

PLANETARY EMERGENCY, HOW TO HAVE HOPE.



BIODIVERSITY:LIFE'S DELICATE BALANCE -
CHALLENGE TO PROMOTE AND PROTECT

ECI Conference 3rd October 2020



BIODIVERSITY

The living fabric of planet Earth



SACRED LEAVEN IN THE



DIVINE CREATIVE EXTRAVAGANCE...



OUR ONENESS IN ESSENCE: LENS OF BIODIVERSITY

Look deep into NATURE.. .And you will understand everything better

A. Einstein

- Biological Diversity: the variety of life on Earth – all forms, species, relationships, interactions and ecosystems.
- Life in the oceans, on land, in the skies and sub-surface bacteria.
- ‘Without biodiversity, there is no future for humanity’
- (Prof. David Macdonald (Oxford University))
- ‘If we lose the insects then everything is going to collapse’
- (Prof. Dave Gaulson (Sussex University, UK))
- Throughout the current Covid-19 pandemic both UN and WHO have been warning that the world must tackle the cause of such outbreaks – the destruction of nature – and not just the health and economic symptoms.
- (The Guardian, 05 August 2020)



The Sun – 5 billion years old -
is the source of all
life on Earth....

The Sun gives away millions of tons
of itself in energy every second
in order to sustain life
in the Universe

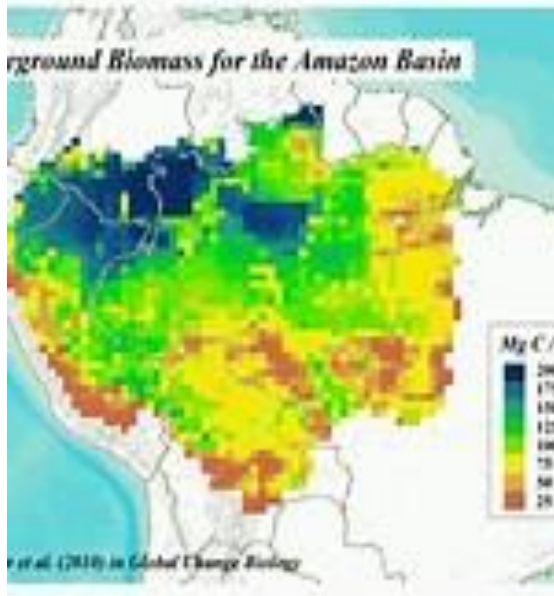
The Universe Story

Without plants: no oxygen



Without bees: no pollination





The Amazon Basin stretches across 9 countries and more than 2 million sq. acres.
Home to planet's greatest biodiversity'.

33 million people, 400 different tribes
c. of which 100 live in voluntary isolation.

*This biome produces c. 20% of world's fresh water,
c.25% of its oxygen and one – third of global forest reserves.*

“The equilibrium of our planet also depends on the health of the Amazon Region.”

‘Querida Amazonia’ Pope Francis 2020

**It is also an epicentre in the battle between
preservation and development**

LIFE ON EARTH : 86% ON LAND, 1% IN OCEANS
13% DEEP SUB-SURFACE BACTERIA

HUMANS = 0.01%, PLANTS = 82%, BACTERIA= 13%
EVERYTHING ELSE = 5%

Since the rise of human civilisation:
83% WILD MAMMALS, 80% MARINE MAMMALS,
50% PLANTS, 15% FISH HAVE BEEN LOST.

(Source: escchat.com Irish Times 26May 2018)

“Ecosystems and biodiversity are as important to human society as a heart, liver, kidneys and lungs are to you. Yet its us that’s causing this worldwide biological systems collapse, despite the fact that our own lives- our food, jobs, homes, governance, security and everything else – quite literally depend on their health.”

(Hannah Hamilton ‘Ireland’s Biodiversity needs intensive care’ Irish Times 2019)

Earth Overshoot Day – 1st Aug. 2018

The date when humanity's demand for ecological resources and services in a given year exceeds what Earth can regenerate in that year.

We are currently using
1.7 earths

through

- *overfishing

- *overharvesting forests

- *emitting more carbon dioxide into the atmosphere than ecosystems can absorb.

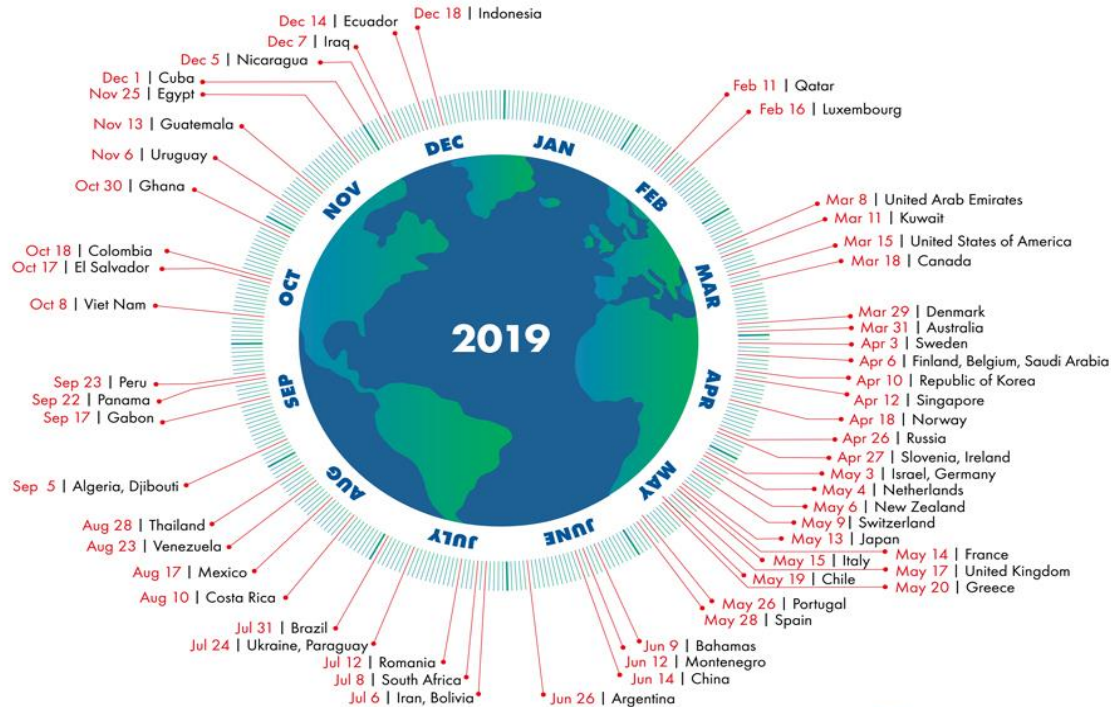


What is your ecological footprint?

How do you intend to reduce it?

Country Overshoot Days 2019

When would Earth Overshoot Day land if the world's population lived like...



Source: Global Footprint Network National Footprint Accounts 2019



USA 15 Mar , Ireland 27 April, NZ 6 May, UK 17 May

EARTH OVERSHOOT DAY 2019 -----29 JULY

2020: 22August due to pandemic breathing space!

UN REPORT MAY 2019

1 million of earth's 8 million plant and animal species currently threatened with extinction mainly through human activity.

NATURE ECOLOGY AND EVOLUTION JOURNAL June 2019

Plant extinction is happening 500x faster than before the Industrial Revolution eg. deforestation for timber and conversion of land for agriculture.

World Wide Fund for Nature: Living Planet Report 2020

Nature is unravelling: 68% plummet in Wildlife Populations Worldwide since 1970.

Global Biodiversity Outlook 5 : 2020 Summary (UN)

Humanity stands at a crossroads with regard to the legacy it leaves to future generations. Biodiversity is declining at an unprecedented rate, and the pressures driving this decline are intensifying. There are real examples of progress too – need to be scaled up in support of 2050 vision of living in harmony with nature.

World Resources Institute – 2020

Over 1 billion tons of resources flow into the economy yearly, c.60% ends up as waste or CO2 emissions

PLASTIC WASTE: C.300 MI. TONS IN 2019

ELECTRONIC WASTE: C.50ml. TONS IN ONE YEAR

FOOD WASTE: 1/3 OF ALL FOOD PRODUCED
While millions go hungry

Need to move from current global economic model of 'create-and-make waste' to circular economy by avoiding waste, stimulating business growth and creating job opportunities.

Proposed European Green Deal : circular economy action plan – sign of hope.

Pause for thought.....



When we humans put short-term profits ahead of long-term needs and priorities of flourishing life for all, we create a dilemma. We cannot live without fresh air, clean water, fertile soil, sunshine or the companionship of each other in the total community of life.....

YET

many are prepared to cut down the rainforests, the very lungs of the earth, to deplete the soil through overuse of harmful chemicals, to pollute the water beyond safe consumption and consign millions of people and species to poverty and homelessness for monetary gain.

Nothing ever goes away
until it has taught us
what we need to know.

- Pema Chödrön -



What did you do once you knew?

All it takes is one good person to restore hope. LS 71



It's all a question of story:
primary hope for the future.

We are in trouble just now because we do not have a good story.

We are in between stories.

The old story, the account of how the world came to be and how we fit into it, is no longer effective.

Yet we have not learned the new story.

The Dream of the Earth, Thomas Berry

'We cannot solve today's problems with the same mindset that created them'

A. Einstein.




ESSENCE OF THE NEW STORY OF THE UNIVERSE



We live in an evolving and expanding universe where everything is forever in the process of BECOMING.... nothing is entirely fixed, unchanging, predictable...

Sharing with all beings the same atoms, minerals, chemicals as the stars, we have evolved in deep time over c.14billion years and carry the wisdom of the evolving universe in every fibre of our being.

The conversion we seek entails a loving awareness that we are not disconnected from the rest of creatures, but joined in a splendid universal communion. **LS 220**



Every being in the universe is intimately present to, and is influencing , every other being in the universe. Every being contributes to the magnificence of the whole.

Thomas Berry

The change required is from a self-image dominated by a perception of ourselves as having the *right* to use earth's resources independently of the needs of all other beings.

This in turn requires theological change: from an image of God as granting us the power to do this.

Part of a theological response to this state of affairs must be a willingness to change our images of God from those that sanction violence towards others and degradation of the earth's resources, to those that encourage us to relate non-violently to each other, to the earth and to God.



Anne Primavesi: Gaia and Climate Change



If we can see ourselves as Earth
rather than Earth as existing for us-
our perspective is transformed.

Anne Primavesi

AN INTEGRAL ECOLOGY

*Environmental
Economic
Spiritual/Religious*



*Social
Political
Cultural*

....we have to realise that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach.....so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. (LS 49). Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach.... (LS 139)

We urgently need a humanism capable of bringing together the different fields of knowledge, including economics, in service of a more integral and integrating vision (LS.141).

*We are not lacking in the dynamic forces needed to create the future.
We live immersed in a sea of energy beyond all comprehension.*

Thomas Berry: The Great Work

CRY OF THE EARTH ----- CRY OF THE POOR

We live in a planet of abundance not scarcity whose resources are finite, yet there is enough for all....

HOWEVER

Less than 20% people own and control over 80% of Earth's resources and generate more than 80% of planet's waste.

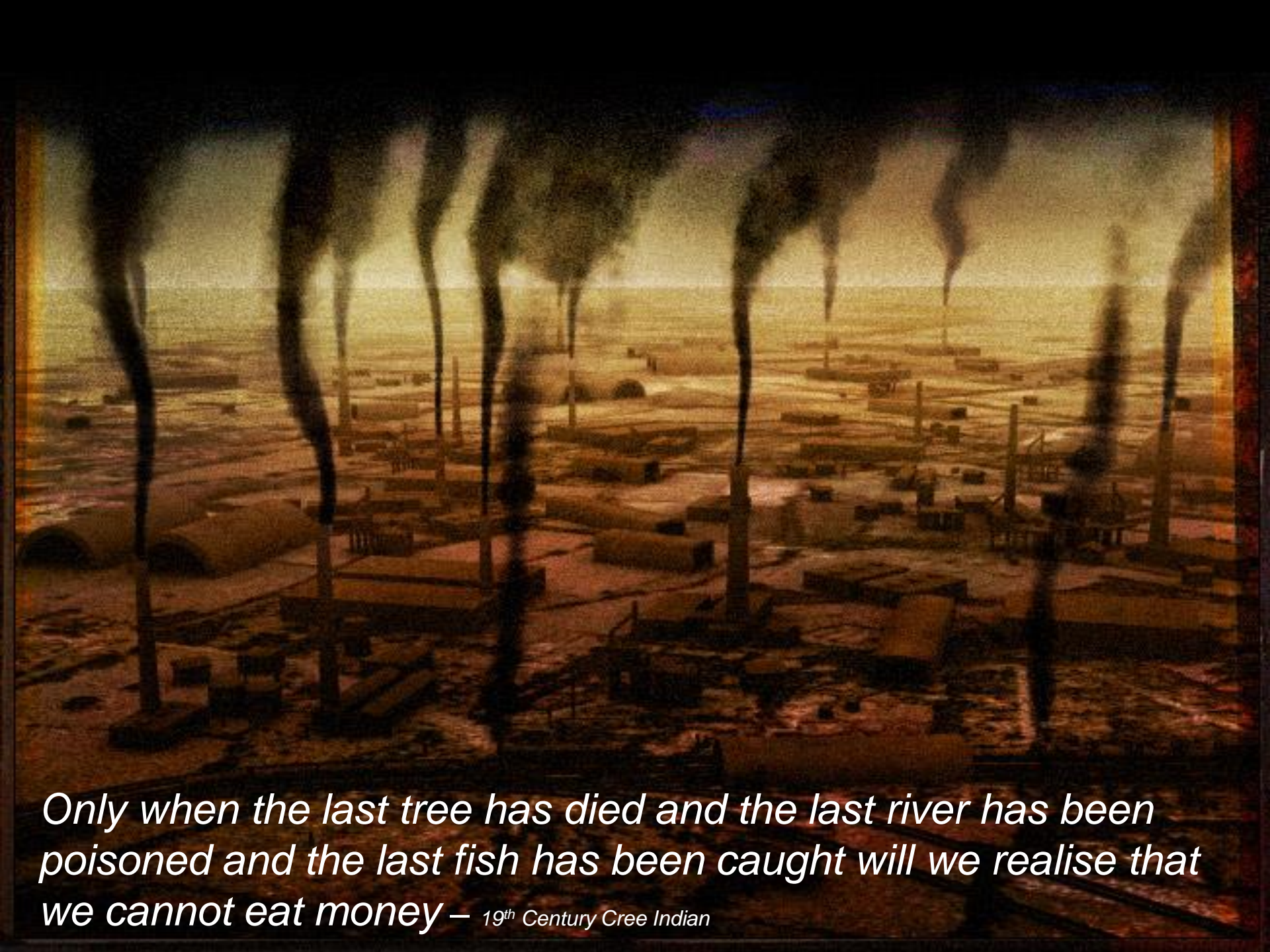
International Migrants: globally –
c.272 million, increase of 51 ml from 2010
(UN. 2019)

26 million refugees globally in 2019.

Half of these are children

(Amnesty International)





*Only when the last tree has died and the last river has been
poisoned and the last fish has been caught will we realise that
we cannot eat money — 19th Century Cree Indian*

FURTHER SIGNS OF HOPE.....

Pandemic 'breathing space' to re-imagine a more sustainable future

Message of Laudato Si' (2015)- Our Common Home

Season of Creation Celebration – Yearly

Eco-congregational Initiatives

Youth Climate Fridays: Global Action

UN Sustainable Development Goals 2016-2030

Proposed European Green Deal: CO2 reductions to 55%/40% -2050

Green Sod Land Trust : Ireland : biodiversity + climate ch. mitigation

Bord na Mona : green energy projects not further peat extraction

Global Tree-planting programme

Young Global Leaders Forum & National Geog. Society – Campaign for Nature = protecting 30% of planet by 2030

The Great Green Wall – Africa -8.000 km from E toW south of Sahara

Organic Food production, local, national, global

B-R-I-D-E Project : Cork: Dairy Farming (biodiversity regeneration)

Transfer of Assets from Fossil Fuels globally (+11 trillion USD 2019)

Fracking ban Rol and LNG Shannon Project banned?



Establish relationships and connections to safeguard the living systems of our planet: air, water, sun, soil.

LET US ACT NOW!!

PROMOTE BIODIVERSITY

REDUCE EMISSIONS

ELIMINATE TOXINS

COMMUNE WITH /LEARN FROM NATURE

GROW IN AWARENESS and COMMITMENT

SUPPORT GLOBAL EFFORTS

SUBTLE ACTIVISM



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