

The Environmental Organizations *must urgently* form a FEDERATION with the power and reach to halt the degradation of the Biosphere

An APPEAL and a CHALLENGE to *you* - and other leaders of the environmental movement.

The formation of a federation of environmental organizations is a logical and necessary action to counteract the global forces that compel us to degrade the biosphere. It is a step we can take now, with immediate benefits. The aim is to fully support and enhance your current on-going efforts.

Does this make sense to you? Are you willing to discuss this idea further? Would you attend a remote meeting? Will you suggest others that may be interested?

Or, if you think this is a total waste of time will you tell me? Thank you!

INTRODUCTION

We humans have decided to degrade both our physical environment and the social structures that define us. We do this deliberately and consciously, despite understanding the consequences and despite knowing the solutions.

The actions taken by you and your organizations to stem this degradation are passionate, courageous and based on decades of knowledge.

Yet, each news cycle documents the acceleration towards irreversible physical and social tipping points. Less than 60 days from the USA elections we must stand still, take stock and act urgently – all at once. It is possible.

(Let me be clear: What follows is not a wholesale condemnation of modern technology, finance or governance. Those concepts feed 8 billion people. They give healthier, richer lives to most of us. They are an integral part of our humanity.)

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Why then do we persist in this illogical degradation? Because the “thing” we know as Neoliberalism, Oligarchism, Capitalism of various colors, and sundry other names, is hellbent on exploiting the biosphere. Very likely to the point where only the very rich will have a chance at leading lives of security and comfort. This “thing” is older, bigger, smarter, more organized, and more ruthless than any of us. It transcends politics and nations. It appears unstoppable.

By comparison the Environmental Movement, no matter how knowledgeable, courageous and persistent, is young, small, local and inefficient. It *must, urgently*, form a federation (a fellowship, call it what you will...) with the power and reach to halt and, if at all possible, to reverse the degradation of humanity and biosphere. It is necessary and doable¹.

The huge amount of knowledge we have accumulated does not seem to help. [As Yuval Harari puts it:](#)

“Despite – or perhaps because of – our hoard of data, we are continuing to spew greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, pollute rivers and oceans, cut down forests, destroy entire habitats, drive countless species to extinction, and jeopardise the ecological foundations of our own species. We are also producing ever more powerful weapons of mass destruction, from thermonuclear bombs to doomsday viruses. Our leaders don’t lack information about these dangers, yet **instead of collaborating** to find solutions, they are edging closer to a global war.”

If our national, political leaders will not collaborate, then we must.

Divided we fall. United we stand.

Let me assume you agree with the above conclusions. How then could this “Federation” be formed?

The simple, naive answer is: By holding a meeting. An agenda follows:

¹See [“Is it even possible?”](#) at the end of this discussion

Inaugural Meeting of the International Federation of Environmental Organizations

AGENDA

1. Welcome, Housekeeping, Introductions
2. Vision, Goals, Ethics
3. Scope, Governance, Structure, Leadership
4. Money Matters
5. Marketing
6. Consumption
7. Politics, Justice, Violence
8. Time
9. Religions
10. Partners
11. Population
12. Artificial Intelligence
13. Next Steps

While not exhaustive, this agenda is already way too long for a realistic initial meeting. Items 2, 3 and 13 will be tough enough.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Before continuing to more detail, please allow me to use two abbreviations:

- **E** - for the forces we describe as Neoliberalism, Oligarchism, Capitalism etc.
- **F** - for the proposed Federation of Environmental Organizations

As a memory aid; E for Empire, F for Federation, [*may the force be with us*]

Further reasons for using these symbols are in Appendix 3

#1 - Welcome, Housekeeping, Introductions

The usual - *[Just getting to this item is a win!]*

#2 - Vision, Goals, Ethics

Clearly these generic points, without external input, are personal, formed by my experience and limitations.

It is therefore foolish for me to try and suggest a Vision for F (the Federation). It needs to emerge from F itself. The setting of the Vision and Goals will happen in parallel to the creation of F. As F evolves, it will set its own goals. Our initial responsibility is to define the most basic ethics and limits.

Vision and Goals

- Given these disclaimers I visualize a network - unified and flexible, global and local, political and ethical - whose main goal is to effectively counter and influence E (the forces compelling the ongoing degradation).
- And two caveats:
 - Once started, the process of creating F will become self-sustaining. That may not be along the lines envisaged by the original founders. *[The road to hell]*
 - The formation of a federation will impact the existing organizations *[e.g. An organization fighting the establishment of a lithium mine may need to recognize that blocking the mine “here” will mean the mine is built “there” - with potentially higher environmental and human impacts]*

Ethics

As for Vision, a definitive code of ethics will emerge from creating F. We need to ask ourselves some basic questions:

- Do we have a responsibility to the future Humanity?
 - Can't we just let them figure it out for themselves?
 - Will they blame us, or forgive us? Do we care? After all, we don't blame our ancestors for killing off the mammoth, or the mega-fauna of Australia and New Zealand or destroying practically every old-growth forest in Europe and North America.
 - Won't future humanity be happy in their mega-structures, tied to virtual reality sets and eating healthy, tasty vat-grown meals?
- Do we think all humans are equal? Or...
 - Do we accept the current (worsening) inequality?
 - Do we let the forces of exploitation, repression and nationalism take their course?

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- Do we ignore the export of waste and of polluting industries to make our community appear more environmentally sensitive?
- Do we agree that violence - *[totally legal violence of course]* - is the final arbiter of who will be able to consume the earth's resources?

The first question is fundamental. It deserves a little more discussion.

Do we have a responsibility to the future? Let's simplify; do we have a duty to our children? And then, do those children have a duty to theirs? The answer to both is: yes! Any other answer is rightly regarded as a mental or criminal deviance. If there is this responsibility from generation to generation, then, yes, we have a responsibility, a "duty of care", to future generations.

Unbelievable as it may seem there are counter arguments. I'll look at two. Both are spread by E, both implicitly and explicitly, to generate the actions that E desires (Consumption, Comfort, Status etc.)

The first unfolds like this: Yes, of course, I have a duty-of-care to my children. That is to "my" children. I do not have a duty-of-care to "your" children. And that teaching, ranging from modern advertising to the commandments of ancient religions leads us to exploitation, race hatred and, eventually, to war. One could argue that this philosophy is what we need to improve humanity, that it has stood us (in our privileged enclaves) in good stead so far. And it works - while there is an infinite biosphere. And while the weapons we use against each other do not cause global damage. But the argument falls apart when we run against the immovable boundaries of the biosphere (which we are doing now). The argument falls apart when the weapons at our disposal have the power to irreparably damage humanity. If used (and the probability of use is high) they will affect everybody, winners and losers.

The second argument is: Yes, I have a duty-of-care to my children. I look after them while they're young. But once they are self-sufficient, they need to look after themselves, they need to cope with the environment I have left them. Then I've done my job, time to retire.

Both of those arguments are so depressing! We cannot, with any conscience, embrace them.

#3 - Scope, Governance, Structure, Leadership

Scope

- Ultimately, F needs to be global to be successful.
- But - without suggesting a limit - we may need to start a little smaller. Initially it will likely be a handful of individuals, probably concentrating on the US, UK,

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Australia/NZ, Canada and western Europe. This group bears responsibility for most of the historic and much of the current degradation².

- On subject matter it must cover all the degradation effects - (see Appendix 1 - Degradation)

Governance

On an operational level the governance will be like that of a corporation; a board of management, some executives, supported by a small staff.

It is the level above that needs more consideration. The components of F will need to follow the laws of the nations they are based in, in the same way the existing Environmental Organizations do now. However, F, as an autonomous entity, cannot be tied to any nation or other controlling construct. Religions claim their ultimate loyalty to their deities. F may claim ultimate responsibility to the biosphere, but I do not yet see how this would be formalized and written into a meaningful charter.

The UN could be proposed as a role model. However, the ultimate power over the UN rests on a council of nations. Each of which expresses their national interest, and some of which can veto any resolution, based on the vagaries of the current rulers of that country.

Structure

A simple-minded approach is to look at E and shamelessly copy the best portions of its “social DNA”. The resulting F structure will likely be a mix of a multinational corporation, government organization and organized religion.

The inclusion of religions in this list may raise questions. But they are examples of international, inclusive, timeless organizations. Organizations that are not necessarily focused on economic outcomes. (More discussion under item #9 below)

Mirroring a multi-national organization, I see “Departments”, “Geographies”, “Partners” and a “Management” structure. The operational groups being the current Environmental Organizations.

Major benefits of an F organization will be:

- The combination of global AND local action.
- Communication of what works and what does not.

² Are these “PETROSTATES”?

There are strong arguments to call the US, UK, Canada, Australia and Norway “[Climate Hypocrites](#)” and “[Petrostates](#)”

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- Mutual support across disciplines (science and technology, law, marketing, finance) and, probably more important, across our societal, imaginary boundaries.

Leadership

Who can possibly lead F? It's probably easier to list who cannot / should not; Old white men, Politicians, Corporate chiefs, Monarchs, Religious leaders *[or anybody who wears funny hats and elaborate cloaks as part of their job - surgeons and welders excepted]* - in short anyone who has profited unduly from the largesse handed out by E.

OR, more likely, there will be no single leader. F will lead itself, selecting individuals where, when and in what sphere of influence they are needed.

#4 - Money Matters

Money is the lifeblood of E. Within E it is the primary measure of success. With money comes ownership; land, natural resources, goods, animals and people. Ownership buys power. Ownership requires protection against intruders and thieves - and that requires violence.

F has two areas of "money" interest:

- How can F obtain enough money to keep its own operations functioning? Charitable contributions can only do so much. Access to adequate finance comes through access to the tax base - via Politics. *[Money is not part of my skill set - others in the F community will need to step in here. From a personal perspective the current system of each organization soliciting funding appears inadequate and inefficient.]*
- On the level of economics multiple studies (e.g. The [Dasgupta Review](#)) have pointed out the cost of biosphere degradation and proposed approaches to merge economic and environmental goals. This knowledge needs to be integrated into the overall messaging disseminated through F Marketing.

#5 - Marketing

Marketing is possibly the most important new, or different, aspect of F, when compared to the existing Environmental Organizations.

Marketing needs to embellish and "sell" a basic story as follows:

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Over centuries a creature known as “E” evolved on the earth. This ravenous, inhuman thing, for reasons only it truly knows, is intent on making the biosphere dangerous for all of us and unlivable for a large part of humanity. E does this by extracting the riches of the biosphere and putting back only its toxic excrements.

We have all known, for decades, how to stop and reverse this degradation. But E understands us so well that, using money, old antagonisms, charm and violent intimidation, it has stopped us from taking the necessary actions.

To oppose and influence E takes unity, determination and persistence. We, “F”, a federation of environmental organizations will, with your help, channel E toward a “cleaner, safer, healthier, more secure world”³.

It is a unique opportunity for all of us to bring about an enlightenment period unlike any in human history.

Marketing, within F, will:

- Lead with a clear unifying message - (per Vision and Goals above)



- Provide a rallying symbol and identity - + “1 biosphere” [just suggestions...⁴] - and use these “everywhere”. This “branding” exercise is vitally important. We can’t use lazy symbols like E and F - they need to be memorable, universal, exciting, a real challenge for the F marketeers.
- Use all the proven marketing methods; five and drum, flags and fancy hats, music, advertising, T-shirts, influencers...
- Uncomplicate things (E greenwashes and confuses)
- Tell the (painful) “Truth” - always
- Use the formation of F itself as a newsworthy, significant step in the battle against biosphere degradation

³ JOHN KERRY

[In an interview](#): “The movement writ large [that would be F, 🌍] needs to do a hell of a lot better job communicating to people that on the other side of this transition is a better world — cleaner, safer, healthier, more secure.”

⁴ The flag symbols “∃!O” represent “There exists, exactly one, Biosphere”

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- **The marketing challenge is to promote F as a unique, exciting opportunity to be part of an enlightenment movement unlike any in human history.**

#6 - Consumption

Many of the arguments around renewable energy, electric vehicles and other means of reducing GHG (Green House Gas) emissions tacitly assume a steady or increasing need for energy. E frames the argument in terms of progress. The need for a drastic change in consumption habits is rarely acknowledged.

E: Buy, Buy, Buy! My, My, My! Now, Now, Now! Buy more, save more. Buy now, pay later [*Very true*]. Bigger is better. Your neighbor has the GT! You deserve more.

F: You can be better than this. You can be a part of saving the biosphere. Think when you buy. Do all those things in your garage or storage locker really make you happier?

#7 - Politics, Justice, Violence

Politics



/ Isaac Cordal, Installation; "Follow The Leaders"

E: Politics is everything. E uses every available resource to control political decisions at every level of government.

F: Needs to understand, learn from and implement similar political practices.

Justice



E: Justice is laws - which are written by politicians. Justice is courts, legal maneuvers, judges, lawyers, intimidation, prisons, executions, punishment and revenge. All of which can be used to further E's agenda.

F: Justice is equal regard for all humans. Justice is protection of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness

Violence

E loves violence, loves war - all that fuel to be burnt, armaments to be manufactured, cities to rebuild. E uses revenge, cruelty, pain, and conscious neglect to control those who do not act according to E's plan. E may well unleash the ultimate violence of nuclear war.

E routinely uses violence in the pursuit of its goals. Some is illegal, perpetrated for the gain of resources (agricultural land, timber, fish, traditional medicines, vanity items). Much is governmental, therefore "legal": Armed Forces, Law Enforcement, Physical Confinement, Dispossession and Conscious Neglect.

F cannot use illegal violence or conscious neglect. First because our vision, goals and ethics will not allow it, and second because such use will provoke a disproportionate response that will undo what has been achieved so far and delay further progress. What F can do is to ensure that legal violence is used minimally and only in a "truly just" cause.

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“1733 land and environmental defenders were killed between 2012 and 2021” - [Global Witness](#)



Two operatives of the French foreign intelligence agency mined and sank the [Greenpeace ship “Rainbow Warrior”](#), at Auckland, New Zealand on 10 July 1985.



“Climate activist killed in ‘Cop City’ protest sustained **57 gunshot wounds**, official autopsy says”

The story of Manuel Esteban Paez “Tortuguita” Terán is complex but illustrates the use of disproportionate, overwhelming, legal violence by E

Arrests and Fines for climate protesters. **Punishment without trial:** Britain’s latest weapon in the war against dissent; Companies are taking out devastating ‘civil injunctions’ against climate activists – and making them pay the costs / [George Monbiot](#)



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[The tragedy of the Adriana](#); an example of conscious neglect.

[/ First dog on the moon 11 Aug 2023](#)



#8 - Time

Time is a fundamental topic. I include the following items here to support the argument for URGENT formation of F.

E: “Shallow Time” - Instant gratification, millisecond trades, and maybe a generation or two when the topic is investment and inheritance.

F: “Deep Time” - Think multiple generations, think a thousand years ahead - what sort of biosphere will we leave for the humanity of that future?

- The time to explain is over. If we try to explain now we have already lost the battle.
- “Every hour is now an “if only” moment: offering a better chance of avoiding collapse than the hour that follows.” Earth systems are being rushed towards their tipping points by governments that offer us nothing but chaos.” / [George Monbiot, 31 Oct 2023](#)
- At present social concerns overwhelmingly control human actions. At some previous time, maybe 10,000 years ago, human actions were largely controlled by the biosphere. We need to flip, or at least balance, those arrows of influence
- We need to expand our time horizon to be more in synch with the time scales of the biosphere
- We, now, do need to think a thousand years out. Will the people of that future record a history of dark centuries of extinction, pandemic, hunger and global war?

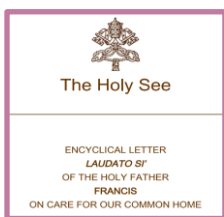
#9 - Religions

E professes to love religion, but more often uses it to divide people. **E** uses religion to justify growth, profit and riches - but only for its chosen people.

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For **F**, religions can provide examples and be unifying forces in the battle for the biosphere. Religions teach of goals beyond the individual, linking past and future, striving for a common good, in balance with nature. They transcend the imaginary boundaries of nation, race and even of religion itself.

Religions embed rituals, symbols and myths as part of their identity, as part of their power. **E** is totally aware of that power. **F** must not ignore it. The ordered repetition of rites, feasts, daily obligations, celebrations, plus the use of colors and symbols, provides structure, certainty and comfort.



Religious leaders - Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu - have urged their followers to live lives of care for the environment. Oriental religions have all living things as a sacred foundation. Indigenous religions around the world have nature, and humanity's place within that nature, at the core of their beliefs.

- In an [unrelated article](#) the writer refers to "...an arid and implausible atheism" in comparison to what I assume he regards as "real" religion. I strongly reject such a characterization. What could be less arid than the complexity of the universe and the miracle of our consciousness to perceive some of that. And let's not even start on the word "implausible".
- **F** will accommodate and partner with religions. It will learn from them, especially in matters of ethics, symbols, rites and an approach to time. But it will have a very different vision from the Abrahamic religions.

#10 - Partners

E: Is a master at partnerships. Through continual experimentation it hones its models. We lament the failures through bankruptcies and stock market crashes, but **E** learns from them and adapts.

F: While asserting its independence **F** will need to cultivate partnerships. This is of course happening now. A more formal and uniform code will be required, especially when the partners have national or economic priorities.

#11 - Population

We need to discuss this, no matter how uncomfortable the subject. This is one instance where abstract symbols become useful, by taking the immediate emotion away from the topic.

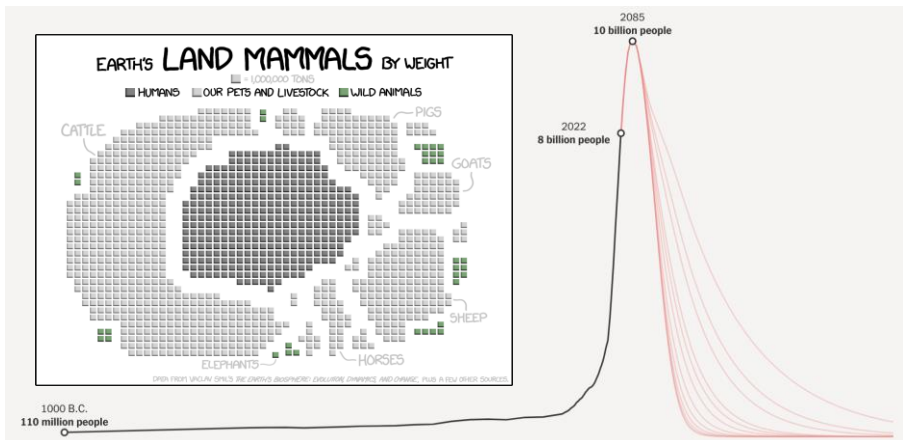
E: Population growth is necessary for the proper functioning and growth of the economy. Any reduction in population (China, Italy, South Korea) is a danger signal. E routinely, unthinkingly, states that any single human life is priceless, while at the same time insurers, actuaries, judges and the like seem to have no problem assigning a precise monetary value to that same human.

F: We must discuss the human population. We must cope with the discomfort of holding contradictory ideas.

We know, approximately, the demographic trends for the next decades. The question is: will the inevitable slowdown and possible reversal be painful, disruptive and violent or will it be just, equal and welcomed. And how will we cope with the extra billions in the meantime?

This discussion can become very dark; Does E have a depopulation plan? What economic use does E foresee for the bulk of humanity when robots and AI can do practically all the required work to keep a privileged few in absolute comfort?

And what about non-human populations? Are we responsible for the future of wild animals? What about agricultural animals? Or, to raise an even more undiscussable subject: What about our pets? [see inset in graph below / xkcd.com/1338.] What about all the other living things from bacteria to blue whales?



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The World's Population May Peak in Your Lifetime. What Happens Next? / [NYT 18.Sep.2023](#)

This is a projection we cannot ignore. The future reduction in population almost seems to justify a do-nothing approach to biosphere degradation. But look at the next 60 years; by this prediction we will add another China and half an India to the world population.

By the time we reach peak population the biosphere may well be locked into a degraded and degrading cycle by the decisions we make now.

#12 - Artificial Intelligence

[“Is AI a danger to humanity or our salvation?”](#) The founders of AI are divided over what's next.”

E uses AI now and will use it more extensively in future (churning out more GHG in the process). E will use AI to cherry pick statistics, emphasize economic hurdles, create conclusions based on false equivalence arguments, package dubious arguments in accessible prose and then use those arguments as “proof” in ongoing debate. The spread of misinformation ([as described in this article](#)) and distractions is well under way and will almost certainly become much worse as the tools become more sophisticated.

F must, at the very least, be aware of the capabilities of AI for mischief. Ideally F will sponsor and use AI tools to detect and counteract misinformation before it spreads too widely.

Positive uses of AI will be:

- integration of topics such as climate change, biodiversity, water use and pollution of all forms. (Subjects which, encouraged by the narrative spread by E, appear to be separate issues.)
- Collection and dissemination of the various local and global action being taken by F
- Indexing and cross-referencing published materials. Condensing such materials into standardized formats and visual representations.

Ideally AI will allow a wider view of the biosphere's systems. While, at the same time, clarifying and illustrating connections. (also, see a recent discussion on [National Academies](#))

#13 - Next Steps

- Assigning of roles, responsibilities
- Assigning tasks, deliverables
- Spreading the word to more partners
- Preparing the materials for wider distributions (Press Releases, Web Site, Social Media spots, Articles, Books...
- All the things that a corporation does when merging with another...

IS IT EVEN POSSIBLE?

Well, of course it's possible. We can certainly envisage F as a United Nations without the shackles of national interests and spiteful vetoes, or as a science-based religion, or a mixture of both. We have enough future fiction to provide models.

But that's just toying with words. Can F, even if formed and active, be successful?

It will be a struggle to induce E into a major course change before damage to the biosphere becomes irreparable. Here however, are some indicators that success is truly possible:

The "social DNA" to create F exists and is shown by:

- Readiness to sacrifice personal safety and comfort in pursuit of higher goals. Prime examples: War, Disaster Relief... [*Sports competitions, Taylor Swift and Adele concerts*⁵]
- Ability to create and control complex social structures across national, racial, economic and religious divides. Examples: Religions, NGO's.

Our culture/society is primed for the evolution of new structures like F:

- The complex, networked structure of our global society facilitates the rapid evolution of new self-organizing creatures (e.g. Social Media, Extremist Politics)
- Communication is now practically instantaneous. New constructs can emerge in days. F could be alive and active in a blindingly short time (ref. the millions of views of a viral YouTube spot)
- F *can* overcome E's 10,000-year head start.

We don't have to convince everybody:

- As Monbiot and Hutchinson⁶ state: "Both observational and experimental data suggest that once roughly 25 percent of the population is committed to change, most of the rest of society quickly joins them." [*In the US a 10% shift of uncommitted voters would result in landslide results*⁷]

⁵ If not obvious by now, comments in square brackets [] are not meant to be taken too seriously

⁶ "Invisible Doctrine - The Secret History Of Neoliberalism" by George Monbiot and Peter Hutchinson - available through [The Guardian](#) and in the US through [Amazon](#), a Guardian review [here](#).

⁷ It could be a very, very small number; "[Can 0.03% of US votes really swing the presidential election?](#)" Hundreds of millions of Americans cast their votes in the US election, but a tiny fraction of those can swing the race for one candidate or another."

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- They continue: “The most important question that humanity has ever faced is whether we can reach the social tipping points (to effectively oppose the degradation) before we reach the environmental tipping points.”
- For a united F that is an achievable goal!

E is afraid:

- E is not stupid, quite the opposite. It is a brilliant psychologist, technological innovator, relentless marketeer and ruthless manipulator.
- But behind the façade it knows it has an illogical, impossible foundation. It knows it cannot disregard the absolute limits of the biosphere and understands the mathematical impossibility of unlimited growth. E is aware that it cannot sustain its contempt for the welfare of humanity as a whole.
- Look at the humans E selects and rewards to be its most visible extremities. Those choices signal the desperation, and eagerness for ruinous action, that lie at the heart of E.
- E knows that F, in some form, is coming. Its violence against protesters, and others that seem to threaten E, is proof that it is afraid of the future and has no coherent plan.
- Even if E succeeds in its apparent mission to massively degrade the planet, either through continued exploitation, or through nuclear war, it knows that it will itself be destroyed.

And me - an asocial old grump - I still believe there are more than enough good people out there to bring F to life. Yes, it is possible – and now it’s up to you.

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Appendix 1 - Degradation

Biosphere Degradation goes way beyond Climate Change. The items listed below are connected inside the complex systems of the biosphere. This list does not affect the primary argument for the creation of the federation (F). It does, however, become important when we discuss the operational structure of F. It is **almost certainly incomplete**, and additions are welcome

Solving (or at least reducing) any one problem will not necessarily solve any others.

For instance: Let's assume that climate change - arguably the most important threat - is solved overnight.

A miraculous breakthrough gives us low temperature fusion. Pollution free energy at ridiculously low cost becomes available for everyone. GHG emissions tumble, stock markets soar. As a result, consumption also soars, plastics become cheaper than dirt, waste skyrockets as all nations demand standards of living comparable to the US and Europe. Biodiversity plummets.

Will future generations be happier?

We need to tackle all of it:

Waste and Pollution

- Green House Gases (In excess over some pre-industrial norm)
- Plastics (Nano to Macro)
- Particulates/Aerosols
- Chemicals, Pharmaceuticals, Fertilizers
- Industrial/Military (Heavy Metals, Fire Retardants, Defoliants, spent U)
- Cement
- Noise, Light, Orbital Debris
- Heat (Industrial, Energy Generation, Air Conditioning)
- Collateral Damage (Fishing "bycatch" and seafloor damage, Industrial Agriculture, Kills from pets, Bird kills from buildings)
- Food (30 - 40 - 50% becomes waste)

Depletion of Non-Renewable⁸ Resources

- Water (Aquifers)
- Soil (Erosion, Nutrient Depletion, Monocultures)

⁸ Non-renewable in the sense that these resources have built up over long timeframes and cannot be renewed, even with advanced technology, on any human timescale.

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- Elements (Rare Earths, Helium)
- Life (Species Decline/Extinction)
- Fossil Fuels

Exploitation of Humanity (Humanity is a subset of the biosphere, so degradation of humans is a degradation of the biosphere)

- Slave labor (or its equivalents) - enforced through economic pressures and physical violence
- Debt accumulation
- Physical effects of Waste and Pollution
- Psychological effects of biosphere degradation
- Health effects⁹ (physical and mental) from overwork, stress, drugs, food additives, loss of community, loss of habitat
- Migration, and hence refugees, resulting from the above conditions

Each of us contributes to this degradation. Some more than others. There has been extensive research into how much degradation is caused by various populations - especially in the emission of GHGs. No surprise: wealthy populations degrade more. F should drive a broader and more rigorous examination and publication of this issue.

⁹ HEALTH EFFECTS

The 2024 Europe report of the Lancet [Countdown on health and climate change: unprecedented warming demands unprecedented action](#)

“This new report tracks 42 indicators highlighting the negative impacts of climate change on human health, the delayed climate action of European countries, and the missed opportunities to protect or improve health with health-responsive climate action”

Appendix 2 - By what right?

What gives me the right to tell existing environmental organizations and activists what they “must” do?

No right at all.

- I have contributed to the degradation of the planet by leading a western lifestyle.
- The tiny steps I take to reduce my consumption in no way make up for the waste and pollution I still generate.
- I have no special training in environmental science, ecology or economics
- I am not an activist or protester.
- My track record of prediction is less than stellar

[When I started in computer programming (NCR 315RMC, NEAT, 1967), we could clearly see that our systems would bring major changes. This was a “Good Thing”! Productivity gains would bring the 4-day working week and paid sabbaticals to everybody. More important, computer systems, through frequent referenda, would make Democracy Real. Everyone could vote on individual issues in a timely and relevant manner, instead of choosing a political party. A great future lay ahead of us! ... In my defense I was young and stupid then.]

Every right.

- My (and your) children, grandchildren¹⁰ and all the following generations will be directly affected by the decisions we make now. I need to speak up for them while I still can.
- I paid my taxes to various governments in the expectation of some protection for the biosphere. E’s influence on those governments, of all stripes, has dashed those expectations.
- I am old enough to remember some of the things we have lost; the teeming of tadpoles in a creek, the huge migrations of horseshoe crabs, teeming schools of fish, the mystery of unexplored lands and vast tropical forests.
- I do have experience of marketing within an international corporation, systems analysis and design. I also spent nearly a decade crawling around attics and basements in the residential energy retrofit industry.

“I know I’m one of Nature’s little kings, Yet to the least and vilest things am thrall.”

[Sir John Davies \(1569 - 1626\)](#)

¹⁰ After viewing Sir David Attenborough’s “A life on our planet” one grandson said “When I think about the future I’m scared. I feel like that orangutan in the solitary tree”

Appendix 3 - Symbols

The idea that the Environmental Organizations should merge to form a powerful global force developed over some years. Because words, nice as they are, can have so many meanings and trigger such violent responses I decided to take an alternative approach loosely based on math and logic symbols¹¹.

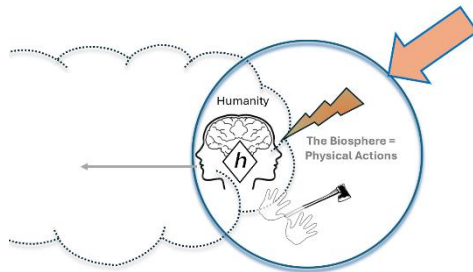
The few people who saw my earlier efforts reacted with polite silence or prudent rejection.

But I remain with the conviction that symbols have advantages:

- Reduce a complex system to a single symbol
- Allow a logical foundation
- Prevent misinterpretation through poor word¹² choice
- Allow us to concentrate on essentials by removing emotion
- Symbols are key identity elements for nations, religions and many other human groups. They will be powerful in creating a global image for the Federation of Environmental Organizations.

Here then is an abbreviated version of the symbolic foundation to the F (Federation) story, summarized in a few diagrams:

On the right we have a blue circle representing the biosphere. It is part of the total physical universe. It is unique (“There is no planet B”). It is bounded and logical.



¹¹ The model shown here is very simplistic, a marketing exercise rather than a strictly logical foundation. More rigorous approaches may be found in "[Relational agency: a new ontology for co-evolving systems](#)" / [Francis Heylighen](#) or, possibly, through Category Theory contributing to ethical decision-making frameworks, which could then be applied to environmental action.

¹² “When I use a word,” Humpty Dumpty said in rather a scornful tone, “it means just what I choose it to mean — neither more nor less.”

“The question is,” said Alice, “whether you can make words mean so many different things.

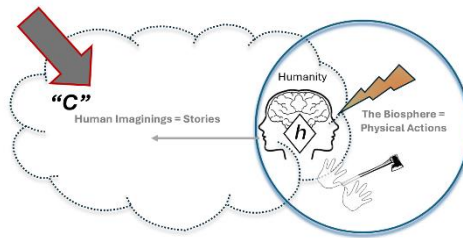
”“The question is,” said Humpty Dumpty, “**which is to be master — that’s all.**” / Lewis Carroll, [Through the Looking Glass](#)

My starting axiom (my foundation myth) is:

There exists exactly one biosphere, represented by the symbols ∃!O

Humans are a subset of the biosphere. With our big brains, opposable thumbs, tools and language we think we're quite special. And we are, but we tend to forget that we're made of the same dirt as everything else.

No biosphere : No humanity ↔ Degraded biosphere : Degraded humanity.



The cloud to the left represents all the things we humans have invented in our minds - the universe of our imagination. It is essentially unbounded. It has features that are logical, contradictory and chaotic, all at once.

This universe of our imagination can only exist if humans exist. It is composed of the stories we tell each other¹³.

To avoid continually typing "***the universe of our imagination***" I use the symbol "C" as a shorthand.

C includes everything outside the physical universe; Civilization, Commerce, Caste, Culture, Clan, Cartel, Capitalism, Cabal, Politics, Society, Religion, History, Art, Science, Philosophy, Music, Good, Poetry, Lies, Mathematics,

¹³ [Yuval Harari](#) expresses it better, of course: "For thousands of years we humans have lived inside the dreams of other humans. We have worshiped gods, pursued ideals of beauty, and dedicated our lives to causes that originated in the imagination of some prophet, poet or politician." (He goes on to say "Soon we will also find ourselves living inside the hallucinations of non-human intelligence")

3!0 - There Exists Exactly One Biosphere

Ethics, Nation, Sect, Party, Time, NGO, Evil, Union, The Economy, Ownership, The Media, Freedom, Pride, Grief, Truth, Happiness, Latitude and Longitude, Taxes, Fairies, ...

C and the biosphere interact, but only through the individual human.

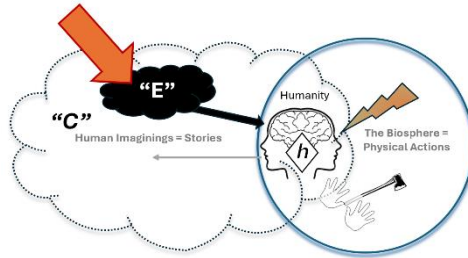
The interactions between a human and C are **stories**. The interactions between a human and the biosphere are **physical actions**.

Our imaginary universe, “C”, cannot affect the biosphere and likewise the biosphere cannot tell any stories. We create the stories.

No humanity : No C ⇔ Degraded humanity : Degraded C

If we now imagine C as some sort of vague sea, full of currents, sparkling waves and abysmal depths, we can see a swirling, seemingly infinite mass of strange shape-shifting creatures. They emerge from the complex network of stories shared among humans.

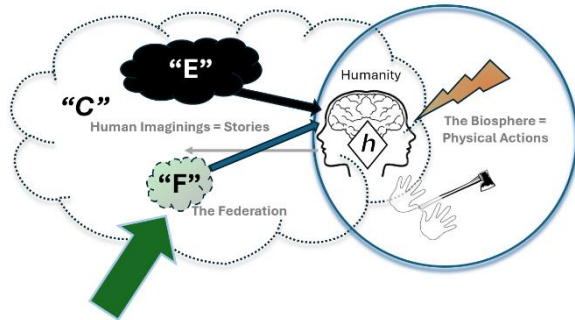
The term “creature” is of course a piece of imagination itself. It simply denotes subsets of all our imaginary constructs, of the entity “C”.



Here I use E to represent a subset of C. E is responsible for the degradation of the biosphere. Responsible, how? By creating and sharing stories that influence individual humans to carry out physical actions in the biosphere. Those “E stories” drown out all others, even as they lead to negative outcomes for the bulk of humanity.

There are numerous subsets of C that create opposing stories and so influence humans to carry out beneficial physical actions within the biosphere. These subsets are the current Ecological Organizations. By comparison to E, they are very young, small and disorganized. Only by merging, creating a new entity - a **Federation** - can we hope to achieve the required success.

∃!O - There Exists Exactly One Biosphere



I use the abbreviation **F** - for Federation

OK, so there we have a pretty diagram. But how does that help in practical action on the ground? - I don't know; that's the honest answer.

Maybe it can help to tell the immensely complicated story of the biosphere and our relation to it in a simpler way. But we could definitely have some fun with it at the same time – as in the following little story of *Ariadne's Thread*:

Ariadne's Thread

I admire Europe. Not the geography, the history, the castles or the cuisine – although those are all fascinating - but the idea. Here is a bunch of people that speak different languages, have different economies and, for much of recent history, have systematically maimed and killed each other. Yet, they have formed a union that works. It is an incredible achievement¹⁴.



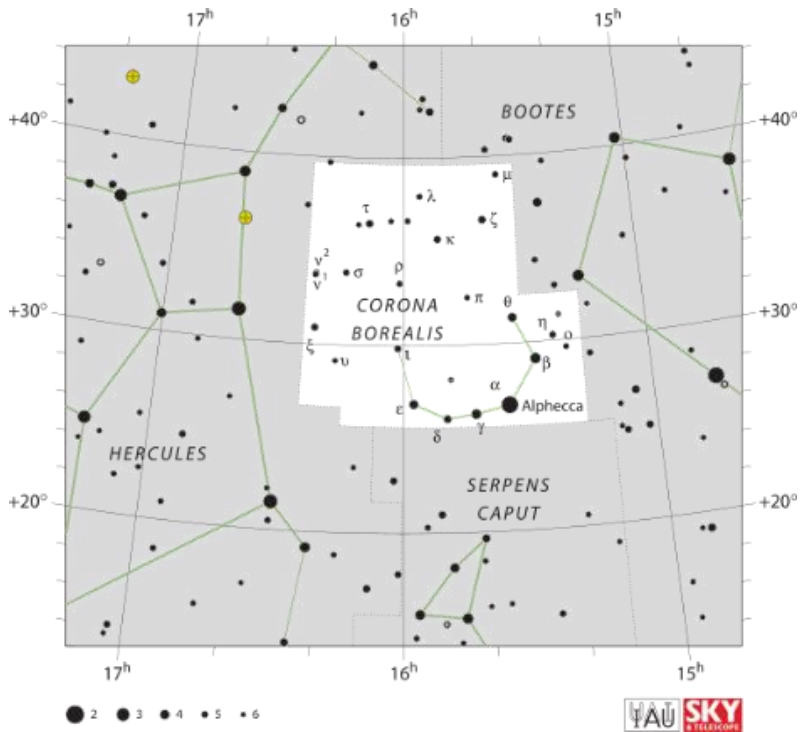
Europe's flag, its symbol, is a circle of 12 gold stars on a blue background¹⁵.

The flag, if you allow a little whimsy, reminds me of the constellation Corona Borealis, the Northern Crown.

¹⁴ It is a total shame that the UK decided to leave that union. And why, once again, are political parties that promise a retreat to the horrible past of nationalism, racism and so many other forms of discrimination, gaining support?

¹⁵ Why 12 stars? 12 is just a nice number – divisible by 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and itself. The EU currently has 27 member states.

☾IO - There Exists Exactly One Biosphere



This arrangement of stars is known as the “Poor People’s Bowl”, the “Camp Circle”, the “Woomera”, the “Boomerang”, or the Welsh goddess “Lady Arianrhod” among other titles.

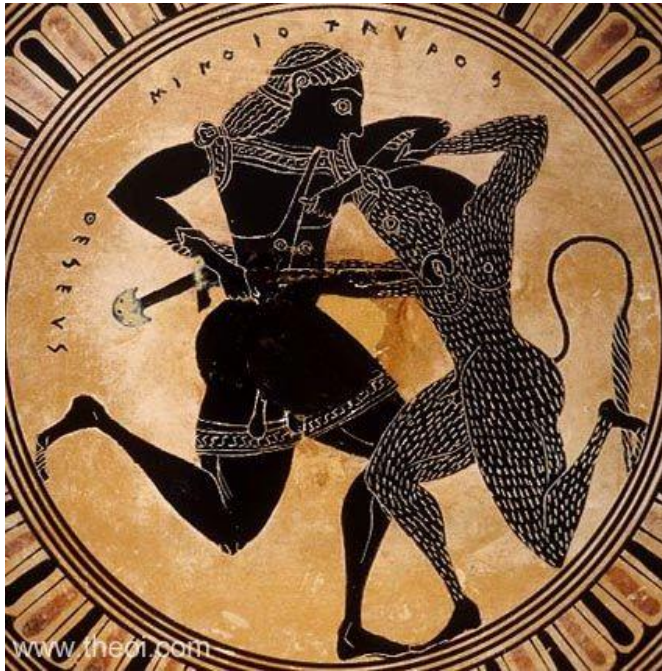
But in Greek mythology this constellation is the crown, made by Hephaestus, which Ariadne threw into the sky after her wedding to Dionysus.



Titian, 1520 – “Bacchus and Ariadne” – National Gallery, London

Throwing her crown into the heavens is no mean feat, but Ariadne's real fame comes from the slaying of the Minotaur. Without her Theseus would likely not have dared to venture into the labyrinth. Even if he did manage to find the monster, and kill it, he was unlikely to find his way out again.

That monster may still be devouring human sacrifices had she not secreted the red thread – Ariadne's Thread - which Theseus unwound to find his way back out of the labyrinth.

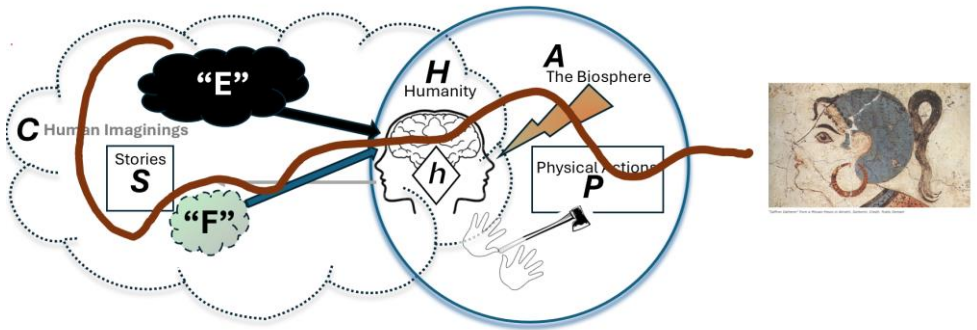


Theseus and the Minotaur, Athenian black-figure kylix 6th century BCE.
Toledo Museum of Art

Today, one meaning of [“Ariadne’s Thread”](#) refers to solving a problem which has multiple apparent ways to proceed—such as a physical maze, a logic puzzle, or an ethical dilemma—through an exhaustive application of logic to all available routes.

∃!O - There Exists Exactly One Biosphere

If the European Union is a logical solution to preventing another war on that continent, then, maybe, the union, or Federation, of Ecological Organizations (“F”) is a logical solution to preventing irreversible degradation of the biosphere – linked by Ariadne’s Thread and our basic axiom; There Exists Exactly One Biosphere.



There exists exactly one biosphere



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