



PLANETARY EMERGENCY 2.0

Securing a New Deal for People, Nature and Climate

DRAFT FOR CONSULTATION



By The Club of Rome, in partnership with
The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research





THE PLANETARY EMERGENCY PLAN 2.0, UPDATED TO INCLUDE THE 2020 GLOBAL PANDEMIC, MAKES THE CASE THAT WE ARE UNEQUIVOCALLY IN THE MIDST OF A PLANETARY EMERGENCY. THE PLAN PROVIDES TEN COMMITMENTS TO PROTECT THE GLOBAL COMMONS AND TEN ESSENTIAL TRANSFORMATIVE ACTIONS TO DRIVE SYSTEMS CHANGE AND STABILIZE THE EARTH.

THE CASE FOR A PLANETARY EMERGENCY PLAN



The Planetary Emergency Plan published in July 2019 called for the UN and governments to declare a Planetary Emergency and implement a plan of action to build a resilient future. Now, in 2020, COVID-19 is infecting millions of people around the world, claiming thousands of lives, with numbers likely to continue to rise. The virus continues to disrupt the global economy and financial markets and directly impacts people's lives and livelihoods across the globe. This pandemic has exposed our vulnerabilities and reinforced the case for emergency action. We live in an increasingly turbulent world with rising pressures on our planet triggering extreme shocks, like disease outbreaks, droughts, floods and heatwaves. We are living beyond the carrying capacity of the planet, putting human systems and natural systems on a collision course. The pandemic is a manifestation of this fact, showing that the health of societies and the stability of economies are deeply connected to our relationship with nature.

COVID-19 is one in a series of rising infectious disease outbreaks over the past decades, ranging from Ebola, Sars, and bird flu. All caused by virus spill over from wildlife and domestic animals to humans, likely triggered by human degradation of natural ecosystems, and reinforced by high levels of global travel, trade and high-density living.

Recovery from the pandemic is a transformative moment at a critical time for our species. Do we rebuild our economy with the same inequalities, fragilities, vulnerabilities and instabilities as before? Why would anyone accept a world where our economic security and long-term survival are in grave risk and our future so uncertain? Or do we build back a more resilient world able to deal with unavoidable shocks, while rapidly deviating away from global systemic risks that we are potentially unable to manage?

This is a critical decade for humanity. For 10,000 years, human civilisation has grown and thrived because of Earth's remarkable climate stability and rich biological diversity. In the last 50 years, human activity has severely undermined this resilience. Our patterns of economic growth, development, production and consumption are pushing the Earth's life-support systems beyond their natural boundaries. The stability of these systems – our global commons on which we so fundamentally depend – is now at risk. Our actions in the coming decade will influence the trajectory of our planet and our future survival. It is not possible to bank on another 10,000 year of human development if we continue to destroy the ground upon which our civilisation has been built – a rich, diverse, functioning biosphere. The stakes really are this high.

2020 GLOBAL INSTABILITIES

GLOBAL COMMONS

- Health pandemics
- Climate tipping points
- Mass extinctions

SOCIAL SYSTEM

- Inequality
- Economic insecurity
- Sensemaking disrupted
- Mass extinctions by social media
- No shared worldview
- Trust in politicians undermined

POLITICAL SYSTEM

- Polarization and distrust
- Rise of nationalism
- Trade wars
- Pullback from international cooperation

ECONOMIC SYSTEM

- Endemic economic insecurity even among middle classes.
- Short termism
- Mass unemployment

THE 10,000-YEAR PERIOD OF REMARKABLE STABILITY AND HIGH BIOLOGICAL DIVERSITY WHICH ENABLED THE EMERGENCE OF HUMAN CIVILISATION, IS NOW AT RISK

A CRITICAL 12 MONTHS



The COVID-19 pandemic has shocked the world and brought immense suffering and economic chaos. This was avoidable. We cannot stand by and allow another similarly avoidable crisis to occur.

The pandemic has highlighted our fragility and the profound links between disease, nature, climate and emissions, equity and justice, the finance sector and food systems. Like previous shocks of this magnitude – the Great Depression, the Spanish Flu and the world wars – this is a transformative moment for humanity.

A different world, a different economy is feasible, desirable and essential. We have the tools to design resilience to future shocks rather than simply react to disaster. But we need political will and joined-up leadership. This is an unprecedented opportunity to move away from unmitigated growth at all costs and deliver a lasting balance between people, planet and prosperity.

Together we must still make 2020 a “Super Year” and the start of a critical Decade of Action.

A DECADE OF ACTION



The impacts of climate change and ecological destruction are more severe and are manifesting themselves earlier than many scientific predictions in previous decades had foreseen.

2020 marks the beginning of the most rapid economic transformation in history to ensure we achieve the Sustainable Development Goals, our Paris Agreement goals and prepare for future shocks. But 2020 is also a year of remembrance as we mark the 75th anniversary of the United Nations.

This is a time to reflect on the importance of collaboration between nations hit by one of the greatest global health pandemics ever seen. It is a moment for solidarity, compassion, reflection and transformation. The United Nations has stewarded societies through an unprecedented period of peace through economic cooperation. Now, as we face an even greater challenge, we must all become effective stewards of the global commons and more equitable prosperity for all.

EMERGING FROM EMERGENCY



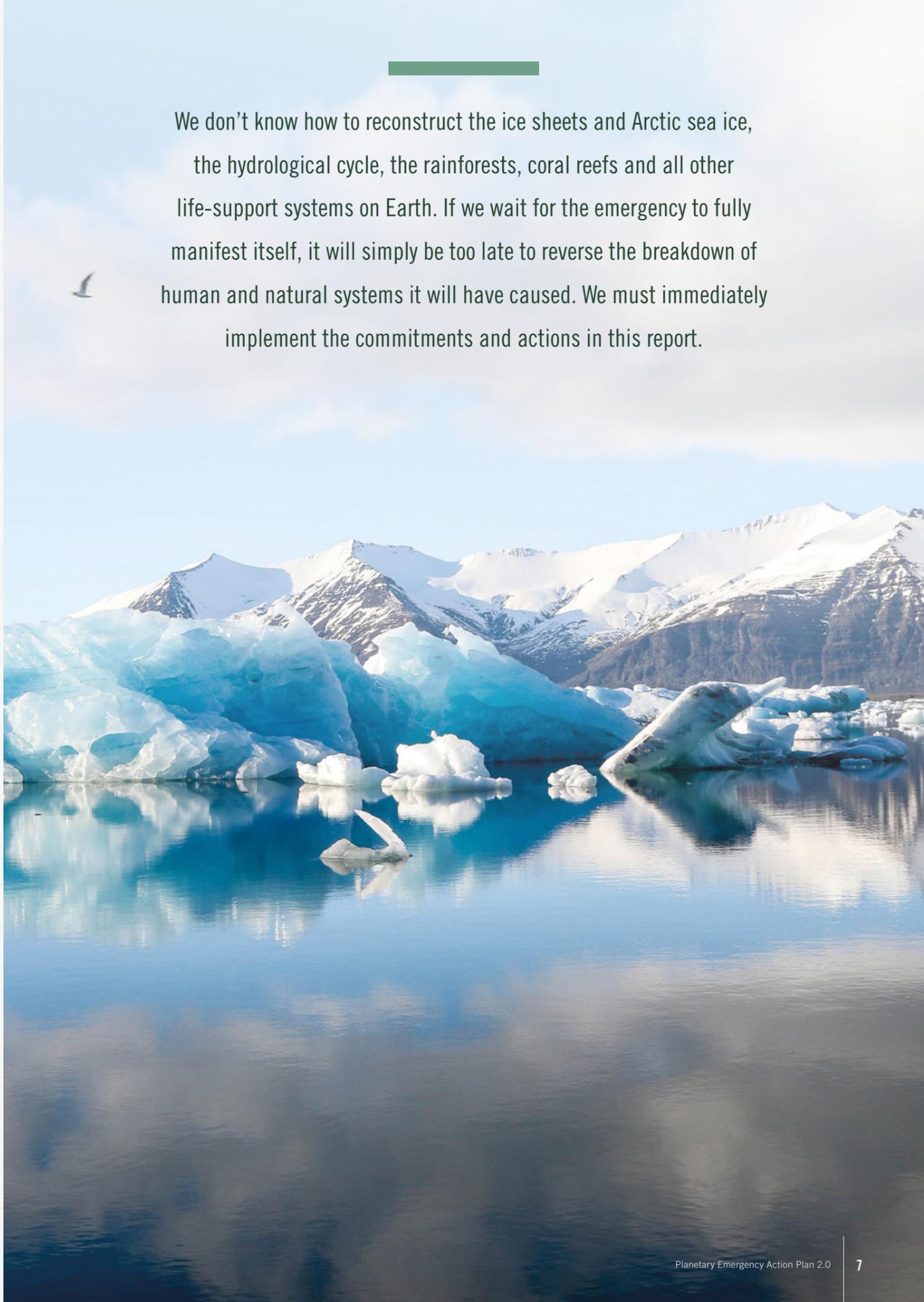
The existential risk is real. This decade will be a turning point – the moment when the world bends the curve, averts the impending disasters and opts instead for a transformative pathway by design, not by disaster. The opportunities to not just avert disaster, but to rebuild, improve and regenerate are readily available. History has shown that humanity is remarkably resilient. We are well-adapted to respond to disaster through our greatest gifts: cooperation and innovation. But we have a narrow window to act now to reduce risk or avoid catastrophe.

Declaring a **Planetary Emergency** provides a new compass for nations and injects the essential urgency into decision-making. It will ensure that all action from 2020 will be taken in consideration of its impact on the stability of Earth's life-support systems, and be underpinned by the social and economic transformations needed to secure the long-term health and well-being of people and planet. By doing so, we can finally ensure that we collectively promote social progress and better standards of life as asked for in 1945 when the United Nations was born.

Yet while our efforts should be global, our responses must be national and local. They should be tailored to local needs, resources and cultures to ensure they have maximum impact and work to everyone's advantage.

Our aim is to protect the Global Commons through 10 clear commitments, and ensure they are met by immediately implementing a set of transformational policy and market levers nationally and locally. This is our insurance policy to emerge from emergency and guarantee a just transition for all.

We invite nations to both declare a Planetary Emergency and adopt a **Planetary Emergency Plan**. We propose that such a plan be founded on the urgent need to halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030, to reach carbon-neutrality by 2050, while halting biodiversity loss and protecting essential global commons and human health. Such an initiative is consistent with the Sustainable Development Goals to end poverty and improve quality of life. We can **emerge from emergency** to a world which benefits all species, within planetary boundaries and leaving no one behind. This is the world we envisage, the world to which we must all aspire where healthy people live on a healthy planet in symbiosis.



We don't know how to reconstruct the ice sheets and Arctic sea ice, the hydrological cycle, the rainforests, coral reefs and all other life-support systems on Earth. If we wait for the emergency to fully manifest itself, it will simply be too late to reverse the breakdown of human and natural systems it will have caused. We must immediately implement the commitments and actions in this report.

10 COMMITMENTS FOR OUR GLOBAL COMMONS AND PUBLIC GOODS



1. **Immediately, declare critical ecosystems as global commons** – essential to the functioning of a stable planet and the responsibility of the global human community to manage sustainably.¹
2. **Immediately, set a universal global moratorium on deforestation**, using a net-zero deforestation and degradation metric and, **by 2025, triple annual investments** in forest conservation and forest landscape restoration. Relatedly, **halt all investments** driving continued deforestation and unsustainable land-use change of intact and irreplaceable ecosystems.
3. Immediately, **sign a moratorium on exploration and exploitation of Arctic oil and gas** reserves, support withdrawal from fossil energy exploration and use and **establish a Cryosphere Preservation Plan** to protect this critical ecosystem.
4. **Immediately, ramp up investment to provide essential public goods.** Inadequate provision of public goods related to global health include disease surveillance, information dissemination, knowledge production, market oversight and pandemic response.^{2,3}
5. **Immediately, boost public and private finance flows** for restoration of critical ecosystems, including by mobilising \$200billion for the Green Climate Fund and Global Environment Facility over the next decade.
6. **Immediately, halt the decline of critical and vulnerable ocean ecosystems and habitats and secure a robust New Ocean Treaty** (under UNCLOS) for the protection and sustainable use of biodiversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction, which constitute half of our planet.
7. **Launch a permanent public-private Planetary Emergency fund for the global commons by the end of 2020**, building upon the G7 Amazon Emergency Fund and committing the necessary capital to insure humanity against present and inevitable future crises.
8. Immediately, **introduce financial mechanisms and policy instruments** to support local farmers, foresters and indigenous people to **secure their livelihoods, enhance resilience to future pandemics** and to shift to **regenerative agriculture, sustainable forestry** and other sustainable land-use practices.
9. **By 2025**, require all large publicly-listed and family-owned companies to commit to **science-based targets, shift to green investments** (climate mitigation and adaptation as well as ecosystems protections and regeneration), **disclose environmental impact and exposure to risk and report** according to material risks from the Planetary Emergency.
10. **By 2025, halt all conversion of wetlands, grasslands and savannahs for the production of agricultural commodities and triple annual investments** in their effective protection, restoration and resilience.

¹ [https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(15\)60901-1.pdf](https://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(15)60901-1.pdf)

² <https://www.climatechangenews.com/2019/08/08/un-science-report-shows-time-reboot-relationship-nature/>

³ <https://www.wri.org/blog/2018/09/safeguarding-carbon-stored-indigenous-and-community-lands-essential-meeting-climate>

11 URGENT ACTIONS FOR THE TRANSFORMATION



CREATING JUST AND EQUITABLE SOCIETIES

1. **Introduce economic progress indicators that include socio-ecological and human health as well as well-being** as soon as possible, recognising that the latter depends on the stewardship of natural ecosystems and supporting the world's most vulnerable.
2. **Revolutionise taxation for the 21st century starting now.** Tax what we don't want: inequality, carbon, air pollution and unhealthy diets. Reduce tax and introduce other incentives to promote behaviour we want to encourage: higher employment, greater equality, low emissions, healthy ecosystems. More specifically, reduce tax on labour and introduce wealth taxes and effective international tax systems for multinational corporations.
3. **Establish clear funding and retraining programmes** for displaced workers during the pandemic, future shocks fostering a green and social transformation.
4. **Provide legal tools that allow indigenous, forest and tribal communities to secure their rights** to land and proper health care if wanted, recognising their vital role as stewards of these lands in mitigating climate change and ecosystem degradation and their vulnerability to health pandemics and environmental crises. Such mechanisms must include **funding and legal aid** to guarantee that these communities have access to justice.

TRANSFORMING ENERGY SYSTEMS

5. **Immediately halt fossil-fuel subsidies and further expansion and use of fossil energy** and shift investments and revenues to low-carbon energy deployment, research,

development and innovation.

6. **Continue the doubling of wind and solar capacity every four years, and triple annual investments** in renewable energy, energy efficiency and low-carbon technologies for high-emitting sectors before 2025.
7. **Set a global floor price on carbon** that internalises high-carbon energy externalities in all products and services (**>30 USD/ton CO2 and rising**) **immediately** for developed countries and **no later than 2025 for the most advanced transition economies.**
8. **Set end-dates for fossil-fuel based infrastructure, mobility and utilities**, aligned with scientific assessments of necessity and climate neutrality goals. This can include, e.g., setting an end-date for the combustion engine and for coal based electricity production.

SHIFTING TO A CIRCULAR ECONOMY

9. Immediately agree to **halve consumption** and production footprints in developed and emerging economies **and close loops in inefficient value chains and production processes, by 2030.**
10. **Internalise externalities in unsustainable and high-carbon production and consumption** through targeted consumption taxes and regulation, as well as consumption-based accounting, **by 2025.**
11. **Develop national and cross-national roadmaps for all countries** adopting regenerative land use, well being, low carbon and circular economic principles dramatically improving the human material and carbon footprint to net-zero, **by 2030.**

The manner and priority in which these actions are implemented will vary from country to country, but the overall objective of rapid carbon emissions reduction, nature regeneration, and enhancing human health and well being should be a common goal over the next decade.

TIPPING POINTS AND PLANETARY BOUNDARIES

THE RATIONALE FOR EMERGENCY ACTION



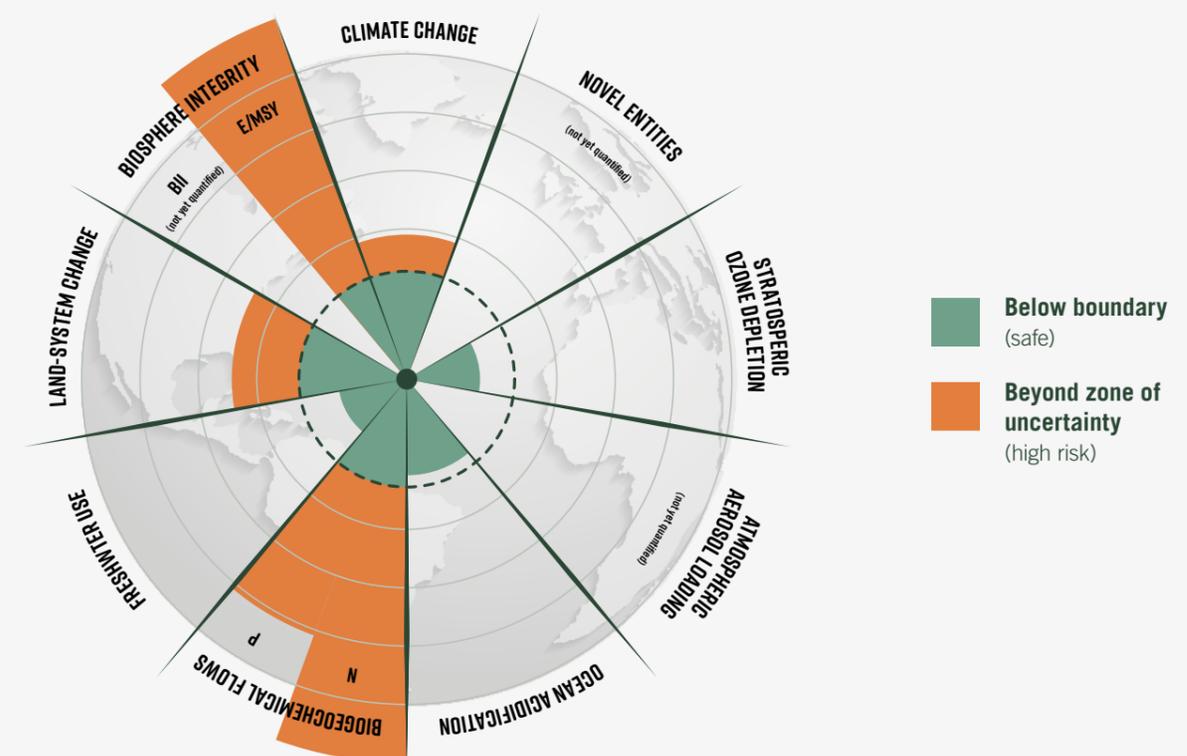
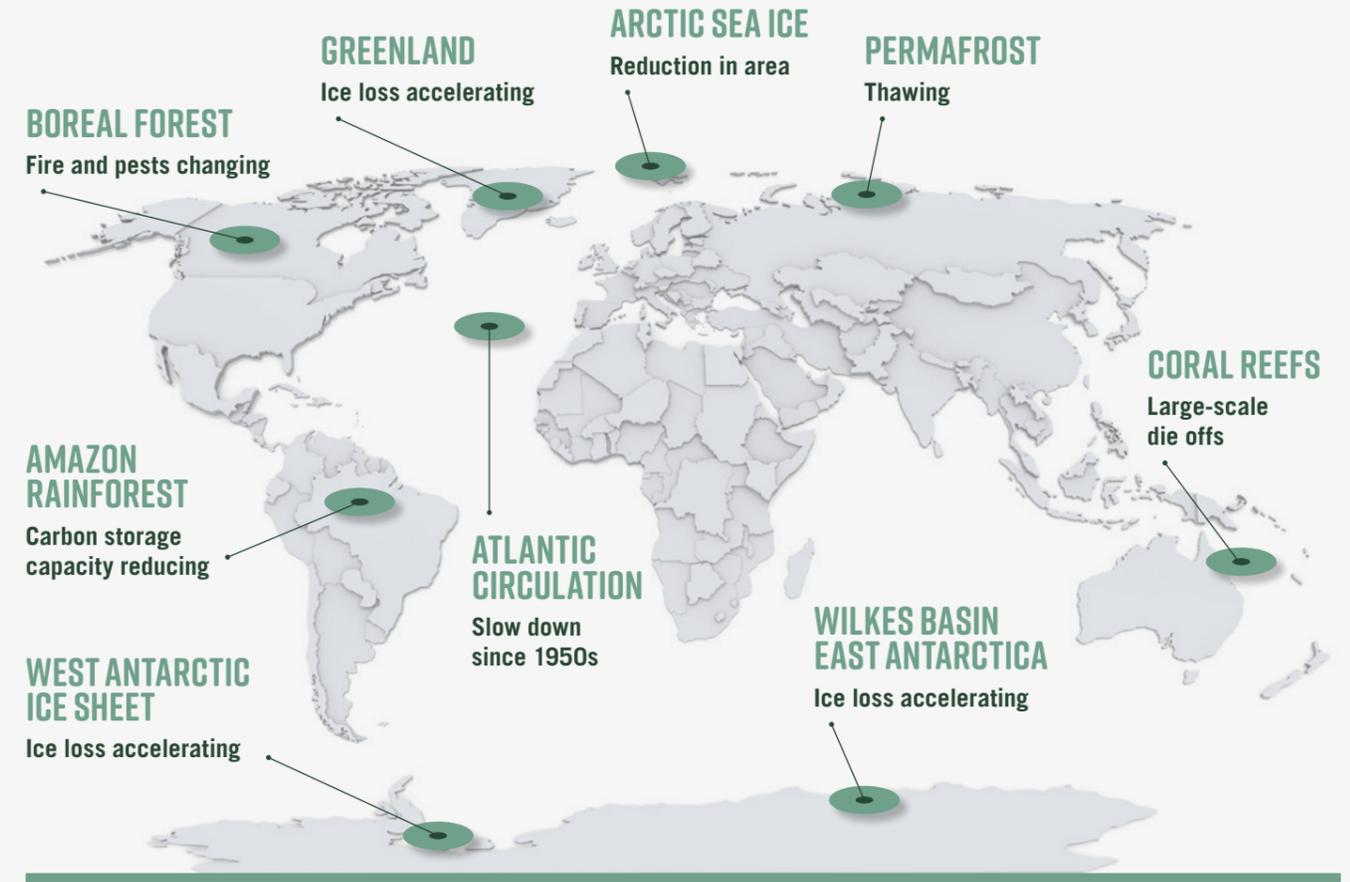
The definition of an emergency is a dangerous event requiring immediate action to reduce risk of potentially catastrophic results. We face a planetary emergency. It is not just about climate. It is the combined threats of climate, nature and human health.

The science is clear: climate, biodiversity and human health are fully integrated and interdependent. Every year since the Industrial Revolution, land and ocean ecosystems have absorbed close to half of all emissions from fossil-fuel burning. Without nature's ability to absorb and store our greenhouse gas emissions, we would have already exceeded 2°C of warming, with potentially disastrous consequences. Breaching this threshold, combined with ecosystem collapse, could push the planet towards an irreversible and catastrophic trajectory for humanity.

When climate change alters key natural processes, it can set off a chain reaction destabilising essential planetary systems. Increasing droughts, for instance, are reducing the ability of tropical forests to store carbon, making them more prone to fires, releasing yet more greenhouse gas emissions. In 2020, researchers showed that the Amazon is losing its ability to store carbon and could become a major emitter of carbon as early as 2035. The colossal ice loss in the Arctic has reduced the albedo capacity of key Earth systems to reflect heat away from the planet. This is why we are seeing record temperatures north of the Arctic Circle. In June 2020, parts of Siberia reached 38°C (100°F). The higher the temperature, the more permafrost thaws, with greater emissions of both CO₂ and methane, leading to even greater warming and triggering further negative feedback loops.

Biodiversity loss is reaching mass extinction rates. At least one million of eight million identified species risk disappearance, many within decades.⁴ Food chains are already impacted, vital ecosystems are collapsing and health pandemics are increasing. Species diversity and ecosystems integrity play a fundamental role in regulating the climate, water cycles, carbon sequestration, food production and human health protection. The COVID pandemic has shown even more clearly our dependency on food security, access to water and proper health services.

We know the existential risk is real yet the opportunities to not just avert disaster but to rebuild, improve and regenerate are also readily available. History has shown that humanity is adapted to respond to disaster through cooperation and innovation. But the potential consequences we face this time are different - we have a narrow window to reduce risk of catastrophe. We need to acknowledge this is a planetary emergency and time is running out. A stable, resilient future for people and planet - the most desirable future for all – remains within our grasp.



⁴ <https://www.ipbes.net/global-assessment-report-biodiversity-ecosystem-services>



ALL LARGE PUBLICLY-LISTED AND
FAMILY-OWNED COMPANIES TO COMMIT
TO SCIENCE-BASED TARGETS, SHIFT
TO GREEN INVESTMENTS, DISCLOSE
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT AND EXPOSURE
TO RISK AND REPORT BY 2025



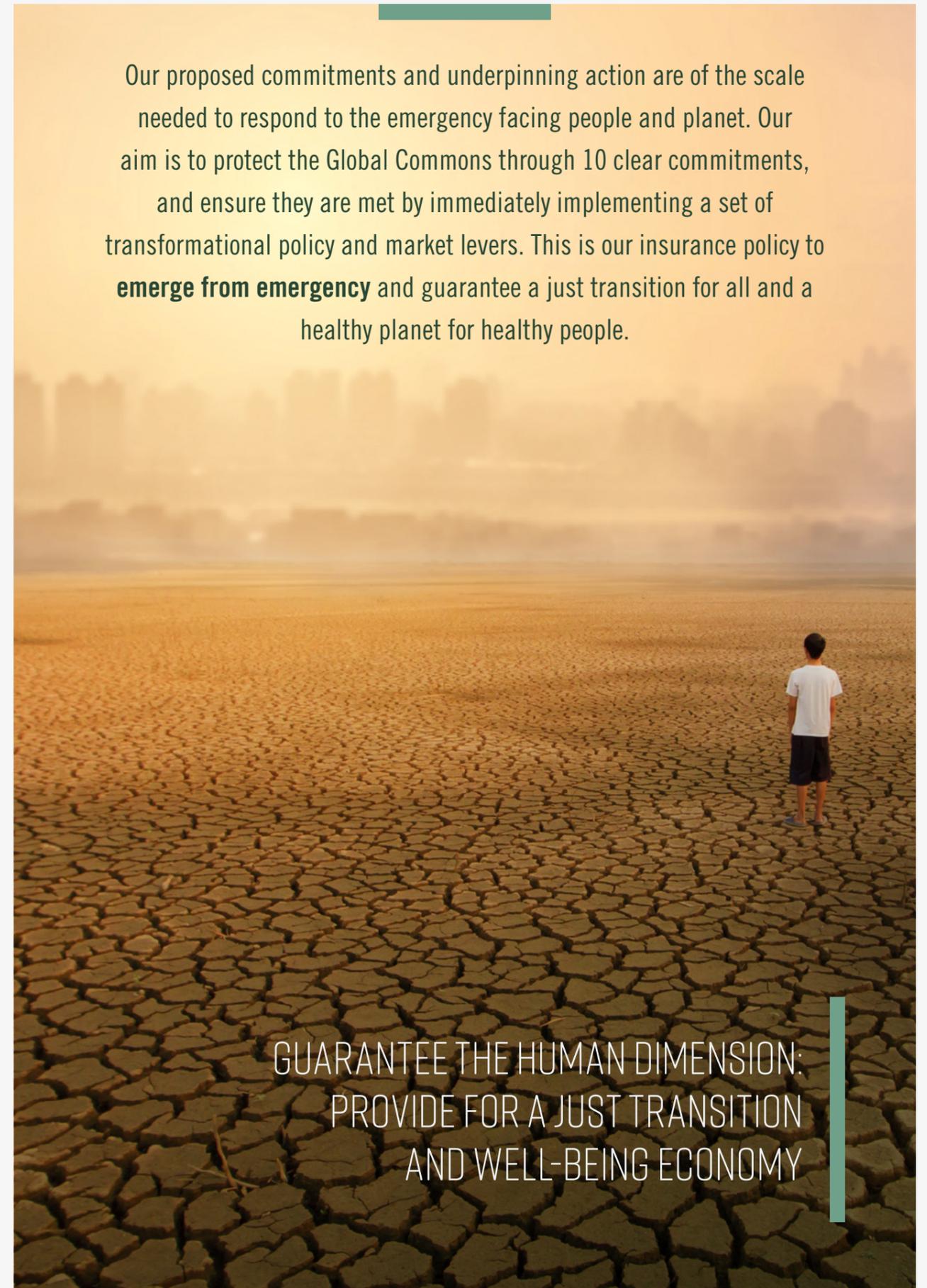
Fundamental changes to the environment threaten to undermine the progress we have made in health and life expectancy. More heat stress coupled with air pollution, for example, reduces labour productivity and causes more deaths, particularly in mid- and low-latitude regions. Fires from intentional burning in agriculture spread to neighbouring farms and forests, damaging soil carbon capacity and productivity. Declining crop yields in tropical and sub-tropical regions will increase undernutrition for many millions, stunting children's growth. On top of this, land-use changes, pollution and temperature rise are causing more infectious and mosquito/animal-borne diseases will only continue to thrive.

Outbreaks of animal-borne and other infectious diseases such as Ebola, Sars, bird flu and now COVID-19, caused by a novel coronavirus, are on the rise and this is only the tip of the iceberg. Without a better balance between man and nature, zoonotic diseases such as COVID-19 will continue to thrive. Breaching this threshold of warming will push the planet towards irreversible and catastrophic biosphere feedbacks and greater human health consequences.^{5,6}

Current economic assessments of planetary changes are deeply concerning and global economic and societal risks of accelerated planetary pressure are unimaginable. Yet, we know that the costs of action are far lower than the costs of inaction. The tools we need to respond boldly to the Planetary Emergency are readily available, and they will reap significant societal and economic benefits. The IPCC Special Report on 1.5°C (SR 1.5) tells us that remaining at or below 1.5°C remains physically, technically and economically within our reach if we act at sufficient speed. Over the next 10 years, we can steer our development path onto one which benefits all humanity and allows economies in transition to leapfrog and immediately seize the opportunities from a low-carbon, well-being economy. An economy that ensures complete symbiosis between people, planet and prosperity.

⁵ Future of Human Climate Niche <https://www.pnas.org/content/117/21/11350>

⁶ Climate tipping points – too risky to bet against <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-019-03595-0>



Our proposed commitments and underpinning action are of the scale needed to respond to the emergency facing people and planet. Our aim is to protect the Global Commons through 10 clear commitments, and ensure they are met by immediately implementing a set of transformational policy and market levers. This is our insurance policy to **emerge from emergency** and guarantee a just transition for all and a healthy planet for healthy people.

GUARANTEE THE HUMAN DIMENSION:
PROVIDE FOR A JUST TRANSITION
AND WELL-BEING ECONOMY

ANNEX: AUTHORS & CONTRIBUTORS

MAIN AUTHORS:

Sandrine Dixson-Declève
(The Club of Rome)

Owen Gaffney
(The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research,
Stockholm Resilience Centre)

Johan Rockström
(The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research)

Anders Wijkman (The Club of Rome)

SUPPORTING AUTHORS:

James Lloyd (Nature4Climate)

George Biesmans (formerly The Club of Rome)

The Planetary Emergency Partnership is a network of 220 organisations calling for the United Nations to declare a planetary emergency. The partnership began in 2019 with the Club of Rome, Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research and WWF. Since 2020, and the global pandemic, the network has grown substantially.

CONTRIBUTORS AND PARTNERS

Amy Leurs (Future Earth)

Andy Haines
(London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine)

Bernadette Fischler (WWF-UK)

Chad Frischmann (Project Drawdown)

Chandran Nair (The Club of Rome)

Claude Martin (The Club of Rome)

Daniel Klingensfeld
(The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research)

Gail Whiteman
(Lancaster University, Arctic Basecamp at Davos)

Herbert Girardet (The Club of Rome)

Hunter Lovins (The Club of Rome)

Ian T. Dunlop (The Club of Rome)

Jinfeng Zhou (The Club of Rome)

John D. Liu (Ecosystem Restoration Camps,
Commonland Foundation)

John Fullerton (The Club of Rome)

John Schellnhuber (The Club of Rome)

Juliana Gärtner
(The Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research)

Kaddu Sebunya (The Club of Rome)

Kristín Vala Ragnarsdóttir
(The Club of Rome)

Luc Bas (IUCN)

Maja Göpel (The Club of Rome)

Mamphela Ramphela (The Club of Rome)

Mark Wright (WWF-UK)

Matthis Wackernagel (The Club of Rome)

Nebojsa Nakicenovic (IIASA)

Pam Pearson
(International Cryosphere Climate Initiative)

Peter Johnston (The Club of Rome)

Petra Kuenkel (The Club of Rome)

Sara Stefanini (Mission 2020)

Sharon Johnson (The NewNow, NAMATI)

STOP THE DESTRUCTION OF
CRITICAL LAND-BASED ECOSYSTEMS
AND CARBON SINKS AND ACCELERATE
THEIR EFFECTIVE PROTECTION,
RESTORATION AND RESILIENCE



OUR AIM IS TO PROTECT THE GLOBAL COMMONS THROUGH
10 CLEAR COMMITMENTS, AND ENSURE THEY ARE MET BY
IMMEDIATELY IMPLEMENTING A SET OF TRANSFORMATIONAL
POLICY AND MARKET LEVERS NATIONALLY AND LOCALLY. THIS
IS OUR INSURANCE POLICY TO EMERGE FROM EMERGENCY
AND GUARANTEE A JUST TRANSITION FOR ALL.



The Club of Rome
Lagerhausstrasse 9
CH-8400 Winterthur
SWITZERLAND

Contact:
Phone: +41(0)52 244 0808
contact@clubofrome.org
www.clubofrome.org



Printed on
recycled paper

July 2020