitalism,” and indeed this action is a nudge to the capitalistic markets, encouraging a rethinking of its priorities.³³⁸ A new form of capitalism has been recently promoted by the Japanese Prime Minister, where environmental and social factors are integrated into economic and financial systems, for a “healthy economic metabolism,” that has the capacity to solve social and environmental challenges.³³⁹

By shifting economic and legal expectations of business, creating new markets, and building “responsibility chains” (see [Box 3.1](#), below), business can become a force for good and powerfully contribute to solutions to the “triple planetary crisis.” At the same time, they can catalyze paradigmatic economic shifts from an extractivist mindset to a green tech revolution and economy based on active regeneration of people and planet (see also [III.3](#), above on supply chain transparency).³⁴⁰ This requires the development of improved, high quality voluntary and mandatory standards to embed best practices over time, and create a business culture of a “race-to-the top” to be winners in the new green economy.

CATALYZING PARADIGMATIC ECONOMIC SHIFTS

A mindset of continuous economic growth built on wasteful extraction and consumption is hazardous to planetary health and needs to shift toward an economy based on regeneration of people and planet. This means calibrating the needs and demands of humankind in terms of the sustainable supply capacity of the planet; that as an economy grows, its growth is reinvested in the right places to meet fundamental human needs.³⁴¹ To enable this transformation, the business ecosystem needs to shift away from an extractivist and “shareholder first” mindset to a “stakeholder first” one, with stakeholders being the global public and all life on Earth.

In recent years, “Triple Bottom Line”, “Circular Economy”, “Regenerative Ecosystem,” and “Stakeholder Governance” have emerged in business vocabulary, indicating this paradigmatic shift of business expectations to include prioritizing social and environmental impact. For instance, in their “Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation,” the Business Roundtable stated in 2019 the fundamental commitment to their stakeholders, which, e.g., includes supporting workers and the communities businesses work in

and dealing ethically with their employees and suppliers.³⁴² Businesses also have a responsibility to invest in a just transition for communities dependent on the fossil fuel economy, and to make the economy more people-centric.

This paradigmatic shift in business can be accelerated by creating pathways for organisations to adopt a legal structure that commits a company's resources to public interest. For instance, companies pursuing B Corp Certification must change their governance structure to be transparent, and must be accountable to all stakeholders, not just shareholders, for their social and environmental impact.³⁴³ Fourth Sector Group (4SG) is another organisation that promotes a stakeholder governance model, emphasizing the collective leadership across business, civil society, government, multilaterals, philanthropy, academia, other “ecosystem builders,” and industry and sector leaders.³⁴⁴ Such organisations have a dual purpose of achieving financial success while promoting social and environmental well-being.

In parallel to the growing international efforts on alternative corporate models, new financing models are also gaining traction, such as impact investment, for the provision of finance to organisations addressing environmental and/or social needs with the explicit expectation of a measurement impact as well as financial return.³⁴⁵ Managing, measuring, and maximizing impact has become imperative and is beginning to find its way into regulation to hold the public and private sector accountable.³⁴⁶ In 2020, the World Economic Forum created the Stakeholder Capitalism Metrics to build consistency for the reporting of non-financial disclosures (e.g., CDP, Global Reporting Initiative (GRI), Sustainability Accounting Standards Board (SASB) standards).³⁴⁷ The International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) was created under the IFRS Foundation in 2021 to set a global baseline for non-financial reporting disclosures.³⁴⁸ It is recommended that all states enshrine in law the new ISSB Sustainability Disclosure Standards requirements, released in June 2023.³⁴⁹ The recent heightened emphasis on the role of the environmental, social, and governance (ESG) component in investing should be used to normalize taking into account sustainability and climate impacts in making investment decisions, and thereby moving away from the shareholder primacy mindset, which is already being achieved via benefit corporations.³⁵⁰

Social impact investment and ESG investment are both growing globally,³⁵¹ mostly through private debt and equity, while “impact-linked” financing instruments are emerging.³⁵² According to the Global Impact Investing Network (GIIN), the largest share of impact investments have focused on renewable energy.³⁵³ To incentivize investment into other impact areas, blended finance can be used, where public and/or philanthropic capital provides catalytic funding to attract private capital.

Inherent in all of these financing models is partnership—between the public, private and philanthropic sectors. However, this investment and ESG in general require greater oversight to prevent greenwashing, which is currently widespread,³⁵⁴ and to standardize practices. A global ESG governance body could be elaborated as a part of UNDP and UNEP or another reputable institution to determine a set of indicators which are appropriate for sustainability related measurement in different economic sectors.³⁵⁵ This could be bolstered with supporting organisations in the field such as the ISSB, with intermediary bodies used to provide formal accreditation to companies.³⁵⁶ The establishment of mandatory and effective governance bodies should serve to reduce greenwashing and increase accountability in the event that investors do not comply with enhanced ESG standards.³⁵⁷

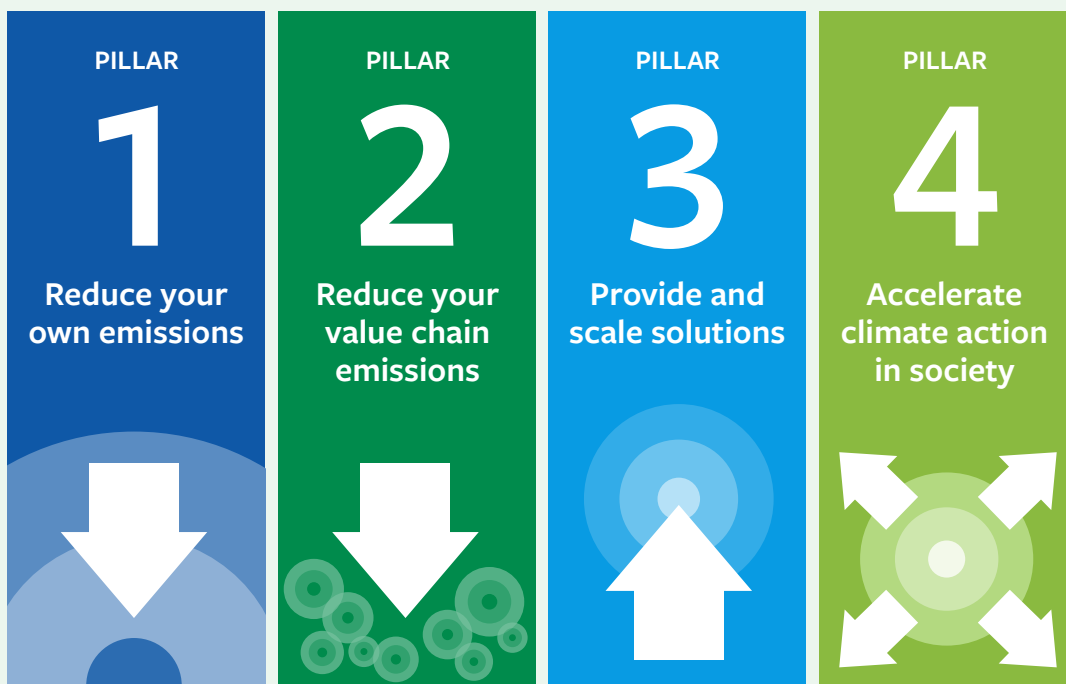
New accounting models focused on impact valuation will also be needed. Impact valuation seeks to create models that allow corporations and investors to translate social and environmental impacts into

the language of currency and make them comparable to financial performance.³⁵⁸ The aspiration is an integrated view of performance which allows investors and managers to make informed decisions based not only on monetized private gains or losses, but also on the broader impact a company has on society and the environment.³⁵⁹

BUILDING AND SCALING UP A POWERFUL GREEN LOBBY WITH INTEGRITY AND CREDIBILITY

Governments must use a global market lens and engage with world leaders and multinationals to ensure regulations accelerate rather than limit or reverse progress on climate action, for example the removal and phasing out of fossil fuel subsidies which block or delay the rapid transformation required. Businesses should likewise align their advocacy with public interest rather than profit at the expense of society. A strong, transparent, and responsible global “green lobby” is key to forging climate-positive markets. The “fourth pillar” of company climate action in the ERI *1.5°C Business Playbook* is, indeed, to “Accelerate Climate Action in Society,” beyond a company’s own business and value chain, by, for example: sharing examples and scaling best practices through collaboration with other industry leaders, influencing policies, and engaging industry associations to accelerate climate action (see [Figure 3.1](#)).³⁶⁰

Figure 3.1: The Four Pillars of Company Climate Action



Source: Exponential Roadmap Initiative, *The 1.5°C Business Playbook*, 8-9.

For example, the electric vehicle (EV) market needs a green lobby to advocate for charging infrastructure, energy grid, and subsidies to lower EV prices. Pushes for policies and infrastructures related to other key changes are likewise needed: e.g., for additional new sustainable transport and mobility shifts, a much more radical energy efficiency and circular economy vision, scaled-up regenerative agriculture, green steel and other zero-carbon industrial material transformations, and so on. Such lobbies need to target domestic as well as foreign markets, especially emerging markets. It is also pivotal that efforts in one country do not cancel out the opportunity for growth in another. Green lobbies and advisory organisations are growing. In 2016, The Good Lobby was founded to build advocacy and the capacity of activists, philanthropies, and progressive businesses so they can lobby for sustainable and accountable policy.³⁶¹ In 2021, the Erb Corporate Political Responsibility (CPR) Taskforce was launched in the US to help companies determine how and whether to engage in civic and political affairs responsibly.³⁶² These organisations can help companies and individuals prioritize climate responsibility and consider their long-term impacts and interest in a healthy economy, society, and living systems.

Box 3.2: From Supply Chains to “Responsibility Chains”

With government policy and consumer expectations contributing to the prioritization of traceability and transparency of climate and environmental harm in company behavior (III.3, above), a new industry has emerged with companies, nonprofits, and certifications sprouting up to help companies map, collect, and certify data in their supply chains. Given the global nature of supply chains and the rapid growth of this sector, it is critical that investment be made to synchronize not only the expectations, but also the taxonomy and methodology of tracking and coding traceability data sources. The Global Governance Innovation Network (GGIN) has proposed investment in a Responsibility Chains Process, to focus in particular on key commodity supply chains (beef, timber, soy, and gold) most linked to deforestation in the Amazon and globally with devastating effects on the climate and Earth system. Adopting this involves “convening relevant actors and initiatives in producer and importer countries, coordinating efforts, and producing an umbrella framework to zero... socio-environmental and human rights violations.”³⁶³

The proposed model seeks to catalyze a paradigm shift in how we think about global supply chains (shifting from a transactional/extractivist model to a relationally-accountable responsibility chain), and it would start with a task force of key stakeholders and champion States. The multistakeholder model would seek to engage all levels of the responsibility chain, e.g., from local suppliers and communities, to relevant regulators at the local, national, and regional levels, together with industry, to identify key coordinated action, standards, and collaborative ways of working within a responsibility chain frame. The task force could work toward a UN mandate and link to global and regional frameworks to accelerate a sustainable future and end socio-environmental harm by 2030.³⁶⁴ This model can be applied to any industry and is intended to build upon and synthesize existing fragmented efforts.



10. Boosting “Next-Generation” City and Regional Alliances

Approximately 75% of the world’s energy-related greenhouse gas emissions come from cities,³⁶⁵ and yet cities do not play as significant a role as they should in global climate change discussions, which remain centralized at the national level. Cities have a crucial role to play in better climate governance as they have the capacity to aim high and move fast on climate action in a way that national governments may struggle with.³⁶⁶ Indeed, cities are often considerably ahead of national governments in implementing mitigation, adaptation, and transformation actions, with global and regional city networks setting the pace through sharing good and innovative practice.

New and existing city forums, networks, and alliances should be strengthened and expanded, as part of a multilevel, highly networked form of global climate governance, to accelerate the delivery of appropriate sustainable and resilient solutions at local, regional, and global scales. The importance of effective multilevel governance, as emphasized in the 2030 Agenda and the New Urban Agenda, should be reflected in cities and regions having seats at COPs and other key climate negotiations (see also [III.1](#), above). New rules or frameworks that could enhance feedback loops and ensure close collaboration between local, national, regional, and international levels could be developed so that all levels are optimised. Bespoke financing for the necessary city transformations has also been proposed (see [III.6](#), above).

NEXT-GENERATION CITY ALLIANCE EXAMPLE: URBAN CLIMATE CHANGE GOVERNANCE IN VULNERABLE HOT AND ARID ZONES

Urban areas, particularly in low and middle-income countries, are highly vulnerable to extreme heat and other effects of the climate emergency, which is why cities and regions form a vital part of ambitious climate governance. The [C40 Reinventing Cities Initiative](#) highlights how cities can work together to promote a resilient urban environment,³⁶⁷ but it should be supplemented by a novel Arid Cities Network. Case studies of hot and arid cities such as Doha, Jodhpur, Khartoum, and Athens show their vulnerability to climate shocks and challenges rising from extreme weather. Hot and arid cities are currently also intensely dependent on carbon for conventional solutions of cooling and water desalination, contributing to further climate deterioration and the occurrence of natural disasters.

Proposed at the [Earthna Summit 2023](#), the [Arid Cities Network \(ACN\)](#) is a city-level partnership and community of practice to accelerate the delivery of sustainable and resilient solutions at the regional and/or global scales for hot and arid cities, which are currently underrepresented in other city networks.³⁶⁸ By April 2024, the initiation phase of the ACN project is expected to be completed, which involves the first steps of international research, national stakeholder engagement, advocacy, and thought leadership. Important forums for the ACN include the UN-Habitat Assembly in June 2024, and the World Urban Forum 12 in November 2024.

Comparable action-focused city or regional networks of particular climate interest and special vulnerability (e.g., threatened by sea-level rise, plummeting aquifers, or flash floods) could be implemented in several ways. First, a global or regional suite of partnerships/alliances of cities could be created where mayors and top officials would be engaged, with minimum levels of staffing, in an agreed headquarters city. Second, an urban network or workstream within existing regional, economic, or political communities, such as the Gulf Cooperation Council, could be seen as an appropriate add-on, which would be faster and cheaper to establish than a new free-standing entity. Third and finally, a mechanism could be developed whereby thematic focal points for cities with common climatic problems or interests are created within existing global membership organisations such as ICLEI, Local Governments for Sustainability, United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG), the Regional Impact Trade Alliance (see [Box 3.3](#)), or the Cities Alliance.³⁶⁹

Box 3.3: Case Study: RITA as an Emerging Platform

The Regional Impact Trade Alliance (RITA) is an emerging international civil society organisation that aspires to serve as an inter-regional trade platform for purpose-driven cities, regions, bio-regions, and small nations, as well as to become a promotion body for a new global positioning of impact regions.

RITA seeks to embody a form of effective and decentralized multilateralism, with a small but diverse group of passionate people overcoming geographic and cultural barriers to contribute to a new interdependent economic system, one which uses business as a force for the common good. Its purpose is to catalyze commercial competitive and collaborative advantages for cities and regions based on their responses to large scale social and environmental needs; in particular, climate change, biodiversity loss and social inequality. Member Regions will be commercially rewarded for meeting minimum criteria in three categories: strong multi-sector collaboration, region-wide agreements (for the Planet), and economic innovations (macro and micro).

Since its first inter-regional roundtable in October 2021 between multi-sector actors in Mendoza and Melbourne, RITA has consistently convened leaders from Europe, Latin America, and Australia to continue exploring the potential for inter-regional impact trade. Leaders from regions in nine countries—Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Colombia, Denmark, Israel, Italy, Spain, and Uruguay—have all been part of the co-creation process, from building trust and relationships at in-person gatherings in Stockholm and Sansepolcro (Italy) to developing core value propositions via regular online workshop meetings. Demonstrating its action-focused commitment to creating open and inclusive spaces for leaders to share regional “superpowers” and vulnerabilities, RITA convened a catalytic meeting in Mendoza (Argentina) in April 2023, which helped to finalize strategic foundations and build life-changing relationships amongst an inter-regional working group. RITA is also beginning to engage with Asia and Africa to continue to expand operations outwards.

RITA will be officially founded in Melbourne, Australia, in late-2023, as a non-profit civil society organisation. Amongst its priorities will be the formation of a pilot group of aspiring Impact Trade Regions in 2024, who, driven by a devotion to their unique places and a spirit of togetherness, will be empowered to co-create new regenerative place-based markets through inter-regional trade roundtables, missions, fairs and gatherings. These regions will be the first to receive a new “Regional Impact Origin” brand mark, which they will display on new economic models, products, services, and knowledge, similar to the denomination of origin stamps on iconic wines.



IV. Building Out Planetary Governance: Next-Generation Working Proposals

“In the face of a worsening planetary crisis, we must take action to create safer and more sustainable societies. With the bold recommendations in this new Climate Governance Commission Report, we can build low-carbon and fair economies, ensuring a life with dignity while respecting the planetary boundaries and securing a better future for all. The time to address the climate crisis is now.”

—María Fernanda Espinosa, Co-Chair, Climate Governance Commission.

Due to the urgency and gravity of the triple planetary crisis, planning and serious expert discussion on enhanced next-generation international governance should start now, in parallel with the near-term international governance reforms described in [Part III](#).³⁷⁰

Humanity faces conditions of worldwide polycrisis: ongoing or imminent transgressions of multiple, planetary bio-system-supporting boundaries which cast long shadows over life, livelihoods, justice, social and economic development, and peace and security, globally. Effectively meeting (mitigating or adapting to) these planetary challenges, while also meeting social and economic development goals, protecting human rights, and safeguarding the consent of the governed, means adopting a more integrated and empowering approach to governance at the global level.³⁷¹

COP 30 in Brazil in 2025, ten years after the adoption of the Paris Agreement, could offer the international community the opportunity to plan for the next-generation international architecture, and to launch a formal process for developing enhanced climate and Planetary Boundary governance. Just as COP 17 in Durban agreed on the mandate to deliver the Paris Agreement nearly five years later, or Rio+20 in Brazil agreed on the mandate to negotiate the SDGs, this natural “*Paris+10*” moment could represent a powerful turning point.

[Part IV](#) of this Report sketches a number of medium-term (next three-to-five years) proposals to ensure that global environmental governance is fit for purpose and up to managing and fulfilling essential governance tasks of the 21st Century.

1. Establish A Global Environment Agency (GEA)

Given the complexity and scope of the climate crisis, as well as the insufficiency of current governance mechanisms to respond to it, a Global Environment Agency (GEA) should be established to serve as the central node for climate, and for general global environmental/Earth system governance.³⁷² Former German Chancellor Angela Merkel and former French President Nicolas Sarkozy endorsed such a proposal in a 2009 open letter to the UNSG, emphasising the need to overhaul existing environmental governance mechanisms.³⁷³

Built upon the UNEP, the GEA could have five key functions: (1) a knowledge function that generates climate and related information through monitoring and research; (2) a deliberative and legislative function with respect to global environmental standards and objectives;³⁷⁴ (3) an enabling and implementing function; (4) a trust and justice-building function that deals with mediation and dispute settlement (e.g., linked to a judicial function, such as that described in IV.3, below); and (5) a learning and reflexivity function designed to reflect upon and reconfigure the GEA's operations to improve performance.³⁷⁵

The GEA should operate as a central authority on climate and other crucial planetary environmental governance that, over the long-term, acquires a mandate to make decisions—based on majority voting—about tasks that lower levels of government are unable or unwilling to perform.³⁷⁶ Initially, the GEA could adopt rules of procedure, establish an independent global scientific advisory council such as an evolved SPAN recommended in III.4, above (or the IPPB, recommended below), and support states in meeting their climate obligations, in collaboration with other key international institutions and programs (e.g., building on the near-term recommendations in III.1, above).³⁷⁷

Frank Biermann articulates three reasons why the international community should transform UNEP into a “World Environment Organisation (WEO),” instead of establishing a new, separate entity. First, a unified WEO/GEA would reverse the trend of fragmentation across various environmental convention secretariats, which would reduce “the coordination deficit in the international governance architecture that results in substantial costs and sub-optimal policy outcomes.”³⁷⁸ Secondly, a unified GEA could help develop a coherent body of international environmental law, much in the same way that the International Labour Organisation (ILO) has developed a comprehensive body of ILO conventions that functionally serves as a global labor code.³⁷⁹ Third, a unified GEA could also help shore up environmental capacities in low and middle-income countries, since “current organisational arrangements for financial North-South transfers suffer from an *ad-hocism* and fragmentation.”³⁸⁰ Enhancing international public finance and global development flows would be crucial for the success of a GEA and its functions (see proposals under III.6, above, and IV.4 and IV.5, below).

Establishing adequate long-term scientific assessment capacities across Planetary Boundaries and tipping element domains, e.g., building on the near-term SPAN proposal (see III.4, above), will require further strategic design across existing components, while also building a model capable of responding to new global conditions in coming decades (e.g., see Part I on a likely overshoot scenario).³⁸¹ A dedicated International Panel on Planetary Boundaries (IPPB) could be designed to aggregate scientific knowledge from the necessary assessment processes to cover all Planetary Boundaries, and to communicate ongoing assessments to policy-makers and the global public.

2. Establish An International Court for the Environment (ICE)

Some scholars have argued that the ICJ, even if reformed (see [III.7](#), above), may possess only limited institutional capacity to take a central role in resolving the gamut of climate issues, as it is a court of general jurisdiction that also must take precautions to preserve the trust of states that do not view it as an appropriate venue for major climate and environmental disputes.³⁸² Additionally, as the ICJ and ITLOS are both currently considering the nature and extent of states' responsibilities in respect to climate change, the expansion and clarity of the law in this manner will enhance the need for a legal forum capable of adjudicating upon the application of the law to specific states and to specific circumstances. If this is the case, the international community should establish a more specialized International Court for the Environment (ICE), closely linked to a GEA, with an express mandate to serve as the central forum for the resolution of international climate and environmental law disputes and authoritative advisory opinions.

Stephen Hockman KC suggests that the new court could operate under an international convention on the right to a healthy environment, with broad coverage, direct access by NGOs and private parties as well as states, supported by a scientific body to assess technical issues, a mechanism to avoid forum shopping, and specialist panels related to mining, aviation, and other such fields.³⁸³ He envisions a court with the power to adjudicate environmental disputes of an appreciable magnitude, order emergency and injunctive relief, mediate, arbitrate, and launch investigations.³⁸⁴ Hockman concludes an ICE would provide the benefits of centralisation, consistent global standards of care, strengthened enforcement of existing treaties, and increased availability of preventive measures.³⁸⁵

Bradnee Chambers and Jessica Green similarly highlight the importance of compulsory jurisdiction, court composition, and financing for a potential ICE. Without compulsory jurisdiction—or jurisdiction over states without requiring consent in every case—the international community risks “creating a two-class society of international norms: those that can be judicially enforced, as with the WTO; and those that cannot.”³⁸⁶ Chambers and Green note that states tend to be *more likely* to grant compulsory jurisdiction to specialised bodies like the ITLOS and the WTO—which potentially bodes well for an ICE.³⁸⁷ Regarding court composition, they argue that its bench should reflect a broad diversity of backgrounds to increase legitimacy (in line with the WTO, whose dispute settlement judges are not all trade experts).³⁸⁸ With respect to financing, Chambers and Green propose that the ICE's budget could come not only from the UN, but also from litigants based on a “polluter-pays” principle.³⁸⁹

In imaging the contours of an ICE, Alessandra Lehmen stresses the importance of drawing from the successes and shortcomings of existing international bodies such as ITLOS and the WTO's dispute settlement system. In addition to compulsory jurisdiction, Lehmen suggests prompt and widespread dissemination of judicial decisions, a staff of in-house experts, and the creation of an active appellate body.³⁹⁰ From ITLOS, Lehmen suggests borrowing a mediation-first approach, as well as provisional measures to prevent grave environmental damage.³⁹¹ She also recommends that the ICE embrace publicity during litigation proceedings, interaction with experts from other international organisations, and private party access to proceedings.³⁹²

3. Adapt Environmental Law to the Anthropocene

Regardless of whether the ICJ or an ICE serves as a venue for environmental dispute resolution, it is important that international environmental law more generally—as an interconnected whole—adapt to the urgent realities of Planetary Boundaries and the Anthropocene. Louis J. Kotzé and colleagues argue that the Anthropocene requires “a more holistic understanding of the earth as a single intertwined social-ecological system,”³⁹³ an interdisciplinary epistemic framework for effective research and policymaking, and integration of traditionally siloed fields such as ecological law, sustainability law, and earth jurisprudence.³⁹⁴ Kotzé and colleagues propose a unified “Earth system law” approach, a new way of thinking about the role and design of law that specifically draws upon an understanding of the Earth as a system.

Kotzé and colleagues propose reframing the overarching purpose of international environmental law from “governing an externalized ‘environment’ that can be mastered by humans” to “maintaining and restoring the integrity of Earth’s life-support system as a precondition for sustainable development.”³⁹⁵ They also propose increasing state accountability under existing international environmental agreements, promoting corporate accountability for greenhouse gas emissions, and encouraging lawyers to increasingly argue on the basis of international law before domestic courts to help “localize” international environmental norms and commitments.³⁹⁶

In terms of bolder, more paradigmatic shifts, Kotzé and colleagues suggest rethinking the notion of sovereignty to account for planetary interdependency, convening a “global citizens convention” to ensure representation of the most vulnerable in global climate governance, reconsidering fundamental legal principles in adjacent fields like trade and investment law, and incorporating Anthropocene-focused conceptions into treaty interpretation.³⁹⁷

Thus, consistent with this line of thought, the GEA could not merely perpetuate existing legal frameworks of international environmental law, but could develop adapted legal paradigms, such as those articulated by Paulo Magalhães and the Common Home of Humanity (CHH), which are based on contemporary scientific Earth system knowledge: that the planet operates as a single, integrated system, and as such, should be legally recognised as an international common good, or a “common heritage of humankind,” while still maintaining national territorial sovereignty.³⁹⁸

This conception relies upon recent scientific advancements that have created the capacity to “quantify a stable and well-functioning state of the Earth system as an intangible object of international law”—all of which would allow the GEA or another international institution to build an “accounting system” that catalogs both “depreciation of this common heritage” and “the positive impacts” that humans create.³⁹⁹ Magalhães analogizes this legal paradigm to an existing legal entity from housing law—the condominium, which is also an “object with a unitary structure and common functional systems, which belongs to various co-owners.”⁴⁰⁰ In a condominium, “each co-owner has private or exclusive rights of ownership over determined fractions (e.g., apartments) while sharing ownership over structural elements (e.g., foundation) and functional systems (e.g., water or electricity).”⁴⁰¹ To manage an analogous legal structure in the context of international environmental law, CHH proposes the revival of the UN Trusteeship Council—perhaps administrable under the auspices of a GEA—with a “mandate to serve the mission of humanity’s common heritage” (see also the proposal of the UNSG, [III.5](#), above).⁴⁰²

4. Reform Bretton Woods Institutions and Enhance Multilateral Development Bank/National Development Agency Collaboration

The international financial system should be reinvented, drawing from and refining a range of leading Bretton Woods Institutional reform proposals,⁴⁰³ to ensure that the financial system pursues climate, Planetary Boundary, and development goals in parallel.⁴⁰⁴ In some cases it will also be necessary to move beyond the Bretton Woods framework. Substantial improvements might include, for example, first, to take a “carrot-and-stick” approach to private capital markets, based on improved regulation of the private sector or through incentives whereby private capital is directed toward productive investments in adapting and restructuring the fundamental energy matrix of the world economy, particularly advancing investment in people, so that individuals can gain livelihoods from a low-carbon economy, employing principles of just transition and ESJ.⁴⁰⁵

Second, fully aligning the international trading system with climate and development goals to ensure that carbon-intensive products and processes are disincentivized. Third, catalysing public development finance by enlarging it and letting it lead, while developing, working with, and/or enhancing existing financing institutions or mechanisms dedicated to tackling climate change (for example, the Green Climate Fund, the Adaptation and Loss and Damage Funds, etc.); more concessional finance and grants to low and middle-income countries; debt relief linked to inclusive and green recovery; the promotion of investing in productive capacity; and prioritising skillful employment.⁴⁰⁶ Many lower-middle-income countries and middle-income countries also emphasize the vital importance of “South-South” exchange, which often extends beyond financial transfers to focus on knowledge sharing and intensive cooperation.

A truly effective long-term vision would also require greater cooperation among multinational corporations, MDBs, and development finance corporations, all working together with governments.⁴⁰⁷ Areas of cooperation should include international trade and particularly technology-sharing, for example via licensing facilities that would ease access to newly-developed technologies for clean energy (see [III.6](#), above).⁴⁰⁸

Alongside increased cooperation with stakeholders, including private sector actors, MDBs should better leverage their expertise, reach and existing resources, and become more fit for purpose by addressing their disbursements and responsiveness, which currently lag behind the needs of low and middle-income countries. This could be achieved by also focusing on global public goods and connecting public and private stakeholders to offer a plethora of financing options and tools.⁴⁰⁹

This should be accompanied by the stimulation of green technologies with smart public-private partnerships in a way that Intellectual Property (IP) rents are not captured by private actors alone. Such stimulation could involve establishing a global research and development partnership for green technology similar to the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers ([CGIAR](#)) and in line with the proposal from UNCTAD that research in green innovation shift from a dominant national approach to embrace the multinational, covering value chains, in whole or in part (see also [III.6](#), above).⁴¹⁰ Equitable reform of the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights (TRIPS) is also needed to promote rapid and comprehensive global innovation uptake, especially for breakthrough technologies that have strong positive externalities.⁴¹¹

In order to generate the necessary support for these reforms to the global financial architecture a new narrative and a new framework for international cooperation on the financing of global public goods and the protection of the global commons is needed. The Global Public Investment (GPI) paradigm has gained traction in recent years to the extent that it meets both these needs. Where the Bridgetown agenda articulates a need for increased, SDG-compliant lending from the IFIs and development banks, GPI articulates a need for more public finance to meet urgent funding gaps and for a modern, 21st century governance arrangement for delivery of that financing to where it is needed most.⁴¹²

GPI would comprise a universal global public goods and challenges budget line, additional and complementary to ODA, which could be grown incrementally over time. Proposals for how to implement such a budget line are considered in the recent Norwegian Expert Group’s report Investing In A Common Future.⁴¹³ Such funding would be overseen by meaningfully inclusive governance arrangements between countries and would intersect with existing proposals for MDB reform and international levies. GPI contributions would include in-country and regional spend, as well as international transfers.

5. Other Key Medium-term International Institutional Reforms

The HLAB report, under “Shift 5” on “Peace and Prevention,”⁴¹⁴ recommends UN Charter reform, with a focus on the UN Security Council, as this is the multilateral institution they describe as the “the highest profile example of failure in the multilateral system” (see also III.2, above).⁴¹⁵ Next-generation reform of the international governance system would indeed involve an upgrade of the UN Charter, which remains essentially unreformed since 1945, despite the drafters’ intentions to have a comprehensive review conference within ten years of Charter adoption.⁴¹⁶ The principal organs of the UN, as set out in its Charter, could benefit from improved, integrated governance of the Earth system, with its interconnected ecological, development/economic, social, and peace and security dimensions. Some possible reforms to significantly strengthen the current international governance architecture include:

UN EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

The UN Security Council could be transitioned to a more fit for purpose UN Executive Council, composed and operating on the basis of contemporary standards of governance fairness and legitimacy. The Executive Council, in a range of matters, could operate in cooperation with the UNGA, and its main focus would be shifted to implementation, management, and effective operation of the UN, with collective security implementation as one of a range of executive functions.⁴¹⁷ This would help with the implementation of new policies on global environmental management, interlinked with other cross-cutting issues.⁴¹⁸

ENHANCEMENT OF THE INTERNATIONAL RULE OF LAW AND INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS

The enhancement of fundamental international rule of law capacity could dramatically assist with increasing accountability in relation to climate action and broader global ecological risk. An “international rule of law package,” including, for example, the compulsory jurisdiction of the ICJ and ICC for all UN members, could be adopted by the international community to significantly enhance global governance legitimacy and efficacy, across sectoral risk and management areas.⁴¹⁹ A UN Office of the Attorney General could assist the reformed UN organs and institutions with legal matters and ensure that new and evolving environmental norms are taken into account in all policies.⁴²⁰ An International Institute for Judicial Training could provide international judges with training on climate and Planetary Boundary issues, as well as the wider intersection of environmental law with general international law and human rights law, among other relevant sources of law.⁴²¹ An upgraded international human rights architecture could also assist with monitoring and enforcing the human right to a healthy environment, as well as wider rights with environmental considerations.⁴²² It would benefit from an International Human Rights Tribunal expanding on existing regional human rights systems to allow litigation to be brought on an international level where states are failing on their rights obligations.⁴²³

STRENGTHENING THE UNPA

The creation of a UNPA is proposed in III.7, above. This could be strengthened over time to become a world parliamentary body, much as the Common Assembly of the European Coal and Steel Community evolved into the European Parliament.⁴²⁴ The parliamentary body would represent the people, complemented by the UNGA representing the UN Member States, similar to the House of Representatives in the US representing the people and the Senate representing the states. Such a world parliamentary body could provide: a) the deliberative and legislative functions of the Global Environmental Agency (see [IV.1](#), above); b) an integrated approach to global governance of related issues (including justice, social and economic development, and peace and security); and c) accountability of global governance to the people. Surveys suggest that a body of this kind now enjoys significant public support in many countries.⁴²⁵

ESTABLISHING A NEW UN FUNDING MECHANISM

Funding for the UN would need to change in accordance with these enhanced roles. Setting contribution rates at a small fixed share of each country’s gross national income (GNI) has multiple merits, including certainty for Member States and an expansion of additional funding.⁴²⁶ Similar to the EU, it could also entail an automatic proportion of a particular tax, such as a VAT, being allocated to the UN.⁴²⁷ Other approaches to raising new sources of international public finance, for example, through a coordinated Tobin-like tax (see [III.6](#), above), should be integrated into and support required international governance functions.



V. Theories of Change and a Strategy for Climate Governance Innovation

“At present we are still more generally inexperienced. We have little practice at the complexities of managing a global civilisation, or a Planet. Our view of the future is still clouded by ignorance and distorted by bias. But our descendants, if all goes well, will be far wiser than we are. They will have had time to understand much more deeply the nature of our condition; they will draw strength and insight from a more just, skillful and mature civilisation; and their choices, in general, will reflect a fuller understanding of what is at stake when they choose. We in the present day, at what may be the very start of history, would therefore do well to be humble, to leave our options open, and to ensure our descendants have a chance to see more clearly, to choose more wisely, than we can today.”⁴²⁸

—Philosopher Toby Ord.

It is important that we understand what is at stake at the current planetary crossroads, and to do all that we can to ensure that viable options for flourishing are left open for future generations. This is despite the current gap between our wisdom and the destructive capacities of our societies, economic models, and technologies as currently employed, that are undermining our basic life support systems on Earth. There is no reason why we cannot employ our wisdom today, to catalyze the maturity needed to ensure a safe passage of humanity through this difficult juncture, decisively choosing a path toward a more just, skillful, and mature civilization. In doing so, we can recognize that the planetary challenges we face are novel to modern human society, and they are occurring on a scale—planetary in scope—to which we are not accustomed (see Parts [I](#) and [II](#), above).⁴²⁹

One of today’s crucial challenges is to *expand the horizons of our collective thinking as a human race* and to design effective governance and collective action options at the planetary level to avoid planetary catastrophe. Failures of imagination and other sociological and psychological barriers persist and are active in undermining sufficient action at all levels of governance (see also [II](#), above); awareness and cooperation to overcome these barriers are critical to tackling the planetary emergency. Such awareness of bottlenecks—and concrete strategies to address them—can be joined with proven positive levers for international system change, as underscored below.

Smart Coalitions and the Role of Norm Entrepreneurship

Breaking through barriers to global collective action, social lock-in,⁴³⁰ and failures of imagination, successful examples of international civil society “smart coalitions” show that small groups of people with powerful ideas, skill, and the right timing can create the requisite momentum for international change. Such momentum can best be generated if awareness of a policy issue’s urgency is already widespread.⁴³¹ For the planetary emergency, the stakes could not be more compelling, with further global weather adversity intensified by El Niño conditions in 2023–2024.⁴³² Consequently, it might become more self-evident to many worldwide that building a broad-based “smart” coalition between state- and non-state actors for planetary governance is required.

REFLECTIONS AND SUCCESS STORIES FROM INTERNATIONAL CIVIL SOCIETY

International “norm entrepreneurship” has proven itself successful as an effective way to develop and strengthen global norms and pressure unwilling governments’ normative commitments to reform their policies.⁴³³ Coalitions of NGOs with even small groups of like-minded states can advocate effectively for transformative norms, and to foster and sustain momentum for concrete climate governance reforms. Beyond public advocacy campaigns and mobilising support, this includes the capacity for exerting positive pressure on reluctant governments.⁴³⁴

Successful examples of global governance reform emerged when NGO representatives were included in treaty-making and negotiation procedures, in addition to conventional state representatives. In fact, many of the most remarkable advances in international affairs since 1989 were led by such coalitions.⁴³⁵ For instance, the Coalition for the International Criminal Court (CICC), which succeeded in four years (1995–1998) to help to realize the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, constitutes an example of the combined power of like-minded states with regional, national, and international civil society organisations across all regions.⁴³⁶ Other successful examples are the global coalition led by the [Republic of Vanuatu](#) to adopt the 2023 UNGA Resolution on an Advisory Opinion on Climate Change from the ICJ,⁴³⁷ and the International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons (ICAN),⁴³⁸ among others.

What these civil society-led initiatives each have in common is how they advocate for relatively simple yet powerful ideas and messages, providing momentum for the adoption of new international norms and treaties, or other progressive international systemic reforms. Powerful and “smart” coalitions are described as coordinated, diverse, inclusive, cooperative, and embrace the diverse perspectives that the coalition’s members bring to an effort.⁴³⁹ In the ICJ initiative, a core group of eighteen countries was formed in what Odo Tevi, Permanent Representative of Vanuatu to the UN, describes as a “microcosm of the UN.”⁴⁴⁰ Assembling select ambassadors and experts, while engaging all UN Member States in an inclusive and participatory process, proved, ultimately, successful.

Such results-oriented coalitions are further enhanced when they include those directly affected by the issue at stake, such as engaging Hiroshima and nuclear test survivors in the ICAN campaign (as summarized in this [Campaigners Kit](#)).⁴⁴¹ They demonstrate how strategic partnerships between governments, international organisations, and civil society (including influential individuals) can garner both political and broader public support. This includes rethinking crisis narratives and mobilising

pressure against powerful stakeholders' resistance (i.e., spoilers). For instance, otherwise reluctant states might be swayed when security and military professionals explain the planetary emergency as a serious international security concern.⁴⁴² As a next step, precise follow-through strategies beyond the initial tabling of a global governance innovation need to be in place to come “off-the-shelf,” to act upon a powerful idea once sufficient political consensus is reached.

ENGAGING BUSINESSES

While green consumer choices on the individual level are insufficient to solve the systemic roots of climate change, businesses have a promising role in becoming effective agents of change in governance and governmental action sufficient to address the planetary emergency (see III.9, above). At this crucial juncture in history, the gap between policy and solutions and declining trust in governments⁴⁴³ adds pressure for the business community to accelerate action to achieve transformative change toward and beyond net-zero and become “Millennial Corporations,”⁴⁴⁴ in line with such tools as *The 1.5°C Business Playbook*.⁴⁴⁵ Multinational corporations can, in particular, leverage their immense influence and resources to mobilize action, lobby, and create public-private partnerships with integrity.

The economic case for action is also compelling (see II, above): the IMF has forecasted “that implementing climate-change policies would shave up to 0.25 percentage points of global annual GDP growth through to 2030, but insists that the short-term costs would be dwarfed by the long-term benefits.”⁴⁴⁶ The B Team companies, in committing boldly in 2015 to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050, represent an early constructive example. At that same year’s historic COP 21 gathering, B Team leaders influenced policy-makers by demonstrating their support for the long-term goals embedded in the Paris Agreement.⁴⁴⁷ Today, more than 650 B Team businesses, with more than US \$15.6 trillion in market capital share, have made sizable climate commitments.⁴⁴⁸ Generally speaking, businesses’ shifting role in society, where, for example, they may wish to clarify their values by aligning concrete actions with trade associations, means that private companies are increasingly open to entering into broad-based coalitions with diverse state and non-state actors.⁴⁴⁹

The Importance of Public Communications, Crisis Leadership, and Education

In order to amplify the work of smart coalitions and other catalytic change agents, widespread public support for the required action should be cultivated; this involves lessons from the psychology and communications literature, as well as from public crisis communications experience.

ENVIRONMENTAL PSYCHOLOGY, PUBLIC SUPPORT, AND RISK PERCEPTION

Attempts to communicate the urgency of climate change, particularly by scientists, think tanks, and activists, have catalyzed climate action insufficiently to date. Consequently, a shift in the conceptualization and presentation of the most helpful “crisis narratives” may assist in garnering new levels of public

awareness and support for climate action. Markowitz and Graves, for instance, found that coherent explanations of the complex causes of the crisis are important for effective public communication.⁴⁵⁰ Further, those communicating in the public interest must confront the still considerable public relations money spent on greenwashing or, worse, unabashed climate change denial,⁴⁵¹ alongside decades of concerted efforts to undermine the scientific consensus on anthropogenic climate change.⁴⁵²

“Activists need to be in the room where the decisions are being made. We need the people in power to listen to us—the generation that will inherit their decisions.”⁴⁵³

—Xiye Bastida, Commissioner and Co-Founder, Re-Earth Initiative.

Yet, in the long-run, an overload of information and urgency narratives may be counterproductive to sustained engagement and collective action. A meta-analysis shows that instead of merely highlighting the threat, people need practical and meaningful suggestions to contribute to reducing the threat.⁴⁵⁴ In fact, clear and solution-oriented narratives of urgency, such as identifying the world we want to live in and how to make this a reality, can be effective to facilitate efficient, large-scale collective action.⁴⁵⁵ Generally speaking, research in environmental psychology highlights the importance of engaging the full spectrum of human emotions beyond fear and guilt, including *hope and gratitude*, to sustain long-term participation in climate action.⁴⁵⁶ Anchored around this goal, the role of the entertainment industry to produce content beyond apocalypse movies is also pivotal, as it holds the key to storytelling—a key to societal change.⁴⁵⁷

Furthermore, finding common ground between people and fostering a sense of care for the planet, instead of numbness, is crucial to tackling injustice.⁴⁵⁸ Overcoming barriers to action in extremely diverse societies worldwide requires the careful adaptation of communications to distinct audiences. Scholars have found that risk perception is more polarised and politically charged amongst members of advantaged groups, who are also less directly impacted by the effects of climate change.⁴⁵⁹ On the other hand, more vulnerable racial and ethnic minorities are less concerned with the crisis’s political divides, given their deep concerns about its severe impacts on their livelihoods.⁴⁶⁰ Hence, while advantaged groups demonstrate more carbon-intensive lifestyles warranting targeted responses, disadvantaged groups are crucial audiences too for climate action, helping to bridge partisan divides and build consensus in diverse societies globally.⁴⁶¹

“Transformative Education” too—both within formal schooling systems (primary, secondary, and tertiary levels) and in the context of professional and lifelong learning—can promote empathy and empowerment, in order to drive societal demand for effective climate and Planetary Boundary governance. Today’s youth may especially embody a bridging role in “the collective ancestry of future generations.”⁴⁶² A global survey of 10,000 youth found that 45% of respondents said their feelings about climate change negatively affected their daily life and functioning, and that climate anxiety and distress were correlated with perceived inadequate government response and associated feelings of betrayal.⁴⁶³ Youth and learners from all generations should, thus, be empowered with: a) knowledge on climate change and Planetary Boundaries; b) concrete tools to facilitate the necessary policy and governance changes;⁴⁶⁴ and, c) other skills and values to foster resilience in an uncertain world, where humanity’s harmony with nature represents both a moral and practical imperative.⁴⁶⁵ These steps can, in effect, generate universal solidarity to protect and regenerate the planet and biosphere, based on principles of Earth Trusteeship (see [Part II](#), above).



One example of transformative education in action—catalysing concrete policy changes—is through the Qatar Foundation (QF) school system, which has incorporated sustainability within the curriculum at all levels of pre-university education, focusing on solutions and the role students can play in solving local and global issues. This promotion of active citizenship and sustainable behavior led a group of students at a QF school to launch a campaign entitled “Say No to Plastic Bags.” Qatar Academy students initiated this campaign as part of its application for an Eco-School “Green Flag”, where, in February 2020, they set-up installations to demonstrate the amount of plastic waste generated by society.⁴⁶⁶

As a result of these efforts, students took the initiative in forming “Activists in Action,” a student-led group (grades 4 and 5), to launch a petition to ban single-use plastic bags in Qatar. By October 2022, the petition “Student activists at Qatar Academy Doha want to ban single-use plastic bags in Qatar!,” which is available on change.org, had received over 8,622 signatures, nearly reaching its target of 10,000.⁴⁶⁷ Since launching the petition, the students have been vocal about sustainability, participating in clean-up drives, taking part in Qatar Sustainability Week, and supporting related efforts. Their campaign was acknowledged by the government following multiple reports in various policy briefings, publications, and social media outlets. In May 2022, Qatar’s cabinet approved a draft resolution No. (143), proposed by the Minister of Municipalities, that regulates plastic bags use, coming into effect by November 2022.⁴⁶⁸

This and other examples show the potential of transformative education across all regions, which can also amplify and build on successful youth-led climate litigation across diverse jurisdictions internationally. For instances, we have seen youth-driven litigation lead to cases before the European Court of Human

Rights,⁴⁶⁹ US state courts,⁴⁷⁰ and the Supreme Court of Colombia,⁴⁷¹ among other jurisdictions. By empowering youth to demand more planetary action through legal forums, transformative education can further aid efforts to introduce new legal paradigms within international law (see [III.7](#) and [IV.3](#), above).

Box 5.1: Connecting Higher Education to Planetary Well-Being

Universities are uniquely positioned to play a central role in advancing planetary well-being, connecting the environment, ecosystems, and human societies. Working with governments, businesses, and civic organisations, universities can become global catalysts for societal transformation toward planetary health.

As one innovative example, Arizona State University's (ASU) University Design Institute (UDI), with a view to leveraging the unique capabilities of universities worldwide, has developed University Design Clinics for Planetary Health.⁴⁷² The function of these Design Clinics is to assist individual universities, university clusters, or, most desirably, national Higher Education Systems in transforming themselves so that they can play a much more effective role in tackling planetary health challenges. In developing this concept, ASU's UDI has identified seven core pillars of university activity (including curriculum, research and innovation, operations, student empowerment, thought leadership, community, and global engagement) that provide a useful framework to capture a "whole-of-university" approach to planetary health.

A Design Clinic is structured by first conducting a pre-engagement analysis to establish a baseline data-set and map of institutional aspirations, appetite for change, resource constraints, and cultural context. A Design Session is then held to share "best practice" lessons learned from other institutions, address ideas for implementation across the seven core pillars, provide inspiration, and support the development of an implementation plan. The concrete output from a design clinic is a customized playbook for implementation and the opportunity for ongoing engagement. The UDI then leverages its network of experts to share knowledge on how to launch similar design efforts. Core topics covered include "developing the necessary human capital," "creating and translating the necessary knowledge," "supporting evidence-based policymaking," "enhancing public awareness and influencing societal behaviour," "giving agency to the student voice," "green campus initiatives and sustainable practices," "engaging with civil society," "industry and other local community partners," and "participating in global networks that embrace the global south and global north."⁴⁷³

CRISIS LEADERSHIP, PUBLIC EMERGENCY COMMUNICATIONS, AND INFORMATION ECOSYSTEMS

Across political systems, short-term political aims of gaining votes or other forms of public (and far-too-often narrow, vested interest) approval still generally trump long-term leadership. As discussed above (see Part II), this inhibits effective crisis leadership that must consider, simultaneously, human well-being in the present and over decades and, indeed, centuries. The current climate governance regime, characterized by all-too-often collective inaction problems, reflects a notable leadership vacuum.⁴⁷⁴ A mix of civil society and government champions can strike the right balance between advocacy and decision-making capabilities that is needed for combined bottom-up and top-down leadership.⁴⁷⁵

The Club de Madrid's (an association of over one hundred former heads of state from democratic countries) work on public, democratic communications in emergencies distills key leadership lessons in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which is relevant to the climate crisis/planetary emergency.⁴⁷⁶ Their report highlights that while science plays an increasingly important role in policymaking, political leaders must also remain fully accountable for their decisions to avoid public confusion and declining trust. Leadership in times of emergency should be positive, appropriate, effective, and ethical, meaning that while critics and observers may deem the task impossible, leaders must truly believe that the goal is achievable and necessary, and act in the best interest of the citizens they represent. Additionally, this includes empathizing with and addressing people's fears.⁴⁷⁷

Proximity communication is at the core of empathy, meaning that leaders' engagement with their citizens should flow through the prism of evidence-based knowledge, yet still employ clear and simple messages (i.e., through the same platforms they typically use to communicate with their community). Public communications in times of high uncertainty and social anxiety demand a regular and fully transparent sharing of facts with citizens to provide information effectively to the public and prevent misinformation. Hence, the above proposal (see III.2) for regular, high-quality briefings on the planetary emergency held at all levels of governance.

To maintain trust in their leaders, complex situations must be broken down for citizens and connected to the policy objectives and envisioned measures for addressing an emergency. Third party scientific advisors, community leaders, and novel methods to communicate science are also critical. In short, emergency preparedness requires deep international cooperation, combined with a coherent strategy, well in advance of a crisis reaching its peak.

*Consultations with diverse stakeholders, especially those most vulnerable to the effects of an emergency, is also a crucial part of crisis leadership, and they should help to ground and improve decision-making within the climate governance regimes.*⁴⁷⁸



VI. Toward Effective and Just Earth System Governance

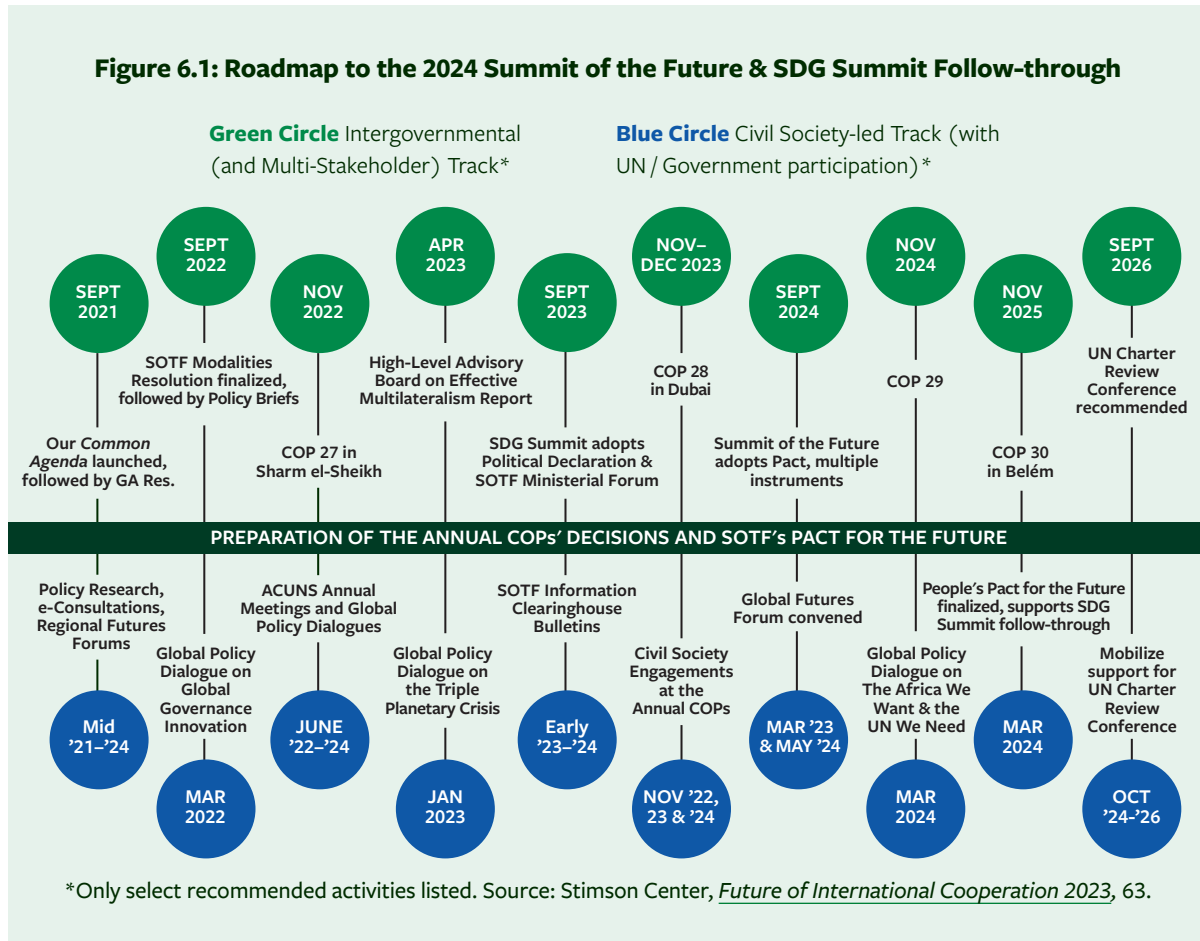
Climate Governance and the Global Summits

Two major sets of upcoming intergovernmental negotiations for considering and possibly taking forward both the near- and medium-term proposals of the Climate Governance Commission are COP 28, from 30 November until 12 December 2023 in Dubai, and the Summit of the Future, from 22–23 September 2024 in New York (see [Figure 6.1](#)).⁴⁷⁹ As the apex intergovernmental forum for climate governance decision-making, the COPs are well-placed to deliberate upon and potentially adopt and oversee the implementation of a number of the Commission’s recommendations, including measures to improve the annual COPs’ capacity to focus on delivery, action, and accountability; facilitating transformative action and accountability of powerful countries (starting with the US., China, India, and EU); and, encouraging greater engagement by the business community, cities, and regional alliances. Garnering support for each will require a robust communications and public outreach strategy that first engages and then amplifies the political support for individual Commission proposals by champion countries and their partners in civil society and the private sector.

On 8 September 2022, the United Nations’ 193 Member States adopted by consensus General Assembly Resolution A/76/307, deciding on the convening of the 2024 Summit of the Future for “reaffirming the Charter of the United Nations, reinvigorating multilateralism, boosting implementation of existing commitments, agreeing on concrete solutions to challenges and restoring trust among Member States.”⁴⁸⁰ On 1 September 2023, the President of the General Assembly of the UN presented a follow-on decision detailing the scope of the Summit’s chief outcome document, the “Pact for the Future,” to be negotiated over the subsequent twelve months.⁴⁸¹

The Pact for the Future is structured with various chapters, each addressing distinct themes of relevance to the Climate Governance Commission’s proposals. Chapter One is dedicated to “Sustainable Development and Financing for Development.” Chapter Three focuses on “Science, Technology and Innovation and Digital Cooperation.” Chapter Four is centered on “Youth and Future Generations” and Chapter Five deals with “Transforming Global Governance.” Even Chapter Four (with its focus on “International Peace and Security”) is relevant to timely CGC discussions on the climate-security nexus. The Summit is, therefore, well-positioned to consider and advance numerous significant proposals presented by the Commission. These proposals encompass declaring a planetary emergency, setting up a planetary-focused Emergency Platform for immediate support to vulnerable groups, broadening international security paradigms around the climate/Planetary Boundary-security nexus, strengthening the international scientific capacity for

Earth System Governance, raising the prominence of environmental governance within the multilateral system, establishing a Global Environment Agency, creating an International Court for the Environment, implementing changes in the Global Financial Architecture, and initiating steps toward UN Charter reform—each designed, in specific ways, to make climate governance more inclusive and effective.



Fundamental to advancing these ideas over the next ten months, in the lead-up to the Summit of the Future, is the formation of a strong, broad-based coalition between proponents in civil society, the President of the General Assembly, the UN Secretariat (in particular, the Executive Office of the Secretary-General), and the main co-facilitators of the intergovernmental process, namely the Permanent Representatives of Namibia, Germany, Jamaica, The Netherlands, Zambia, and Sweden. In addition, champion countries, from both the Global South and North, will be identified, nurtured, and supported in navigating the international political terrain toward the adoption of select, high-impact climate governance innovations.

“Today a gap exists in our movement presenting an opportunity to accelerate change by reaching beyond the climate community and raising awareness united under a single vision.”

—Mary Robinson, Letter on Project Dandelion.⁴⁸²

BUILDING A DEDICATED “SMART COALITION” FOR EFFECTIVE GLOBAL GOVERNANCE OF THE ENVIRONMENT

Ultimately, a key metric of the Climate Governance Commission’s success is in catalysing shifts for improved global governance of the environment. To this end, the Commission plans to set-up high-level expert and diplomatic working groups on key proposals, leveraging partnerships with influential like-minded states, including associations of small island developing states that have a strong track record of international climate leadership. It also collaborates with the World Federalist Movement/Institute for Global Policy (WFM/IGP) and Citizens for Global Solutions (CGS), and a growing number of civil society partners, to advance select major Climate Governance Commission recommendations.

Learning from earlier campaigns, implementation efforts will follow the proven strategy of building a “smart coalition” of state and non-state actors, harnessing the strengths of diverse partners over a sustained period and working toward the achievement of ambitious and clearly defined milestones along the way.⁴⁸³ The Commission, WFM/IGP, and CGS, inspired by the successful Coalition for the International Criminal Court—where the WFM acted as convenor over two decades—have initiated in recent months the MEGA project, “Mobilizing an Earth Governance Alliance.” A wide range of environmental and other civil society organisations are expressing an interest in joining MEGA, including those associated with the [Coalition for the UN We Need](#) and the [We The Peoples Campaign: Call for Inclusive Global Governance](#).

The fast-changing environment’s increasingly dramatic impact on humanity (driven, in particular, by the actions of people, corporations, and governments) generates new levels of popular and political will for employing international law and new kinds of global governance innovations to protect the Earth’s ecosystems. This promising dynamic is exemplified by the recent progress of, for example, the global [Stop Ecocide campaign](#) and the [International Court of Justice Climate Case \(Advisory Opinion\)](#). MEGA will leverage such momentum, working toward global governance innovations and solutions commensurate to our intensifying planetary emergency. It hopes to offer an antidote to climate anxiety and despair, providing practical tools for realizing a shared positive vision, rooted in science and empirical evidence, where humanity’s actions restore and regenerate, rather than undercut and erode, nature.

* * *

“In the face of a deepening planetary crisis, it falls upon us to be the architects of brighter and safer societies. With bold climate and environmental governance transformations suggested in the new Climate Governance Commission Report, we can build low-carbon and fairer economies, and we can enjoy a life with dignity respecting planetary boundaries and ensuring a secure, flourishing future for all. The time to avert the climate crisis is now.”

—María Fernanda Espinosa, Co-Chair, Climate Governance Commission.

Endnotes

Purpose of the Report

- 1 The Climate Governance Commission (CGC) was initiated to establish and sustain a policy dialogue on innovations toward a global governance architecture commensurate with the planetary climate challenge. The contribution of each Commissioner to this Report was made in a personal capacity and should not be attributed to any institution. The Commissioners approve the overall conclusions of this Report but not necessarily every statement in it. This Report follows from extensive research, extensive in-person and online consultations with cross-disciplinary experts, and successive deliberations by and with the Commissioners (see [Annex I](#) and [II](#)).
- 2 United Nations, [Our common agenda: Report of the Secretary-General](#).
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 United Nations, [“Secretary-General calls latest IPCC climate report ‘code red for humanity’, stressing ‘irrefutable’ evidence of human influence.”](#)
- 5 United Nations, [“Humanity has opened the gates to hell” warns Guterres as climate coalition demands action.”](#)

I. The Climate Problem-Set: Understanding Our Current Predicament

- 6 United Nations, [Our common agenda: Report of the Secretary-General](#).
- 7 These interacting processes form a system consisting of the land, oceans, atmosphere and poles. It includes the planet’s natural cycles—the carbon, water, nitrogen, phosphorus, sulphur and other cycles—and deep Earth processes. See: International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme, [“Earth System Definitions.”](#) Accessed November 7, 2023.
- 8 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, [Global warming of 1.5°C](#), 17.
- 9 Global Marshall Plan, Al Gore in *Earth in the Balance*, and e.g., Earthshot. [“The Earth Shot Prize.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- 10 Institute for New Economic Thinking, [“Seth Klein: How WWII preparation sets an example for confronting climate change.”](#)
- 11 Cedamia, [“Fact sheets.”](#) Accessed November 6, 2023.
- 12 Climate Emergency Declaration, [“Climate emergency declarations in 2,349 jurisdictions and local governments cover 1 billion citizens.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- 13 See, e.g.: Climate Action Tracker, [“Countries.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.

- 14 See the remarks of youth activist Vanessa Nataka at the Youth4Climate pre-COP 26 event, Doha Debates, [“Vanessa Nakate’s Full Keynote Speech at Youth4Climate Pre-COP26,”](#) Accessed November 7, 2023.
- 15 See the remarks of Primer Minister of Barbados and climate activist Mia Mottley at the opening of the Cop 26 World Leaders Summit, United Nations Climate Change, [“Speech: Mia Mottley, Prime Minister of Barbados at the Opening of the #COP26 World Leaders Summit,”](#) Accessed November 7, 2023.
- 16 Where “existential risks” are defined as “risks that threaten the destruction of humanity’s long term potential” (e.g., extinction, unrecoverable global civilizational collapse, locked in dystopian futures, etc.) Ord, *The Precipice: Existential risk and the future of humanity*, 6.
- 17 Ibid, 3-4.
- 18 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, [Synthesis report of the Sixth Assessment Report \(AR6\)](#).
- 19 Richardson et al., [Earth Beyond Six of Nine Planetary Boundaries](#), 26. See also Stockholm Resilience Center, [“All Planetary Boundaries mapped out for the first time, six of nine crossed.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- 20 E.g., through (a) the uptake of GHGs in the land and ocean, and (b) heat sinks and uptake capacity. Here are two examples. (1) When the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increases, plants tend to absorb more CO2 in what is known as the “CO2 fertilisation effect.” This effect will at some point be saturated, offering no further buffer to rising CO2 concentrations in the atmosphere. (2) In recent decades, the oceans have taken up some 90% of all excess heat due to global warming, resulting in record-high ocean heat content. While this buffers the atmosphere from even faster warming, it has devastating effects on ocean ecosystems and is accelerating sea-level rise.
- 21 Lamboll et al., [Assessing the size and uncertainty of remaining carbon budgets](#), 1-10.
- 22 Lamboll et al., [Assessing the size and uncertainty of remaining carbon budgets](#), 1-10.
- 23 Club of Rome, [“Planetary Emergency 2.0 Securing a New Deal for People, Nature and Climate.”](#)
- 24 Kemp et al., [Climate endgame: Exploring catastrophic climate change scenarios](#), 1-9.
- 25 Zalasiewicz et al, [The Anthropocene as a geological time unit](#).
- 26 Rockström et al., [Identifying a safe and just corridor for people and the planet](#), 1-7.
- 27 Club of Rome, [“Planetary Emergency 2.0 Securing a New Deal for People, Nature and Climate.”](#) 2020.

- ²⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁹ E.g., such global commons as the global climate system, the global hydrological cycle, the ecological stability of large biomes such as the Amazon rainforest, and the Greenland ice sheet, upon which we all depend.
- ³⁰ Osman et al., *Globally resolved surface temperatures since the Last Glacial Maximum*, 239–244.
- ³¹ Steffen et al., *Trajectories of the Earth system in the Anthropocene*, 8252–8259.
- ³² Rockström et al., *We need biosphere stewardship that protects carbon sinks and builds resilience*, 1-5.
- ³³ National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, “*Climate Forcing*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³⁴ Gatti et al., *Amazonia as a Carbon Source Linked to Deforestation and Climate Change*, 388-393.
- ³⁵ See e.g. Cai et al., *Changing El Niño–Southern Oscillation in a warming climate*, 628–644.
- ³⁶ National Snow and Ice Data Center, “*Sea Ice Index Daily*.” Accessed November 7, 2023. See also Hall, *The role of surface albedo feedback in climate*, 1550–1568.
- ³⁷ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *AR6 Synthesis Report*, 3.1.1.
- ³⁸ Armstrong et al., *Exceeding 1.5°C global warming could trigger multiple climate tipping points*, 797–818. A recent, alarming study published in the Journal Nature finds that “accelerated melting of ice shelves in West Antarctica is locked in, even for the most ambitious emissions reduction scenarios.” See Sohail, “*Committed Future Ice-Shelf Melt*,” 1-2.
- ³⁹ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate change 2001: The scientific basis*.
- ⁴⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴¹ Lenton et al., *Climate tipping points—too risky to bet against*, 592–595.
- ⁴² Rockström et al., *We need biosphere stewardship that protects carbon sinks and builds resilience*, 1-5.
- II. Conceptual Frameworks: International Governance Perspectives as a Vital Necessity**
- ⁴³ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, “*What is the Triple Planetary Crisis*.” Accessed November 7, 2023.
- ⁴⁴ Stimson Center and Hague Institute for Global Justice, *Confronting the Crises of Global Governance*.
- ⁴⁵ Tallberg, Jonas et al, *Global Governance: Fit for Purpose?*. See also Blais, Louise, “*The First Step Toward World Peace? Fix the UN.*” and European Council, “*Speech by President Charles Michel at the 78th United Nations General Assembly.*”
- ⁴⁶ International Institute for Sustainable Development, “*UN75 declaration calls for multilateralism to achieve an equal, resilient world.*”
- ⁴⁷ Ross, “*Davos Worries about a Polycrisis.*”
- ⁴⁸ International governance and cooperation are vital necessities, but there is also of course a need for sound governance at all levels—regional, national, local, or corporate actors, etc.; see below, III.9 and III.10, among others.
- ⁴⁹ As described above under Part I, a stable climate system is fundamentally interrelated with other Planetary Boundaries. See Persson et al., *Outside the safe operating space of the for novel entities*, 1510–1521.
- ⁵⁰ “The world is just waking up to the importance of existential risk. We have begun to work on evaluating and evading the most significant threats, but have yet to scale this up in proportion to the significance of the problems. Seen in the context of the overall distribution of global resources, existential risk is sorely neglected” Ord, *The Precipice: Existential risk and the future of humanity*, 57.
- ⁵¹ Stockholm Resilience Center, “*The nine Planetary Boundaries.*” Accessed October 30, 2023
- ⁵² United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special edition: Toward a Rescue Plan for People and Planet*.
- ⁵³ Ibid.
- ⁵⁴ Ord, *The Precipice: Existential risk and the future of humanity*, 59.
- ⁵⁵ Kemp and Rhodes, *The Cartography of Global Catastrophic Governance*.
- ⁵⁶ Slaughter, *A New World Order*, 4.
- ⁵⁷ The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations and Adaptation Without Borders, *The global transboundary climate risk report*. April 17, 2023. See also Dahl et al., *The global catastrophic risk index: Putting risk on the agenda*.
- ⁵⁸ See, e.g., The Earth System Governance Project, “*Earth System Governance*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁵⁹ The Good Country, “*Good Country*.” Accessed October 31, 2023. The Good Country project proposes a new paradigm for International Relations that emphasizes collaboration between countries toward common goals. This paradigm suggests that countries should work not only for their own national interest, but also for the greater good of humanity. The Good Country Index, a tool developed by the project, ranks countries based on their external impacts outside their own borders.
- ⁶⁰ Lucero-Matteucci, “*Catastrophic risks are converging. It’s time for researchers to step out of their silos.*”

- ⁶¹ Climate Diplomacy, “[Geopolitics of climate change](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023. See also Tanzler et al., “[The geopolitics of decarbonisation: Reshaping European foreign relations](#).”
- ⁶² Way et al., *Empirically grounded technology forecasts and the energy transition*, 2052-2082.
- ⁶³ Ibid.
- ⁶⁴ See Dixon-Declève, Sandrine et al., *Earth for All: A survival guide for humanity: A report to the Club of Rome (2022), fifty years after the limits of growth*, [Executive Summary](#), Key Message # 8.
- ⁶⁵ International Monetary Fund, [IMF Fossil Fuel Subsidies Data](#).
- ⁶⁶ See proposals in: Dixon-Declève, Sandrine et al., *Earth for all: A survival guide for humanity: A report to the Club of Rome (2022), fifty years after the limits of growth (1972)*.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid. See [Executive Summary](#), Key Message # 1. See also Key message # 10: “Over-consumption in high-income countries must be curbed and global consumption patterns shifted toward circular and regenerative models. Material consumption among high-income takers is a major driver of climate change, ecosystem decline and pollution and makes it increasingly difficult for poor people to enhance their living standards. Policies must be implemented to provide sufficiency for all by redistributing wealth and lowering the material footprint of the rich and enhance the shift toward smart natural resource use, circularity and regenerative solutions in low, middle and high income countries.”
- ⁶⁸ United Nations, [Our common agenda: Report of the Secretary-General](#).
- ⁶⁹ Exponential Roadmap Initiative, [The 1.5°C business playbook](#), 7.
- ⁷⁰ “People want to become better planetary stewards. [...] This is part of a wider societal trend toward planetary stewardship that includes companies, cities and politicians. This momentum means it is likely that the decade to 2030 will see the fastest economic transition in history: a huge market opportunity.” See The Global Commons Alliance, [The Global Commons Survey: Attitudes to planetary stewardship and transformation among G20 countries](#), 6. See also The Stimson Center, [Global Governance Survey 2023](#).
- ⁷¹ Leiserowitz et al., [International Public Opinion on Climate Change](#), 15.
- ⁷² Dixon-Declève, Sandrine et al., *Earth for all: A survival guide for humanity: A report to the Club of Rome (2022), fifty years after the limits of growth (1972)*.
- ⁷³ See: the remarks of President Ruto at the African Climate Summit, African Climate Summit 2023. “[Welcome to Africa Climate Week](#).”
- ⁷⁴ See, e.g.: Ban Ki-moon Center for Global Citizens, “[Center for Global Citizens](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023
- ⁷⁵ Lopez-Claros et al., “[Values and principles for an enhanced international system: Operationalizing global good governance](#).” in *Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st century*, 433-356.
- ⁷⁶ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, “[The 17 goals](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁷⁷ Brundtland Commission. [Our Common Future](#). See also Dixon-Declève, Sandrine et al., *Earth for all: A survival guide for humanity: A report to the Club of Rome (2022), fifty years after the limits of growth (1972)*.
- ⁷⁸ Stockholm Resilience Center, “[Planetary Boundaries](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁷⁹ Gupta et al., “[Earth system justice needed to identify and live within Earth system boundaries](#),” 630-638.
- ⁸⁰ Ibid. There is further work to be done in merging the discussion on Planetary Boundaries with consideration regarding the complex landscape of justice issues across actors, levels, generations, and species.
- ⁸¹ Paris Climate Agreement 2015.
- ⁸² Climate Justice Alliance, “[What Do We Mean By Just Transition?](#)” Accessed October 30, 2023
- ⁸³ International Energy Agency, [World Energy Investment Report](#), 9.
- ⁸⁴ Abnett, “[COP28 chief, groups, urge tripling renewable capacity by 2030](#).”
- ⁸⁵ Pollin, “[The political economy of saving the planet](#),” 141-168.
- ⁸⁶ E.g., see the [Earth Charter](#) Accessed October 30, 2023 and Earth Trusteeship, “[Hague Principles on Earth Trusteeship](#).”
- ⁸⁷ See, e.g., Gaillard and Forman (eds.), *Legal actions for future generations*.
- ⁸⁸ Sobion et al., *Reflections on Earth trusteeship: Mother Earth and a new 21st-century governance paradigm*.
- ⁸⁹ European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. “[Basic law for the Federal Republic of Germany](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁹⁰ Constitution of Bhutan, “[Article 5, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁹¹ Simon, “[Dilemmas of development and the environment in a globalizing world: theory, policy and praxis](#),” 9-11.

- ⁹² Ord, *The Precipice: Existential risk and the future of humanity*, 59.
- ⁹³ See, e.g.: Finnemore and Sikkink, “*International norm dynamics and political change*,” 887–917.
- ⁹⁴ The Stimson Center, *Global Governance Survey 2023*.
- ⁹⁵ The Elders, “*About the Elders*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁹⁶ Callahan, “*Good Science Isn’t Enough*.”
- ⁹⁷ See, e.g., inner development goals; Inner Development Goals, “*Inner Development Goals*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁹⁸ See, for example, Project Dandelion, a new women-led global climate justice initiative. “*Project Dandelion*.” Accessed November 5, 2023.
- III. Near-Term International Governance Innovations: “TOP 10” Working Proposals**
- ⁹⁹ United Nations Environment Programme, *Emissions Gap Report*.
- ¹⁰⁰ See key “takeaways” from the Interim Report of the Commission in Annex II. Global Challenges Foundation, *The Climate Governance Commission, 2021 interim report: Governing our climate future*.
- ¹⁰¹ Ibid.
- ¹⁰² E.g., 40,000 participants registered for the COP that was held in Glasgow in 2021. Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, “*Outcomes of the UN Climate Change Conference in Glasgow: 26th session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26)*.”
- ¹⁰³ Müller et al., “*Quo vadis COP? Future arrangements for intergovernmental meetings under the UNFCCC—settled and fit for purpose*.”
- ¹⁰⁴ The Club of Rome, “*An open letter to the UN Secretary General and COP Executive Secretary: Reform of the COP process—a manifesto for moving from negotiations to delivery*.” 2023.
- ¹⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁰⁸ Biniiaz, “*After Madrid, w[h]ither the COP*.”
- ¹⁰⁹ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁰ The Club of Rome, “*An open letter to the UN Secretary General and COP Executive Secretary: Reform of the COP process—a manifesto for moving from negotiations to delivery*.”
- ¹¹¹ Rietig et al., *Improving UNFCCC negotiations with facilitation/mediation approaches: A toolkit*.
- ¹¹² The Club of Rome, “*An open letter to the UN Secretary General and COP Executive Secretary: Reform of the COP process—a manifesto for moving from negotiations to delivery*.”
- ¹¹³ See Global Assembly, “*Global Assembly*.” Accessed October 30, 2023 and, ISWE Foundation, “*Accelerating Action through People Power: Exploring the Potential for a Permanent Global Citizens’ Assembly*.”
- ¹¹⁴ See for example the Irish Citizens Assembly model, which saw members of the public randomly selected in a manner designed to ensure representation from all parts of society. Members were then exposed to a variety of views on a particular policy issue with the task of forming workable policy proposals for parliament to act upon. The Assembly allowed ordinary members of the public to play a role in policymaking while legitimizing decision making on complex issues. Observatory of Public Sector Innovation, “*The Irish Citizens Assembly*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹¹⁵ Rietig et al., *Improving UNFCCC negotiations with facilitation/mediation approaches: A toolkit*.
- ¹¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁹ Klein et al., “*Building climate diplomacy back better: Imagining the UNFCCC meetings*.”
- ¹²⁰ Rietig et al., *Improving UNFCCC negotiations with facilitation/mediation approaches: A toolkit*.
- ¹²¹ Biniiaz, Susan, “*After Madrid, w[h]ither the COP*.” Sabina Center for Climate Change Law January, 2020.
- ¹²² Seo, “*Beyond the Paris Agreement: Climate change policy negotiations and future directions*,” 61–140.
- ¹²³ Rietig et al., *Improving UNFCCC negotiations with facilitation/mediation approaches: A toolkit*.
- ¹²⁴ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, “*Paris Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee (PAICC)*.” Accessed October 30, 2023,
- ¹²⁵ See for example United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, *Switzerland’s information necessary for clarity, transparency and understanding in accordance with decision 1/CP.21 of its updated and enhanced nationally determined contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement (2021–2030)*, 13.
- ¹²⁶ Rajamani et al., “*National ‘fair shares’ in reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the principled framework of international environmental law*,” 983–1004.

- ¹²⁷ A second element of fairness is domestic/internal fairness, to ensure that the poor and marginalized are not being disadvantaged or the higher income and higher emitters are not being privileged, e.g., in accordance with ESJ and just transition principles.
- ¹²⁸ European Scientific Advisory Body on Climate Change, *Scientific advice for the determination of an EU-wide 2040 climate target and a greenhouse gas budget for 2030–2050*, 18.
- ¹²⁹ Providing such – badly needed – advice and support would be a very big task, likely beyond what one would normally expect from a Commission body, thus underlining the need for much greater and well-resourced international support mechanisms to ensure adequate climate and environmental governance at the global level; see, e.g., IV.1, below on proposals for a Global Environment Agency.
- ¹³⁰ Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen and Dahl, “Options for strengthening accountability mechanisms in global environmental governance.”
- ¹³¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹³² Brown and Reicher, “Who will ensure compliance with the Glasgow climate commitments?”
- ¹³³ In this regard, near- and longer term accountability mechanisms can take inspiration from cases such as *Urgenda v. the Netherlands*, [2015] HAZA C/09/00456689 [2015] HAZA C/09/00456689, *Neubauer v. Germany*, *undesverfassungsgericht* [BVerfG] [Federal Constitutional Court], Mar. 24, 2021, Case No. BvR 2656/18/1, BvR 78/20/1, BvR 96/20/1, BvR 288/20 and *Leghari v. Pakistan* (2015) W.P. No. 25501/201, all of which imposed varying obligations on States to reduce emissions and/or implement relevant climate legislation. In the cases of *Urgenda* and *Neubauer v. Germany*, these decisions were partially based on human rights law principles. These cases help fill the enforcement gap in the Paris Agreement and should be built upon in future independent international evaluation bodies as well as international climate jurisprudence. See generally Wewerinke-Singh, “The State of the Netherlands v Urgenda Foundation: Distilling best practice and lessons learnt for future rights-based climate litigation,” 275–283.
- ¹³⁴ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. *A breakthrough for people and planet: Effective and inclusive global governance for today and the future*, 54–60.
- ¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, 55. The HLAB notes: “Indeed, we recognize the significant efforts across the three pillars of the United Nations to enhance our collective knowledge of the empirical links between climate change and our collective security.”
- ¹³⁶ Climate Emergency Declaration. “Climate emergency declarations in 2,349 jurisdictions and local governments cover 1 billion citizens.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹³⁷ United Nations, “Secretary-General warns of climate emergency, calling intergovernmental panel’s report ‘a file of shame’, while saying leaders ‘are lying’, fuelling flames.”
- ¹³⁸ Club of Rome, “Planetary Emergency Plan.”
- ¹³⁹ Drawing, for example, from the United Nations Environment Programme discussion of the Climate Emergency see: United Nations Environment Programme, “The Climate Emergency.” See also United Nations Environment Programme, “The UN Environment Programme and nature-based solutions.” and the United Nations, “Ambitious action key to resolving triple planetary crisis of climate disruption, nature loss, and pollution.”
- ¹⁴⁰ United Nations, *Our common agenda policy brief 2: Strengthening the international response to complex global shocks—an emergency platform*.”
- ¹⁴¹ Persson et al., *Outside the safe operating space of the for novel entities*, 1510–1521.
- ¹⁴² For more on the proposal to add a sunset clause for any Emergency Platform launched, see Hoffman, “The United Nations Emergency Platform,” [Working Paper].
- ¹⁴³ Climate Champions, *Breakthrough Agenda*. See also United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, “Race to Zero”, Accessed November 13, 2023. Moreover, the Platform could take some of its design features from existing initiatives such as the Coalition for Disaster Resilient Infrastructure (CDRI) and the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) International Platform on Earthquake Early Warning System, and have a mandate which is data-driven and provides monitoring using multiple datasets aggregated by charitable and humanitarian charters, while ensuring poly-crises preparedness and response through national and international agencies and governments.
- ¹⁴⁴ United Nations, *Our common agenda policy brief 2: Strengthening the international response to complex global shocks—an emergency platform*.
- ¹⁴⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁴⁶ Mahon and McBride, “Standardizing and disseminating knowledge: The role of the OECD in global governance,” 83–101.

- ¹⁴⁷ Kostakos and, Harris, *A Global Resilience Council as a “UN Security Council for Human Security Issues like Climate and Pandemics*. The link to the FOGGS web page dedicated to the Global Resilience Council proposal is the following: Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability. “*Global Resilience Council*.” Accessed October 31, 2023. See also recent overview article available here: Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability, “*An Enhanced Role for the UN in Peace and Human Security*,” 40–41.
- ¹⁴⁸ Burke, “*Climate change: A threat to international peace and security*.” See also Nevitt, “*Climate change: A threat to international peace & security?*”; Nevitt, “*Is climate change a threat to international peace and security?*” 527–579.
- ^{and} United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, “*Addressing the impact of climate change on peace and security*.” Accessed October 31, 2023.
- ¹⁴⁹ United Nations Security Council, “*The UN Security Council and climate change: Tracking the agenda after the 2021 veto*.”
- ¹⁵⁰ United Nations Security Council, “*Climate Change ‘Biggest Threat Modern Humans Have Ever Faced’, World-Renowned Naturalist Tells Security Council, Calls for Greater Global Cooperation*.”
- ¹⁵¹ World Health Organisation, “*Climate Change*,” 1.
- ¹⁵² United Nations Security Council, *S/2021/990*.
- ¹⁵³ United Nations Security Council, “*The UN Security Council and climate change: Tracking the agenda after the 2021 veto*.” See also United Nations Security Council, “*Security Council fails to adopt resolution integrating climate-related security risk into conflict-prevention strategies*.”
- ¹⁵⁴ See, e.g., Just Security, “*The U.N. General Assembly’s veto initiative turns one_ Is it working?*” and Barber, “*What can the UN General Assembly do about Russian Aggression in Ukraine?*”
- ¹⁵⁵ Human Security for All, “*Human Security for All*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹⁵⁶ United Nations General Assembly, “*A/RES/66/290*,” 2012.
- ¹⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁵⁸ United Nations Development Programme, *Human development report 1994*.
- ¹⁵⁹ Ibid.
- ¹⁶⁰ Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, *Climate change 2022: Mitigation of climate change*.
- ¹⁶¹ Simeonova, *Knowledge sharing and learning through a global climate policy clearinghouse: Options and opportunities*.
- ¹⁶² Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, “*OECD Climate Change and Environment Database*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹⁶³ Climate Policy Database, “*Climate Policy Database*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹⁶⁴ London School of Economics, “*Grantham Research Institute on Climate Change and the Environment*.” Accessed November 7, 2023.
- ¹⁶⁵ Climate Policy Database, “*Climate Policy Database*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹⁶⁶ International Climate Councils Network, “*Climate Councils Network*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹⁶⁷ Simeonova, *Knowledge sharing and learning through a global climate policy clearinghouse: Options and opportunities*.
- ¹⁶⁸ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *Sustainable development knowledge platform, concept note*.
- ¹⁶⁹ Collins, “*Level 5 Leadership: The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve*.” in “*On Leadership*.” Harvard Business Review Press, 115–136.
- ¹⁷⁰ Friedrich, Johannes. et al, “*This interactive chart shows changes in the World’s top 10 emitters*.” See also ClimateTrade, “*Which countries are the World’s biggest carbon polluters?*” and Statista, “*Distribution of carbon dioxide emissions worldwide in 2021, by select country*.”
- ¹⁷¹ See generally United Nations, “*History of the United Nations*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹⁷² Bordo, Michael D, “*The Bretton Woods international monetary system: A historical overview*,” in *A retrospective on the Bretton Woods system: Lessons for international monetary reform*, 3–108. See also De Long et al., “*The Marshall Plan: History’s most successful structural adjustment program*.”
- ¹⁷³ Friedrich, Johannes. et al, “*This interactive chart shows changes in the World’s top 10 emitters*.”
- ¹⁷⁴ It is critical to highlight in such a bargain that India is at a very different development scale and path, compared to the US, EU and China. Though India’s 2070 net-zero target is two decades later than the US and EU and a decade later than China, it would still emit 59 per cent less than China, 58 per cent less than the US and 49 per cent less than the EU cumulatively (1850–2100). Between 2020 and 2030, the US, the EU and China would consume 45 per cent—and by 2050, 91 per cent—of the 1.5 °C carbon space. If all four were to be scaled similarly, then we must call on the other three to bring ahead their net-zero targets by a decade. The latter would save 28.5% of the global carbon budget to stay below 1.5 °C. See: Ankur and Vaibhav, *The Carbon Space Implications of Net Negative Targets*, and Ghosh, “*Can India Become a Green Superpower?*”

- ¹⁷⁵ Euronews Green, [“G7’s new Climate Club promises to promote ‘socially just’ transition to net zero.”](#) See also European Council, [“G7 leaders’ statement,”](#) and Government of Germany, [“Terms of reference for the Climate Club.”](#)
- ¹⁷⁶ Gross, [“Why are Fossil Fuels so Hard to Quit.”](#) See also Marchant, [“This is how climate change could impact the global economy.”](#)
- ¹⁷⁷ Costello et al., [Managing the health effects of climate change](#), 1693–1733. See also Steffen et al., [The trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration](#), 81–98.
- ¹⁷⁸ Oil Change International, [“Big oil reality check 2023—An assessment of Eni’s and Equinor’s climate plans.”](#) Further, climate strategies which rely on carbon offsetting by means of unproven technologies while prolonging the lifetime of fossil fuel assets are in conflict with scientific consensus on the urgent need to phase out production, rather than merely offsetting the emissions.
- ¹⁷⁹ Fossil Fuel Registry, [“Global Registry of Fossil Fuels.”](#)
- ¹⁸⁰ Global Energy Monitor, [“About Global Energy Monitor.”](#)
- ¹⁸¹ Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance, [“About BOGA.”](#)
- ¹⁸² Powering Past Coal Alliance, [“The End of Coal is in Sight.”](#) Accessed November 7, 2023.
- ¹⁸³ Clean Energy Transition Partnership, [“About the CETP.”](#) Accessed October 31, 2023.
- ¹⁸⁴ Fossil-Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty, [“Fossil Fuel Treaty.”](#) Accessed October 31, 2023.
- ¹⁸⁵ See the action pathways set out in: Exponential Roadmap Initiative, [The 1.5°C Business Playbook](#).
- ¹⁸⁶ Climate Champions, [“Race to Zero.”](#) Accessed November 5, 2023.
- ¹⁸⁷ United Nations, [High-Level Expert Group on the Net Zero Emissions Commitments of Non-State Entities](#).
- ¹⁸⁸ European Commission, [“Corporate Sustainability Reporting Directive.”](#) 2023.
- ¹⁸⁹ Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs. Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs, [“The Corporate Climate Action Transparency Index \(CATI\).”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ¹⁹⁰ Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs, [“Global business accountability map.”](#) Accessed October 31, 2023.
- ¹⁹¹ See Carbon Disclosure Project, [“Carbon Disclosure Project.”](#) Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ¹⁹² Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs, [CATI evaluation report: Building global corporate accountability](#).
- ¹⁹³ Obura, [Responding to Earth system risk in the global multilateral system](#), 12.
- ¹⁹⁴ Armstrong McKay et al., [Exceeding 1.5°C global warming could trigger multiple climate tipping points](#), 797-818.
- ¹⁹⁵ See pioneering thinking in this respect, by: Biermann, [“Earth system governance’ as a crosscutting theme of global change research,”](#) 126–137.
- ¹⁹⁶ Obura, [Responding to Earth system risk in the global multilateral system](#), 12.
- ¹⁹⁷ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁸ Ibid.
- ¹⁹⁹ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁰ Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services, [Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Pandemics of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services](#).
- ²⁰¹ Portner et al., [IPBES-IPCC Co-Sponsored Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Climate Change](#).
- ²⁰² Obura, [Responding to Earth system risk in the global multilateral system](#), 12.
- ²⁰³ Ibid, 13.
- ²⁰⁴ Ibid, 14.
- ²⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ²⁰⁶ Ibid, 12.
- ²⁰⁷ Kofi Annan Foundation, [“On the three pillars for a fairer, more peaceful world.”](#) See also United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#).
- ²⁰⁸ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, [A breakthrough for people and planet: Effective and inclusive global governance for today and the future](#).
- ²⁰⁹ Ibid.
- ²¹⁰ Ibid.
- ²¹¹ Ibid. The UN HLAB on Effective Multilateralism also recommends a “global public investment” approach (see III.6, below) to the governance of international public finance, where organisations such as UNEP and UNEA could provide ongoing advice to more democratically constituted governance arrangements overseeing the prioritisation and allocation of public funding to climate and ecological finance.
- ²¹² Ibid.
- ²¹³ Ibid.
- ²¹⁴ Ibid.
- ²¹⁵ United Nations, [Our common agenda policy brief 2: Strengthening the international response to complex global shocks—an emergency platform](#), 4.

- ²¹⁶ See Ombudspersons for Future Generations, [“Bringing Intergenerational Justice into the Heart of Policymaking.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ²¹⁷ United Nations, [Our common agenda policy brief 2: Strengthening the international response to complex global shocks—an emergency platform.](#)
- ²¹⁸ Ibid.
- ²¹⁹ Parliament of the World’s Religions, [“Repurposing the Trusteeship Council.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ²²⁰ See remarks of Mia Mottley at Power Our Planet: Live in Paris, Global Citizen, [“PM Mia Mottley & World Bank’s Ajay Banga on Climate Promises,”](#) 2:12-2:40. See also Global Citizen, [“8 Mic Drop Moments From Prime Minister of Barbados Mia Mottley.”](#)
- ²²¹ United Nations. [“United Nations Secretary-General’s SDG Stimulus to deliver agenda,”](#) 1.
- ²²² United Nations, Conference on Trade and Development, [World Investment Report.](#)
- ²²³ United Nations, Environment Programme, [Adaptation Gap Report.](#)
- ²²⁴ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, [“Transitional Committee on Loss and Damage Makes Progress at Third Meeting.”](#) See also Rowling, [“Tensions Soar over new fund for climate loss and damage ahead of COP 28.”](#)
- ²²⁵ United Nations, [United Nations Secretary-General’s SDG Stimulus to deliver agenda 2030,](#) 11.
- ²²⁶ United Nations, [“New global deal that shares power, resources would be crucial in building just, sustainable future, Secretary-General tells World Summit for Social Development.”](#)
- ²²⁷ Dixon-Declevé, Sandrine., et al, [Earth for all: A survival guide for humanity: A report to the Club of Rome \(2022\), fifty years after the limits of growth \(1972\),](#) 8. See also Ghosh and Harihar, [Coordinating global risk mitigation for exponential climate finance.](#)
- ²²⁸ Expert Working Group on Global Public Investment, [Building a better system: Making global public investment a reality.](#)
- ²²⁹ Lopez-Claros, [Financing instruments for climate change mitigation and adaptation,](#) 4.
- ²³⁰ Piketty and Reid-Henry, Simon, [“GPI and a Global Wealth Tax”](#), in Global Public Investment Network, [Time for Global Public Investment: Leaders and experts rethink sustainable development finance,](#) 28-29.
- ²³¹ Parry et al., [Fossil Fuel Subsidies Surged to Record \\$7 Trillion.](#)
- ²³² Lopez-Claros, [Financing instruments for climate change mitigation and adaptation,](#) 4.
- ²³³ Mager, Franziska, [“Launching the Tax Justice Network’s New Climate Initiative.”](#) See also Mager, Franziska, and Sergio, Hernandez-Chaparro, [Delivering Climate Justice using the Principles of Tax Justice.](#)
- ²³⁴ International Monetary Fund, [Fiscal Monitor: How to Mitigate Climate Change.](#) See also Lopez-Claros, [Financing instruments for climate change mitigation and adaptation,](#) 4.
- ²³⁵ European Commission, [“Carbon border adjustment mechanism.”](#) See also European Parliament. [“Regulation \(EU\) 2023/956 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 establishing a carbon border adjustment mechanism.”](#)
- ²³⁶ Brown, [“How do we raise trillions of dollars to fight the climate crisis? The answer is staring us in the face.”](#)
- ²³⁷ Lopez-Claros, [Financing instruments for climate change mitigation and adaptation,](#) 4.
- ²³⁸ Ibid.
- ²³⁹ Kumarm, Nagesh, [Reviving the International Financial Transactions Tax.](#)
- ²⁴⁰ Lopez-Claros, [Financing instruments for climate change mitigation and adaptation,](#) 4.
- ²⁴¹ Thomas, [“136 countries have agreed to a global minimum tax rate. Here’s what it means.”](#)
- ²⁴² Planelles, Manuel, [“Report proposes tax on the ultra-rich to finance a global climate fund.”](#)
- ²⁴³ Dixon-Decleve, [“The Club of Rome’s plan for systems change and a just solar revolution.”](#) See also [Earth for All: A Survival Guide for Humanity,](#) 77, citing work by economists Michael Doyle and Joseph Stiglitz: this would be deemed a tolerable level of inequality, after which “social and health problems get much more severe and there is less social cohesion, making it more difficult for governments to make long-term decisions.”
- ²⁴⁴ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, [A Breakthrough for People and Planet,](#) 38, recommending fairer and more equitable tax systems.
- ²⁴⁵ Zucman, [“ICRICT’s study of asset ownership information available in the UK: a stepping stone toward a Global Asset Registry.”](#) See also Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation, [Roadmap for a Global Asset Registry.](#)
- ²⁴⁶ Ryding, [“Proposal for a United Nations Convention on Tax.”](#) See also Norwegian Academy of International Law. [A UN Tax Convention?](#) September 2022 and Cobham, [“UN resolution for an intergovernmental tax framework: What does it mean, and what’s next?”](#)
- ²⁴⁷ The Global Peace Dividend Initiative, [“Peace Dividend.”](#) Accessed October 31, 2023.

- ²⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁴⁹ See discussion in, e.g., Lopez-Claros, et al., “Strengthening the international rule of law,” in Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st Century, 208-235.
- ²⁵⁰ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, “Escalating debt challenges are inhibiting achievement of the SDGs.”
- ²⁵¹ E.g., by not making specific connections with climate investment and falling short in including middle income countries which are amongst the most highly indebted. Ramos et al., Debt Relief for a Green and Inclusive Recovery: Guaranteeing Sustainable Development.
- ²⁵² Steele and Sejal, Tackling the triple crisis: Using debt swaps to address debt, climate and nature loss post-COVID-19, 4.
- ²⁵³ Ibid.
- ²⁵⁴ Ramos et al., “Debt Relief for a Green and Inclusive Recovery: Guaranteeing Sustainable Development. See also United Nations, United Nations Secretary-General’s SDG Stimulus to deliver agenda 2030.
- ²⁵⁵ Expert Working Group on Global Public Investment, Recommendations of the Expert Working Group on Global Public Investment Launch.
- ²⁵⁶ Masterson, “The Bridgetown Initiative: Here’s everything you need to know.” See also Steele and Sejal, “Tackling the triple crisis: Using debt swaps to address debt, climate and nature loss post-COVID-19,” 12.
- ²⁵⁷ Farand, “Mia Mottley builds global coalition to make financial system fit for climate action.”
- ²⁵⁸ Ibid.
- ²⁵⁹ United Nations, United Nations Secretary-General’s SDG Stimulus to deliver agenda 2030, 10.
- ²⁶⁰ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, A Breakthrough for People and Planet, 34.
- ²⁶¹ Ghosh and Harihar, Coordinating global risk mitigation for exponential climate finance, 3.
- ²⁶² United Nations. United Nations Secretary-General’s SDG Stimulus to deliver agenda 2030, 10–11.
- ²⁶³ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, A Breakthrough for People and Planet, 32.
- ²⁶⁴ Ehlers et al., Here’s how to scale up private climate finance in emerging economies.
- ²⁶⁵ International Monetary Fund, Scaling up private climate finance in emerging market and developing economies: Challenges and opportunities.
- ²⁶⁶ Ghosh and Hahrihar, Coordinating global risk mitigation for exponential climate finance, 4–16.
- ²⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ²⁶⁸ Lee et al., “MDBs Could Do More to Build Markets Just By Releasing More Data.”
- ²⁶⁹ Alexander et al., Financing the sustainable urban future: Scoping a green cities development bank, 552. See also United Nations-Habitat, World Cities Report 2022: Envisioning the Future of Cities, 310.
- ²⁷⁰ See, e.g., Platform on Global Security, Justice and Governance Innovation, Top Ten Reform Proposals.
- ²⁷¹ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, A breakthrough for people and planet: Effective and inclusive global governance for today and the future, 25.
- ²⁷² Ibid.
- ²⁷³ World Health Organisation, “mRNA Vaccine Technology Transfer Hub.” Accessed November 6, 2023.
- ²⁷⁴ United Nations, “General Assembly adopts resolution requesting International Court of Justice provide advisory opinion on states’ obligations concerning climate change,” 3.
- ²⁷⁵ Rocha, “The advisory jurisdiction of the ITLOS in the request submitted by the Commission of Small Island States.”
- ²⁷⁶ See, e.g.: Ecocide Law, “Ecocide law.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ²⁷⁷ United Nations, “UN General Assembly declares access to clean and healthy environment a universal human right.”
- ²⁷⁸ United Nations, “The right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment - what does it mean for States, for rights-holders and for nature?”
- ²⁷⁹ Global Pact for the Environment, “The Pact Explained in 3 Minutes.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ²⁸⁰ Ibid.
- ²⁸¹ The Earth Charter. “Earth Charter” Accessed October 28, 2023.
- ²⁸² Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature, “Universal Declaration for the Rights of Mother Earth.”
- ²⁸³ Global Alliance for the Rights of Nature, “GARN.” Accessed October 28, 2023.
- ²⁸⁴ For example, building on the Aarhus Convention and the Escazú Agreement See United Nations Economic Commission for Europe., “Aarhus Convention.” Accessed October 30, 2023 and United Nations, “Escazú Agreement.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ²⁸⁵ Global Pact for the Environment, “The Pact Explained in 3 Minutes.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ²⁸⁶ Strauss, “Cutting the Gordian Knot: How and why the United Nations should vest the International Court of Justice with referral jurisdiction,” 604–658.

- ²⁸⁷ International Court of Justice, “Chambers and Committees.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ²⁸⁸ See the Declaration endorsed by 33 States calling for universal acceptance of ICJ jurisdiction. International Court of Justice. “Declaration on Promoting the Jurisdiction of the International Court.”
- ²⁸⁹ Many human rights, peace and international relations treaties include provisions for any State Party to unilaterally refer a dispute under the treaty to the ICJ. However, the general practice to-date for environmental treaties is to restrict ICJ jurisdiction only to disputes where all Parties to the dispute consent to such jurisdiction. See List of treaties or conventions conferring jurisdiction on the Court International Court of Justice, “Treaties.”
- ²⁹⁰ Chambers, *Reforming international environmental governance: From institutional limits to innovative reforms*, 154.
- ²⁹¹ Four UN Organs, fifteen UN Specialized Agencies and one related organisation are currently granted authority to request advisory opinions. See International Court of Justice. “Organs and Agencies Authorized to Request Advisory Opinions.” Accessed November 3, 2023.
- ²⁹² Strauss, “Cutting the Gordian Knot: How and why the United Nations should vest the International Court of Justice with referral jurisdiction.” 604–658.
- ²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 626. The permanent members of the Security Council would not possess authority to unilaterally block or delay such referral cases, because doing so would require an affirmative resolution, and a veto can only block a resolution, not create one.
- ²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 637, 646.
- ²⁹⁵ United Nations, *Our common agenda: Report of the Secretary-General.*
- ²⁹⁶ United Nations, *Shaping Our Future Together: Listening to People’s Priorities for the Future and Their Ideas for Action. Concluding Report of the UN75 Office*, 65.
- ²⁹⁷ Democracy Without Borders, *A UNITED NATIONS PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY.*
- ²⁹⁸ Together First, *The Case for a UN Civil Society Champion.*
- ²⁹⁹ We the People’s, “A Voice for Global Citizens: a UN World Citizens’ Initiative.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³⁰⁰ See, e.g., We The Peoples. “We the Peoples Campaign: Call for inclusive global governance.” Accessed October, 30, 2023.
- ³⁰¹ See Stop Ecocide Foundation, “Making Ecocide a Crime”. See also Stoett, “Unearthing Under-Governed Territory: Transnational Environmental Crime.” *Just Security in an Undergoverned World*, 238–261.
- ³⁰² High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, *A breakthrough for people and planet: Effective and inclusive global governance for today and the future*, 26.
- ³⁰³ *Ibid.*
- ³⁰⁴ See generally United Nations Human Rights Council, “Special Procedures.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³⁰⁵ Organisation for Economic Co-Operations and Development, *OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises.*
- ³⁰⁶ United Nations General Assembly, “Text of the third revised draft legally binding instrument with textual proposals submitted by states during the seventh and the eighth sessions of the open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights A/HRC/52/41/Add.1.”
- ³⁰⁷ United Nations General Assembly, “A/RES/76/300.”
- ³⁰⁸ Türk, “We need an International Anti-Corruption Court.”
- ³⁰⁹ Lynch and Groff, “Taking the Climate Crisis Seriously Requires Ambitious Anti-Corruption Solutions.”
- ³¹⁰ European Commission, *Carbon border adjustment mechanism.*
- ³¹¹ See generally proposals from the Council on Energy, Environment, and Water, “International Cooperation.” Accessed November 7, 2023.
- ³¹² Lim et al., “Pitfalls of the EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.” 7303-7321.
- ³¹³ Busch et al., “China and the European Union’s carbon border adjustment mechanism: Cultivating mutual benefits for the EU and China Institute for Finance and Sustainability.”
- ³¹⁴ Parry et al., *Proposal for an International Carbon Price Floor Among Large Emitters.* See also for example the carbon pricing system in Canada, where the government has pledged to make it “revenue neutral” by returning all revenues raised by the tax to citizens, equally: Government of Canada, “A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy.”
- ³¹⁵ Keane et al., *Aligning climate finance and Aid for Trade: a new agenda for LDC negotiators*, 400.
- ³¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³¹⁷ Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, *Pacific aid for trade strategy (PAFTS) 2020–2025.*
- ³¹⁸ World Trade Organisation, *World trade report 2022: Climate change and international trade*, 26–47.
- ³¹⁹ G7 Germany, “Terms of reference for the Climate Club.”

- ³²⁰ Barrett, “Climate Change and International Trade: Lessons on their Linkage from International Environmental Agreements Thinking Ahead on International Trade (TAIT).”
- ³²¹ Peterson Institute for International Economics, *How carbon tariffs and climate clubs can slow global warming*.
- ³²² Ibid.
- ³²³ Cirone and Johannes, “Trade sanctions in international environmental policy: Detering or encouraging free riding,” 309–334.
- ³²⁴ G7 Germany, “Terms of reference for the Climate Club.”
- ³²⁵ Aleksandrova, Mariya., et al., “The role of the G7 in strengthening the global landscape of climate finance for adaptation and loss and damage.”
- ³²⁶ Trade Justice Education Fund and Sierra Club, “FAQ: Climate Peace Clause.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³²⁷ World Trade Organisation, “Members discuss possible TESSD outcomes for delivery at MC13.”
- ³²⁸ Oeschger and Balino,, “Trade and sustainability discussions at WTO approaching next milestone.”
- ³²⁹ United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, *Netherlands model investment agreement*.
- ³³⁰ Brauch, “Reforming international investment law for climate change goals,” 25.
- ³³¹ Ibid.
- ³³² Ipp, “Regime interaction in investment arbitration: Climate law, international investment law and arbitration.”
- ³³³ Dooley, “The co-existence of mitigation and international investment law: A practical assessment of climate change action under less “green-friendly” investment agreements,” 849–886.
- ³³⁴ African Union, *Pan African Investment Code (PAIC)*.”
- ³³⁵ Farnelli, “Investors as environmental guardians? On climate change policy objectives and compliance with investment agreements.”
- ³³⁶ B Corporation, “What’s the difference between a Certified B Corp and a benefit corporation?.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ³³⁷ Exponential Roadmap Initiative, *1.5°C Business Playbook*.
- ³³⁸ Gelles, “Billionaire no More.”
- ³³⁹ Government of Japan, “PM Kishida’s Speech on the New Form of Capitalism and Why Japan Is a “Buy.”
- ³⁴⁰ Montgomery, and Van Clieaf, *Net Zero Business Models*.
- ³⁴¹ Freakonomics, “Is Economic Growth the Wrong Goal.”
- ³⁴² Business Roundtable, *Statement on the Purpose of a Corporation*.
- ³⁴³ B Corporation, “What’s the difference between a Certified B Corp and a benefit corporation?.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ³⁴⁴ Ibid.
- ³⁴⁵ Sir Ronald Cohen, “Sir Ronalds Philosophy.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ³⁴⁶ Wilson, “The Imperative for Impact: The Global Context.”
- ³⁴⁷ Allen, Christopher, “How the World Economic Forum’s ESG Metrics Align with Other Frameworks (SASB, GRI).”
- ³⁴⁸ International Sustainability Standards Board, “International Sustainability Standards Board.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ³⁴⁹ Ibid. The IFRS Foundation is a not-for-profit, public interest organisation established to develop high-quality, understandable, enforceable and globally accepted accounting and sustainability disclosure standards.
- ³⁵⁰ B Lab, “Benefit Corporations.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ³⁵¹ Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, *Social Impact Investment*.
- ³⁵² Impact Linked Finance Fund, “About Impact Linked Finance Fund.” Accessed October 31, 2023.
- ³⁵³ Global Impact Investment Network, *2020 Annual Impact Investor Survey*.
- ³⁵⁴ Toplensky, “Global Executives Say Greenwashing Remains Rife.”
- ³⁵⁵ The Second Dolomite Conference On The Global Governance Of Climate Change, “Group 1: Beyond Esg: Measure Less And Measure Better? Which Are The Mechanisms For Steering Private Investments Toward Sustainability?”
- ³⁵⁶ Ibid.
- ³⁵⁷ Ibid.
- ³⁵⁸ International Foundation of Valuing Impacts, “Conceptual Accounting Methodology.” Accessed October 31, 2023. See also Global Steering Group, *GSG Strategic Focus*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³⁵⁹ Harvard Business School, “Impact Weighted Accounts.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³⁶⁰ Exponential Road Map, *1.5C Business Playbook*.
- ³⁶¹ The Good Lobby, “The Good Lobby.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³⁶² Erb Institute, “Corporate Political Responsibility Task Force.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ³⁶³ Stimson Center, *Responsibility Chains*.
- ³⁶⁴ Ibid.

³⁶⁵ Greenhouse Gas Protocol, [Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories An Accounting and Reporting Standard for Cities Version 1.1 Z.](#)

³⁶⁶ Simon, “[What Cities Can Teach Countries About Tackling Climate Change.](#)”

³⁶⁷ C40, “[Reinventing Cities Initiatives.](#)” Accessed October 30, 2023.

³⁶⁸ The Earthna Summit 2023 launched the policy brief: Simon, “[Urban climate change governance and hot and arid zones: mutual learning and partnerships to build sustainable resilience solutions.](#)”

³⁶⁹ Simon, “[Urban climate change governance and hot and arid zones: mutual learning and partnerships to build sustainable resilience solutions.](#)”

IV. Building out Planetary Governance: Next-Generation Working Proposals

³⁷⁰ E.g., as has been proposed by a range of stakeholder/civil society groups; Civil Society Pact, “[Civil Society Pact, Summit of the Future.](#)” Accessed October 30, 2023.

³⁷¹ I.e., analogous to parliaments at the national level. See UN Parliamentary Assembly (UNPA) proposal, III.7, above.

³⁷² Alternatively referred to as a World Environmental Organisation (WEO) or Global Environment Organisation (GEO).

³⁷³ Prestigiacomo and Michuki, “[Why we need a world environment organisation.](#)”

³⁷⁴ A world parliamentary body, evolved from the UN parliamentary Assembly proposed in III.7 above, could assist in providing or supplementing (i) the deliberative and legislative functions, (ii) an integrated approach to global governance of related issues (including justice, social and economic development, peace and security), and (iii) accountability of the GEA to the people (the trust function).

³⁷⁵ Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen and Dahl, [Toward a Global Environment Agency: Effective governance for shared ecological risk](#), 4.

³⁷⁶ Ibid.

³⁷⁷ Ibid.

³⁷⁸ Biermann, “[Reforming global environmental governance: From UNEP toward a World Environment Organization.](#)” 105.

³⁷⁹ Ibid, 108.

³⁸⁰ Ibid, 107.

³⁸¹ Obura, [Responding to Earth system risk in the global multilateral system.](#)

³⁸² Koivurova, “[International legal avenues to address the plight of victims of climate change: Problems and prospect.](#)” 296.

³⁸³ Hockman KC, Stephen, “[The case for an International Court for the Environment](#), 223.

³⁸⁴ Ibid.

³⁸⁵ Ibid.

³⁸⁶ Chambers and Green, [Reforming international environmental governance: From institutional limits to innovative reforms](#), 9.

³⁸⁷ Ibid

³⁸⁸ Ibid, 161–162.

³⁸⁹ Ibid, 168.

³⁹⁰ Lehmen, “[The case for the creation of an International Environmental Court: Non-state actors and international environmental dispute resolution](#), 195.

³⁹¹ Ibid, 202.

³⁹² Ibid, 192.

³⁹³ Kotzé et al., “[Earth system law: Exploring new frontiers in legal science](#),” 1–9.

³⁹⁴ Ibid.

³⁹⁵ Dubois et al., [White paper 02: Anthropocene](#), 52–53; citing Rakhyn, “[Transnational sustainability law—Whither international environmental law?](#)” 405–408.

³⁹⁶ Dubois et al., [White paper 02: Anthropocene](#), 63–66.

³⁹⁷ Ibid, 44, 61, 72, and 77.

³⁹⁸ Magalhães, “[Common Home of Humanity: White paper.](#)”

³⁹⁹ The Planetary Press, “[Interview: A legal framework for protecting the biosphere and living sustainably—A MAHB dialogue with Paulo Magalhães, founder of Common Home for Humanity.](#)”

⁴⁰⁰ Ibid.

⁴⁰¹ Ibid.

⁴⁰² Ibid. See also United Nations. “[Our common agenda: Report of the Secretary-General](#),” 45 on the repurposing of the Trusteeship Council.

⁴⁰³ E.g., see: Summers and Singh, “[The Multilateral Development Banks the World Needs.](#)” See also United Nations. “[With clock ticking for the SDGs, UN Chief and Barbados Prime Minister call for urgent action to transform broken global financial system.](#)”; Gallagher et al., “[Reforming Bretton Woods institutions to achieve climate change and development goals](#), 1291–1303 and United Nations, “[UN Secretary-General calls for radical transformation of global financial system to tackle pressing global challenges.](#)”

- ⁴⁰⁴ Gallagher and Kozul-Wright, *The case for a new Bretton Woods*.
- ⁴⁰⁵ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰⁶ Ibid.
- ⁴⁰⁷ United Nations, *High-Level Expert Group on the Net Zero Emissions Commitments of Non-State Entities. Integrity matters: Net zero commitments by businesses, financial institutions, cities and regions*.
- ⁴⁰⁸ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism,, *A breakthrough for people and planet: Effective and inclusive global governance for today and the future*, 25.
- ⁴⁰⁹ Summers and Singh, *“The Multilateral Development Banks the World Needs.”*
- ⁴¹⁰ Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research, *“Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.”* Accessed October 29, 2023. See also United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. *Technology and Innovation Report*, 127.
- ⁴¹¹ Medhora, Rohitnton, *“The Failure of Global Cooperation in a Time of Crisis.”*
- ⁴¹² Global Public Investment, *“Expert Working Group on Global Public Investment,”* Accessed November 7, 2023.
- ⁴¹³ Norwegian Expert Group, *Investing in a Common Future*.
- ⁴¹⁴ High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism, *A breakthrough for people and planet: Effective and inclusive global governance for today and the future*, 46-53.
- ⁴¹⁵ Ibid, 48.
- ⁴¹⁶ United Nations Charter Article 109(3).
- ⁴¹⁷ Lopez-Claros et al, *“UN Executive Council: Beyond an outdated paradigm,”* in *Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st Century*, 131-144.
- ⁴¹⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴¹⁹ Groff, *“Revitalizing International Law: Making the Multilateral System Fit for the Future.”*
- ⁴²⁰ Lopez-Claros et al., *“Strengthening the international rule of law,”* in *“Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st Century*, 208–235.
- ⁴²¹ Clark and Sohn, *World peace through world law: Two alternative plans*, 336.
- ⁴²² Subedi, *The effectiveness of the UN human rights system: Reform and the judicialisation of human rights*. See also Trechsel, *“A World Court for Human Rights.”*
- ⁴²³ Lopez-Claros et al., *“Strengthening the international rule of law,”* in *“Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st Century*, 208–235.
- ⁴²⁴ Democracy Without Borders, *“A United Nations Parliamentary Assembly.”* 2020.
- ⁴²⁵ YouGov, *“Global Census. Public Opinions on International Cooperation. Support for a World Parliament.”*
- ⁴²⁶ Lopez-Claros et al., *“Strengthening the international rule of law,”* in *“Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st Century*, 208–235. See also Schwartzberg, *Transforming the United Nations system: Designs for a workable world*.
- ⁴²⁷ Ibid. See also: Eichengreen, *“The Tobin tax: What have we learned?”*, in ul Haq and Grunberg, Isabelle, (eds.) *“The Tobin tax: Coping with financial volatility,”* 273-287.

V. Theories of Change and a Strategy for Climate Governance Innovation

- ⁴²⁸ Ord, *The Precipice: Existential risk and the future of humanity*, 57.
- ⁴²⁹ Ibid, 60.
- ⁴³⁰ See, e.g., Goldtsein et al., *Unlocking “lock-in” and path dependency: A review across disciplines and socio-environmental contexts.*, 161.
- ⁴³¹ Hawkins et al., *“ICAN’s origins.”*
- ⁴³² Reuters, *“Over 95% chance of El Nino conditions from January to March 2024, US forecaster says.”*
- ⁴³³ Buitelaar and Ponzio, *“Mobilizing Smart Coalitions and Negotiating Global Governance Reform.”* 8 In Durch et al., *Just Security in an Ungoverned World*, 463–487. See also Wunderlich, *“Dedicated to the good: Norm entrepreneurs in International Relations’, in Rogue states as norm entrepreneurs: Black sheep or sheep in wolves’ clothing?”* 15-55.
- ⁴³⁴ Wexler, *“The international deployment of shame, second-best responses, and norm entrepreneurship: The campaign to ban landmines and the landmine ban treaty,”* 561–606.
- ⁴³⁵ Pace, *“Reflecting on 25 years of the CICC.”*
- ⁴³⁶ Buitelaar and Ponzio, *“Mobilizing Smart Coalitions and Negotiating Global Governance Reform.”* In Durch et al., *“Just Security in an Ungoverned World*, 463–487. See also Pace, *“Reflecting on 25 years of the CICC.”*
- ⁴³⁷ Vanuatu International Court of Justice Initiative, *“The Republic of Vanuatu succeeded in the adoption of a UNGA Resolution calling for an advisory opinion on climate change from the International Court of Justice.”* Accessed October 29, 2023.
- ⁴³⁸ International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons, *“ICAN.”* Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁴³⁹ Moyes, *International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons Campaigners Kit*, 21.
- ⁴⁴⁰ Tevi, *Policy Forum: Legal Avenues to Fight Climate Change.*

- ⁴⁴¹ Moyes, [International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons Campaigners Kit](#), 20.
- ⁴⁴² Buitelaar and Ponzio, “[Mobilizing Smart Coalitions and Negotiating Global Governance Reform](#).” In Durch et al., “[Just Security in an Ungoverned World](#),” 463–487.
- ⁴⁴³ Edelman, [Edelman Edelman Trust Barometer](#).
- ⁴⁴⁴ The B Team, “[Raising ambition to reach net-zero by 2050](#).” Accessed October 29, 2023. See also Papaioannou, et al., “[Can business change the world?](#)”, and Barzuza et al., “[The Millennial Corporation](#).” Barzuza et al argue that the Millennial generation has moved from shareholder primacy and is affecting the ways in which businesses operate by, among others, exposing managers to higher scrutiny.
- ⁴⁴⁵ Exponential Road Map, [1.5C Business Playbook](#).
- ⁴⁴⁶ Papaioannou, “[Can business change the world?](#)”
- ⁴⁴⁷ The B Team, “[Progress toward net-zero by 2050 challenges, trends and teamwork](#).”
- ⁴⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁴⁹ Papaioannou, “[Can business change the world?](#)” See also Exponential Road Map, [1.5C Business Playbook](#).
- ⁴⁵⁰ Markowitz and Graves, “[After 2020, we need to talk about how we talk about catastrophe](#).”
- ⁴⁵¹ See, e.g.: Influence Map, [Influence Map](#). Accessed November 7, 2023.
- ⁴⁵² See, e.g.: Oreskes, *Merchants of doubt : how a handful of scientists obscured the truth on issues from tobacco smoke to global warming*.
- ⁴⁵³ See remarks of Xiye Bastida at Power Our Planet: Live in Paris, Global Citizen, [Activists Camille Etienne, Xiye Bastida & Elizabeth Wathuti | Power Our Planet: Live in Paris](#),” 2:40-2:50.
- ⁴⁵⁴ Peters et al., [Threatening communication: A critical re-analysis and a revised meta-analytic test of fear appeal theory](#), 3-8.
- ⁴⁵⁵ Bateman, “[How to create a sense of urgency around sustainability and climate action](#).” See also O’Neill et al., “[On the use of imagery for climate change engagement](#),” 413–421.
- ⁴⁵⁶ Marlon et al., “[How hope and doubt affect climate change mobilization](#).” See also Schneider et al., [Positive emotions and climate change](#), 114–120. and Wray, “[Communicate wisely about the crisis](#).” in *Generation dread: Finding purpose in an age of climate crisis*.
- ⁴⁵⁷ For instance the huge popularity of David Attenborough’s documentaries ‘Our Planet’ on Netflix and other broadcasting channels shows the potential impact of the entertainment industry.
- ⁴⁵⁸ Wray, “[Communicate wisely about the crisis](#).” in *Generation dread: Finding purpose in an age of climate crisis*.
- ⁴⁵⁹ Pearson et al., [Race, class, gender and climate change communication](#), 1-38.
- ⁴⁶⁰ Ibid.
- ⁴⁶¹ Ibid.
- ⁴⁶² Coalition for the UN we Need, “[Peoples Pact for the Future](#).”
- ⁴⁶³ Hickman et al., [Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey](#), 863-873. See also Wray, *Generation Dread*.
- ⁴⁶⁴ Qatar News Agency, “[Ministry of Municipality Announces Controls for Single-Use Plastic Bags](#).”
- ⁴⁶⁵ See for example the Schools 2030 Program, “[Schools 2030](#).” Accessed November 1, 2023. The Program equips young people with the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values they need to become contributing and thriving members of their societies. This is achieved through a focus on teacher agency: recognising and amplifying teachers as leaders, innovators, and active agents in education reform, while empowering students and teachers to co-design and implement micro-innovation. See also the panel discussion held on day three of the Schools 2030 Global Forum 2023, which saw Maja Groff (Climate Governance Commission) in conversation with Kevin Frey (United Nations Children’s Fund Generation Unlimited), Won Jung Byun (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation), and Sarah Beardmore (Global Partnership for Education) explore how to best support the role of educators to tackle the climate crisis: Schools 2030. “[Global Forum 2023 in Pictures](#).”
- ⁴⁶⁶ Al Halabi, “[Sustainable Qatar Social Political and Environmental Perspectives](#).” See also Eco-schools, “[About FEE EcoCampus](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁴⁶⁷ Change.org, “[Student activists at Qatar Academy Doha want to ban single-use plastic bags in Qatar!](#)” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- ⁴⁶⁸ Qatar News Agency, “[Ministry of Municipality Announces Controls for Single-Use Plastic Bags](#).”
- ⁴⁶⁹ Duarte Agostinho and Others v. Portugal and 32 Other States 39371/20.
- ⁴⁷⁰ See for example Held v. State CDV-2020-307 (The “Montana Climate Case”).
- ⁴⁷¹ Future Generations v. Ministry of the Environment and Others 11001 22 03 000 2018.

⁴⁷² Arizona State University, "[University Design Clinics for Planetary Health](#)." Accessed October 30, 2023.

⁴⁷³ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁴ Bäckstrand, and Lövbrand, "[The road to Paris: Contending climate governance discourses in the post-Copenhagen era](#)."

⁴⁷⁵ Buitelaar and Ponzio, "[Mobilizing Smart Coalitions and Negotiating Global Governance Reform](#)." In Durch et al., "[Just Security in an Ungoverned World](#), 463–487.

⁴⁷⁶ Club de Madrid, "[Democracy & emergencies: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic for democratic resilience](#)."

⁴⁷⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁷⁸ Ibid.

VI. Toward Effective and Just Earth System Governance

⁴⁷⁹ United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, "[COP 28](#)." Accessed October 30, 2023.

⁴⁸⁰ United Nations General Assembly, "[Resolution A/76/307](#)." September 8, 2022.

⁴⁸¹ United Nations, "[Letter from the President of the General Assembly Co-facilitators of the Summit of the Future Letter—Draft Decision](#)."

⁴⁸² Project Dandelion, "[Letter from Mary Robinson](#)," Accessed November 7, 2023.

⁴⁸³ Buitelaar and Ponzio, "[Mobilizing Smart Coalitions and Negotiating Global Governance Reform](#)," *Just Security in an Ungoverned World*, 463–487.

Annex II: Commission Background and Interim Report

⁴⁸⁴ Unfortunately, this is now a very high ambition, based on current policies and actions (see: Schlosser et al., "[The 1.5°C global warming limit is still within grasp—here's how we can reach it](#)." *World Economic Forum* December 5th, 2022. But, as underlined by the IPCC, 1.5°C in fact represents **a scientific limit** and not a target or aspiration (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, [Climate Change 2023 Current Synthesis Report](#).) If current inaction continues, there will be overshoot of this limit, and we will then have to "draw down" to attempt to re-stabilize the climate/Earth system. Regarding the latter scenario, see, for example, the work of the Climate Overshoot Commission, "[Overshoot Commission](#)." Accessed October 30, 2023.

Annex I: Commissioners of the Climate Governance Commission

Mary Robinson	Lead Chair	Chair of The Elders, Former President of Ireland
María Fernanda Espinosa	Co-Chair	Group of Women Leaders, Executive-Director, Coalition for the UN We Need, 73rd President of the United Nations General Assembly
Johan Rockström	Co-Chair	Director, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research
Adriana Erthal Abdenur	Commissioner	Co-Founder, Plataforma CIPÓ
Bader Al-Dafa	Commissioner	Executive Director, The Global Drylands Alliance, Special Envoy for Climate Change and Sustainability
Xiye Bastida	Commissioner	Co-Founder, Re-Earth Initiative, Climate Activist
Sharan Burrow	Commissioner	General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation, Vice-Chair, European Climate Foundation
Sandrine Dixson-Declève	Commissioner	Co-President, Club of Rome
Arunabha Ghosh	Commissioner	Chief Executive Officer, Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), New Delhi
Thilmeeza Hussain	Commissioner	Permanent Representative of The Maldives to the United Nations
Ma Jun	Commissioner	Director, Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs (IPE), Beijing
Sophia Kianni	Commissioner	Founder and Executive Director of Climate Cardinals, Member UN Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change.
Wanjira Mathai	Commissioner	Managing Director, Africa & Global Partnerships, World Resources Institute (WRI)
Chido Mpemba	Commissioner	Youth Envoy at the African Union Commission, Youngest Diplomat in the African Union Chairperson's Cabinet
Ellen Johnson Sirleaf	Commissioner	Former President of Liberia and an Elder
Nobuo Tanaka	Commissioner	Chair, the Steering Committee of Innovation for Cool Earth Forum (ICEF), Former Executive Director, International Energy Agency (IEA)
Ernesto Zedillo	Commissioner	Former President of Mexico, an Elder, and Director, Yale Center on the Study of Globalization

Annex II: Commission Background and Interim Report

The [Climate Governance Commission](#) aims to address a crucial gap in confronting the global climate emergency by developing, proposing, and building partnerships that promote feasible, high-impact global governance solutions for urgent and effective climate action to limit global temperature rise to 1.5°C or less.⁴⁸⁴ Urgent international efforts must seek to minimize the extent and duration of the probable overshoot of this temperature rise, and prepare for the measures required to return the global climate system to a safe level. A foundational premise of the Commission is that new perspectives on and approaches to global governance—deploying new levels of collective wisdom and ingenuity—will be required to complement ongoing intergovernmental negotiations in order to tackle current existential planetary risks and address the [Triple Planetary Crisis](#) of climate change, pollution, and biodiversity loss within a context of growing poverty and inequality.

Since an initial strategy meeting in Seoul during former UNSG Ban Ki-moon’s Global Green Growth Institute’s (GGGI) Global Green Growth Week in October 2019, the CGC has reached several milestones. In October 2021 in Stockholm, the project released [Governing Our Climate Future: Interim Report of the Climate Governance Commission](#), offering analysis and innovative proposals from a broad range of contributing authors for rethinking international management of the global catastrophic risk of climate change (see a summary, below). The Interim Report drew from ten in-depth research papers prepared by the project’s Phase I technical team on specific innovation proposals, and was presented in more than two dozen promotional activities in Asia, Europe, and North America, including twelve presentations during COP 26 in Glasgow. In 2022 and early 2023, the Commission transitioned to its second phase, expanding institutional partners and hosting or contributing to diverse events, expert meetings, and policy dialogues in New York during the UN General Assembly (UNGA)/Climate week, at COP 27, and in various regions and nations, including Brazil/Latin America, Morocco/North Africa and MENA generally, North America, and Europe.

The [2021 Interim Report of the Climate Governance Commission](#), working with such action- and solutions- focused partners as the [ERI](#), focused on the gravity of our predicament, but also the positive vision, solutions, and governance perspectives vital to move our collective climate action forward. It identified three interrelated global climate action gaps. **The climate solution-action gap:** Existing, well-known, and viable technological, economic, and social solutions that would keep the world on track to meet Paris Agreement targets are currently not being applied and executed at the speed and scale required. **The climate policy gap:** To bridge the climate solution-action gap, there is need for strong leadership and adequate policies to align the incentives of individuals, businesses, and nations with global climate goals. Such policies exist and have been on the agenda for many years—for example carbon pricing and the removal of fossil fuel subsidies—but are not put into effect quickly and widely enough, nor are they being sufficiently scaled up and diffused globally in a systematic fashion. **The climate governance gap:** To bridge the climate policy gap and ensure effective climate policies at a global scale, purposeful and functional governance mechanisms at a global level are urgently needed. Currently, existing governance structures are not up to the task (see Box 7.1, below).

In early 2023, the Commission formally entered its “High-Level Phase” (Phase II), continuing and refining its substantive work together with invited diverse Commissioners (see Annex I), composed of former world leaders, public intellectuals, and youth and civil society leaders, each contributing to the Commission’s analysis and global governance innovation policy messages.

Four objectives of the Commission’s current High-Level Phase II are:

- ▶ The further elaboration of original and timely thinking on the future of global climate governance for effective climate action, feeding into the 2023–2024 Summit of the Future, COP 28, and beyond.
- ▶ The creation of a new global constituency for improved climate governance—which currently does not exist at the COPs or within international policy discourses more generally—consisting of both governmental actors and the range of non-governmental actors devoted to the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement (e.g., civil society organisations, the business community, academia, and Indigenous, youth and interfaith leaders, among others).
- ▶ The framing of a short, medium, and long-term climate governance policy and institutional change research agenda, including idea dissemination and public outreach strategies.
- ▶ Continuing to serve as a knowledge management platform and nerve centre for a range of organisations/activities related to climate governance in a dynamic and efficient way (e.g., participating in and collaborating on joint events and initiatives with multiple like-minded partners).

Box 7.1: Key Governance Conclusions, Interim Report of the Climate Governance Commission:

The need for action across policy areas: There is a lack of coherence between climate goals and international regimes in other policy areas that are closely linked, and which may present important, even vital, opportunities for effective climate action: international trade, peace and security, finance, development, labour markets, and social impact, as well as legal institutions to combat environmental or economic crime and corruption. The common message is that climate change cannot be dealt with in isolation, but must be integrated at the core of nearly all policy fields. This speaks to an emerging “whole-of-system” and “whole of societies” approach to climate governance worldwide.

The tension between universality and ambitious leadership: Proposals are needed that address the delicate trade off and balance between the need for governance mechanisms with global inclusion, and the pressing parallel need for heightened ambition and sharper policy tools. Global negotiations under current dominant paradigms, requiring consensus, tend to lead to agreements that are acceptable to the countries with the lowest ambition, undermining the bold

action that is required. Progressive groups of countries and other stakeholders should continue and/or make substantial new efforts to lead the way with more ambitious programmes and policies, aiming for others to follow. However, such initiatives should not be seen as alternatives to the existing global climate regime, with the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and the Paris Agreement negotiated under it as the centrepiece, but rather as complementary, and as ways to improve and strengthen existing institutions and shared goals.

Technical and economic solutions already available in harmony with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): There are options already available for the economic and technological transformation needed for tackling climate change, which would also facilitate achievement of the SDGs. For example, transitioning from fossil fuels and traditional energy grids to distributed renewable energy offers the potential to power businesses and livelihoods, and have other positive social effects in areas that are characterized by energy poverty today. At the heart of global climate policy should be future-oriented development and justice perspectives.

The need for enhanced international legal protections: Several proposals highlight the need for strengthened international legal protection of life-supporting planetary systems that constitute global commons. Such enhancements of the international legal framework could be achieved in different ways: through enhancements of existing legal institutions, such as the International Court of Justice (ICJ), or the establishment of new specialized institutions, such as an International Court for the Environment (ICE), or through the establishment of new legal concepts and paradigms.

Upgrading key global governance institutions: Key global institutions could be reinforced to better address the existential challenges of climate change and other interrelated environmental problems. The basic architecture of the global governance system could be substantially enhanced in a way that is based on fundamental points of law already agreed to by states worldwide, and upon foundational principles embedded in the current international order.

Labour market adjustments, climate adaptation, and a “well-being” economy within Planetary Boundaries: Massive investments in renewable energy and other green solutions will create new jobs and business opportunities that will benefit hundreds of millions of people in low- and medium- as well as high-income countries. But jobs will also be lost and certain assets become worthless in the old, fossil fuel economy. Therefore, it is necessary for the international community to take both a pragmatic and justice-oriented perspective on the transition, to ensure that funding is available to retrain labour and for sufficient investment in clean energy jobs, as well as for climate adaptation in the countries that are most affected and have fewest resources to meet these challenges. There is also the need for a fundamental shift in how we think about the economy, away from the current focus on production growth, toward a focus on human well-being and shared prosperity, emphasizing indicators such as those relating to good health, meaningful jobs, fair income distribution, healthy ecosystems, and a stable climate.

Scaling up policies and governance solutions: Policies and governance models that prove effective when adopted by cities, individual countries, or groups of countries may themselves have the potential to be scaled up and diffused exponentially. Some proposals, such as the idea of Climate Clubs, the increased use of Climate Councils, and/or the establishment of a global climate policy clearinghouse, seek to exploit such opportunities to drive transformative international change.

* * *

Steering Committee: The Stimson Center/Global Governance Innovation Network (GGIN), the Global Governance Forum (GGF), International Environment Forum (IEF), the Council on Energy, Environment & Water (CEEW), Plataforma CIPÓ, the World Resources Institute (WRI) Africa, and the Earthna Center for a Sustainable Future, serve on the Steering Committee for Phase II of the CGC. It convenes monthly and contributes to the steering of organisational and financial elements of the project.

Bibliography

A

- Abdenur, Adriana., et al. *Responsibility Chains. Global Governance Innovation Network Policy Brief: Stimson Center*. September, 2022.
- Abnett, Kate. “[COP28 chief, groups, urge tripling renewable capacity by 2030](#).” *Reuters* October 30, 2023.
- African Union. *Pan African Investment Code (PAIC)*. 2016.
- Al-Halabi, Reem, and Logan Chochrane (eds.). *Sustainable Qatar: Social, Political and Environmental Perspectives*. Springer. 2023.
- Aleksandrova, Mariya, et al. “[The role of the G7 in strengthening the global landscape of climate finance for adaptation and loss and damage](#).” *Think7*. 2023.
- Alexander, James., et al. “[Financing the sustainable urban future: Scoping a green cities development bank](#).” *Overseas Development Institute Working Paper*. April, 2019.
- Allen, Christopher. “[How the World Economic Forum’s ESG Metrics Align with Other Frameworks \(SASB, GRI\)](#).” *Diligent*. November 11, 2020.
- Arizona State University. “[University Design Clinics for Planetary Health](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Armstrong McKay, David I., et al. [Exceeding 1.5°C global warming could trigger multiple climate tipping points](#)” *Science*. [377] No. 6611 (September, 2022): 797–818.

B

- B Lab. “[Benefit Corporations](#).” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- Bäckstrand, Karin, and Eva Lövbrand. “[The road to Paris: Contending climate governance discourses in the post-Copenhagen era](#).” *Journal of Environmental Policy & Planning*. [21] No. 5 (March, 2016): 519–532.
- Barber, Rebecca. “[The U.N. General Assembly’s veto initiative turns one. Is it working?](#)” *Just Security* April 26, 2023.
- Barrett, Scott. “[Climate Change and International Trade: Lessons on their Linkage from International Environmental Agreements](#).” *Thinking Ahead on International Trade (TAIT) - 2nd Conference Climate Change, Trade and Competitiveness: Issues for the WTO*. June, 2010.
- Bateman, Tom. “[How to create a sense of urgency around sustainability and climate action](#).” *Greenbiz*. December 12, 2018.
- Bcorporation. “[What’s the difference between a Certified B Corp and a benefit corporation?](#)” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- Biermann, Frank. “[Reforming global environmental governance: From UNEP toward a World Environment Organization](#).” *Global Environmental Governance: Perspectives on the Current Debate* (2007): 103–123.

- Biniarz, Susan. “[After Madrid, w\[ith\]ither the COP?](#)” *Sabin Center for Climate Change Law*. January, 2020.
- Bordo, Michael D. “[The Bretton Woods international monetary system: A historical overview](#).” in Bordo, Michael D. and Eichengreen, Barry. (eds.). *A retrospective on the Bretton Woods system: Lessons for international monetary reform*. University of Chicago Press. 1993.
- Brauch, Martin D. “[Reforming international investment law for climate change goals](#).” *Sabin Center for Climate Change* November, 2020.
- Brown, Gordon. “[How do we raise trillions of dollars to fight the climate crisis? The answer is staring us in the face](#).” *The Guardian*. September 25, 2023.
- Brown, Scott, and Dan Reicher. “[Who will ensure compliance with the Glasgow climate commitments?](#)” *The Hill*. November 18, 2021.
- Buitelaar, Tom, and Richard Ponzio. “[Mobilizing Smart Coalitions and Negotiating Global Governance Reform](#).” In Durch W., et al. *Just Security in an Ungoverned World*. Oxford University Press. 2018: 463–487.
- Burke, Joseph. “[Climate change: A threat to international peace and security](#).” *Universal Rights Group*. February 15, 2022.
- Busch, Chris., et al. “[China and the European Union’s carbon border adjustment mechanism: Cultivating mutual benefits for the EU and China](#).” *Energy Innovation*. (April, 2022): 1–17.

C

- C40. “[Reinventing Cities Initiatives](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Callahan, T. *Medium* “[Good Science Isn’t Enough](#).” October 18, 2022.
- Cedamia, “[Fact sheets](#).” Accessed November 3, 2023.
- Charney, Craig. *Global Governance Survey 2023. The Stimson Center*, June, 2023.
- Chambers, W. Bradnee, and Jessica Green. *Reforming international environmental governance: From institutional limits to innovative reforms*. Tokyo: United Nations University Press. 2005.
- Cirone, Alexandra E., and Johannes Urpelainen. “[Trade sanctions in international environmental policy: Deterring or encouraging free riding?](#)” *Conflict Management and Peace Science* [30] No. 4 (September. 2013): 309–334.
- Clark, G., and Sohn, L. B. *World peace through world law: Two alternative plans*. [3rd edn] Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Climate Diplomacy. “[Geopolitics of climate change](#).” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Climate Emergency Declaration. “[Climate emergency declarations in 2,346 jurisdictions and local governments cover 1 billion citizens](#).” Accessed October 31, 2023.

- Climate Justice Alliance. [“What Do We Mean By Just Transition?”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Climate Policy Database. [“Climate Policy Database.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Club de Madrid. [“Democracy & emergencies: Lessons from the COVID-19 pandemic for democratic resilience.”](#) December, 2021.
- Club of Rome. [“Planetary Emergency 2.0 Securing a New Deal for People, Nature and Climate.”](#) 2020.
- Club of Rome. [“Planetary Emergency Plan.”](#) 2020.
- Coalition for the UN we Need. [“Peoples Pact for the Future.”](#) 2023.
- Cobham Alex. [“UN resolution for an intergovernmental tax framework: What does it mean, and what’s next?”](#) Tax Justice Network. 2023.
- Cohen, Ronald (Sir) [“Sir Ronalds Philosophy.”](#) Accessed October 29, 2023.
- Collins, Jim. [“Level 5 Leadership: The Triumph of Humility and Fierce Resolve.”](#) in *On Leadership*. Harvard Business Review Press (2001): 115–136.
- Constitution of Bhutan. [“Article 5, the Constitution of the Kingdom of Bhutan.”](#)
- Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research. [“Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research.”](#) Accessed October 29, 2023.
- Costello, Anthony., et al. [Managing the health effects of climate change](#). *The Lancet*. [373] No. 9676 (May, 2009): 1693–1733.
- D**
- Democracy Without Borders. [A United Nations Parliamentary Assembly](#). 2020.
- Democracy Without Borders. [“International institutions insufficient to deal with global issues.”](#) May, 2023.
- Dixon-Decleve, Sandrine. [“The Club of Rome’s plan for systems change and a just solar revolution.”](#) *Solar Today*. December 16, 2022.
- Dixon-Declevè, Sandrine., et al. *Earth for all: A survival guide for humanity: A report to the Club of Rome (2022), fifty years after the limits of growth (1972)*. New Society Publishers. 2022.
- Dooley, Josephine. [“The co-existence of mitigation and international investment law: A practical assessment of climate change action under less “green-friendly” investment agreements.”](#) *The Journal of World Investment & Trade*. [23] No. 5–6 (December, 2022): 849–886.
- Dubois, Sandrine., et al. *White paper 02: Anthropocene*. International Law Association. 2022.
- E**
- Erb Institute. [“Corporate Political Responsibility Task Force.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Euronews Green. [“G7’s new Climate Club promises to promote ‘socially just’ transition to net zero.”](#) December 13, 2022.
- European Parliament. [“Regulation \(EU\) 2023/956 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 10 May 2023 establishing a carbon border adjustment mechanism.”](#) May, 2023.
- European Commission. [“Carbon border adjustment mechanism.”](#) Accessed October 25, 2023.
- European Scientific Advisory Body on Climate Change. [Scientific advice for the determination of an EU-wide 2040 climate target and a greenhouse gas budget for 2030–2050](#). 2023.
- European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights. [“Basic law for the Federal Republic of Germany.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Expert Working Group on Global Public Investment. [“Building a better system: Making global public investment a reality.”](#) *Equal*. July, 2022.
- Exponential Roadmap Initiative. [The 1.5°C business playbook](#). October, 2022.
- F**
- Farand, Chloe. [“Mia Mottley builds global coalition to make financial system fit for climate action.”](#) *Climate Home News*. September 23, 2022.
- Farnelli, Gian M. [“Investors as environmental guardians? On climate change policy objectives and compliance with investment agreements.”](#) *The Journal of World Investment & Trade*. [23] No. 5–6 (2022): 887–914.
- Forster, Piers M., et al. [Indicators of Global Climate Change 2022: annual update of large-scale indicators of the state of the climate system and human influence](#). *Earth System Science Data*. [15] (2023): 2295–2327.
- Dubner, J., Stephen, [“Is Economic Growth the Wrong Goal.”](#) *Freakonomics* February 1, 2023.
- Friedrich, Johannes, et al. [“This interactive chart shows changes in the World’s top 10 emitters.”](#) *World Resource Institute*. March 2, 2023.
- G**
- G7 Germany. [“Terms of reference for the Climate Club.”](#) December 12, 2022.
- Gallagher, Kevin P., and Richard Kozul-Wright. *The case for a new Bretton Woods*. Wiley. 2022.
- Gatti, Luciana., et al. [“Amazonia as a Carbon Source Linked to Deforestation and Climate Change.”](#) *Nature*. [595] (July, 2021): 388–393.
- Gelles, David. [“Billionaire no More.”](#) *New York Times*. September 14, 2022.
- Ghosh, Arunabha, and Nandini Harihar. [Coordinating global risk mitigation for exponential climate finance](#). *Global Challenges Foundation*. 2021.

- Global Challenges Foundation. *The Climate Governance Commission, 2021 interim report: Governing our climate future*. 2021.
- Global Impact Investment Network. *2020 Annual Impact Investor Survey*. 2020.
- Global Marshall Plan. Al Gore in *Earth in the Balance*. Houghton Publishing [1st Edn] 1992.
- Global Pact for the Environment. “*The Pact Explained in 3 Minutes*.” 2023.
- Government of Japan. “*PM Kishida’s Speech on the New Form of Capitalism and Why Japan Is a ‘Buy’*.” 2022.
- Government of the United States. “*Inflation Reduction Act of 2022*.” 2022.
- Greenhouse Gas Protocol. *Global Protocol for Community-Scale Greenhouse Gas Inventories An Accounting and Reporting Standard for Cities. Version 1.1* 7. 2021.
- Groff, Maja. “*Revitalizing International Law: Making the Multilateral System Fit for the Future*.” *Development and Peace Foundation*. 2022.
- Gross, Samantha. “*Why are Fossil Fuels so Hard to Quit?*” *Brookings Institute* June, 2020.
- Gupta, Joyeeta, et al. “*Earth system justice needed to identify and live within Earth system boundaries*.” *Nature Sustainability*. [6] (March, 2023): 630–638.
- H**
- Harvard Business School. “*Impact Weighted Accounts*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Harvey, Fiona. “*UN secretary general urges all countries to declare climate emergencies*.” *The Guardian*. December 12, 2020.
- Hawkins, Dimity, et al. “*ICAN’s origins*.” *International Coalition for the Abolishment of Nuclear Weapons* October, 2019.
- Hickman, Caroline, et al. “*Climate anxiety in children and young people and their beliefs about government responses to climate change: a global survey*.” *The Lancet*. [5] No. 12 (December, 2021): E863–E873.
- High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism. *A breakthrough for people and planet: Effective and inclusive global governance for today and the future*. *United Nations University*. 2023.
- Hoffman, P. “*The United Nations Emergency Platform*.” *Global Governance Innovation Network Policy Brief*. [Working Paper]. Stimson. 2023.
- Hockman KC, Stephen, “*The case for an International Court for the Environment*.” *Journal of Court Innovation* 3, no. 1 (March, 2010): 215–230.
- Human Security for All, “*Human Security for All*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- I**
- Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation. *Roadmap for a Global Asset Registry*. March, 2019.
- Influence Map. “*Influence Map*.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- Institute for New Economic Thinking. “*Seth Klein: How WWII preparation sets an example for confronting climate change*.” December 23, 2020.
- Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs. “*CATI evaluation report: Building global corporate accountability*.” 2022.
- Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs. “*Global business accountability map*.” Accessed November 2, 2023.
- Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs. “*The green supply chain corporate information transparency index*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. *Climate change 2001: The scientific basis*. 2001.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. *Climate change 2022: Mitigation of climate change*. 2021.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. *Global warming of 1.5°C. Special Report* 2018.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. *Synthesis report of the Sixth Assessment Report (AR6)*. 2023.
- Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services. *Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Pandemics of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services*. 2022.
- International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons. “*ICAN*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- International Climate Councils Network. “*Climate Councils Network*.” Accessed October 30, 2023.
- International Court of Justice. “*Chambers and Committees*.” Accessed October 29, 2023.
- International Energy Agency. “*World Energy Investment Report*.” May, 2023.
- International Foundation of Valuing Impacts. *Conceptual Accounting Methodology*. October, 2023.
- International Geosphere-Biosphere Programme. “*Earth System Definitions*.” Accessed November 7, 2023.
- International Institute for Sustainable Development. “*UN75 declaration calls for multilateralism to achieve an equal, resilient world*.” *SDG Knowledge Hub*. September 24, 2020.
- International Monetary Fund. *Energy Subsidy Reform: Lessons and Implications*. 2013.
- International Monetary Fund. “*Fiscal Monitor: How to Mitigate Climate Change*.” October, 2019.
- International Monetary Fund. *Scaling up private climate finance in emerging market and developing economies: Challenges and opportunities*, in *Global financial stability report*. 2022.
- International Monetary Fund. *IMF Fossil Fuel Subsidies Data*. 2023.
- International Sustainability Standards Board. “*International Sustainability Standards Board*.” Accessed October 29, 2023.

Ipp, Anja. “Regime interaction in investment arbitration: Climate law, international investment law and arbitration.” *Kluwer Arbitration Blog*. January 12, 2022.

K

Karlsson-Vinkhuyzen, Sylvie, and Arthur L. Dahl. Toward a Global Environment Agency: Effective governance for shared ecological risks. *Global Challenges Foundation*. 2021.

Keane, Jodie., et al. Aligning climate finance and Aid for Trade: a new agenda for LDC negotiators. *Policy brief Overseas Development Institute*. 2021.

Kemp, Luke, and Rhodes, Catherine. The Cartography of Global Catastrophic Governance. *Global Challenges Foundation*. 2019.

Kemp, Luke., et al. Climate endgame: Exploring catastrophic climate change scenarios. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. [119] No. 34 (August, 2022).

Klein, Richard., et al. “Building climate diplomacy back better: Imagining the UNFCCC meetings.” *Stockholm Environment Institute*. 2021.

Kofi Annan Foundation. “On the three pillars for a fairer, more peaceful world.” November, 2015. United Nations.

Koivurova, Timo. “International legal avenues to address the plight of victims of climate change: Problems and prospect.” *Journal of Environmental Law and Litigation*. [22] No. 2 (December, 2007): 267–299.

Kostakos, Georgios, and Gleckman, Harris. A Global Resilience Council as a “UN Security Council for Human Security Issues like Climate and Pandemics. *Foundation for Global Governance and Sustainability*. 2022

Kotzé, Louis J., et al. “Earth system law: Exploring new frontiers in legal science.” *Earth System Governance*. [11] No. 2 (January, 2022): 1–9.

Kumar, Nagesh. “Reviving the International Financial Transactions Tax.” *Agenda for the G20 T20 Policy Brief*. 2023.

L

Lamboll, R. D., et al. “Assessing the size and uncertainty of remaining carbon budgets.” *Nature Climate Change*. (2023): 1-10.

Lee, Nancy., et al. “MDBs Could Do More to Build Markets Just By Releasing More Data.” *Center for Global Development*. 2021.

Lehmen, Alessandra. “The case for the creation of an International Environmental Court: Non-state actors and international environmental dispute resolution.” *Colorado Natural Resources, Energy & Environmental Law Review*. [26] No. 2 (2015): 180–215.

Leiserowitz, Anthony., et al. International Public Opinion on Climate Change. *Yale Program for Climate Change and Communication*. 2022.

Lenton, Tim M., et al. Climate tipping points—too risky to

bet against. *Nature*. [575] (November, 2019): 592–595.

Lim, Byeongho., et al. “Pitfalls of the EU’s Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism.” *Energies*. [14] 2021.

Lopez-Claros, Augusto. Financing instruments for climate change mitigation and adaptation. *Global Challenges Foundation*. 2021.

Lopez-Claros, Augusto., et al. “Strengthening the international rule of law,” in Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st Century. *Cambridge University Press*. 208–235 2020.

Lopez-Claros, Augusto., et al. “UN Executive Council: Beyond an outdated paradigm,” in Global governance and the emergence of global institutions for the 21st Century. 131–44, *Cambridge University Press* January, 2020.

Lucero-Matteucci, Kayla. “Catastrophic risks are converging. It’s time for researchers to step out of their silos.” *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*. May, 2023.

Lynch, Ian, and Maja Groff. “Taking the Climate Crisis Seriously Requires Ambitious Anti-Corruption Solutions.” *The Diplomat*. November 5, 2021.

M

Mager, Franziska, and Sergio, Hernandez-Chaparro. “Delivering Climate Justice using the Principles of Tax Justice.” *Tax Justice Network*. June 22, 2023.

Magalhães, Paulo, “Common Home of Humanity: White paper.” *Common Home of Humanity* 2017.

Mahon, Rianne, and Stephen McBride. “Standardizing and disseminating knowledge: The role of the OECD in global governance.” *European Political Science Review*. [1] No. 1 (March, 2009): 83–101.

Marlon, Jennifer R., et al. “How hope and doubt affect climate change mobilization.” *Frontiers in Communication*. [4] No. 20 (May, 2019): 1–15.

Markowitz, Ezra, and Graves, Lucia. “After 2020, we need to talk about how we talk about catastrophe.” *The Washington Post*. December 30, 2020.

Masterson, Victoria. “The Bidgetown Initiative: Here’s everything you need to know.” *World Economic Forum*. January 13, 2023.

Medhora, Rohinton. “The Failure of Global Cooperation in a Time of Crisis.” *Institute for New Economic Thinking* May, 2020.

Montgomery, John, and Mark, Van Clieaf. *Net Zero Business Models*. Wiley. 2023.

Moyes, Richard. “International Campaign to Abolish Nuclear Weapons Campaigners Kit.” *International Coalition for the Abolishment of Nuclear Weapons* December, 2014.

Müller, Benito., et al. “Quo vadis COP? Future arrangements for intergovernmental meetings under the UNFCCC—settled and fit for purpose.” *European Capacity Building Initiative*. 2021.

N

National Aeronautics and Space Administration. “[What is Albedo.](#)” Accessed October 30, 2023.

Government of the Netherlands. [Netherlands model investment agreement.](#) 2019.

Nevitt, Mark. “[Is climate change a threat to international peace and security?](#)” *Michigan Journal of International Law.* [42] No. 3 (July, 2021): 527–571.

Nightingale, Andrea J., et al. “[Beyond technical fixes: Climate solutions and the great derangement.](#)” *Climate and Development.* [12] No. 4 (2020): 343–352.

Norwegian Academy of International Law. [A UN Tax Convention?](#) September 29, 2022.

Norwegian Expert Group, [Investing in a Common Future.](#) 2023.

O

Obura, David. [Responding to Earth system risk in the global multilateral system.](#) Global Challenges Foundation. June, 2023.

Oeschger, Andreas, and Sofia Baliño. “[Trade and sustainability discussions at WTO approaching next milestone.](#)” *International Institute for Sustainable Development.* 2022.

Oil Change International. “[Big oil reality check 2023—An assessment of Eni’s and Equinor’s climate plans.](#)” *Price of Oil* May 25, 2023.

Ord, Toby. [The Precipice: Existential risk and the future of humanity.](#) Bloomsbury Publishing. 2020.

Organisation for Economic Co-Operations and Development. [OECD guidelines for multinational enterprises.](#) OECD Publishing. 2011.

Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development. [Social Impact Investment.](#) 2019.

Osman, Matthew B., et al. “[Globally resolved surface temperatures since the Last Glacial Maximum.](#)” *Nature.* [599] (November, 2021): 239–244.

P

Pace, William. “[Reflecting on 25 years of the CICC.](#)” *Coalition for the International Criminal Court* July 20, 2020.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. [Pacific aid for trade strategy \(PAFTS\) 2020–2025.](#) 2020.

Papaioannou, Elias, et al. “[Can business change the world?](#)” *Think at London Business School.* January 31, 2023.

Paris Climate Agreement 2015.

Parliament of the World’s Religions. “[Repurposing the Trusteeship Council.](#)” Accessed November 9, 2023.

Parry, Ian., et al. [Fossil Fuel Subsidies Surged to Record \\$7 Trillion.](#) *International Monetary Fund.* 2023.

Parry, Ian., et al. [Proposal for an International Carbon Price Floor Among Large Emitters.](#) *International Monetary Fund.* June 18, 2021.

Pearson, Adam., et al. “[Race, class, gender and climate change communication.](#)” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Climate Science.* (April, 2017): 1–38.

Persson, Linn., et al. “[Outside the safe operating space of the for novel entities.](#)” *Environmental Science & Technology.* [56] No. 3 (January, 2022): 1510–1521.

Peters, Gjal., et al. “[Threatening communication: A critical re-analysis and a revised meta-analytic test of fear appeal theory.](#)” *Health Psychology Review.* [7] No. 1 (May, 2013): S8–S3.

Deverajan, Shantayana., et al. [How carbon tariffs and climate clubs can slow global warming.](#) *Peterson Institute for International Economics.* 2022.

Piketty, Thomas and Reid-Henry, Simon. “[GPI and a Global Wealth Tax](#)”, in [Time for Global Public Investment: Leaders and experts rethink sustainable development finance.](#) Global Public Investment Network. 2023.

Planelles, Manuel. “[Report proposes tax on the ultra-rich to finance a global climate fund.](#)” *El País.* 2023.

Pollin, Robert. “[The political economy of saving the planet.](#)” *Japanese Political Economy.* [49] No 2-3 (September, 2023): 141-168.

Portner, Hans-Otto., et al. “[PBES-IPCC Co-Sponsored Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Climate Change.](#)” *IPBES-IPCC co-sponsored workshop biodiversity and climate change 2021.*

Prestigiacomo, Stefania, and John Michuki. “[Why we need a world environment organisation.](#)” *The Guardian.* October 28, 2009.

Q

Qatar News Agency. “[Ministry of Municipality Announces Controls for Single-Use Plastic Bags.](#)” June 23, 2022.

R

Rajamani, Lavanya., et al. “[National ‘fair shares’ in reducing greenhouse gas emissions within the principled framework of international environmental law.](#)” *Climate Policy.* [8] No. 21 (September, 2021): 983–1004.

Ramos, Luma., et al. “[Debt Relief for a Green and Inclusive Recovery: Guaranteeing Sustainable Development.](#)” Boston, London, Berlin: *Boston University Global Development Policy Center; Centre for Sustainable Finance, SOAS, University of London; Heinrich-Böll-Stiftung.* 2023.

Reuters. “[Over 95% chance of El Nino conditions from January to March 2024, US forecaster says.](#)” September 14, 2023.

Richardson, Katherine., et al. “[Earth Beyond Six of Nine Planetary Boundaries.](#)” *Science Advances.* [9] No. 37 (September, 2023): 1–26.

Rietig, Katharine., et al. “[Improving UNFCCC negotiations with facilitation/mediation approaches: A toolkit.](#)” *Better Climate Governance Project.* 2021.

Rocha, Arrmando. “[The advisory jurisdiction of the ITLOS in the request submitted by the Commission of Small Island States.](#)” *Climate Law: A Sabin Center blog.* April 12, 2023.

- Rockström, Johan., et al. *We need biosphere stewardship that protects carbon sinks and builds resilience.* *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.* [118] No. 38 (September, 2021).
- Rockström., Johan., et al. *“Identifying a safe and just corridor for people and the planet.”* *Earth’s Future.* [9] No. 4 (April, 2021).
- Ryding, Tove. *“Proposal for a United Nations Convention on Tax.”* *Eurodad.* March 10, 2023.
- S**
- Schools 2030 Program. *“Schools 2030.”* Accessed November 1, 2023.
- Sergio, Hernandez-Chaparro. *“Delivering Climate Justice using the Principles of Tax Justice.”* *Tax Justice Network.* June 22, 2023.
- Seo, S. Niggol. *“Beyond the Paris Agreement: Climate change policy negotiations and future directions.”* *Regional Science Policy & Practice.* [9] No. 2 (June, 2017): 61–140.
- Simeonova, Katia. *Knowledge sharing and learning through a global climate policy clearinghouse: Options and opportunities.* *Global Challenges Foundation.* 2021.
- Simon, David. *“What Cities Can Teach Countries About Tackling Climate Change.”* *Foreign Policy.* August 14, 2023.
- Simon, David. *“Urban climate change governance and hot and arid zones: mutual learning and partnerships to build sustainable resilience solutions.”* *Earthna.* 2023.
- Simon, David. *“Dilemmas of development and the environment in a globalizing world: theory, policy and praxis.”* *Progress in Development Studies.* [3] No. 1 (2003): 5-41.
- Slaughter, Anne-Marie. *A new world order.* Princeton University Press 2004.
- Sobion, Justin, and Hans van Willenswaard. (eds.), *Reflections on Earth trusteeship: Mother Earth and a new 21st-century governance paradigm.* INI Books. 2023.
- Spier, Jaap. *“The ‘Strongest’ Climate Ruling Yet’: The Dutch Supreme Court’s Urgenda Judgment.”* *Netherlands International Law Review.* [67] (September, 2020): 319–391.
- Statista. *“Distribution of carbon dioxide emissions worldwide in 2021.”* September, 2022.
- Steele, Paul, and Sejal Patel. *“Tackling the triple crisis: Using debt swaps to address debt, climate and nature loss post-COVID-19.”* *International Institute for Environment and Development.* 2020.
- Steffen, Will., et al. *“Trajectories of the Earth system in the Anthropocene.”* *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.* [115] No. 33 (August, 2018): 8252–8259.
- Steffen, Will., et al. *The trajectory of the Anthropocene: The Great Acceleration.* *The Anthropocene Review.* [2] No. 1 (January, 2015): 81–98.
- Sterling, Gregory E. *“From the dean’s desk’, Crucified Creation: A Green Faith Rising.”* *Yale Reflections.* 2019.
- Stockholm Resilience Center. *“The nine Planetary Boundaries.”* Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Strauss, Andrew, L. *“Cutting the Gordian Knot: How and why the United Nations should vest the International Court of Justice with referral jurisdiction.”* *Cornell International Law Journal.* [44] No. 3 (November, 2011): 604–658.
- Subedi, Surya P. *The effectiveness of the UN human rights system: Reform and the judicialisation of human rights.* London: Routledge. 2017.
- Summers, Lawrence, and N. K. Singh. *“The Multilateral Development Banks the World Needs.”* *Project Syndicate.* July 24, 2023.
- Sutton, Isabel. *“Activists take fight against climate change from streets into courts.”* *Clean Energy Wire.* November 10, 2021.
- Swanson, Ana. *“Climate change may usher in a new era of trade wars.”* *The New York Times.* January 25, 2023.
- T**
- Tallberg, Jonas., et al. *“Global Governance: Fit for Purpose?”* *SNS Democracy Council.* 2023.
- Tevi, Odo. *“Policy Forum: Legal Avenues to Fight Climate Change.”* December 15, 2021.
- The B Team. *“Progress toward net-zero by 2050 challenges, trends and teamwork.”* 2018.
- The B Team. *“Raising ambition to reach net-zero by 2050.”* Accessed October 29, 2023.
- The Club of Rome. *“An open letter to the UN Secretary General and COP Executive Secretary: Reform of the COP process—a manifesto for moving from negotiations to delivery.”* February, 2023.
- The Elder. *“About the Elders.”* Accessed October 30, 2023.
- The Global Peace Dividend Initiative. *“Peace Dividend.”* Accessed October 30, 2023.
- The Good Lobby. *“About Us.”* Accessed October 30, 2023.
- The Institute for Sustainable Development and International Relations and Adaptation Without Borders. *“The global transboundary climate risk report.”* 2023.
- The Planetary Press. *“Interview: A legal framework for protecting the biosphere and living sustainably—A MAHB dialogue with Paulo Magalhães, founder of Common Home for Humanity.”* December 16, 2020.
- The Second Dolomite Conference On The Global Governance Of Climate Change. *“Group 1: Beyond Esg: Measure Less And Measure Better? Which Are The Mechanisms For Steering Private Investments Toward Sustainability?”* *Thinktank Vision* 2023.
- Thomas, Leigh. *“136 countries have agreed to a global minimum tax rate. Here’s what it means.”* *World Economic Forum* November. 2021.
- Together First. *The Case for a UN Civil Society Champion.* 2020.

- Trade Justice Education Fund and Sierra Club. [“FAQ: Climate Peace Clause.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- Türk, Danilo. [“We need an International Anti-Corruption Court.”](#) Politico. October 24, 2022.
- U**
- United Nations Charter
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, [“Escalating debt challenges are inhibiting achievement of the SDGs”](#). Accessed November 9, 2023.
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. [Netherlands model investment agreement](#). 2019.
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. [World Investment Report](#). 2023.
- United Nations Conference on Trade and Development. [Technology and Innovation Report](#). March, 2023.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. [“SDG Actions Platform.”](#) Accessed November 8, 2023.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. [“The 17 goals.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- United Nations. Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs. [“The UN Security Council and climate change: Tracking the agenda after the 2021 veto.”](#) 2022.
- United Nations Development Programme. [Human development report 1994](#). Oxford University Press 1994.
- United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, [The Sustainable Development Goals Report 2023: Special edition: Toward a Rescue Plan for People and Planet](#). July, 2023.
- United Nations Environment Programme. [Adaptation Gap Report](#). 2023.
- United Nations Environment Programme. [Emissions Gap Report](#). 2022.
- United Nations Environment Programme. [Emissions Gap Report](#). 2023.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. [“Transitional Committee on Loss and Damage Makes Progress at Third Meeting.”](#) September 8, 2023.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [“COP 28.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. [“Paris Agreement Implementation and Compliance Committee \(PAICC\).”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. [“What is the Triple Planetary Crisis.”](#) April 13, 2022.
- United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. [“Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice \(SBSTA\),”](#) Accessed November 7, 2023.
- United Nations. General Assembly. [A/RES/66/290](#). September 10, 2012.
- United Nation. General Assembly. [A/76/307](#). September 8, 2022.
- United Nations. General Assembly. [A/RES/76/300](#). July 28, 2022.
- United Nations. General Assembly. [“Text of the third revised draft legally binding instrument with textual proposals submitted by states during the seventh and the eighth sessions of the open-ended intergovernmental working group on transnational corporations and other business enterprises with respect to human rights A/HRC/52/41/Add.1.”](#) 2023.
- United Nations. Security Council. [S/2021/990](#). 2021.
- United Nations. Security Council. [“The UN Security Council and climate change: Tracking the agenda after the 2021 veto.”](#) December 30, 2022.
- United Nations Press. [“General Assembly adopts resolution requesting International Court of Justice provide advisory opinion on states’ obligations concerning climate change.”](#) March 29, 2023.
- United Nations Press. [“Secretary-General warns of climate emergency, calling intergovernmental panel’s report ‘a file of shame’, while saying leaders ‘are lying’, fuelling flames.”](#) April 4, 2022.
- United Nations Press. [“New global deal that shares power, resources would be crucial in building just, sustainable future, Secretary-General tells World Summit for Social Development.”](#) December 1, 2020.
- United Nations Press. [“UN General Assembly declares access to clean and healthy environment a universal human right.”](#) July 28, 2022.
- United Nations Press [Climate Change ‘Biggest Threat Modern Humans Have Ever Faced’, World-Renowned Naturalist Tells Security Council, Calls for Greater Global Cooperation.”](#) 2021.
- United Nations Press. [“Secretary-General calls latest IPCC climate report ‘code red for humanity’, stressing ‘irrefutable’ evidence of human influence.”](#) 2021.
- United Nations. [High-Level Expert Group on the Net Zero Emissions Commitments of Non-State Entities. Integrity matters: Net zero commitments by businesses, financial institutions, cities and regions](#). 2022.
- United Nations. [“History of the United Nations.”](#) Accessed October 30, 2023.
- United Nations. [“Humanity has opened the gates to hell” warns Guterres as climate coalition demands action.”](#) September 20, 2023.
- United Nations President of the General Assembly. [“Letter from the President of the General Assembly Co-facilitators of the Summit of the Future Letter—Draft Decision.”](#) August 30, 2023.
- United Nations. [Our common agenda policy brief 2: Strengthening the international response to complex global shocks—an emergency platform](#). 2023.
- United Nations. [Our common agenda: Report of the Secretary-General](#). 2021.

United Nations. *Shaping Our Future Together: Listening to People's Priorities for the Future and Their Ideas for Action. Concluding Report of the UN75 Office.* 2021.

United Nations. Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. "*The right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment - what does it mean for States, for rights-holders and for nature?*" 2022.

United Nations. *United Nations Secretary-General's SDG Stimulus to deliver agenda.* 2023.

Urpelainen, Johannes and Elisha George. "*Reforming global fossil fuel subsidies: How the United States can restart international Cooperation.*" Brookings. 2021.

V

Vanuatu International Court of Justice Initiative. "*The Republic of Vanuatu succeeded in the adoption of a UNGA Resolution calling for an advisory opinion on climate change from the International Court of Justice.*" Accessed October 29, 2023.

W

Way, Rupert., et al. *Empirically grounded technology forecasts and the energy transition.* Joule. [6] No. 9 (September, 2022): 2052–2082.

We the Peoples. "*A Voice for Global Citizens: a UN World Citizens' Initiative.*" Accessed October 30, 2023.

Wexler, Lesley. "*The international deployment of shame, second-best responses, and norm entrepreneurship: The campaign to ban landmines and the landmine ban treaty.*" *Arizona Journal of International and Comparative Law.* [20] No 3. (November, 2003): 561–606.

World Health Organisation. "*mRNA Vaccine Technology Transfer Hub.*" Accessed November 6, 2023.

World Health Organisation. "*Climate Change.*" Accessed November 10, 2023.

World Trade Organisation. *World trade report 2022: Climate change and international trade.* 2022.

World Trade Organisation. "*Members discuss possible TESSD outcomes for delivery at MC13.*" 2023.

Wray, Britt. *Generation Dread.* Knopf. Canada, 2022.

Y

YouGov. "*Global Census. Public Opinions on International Cooperation. Support for a World Parliament.*" *Democracy Without Borders.* 2020.

Z

Zalasiewicz, Jan., et al. *The Anthropocene as a geological time unit.* Cambridge University Press. 2019.

Zucman, Gabriel. *ICRICT's study of asset ownership information available in the UK: a stepping stone toward a Global Asset Registry.* *Tax Justice Network.* January 8, 2020.

Climate Governance Commission (CGC)

LEAD CHAIR AND CO-CHAIRS

Mary Robinson (Chair of The Elders and former President of Ireland), María Fernanda Espinosa (73rd President of the United Nations General Assembly), and Johan Rockström (Director, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research).

CONVENOR

Maja Groff, Esq. (Co-Winner of the International New Shape Prize on Global Governance Innovation, International Lawyer, Senior Treaty Advisor, Integrity Initiatives International, Co-Founder, Global Governance Forum).

COMMISSIONERS

Adriana Erthal Abdenur (Co-Founder, Plataforma CIPÓ), Bader Al-Dafa (Executive Director, The Global Drylands Alliance, Special Envoy for Climate Change and Sustainability), Xiye Bastida (Co-Founder, Re-Earth Initiative, Climate Activist), Sharan Burrow (General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation, Vice-Chair, European Climate

Foundation), Sandrine Dixson-Declève (Co-President, Club of Rome), Arunabha Ghosh (Chief Executive Officer, Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), New Delhi), Thilmeeza Hussain (Permanent Representative of The Maldives to the United Nations), Ma Jun (Director, Institute of Public & Environmental Affairs (IPE), Beijing), Sophia Kianni (Founder and Executive Director of Climate Cardinals, Member UN Youth Advisory Group on Climate Change), Wanjira Mathai (Managing Director, Africa & Global Partnerships, World Resources Institute (WRI)), Chido Mpemba (Youth Envoy at the African Union Commission, Youngest Diplomat in the African Union Chairperson's Cabinet), Ellen Johnson Sirleaf (Former President of Liberia and an Elder), Nobuo Tanaka (Chair, the Steering Committee of Innovation for Cool Earth Forum (ICEF), Former Executive Director, International Energy Agency (IEA)), and Ernesto Zedillo (Former President of Mexico, an Elder, and Director, Yale Center on the Study of Globalization).

“The climate crisis is evident in the devastating impacts we witness and in the unequivocal science we are all aware of. What eludes us is political will and ambition; it is fundamentally a crisis of governance. This Report offers crucial insights toward the urgent reforms necessary to address our escalating planetary emergency.”

—Mary Robinson, Lead Chair of the Climate Governance Commission, Chair of The Elders

