

Alternative Paradigms in Planetary Management

Dear ABC (board, management and staff),

Following an IPCC 2018 Special Report stressing the urgent need to keep global warming below 1.5°C, and mindful of previous IPCC reports which noted a range of possible temperature increases up to 7.8°C (see "[Anthropocene Warming](#)"), I wonder whether I may be able to point to an additional dimension of the interface between climate change and the human response to its very own 1-in-100-million-year-event.

My academic focus (in Japanese universities) was on creativity and exploring in my classrooms the questions:

why has the recent evolutionary increase in the complexity of organised human endeavour led the species 'homo sapiens sapiens' to self-define more accurately as 'homo stupidens stupidens'

what is the dimension of this failing in man's increasing occupation of the planet

why is our species so singularly destructive, to the point of even risking "futurecide"

what creative role can the individual play in an organisation responsible for such counter-intuitive decision-making.

Basic terminology:

'stupidens': the only species to be responsible for a major extinction event, the Anthropocene, the 6th major extinction

'stupidens stupidens': near total incapacity to respond with the necessary urgency despite the findings of planet-wide scientific research by the IPCC

"futurecide": the mathematical axiom that our propensity for (quantitative!) exponential growth has an end-point on the time axis, while the choice of 'qualitative' growth would allow for unlimited civilisational 'development'.

There is an 'extreme' element in evaluating climate risk that I think needs to be taken into consideration in determining legally required and appropriate risk management:

the ultimate 'outlier', the hundred-million-year extinction event.

The IPCC AR5 (2014) actually points to this (despite 'oversight' by major governments) as a 'high confidence' possibility: [up to 7.8°C increase in temperature](#) in the life of today's schoolchildren. (In a 2018 Special Report, political 'oversight', apparently, has succeeded in completely eliminating all reference to potential extremes).

Beyond the IPCC

From memory, an IPCC AR4 (2007) draft report included reference to possible positive feedback due to the release of 'Arctic methane' in the East Siberian Arctic Shelf (ESAS). I was surprised to see this had disappeared in the final

report, and continues to be excluded in later iterations of the IPCC report, especially the more widely read “*Summary for Policymakers*”.

While it seems that most climate modelling has largely ignored the cumulative effect of ‘Arctic methane’, data-driven research ‘on the ground’ (effectively ‘on the ice’ and in “Russia!”) has led to ‘predictions’ of possible runaway warming that are dire in the extreme. Well known work by the wife and husband team Shakova and Semiletov (Russian, based in Alaska) has indicated a possible methane ‘burp’ of 50GT from the ESAS “at any time” – the veritable ‘tipping point’. Large-scale methane releases meanwhile are increasingly frequent.

In addition, decades long soundings ‘under the ice’, from British submarines, has allowed Cambridge Polar Ocean Physics Professor Peter Wadhams to record decreasing ice ‘thickness’, thus decreasing ice volume and inevitable disappearance of Arctic ice, decades earlier than indicated by the IPCC – now a matter of years compared to ‘end of the century’ according to the IPCC, evidentiating yet another positive feedback process and closer-to-exponential warming. Note, Prof. Wadhams, an ultimate ‘authority figure’ in this field, endorsed Natalia Shakova’s observations when asked whether “civilization could withstand a 50-gigaton release of methane”, answering: “No, I don’t think it can.”

In fact, the mathematics of ‘our’ Anthropocene and resulting global warming are simple, [supported also by Prof Wadhams](#): 5°C warming due to CO² can cause a further 5°C warming due to methane release, resulting in a repeat of the Permian, with 90% extinction of life forms. (See also “[Arctic methane: a global warming emergency](#)”).

Responsible risk management

The fact that extreme temperature increase is possible does not limit our response to adaptation – or to becoming an early climate refugee in Tasmania or Tierra del Fuego.

When a major war breaks out, there can be a virtually instantaneous response on national and supra-national level, with the restructuring of corporate, industrial and societal activity to meet the perceived threat. If awareness of the present exponentially greater threat can be promulgated along with appropriate decision-making for risk management, while ‘instructing’ media to promote a constructive response instead of profiteering from a climate of panic, it may be possible to create a sustainable planet, with continued human participation.

There can be multiple modifications of our ‘planetary footprint’ that can ease the burden of our self-defined ‘advanced civilisation’. Each of 7 billion individuals (though rarely organisations) will have creative proposals to share in this direction. Change can be easy, even pleasant. We simply have to make a perfect ‘people world’: a world in which each individual is respected and given value; a world in which each species is protected and given its appropriate space; a world in which all of the planetary systems supporting and enriching life are allowed to flourish. In other words, ‘profit’ may need to give way to ‘people and planet’.

Discovering alternative paradigms

While the above is simply a collation of readily available reporting on the emerging climate catastrophe, and a few commonly held ideas for meeting this

challenge, it may also be possible for the present author to make a personal research contribution in attempting to understand why ‘sapiens’ has become ‘stupidens’ – and how to become ‘sapiens’ once more. There is a simple means by which the key element of creativity, namely “flash of insight”, can be facilitated in [group discussion](#) and decision-making in order to ‘illuminate’ the underlying conditioning and subordination to group or organisational goals that tend to determine corporate and government planning outcomes. (My academic website <http://www.creativediscussion.org> details 20 years of research into creativity and development of “Creative Discussion using Plain Pair Groups” – see esp. “The Awakeness Paradigm”). Long term experimentation suggests that appropriate forms of interaction can enable the individual to access regular “insight” and share that insight in group discussion across the organisation in a way that can be transformative of the organisation, while finding ways to respect the constraints imposed by and help reverse planetary warming.

A relatively unexplored dimension is the involvement of the planet ‘herself’ in re-establishing a normal state of thermic homeostasis. Present theories posit the active – some would even say conscious – role of the planet in maintaining dynamic system interactions within a range maximally suited to multiple levels of planetary life. The planetary dimension implicit in local (individual) interaction can lead us to ‘recognise’ the role of ‘the planet’ in guiding the purely individual experience of “flash of insight” in a direction that is in accord with supra-individual and supra-species needs. This form of ‘planetary insight’ has been hypothesised as “[Earthsight](#)”, giving it the admittedly unproven role of shepherding multiple-individual “insight” in an organisational context in the direction of decision-making that is in accord with fundamental organisational requirements while respecting the needs of planet and people: prioritising beneficial externalities over adverse externalities.

Can we find an example of very long-term resource management that can serve as a template for post-agricultural land management and post-industrial resource management? Facing this challenge in Australia allows us direct access to an advanced decimillennial civilisation with highly sophisticated maintenance of biosphere and living space that was preserved over 100,000 years from the Kimberley to the Huon Valley, despite major geological catastrophes. If “we” cannot reverse the action of 10,000 years of what has become ‘western civilisation’, we need to unhesitatingly welcome ‘the voice’ of indigenous Australia in advising our choice of civilisation, polity and economy.

For further development of certain ideas see my submission to the Senate enquiry into the Abbott Government's Direct Action Plan: “[Futurecide](#)” (for original see APH site [No. 69](#)).

Additional thoughts on global warming and related issues can be found on: www.earthsight.org.

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