



# A Fresh Design for Global System Steering

Steering is easier if you locate the steering wheel, brakes, and accelerator  
– *and know that a rocketship must land* –

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Ed 2022-08-06 – add § 2.5 and 2.6 - Twitter threads

## 1 UN Invitation for proposal

The UN [High-Level Advisory Board on Effective Multilateralism](#)<sup>1</sup> has held wide-ranging and inclusive consultations with experts, leaders, and practitioners. These discussions have allowed the Board to consider potential approaches and recommendations to issues of global concern identified in the Our Common Agenda report. Our work relies on the active support and strong engagement of a wide variety of constituents.

The Board is seeking original contributions that outline specific recommendations that address the following questions: What are the areas of global concern where governance improvements are most needed? What governance improvements could be achieved? How could the international community seek more equity, fairness, and effectiveness in multilateral decision-making? Please include these in a PDF document and limit your submission to ten pages.

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## 2 Proposal – A Fresh Design for Global System Steering

### 2.1 Short Excerpt

The UN is wonderfully purposeful, but we're trying to HEAL THE PLANET WHILE THE DAMAGE IS STILL ACCELERATING! A Fresh Design for Global Steering is what's needed. The harms caused by the limitless multiplying of short-term profits and financial power are utterly unmanageable.

The idea is to convince the managers of the financial and business worlds, mostly nice people themselves trapped in the system, that it would be in their direct interest to use nature's way of transitioning away from growth. Nature's way creates new lives of all kinds with growth, then gives them long, healthy lives after their growth. That's done by shifting the resources for building living systems to caring for them, giving the earth a rich diversity of life.

Look at any life cycle. That transfer of resources from growing things to caring for their future is the pattern in plain sight. Steering investment funds to seek long-term profits from improving the world is part of it. Another part is giving even more responsibility for investing in the common interest to funds accumulated by compound self-investment. That would begin to detach our lives from the limitless accumulations of power.

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<sup>1</sup> HLAB site and submission links <https://highleveladvisoryboard.org/public-consultation/>



It's a new type of "impact investing" aimed at facing the root of the crisis head-on; how the economy has turned to multiply investment in ultimately destructive things. It also uses emerging science on natural transformations showing this as a way out of our trap. You can contact me for discussion or talks at [sy@synapse9.com](mailto:sy@synapse9.com)

## 2.2 The main global concerns

- *Our failure to see that climate change is still accelerating at its fastest exponential rate ever!*
- *Our failure to notice the polycrisis of erupting unmanageable dysfunctions of every sort that are emerging altogether, directly coupled to our ever-escalating demands on the earth and each other. See the list of the top 100+ Global Crises Growing with Growth:*

<https://synapse9.com/r3ref/100CrisesTable.pdf>

## 2.3 Figures

The very clear message of Figure 1 is that no one in authority has ever looked at this data closely, clearly showing the true rate of climate change accelerating exponentially as we make every effort, supposedly, to slow it. It means that after 20 years of 'serious' climate mitigation efforts, global warming is still accelerating at its fastest ever growth rate! NOTE: That CAN ONLY BE because capitalism has been faking its response to the crisis entirely – putting the growth of short-term profits ahead of the well-being of humanity AT **EVERY STEP**.

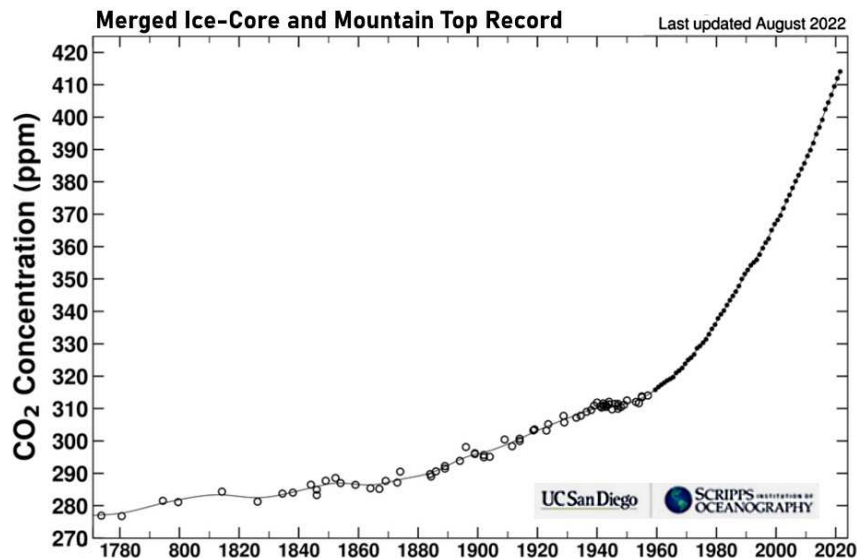


Figure 1. The Scripps 300 yr global atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> raw data. Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> is directly proportional to the rate of real climate change, the heat trapped by the greenhouse effect.

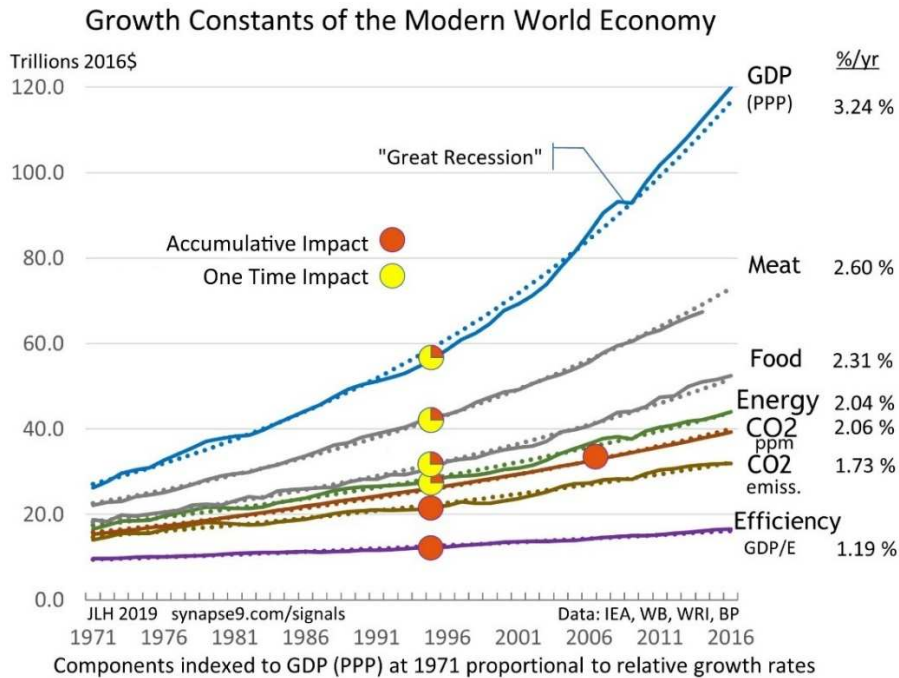
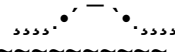


Figure 2. Global economic steering curve, showing strong constant proportional coupling of maximized GDP growth curve and the slightly slower exponential resource and consumption impact curves.

## 2.4 discussion

So, again, as we've seen many times before, people who make big financial decisions are often blind to or see but don't feel the wider consequences. People who live by rules, particularly about money, get so little direct experience of the contexts affected that they make even their biggest decisions blindly.

The hidden source of the problem, well-meaning people, socially organized to make catastrophic choices, seems to originally to come from our **use of \*concepts\*<sup>2</sup> detached from their contexts**. Concepts are mental constructs we use to represent the patterns of nature in simplified terms, making it much easier to think. However... once detached from their contexts, they can lose their real meaning. So people long ago learned which conceptus needed to be checked all the time with reality and which seemed to be a reality, so they never checked. The meanings of some of those have, however, dramatically changed. For example, we never seriously pushed the earth's limits before, so all the ancient meanings we attached to the earth seeming to be limitless, fiction from the start, but still underpin our cultures and professions, are now reversed.

### System Steering

The steering of complex living systems is quite simple to understand. It's where a system puts its resources. Those choices are made from inside the system, though, not outside. So to steer the world economy, you need the people who have been steering where the resources go one way to

<sup>2</sup> Con-cept refers to "object of thought" <https://www.etymonline.com/search?q=concept> an abstracted pattern inspired by observations often mistaken for the reality it is used to represent, and not, for safety, regularly checked with the reality to see how its meaning in context might have greatly changed.



see it in their interest to change and steer them another. In our case, that would be from short-term profits from pushing nature's limits to long-term profits from caring for the new human world that growth created (now increasingly in dire conflict with itself). So there would certainly be an eventful "learning curve." Part of it is that whole natural systems generally can only change as a whole because they're self-correcting so that individual changes would have no accumulative effect. That's part of the new science that we look at how nature works more than how we like to think of it.

So, for parts of the whole-system change, we can be patient as people learn and come around. The first rule of triage still applies, though; stop the bleeding. That would mean getting through to the people managing the causes of climate change, executives who think of themselves as cultured and caring, mostly. There might be a different approach to other horrific threats, such as fraudulent misinformation, another that comes first to mind.

Attacking people usually hardens their views, too, so genuinely caring for them seems to be the alternate choice of preference. It may take an all-out effort of compassion to get others to move, but we ALL need them to move. Then as the whole system change becomes more familiar, economic support will tend to flow to the needs of the whole, like our bodies direct resources wherever their needs are. So, being guided by needs is a bit less for sympathy and more for the well-being of the whole. That would, of course, include sympathy, but not to the detriment of the whole. So if aid destroys the cultures that let people care for themselves, some other intervention is needed.

That's somewhat like how market systems connect resources and needs for the global economy. But for steering the whole, we'd need continually renewed habits, not a set of long fixed ones as before. So to steer through a changing world, the credits for investing in common interests would change with the conditions, like driving along a road and noticing a turn or change in conditions, to respond accordingly. So the steering system for the economy would KEEP INVESTORS IN TOUCH WITH THE NATURAL CONTEXTS and have them earn credits for responding. A table like in Ref (2) can be used to distribute shares of global responsibility for investors as part of a world care plan.

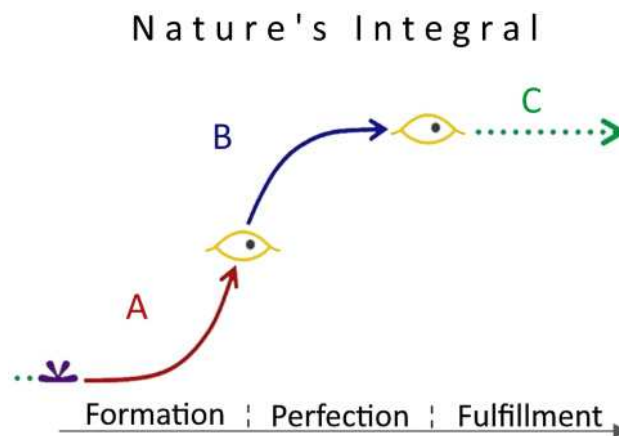


Figure 3. The basic growth path to life, beginning with a seed or inspiration that starts a growth process (A) going, that ends when resources



shift to taking care of the new life as learns about its new world (B) to eventually be fulfilled by a long life of engagement (C) with the world.

Figure 3, “Nature’s Integral,” refers to the symbolic curve of “how nature adds things up,” minimally in three stages, each built on the one before: formation → perfection → fulfillment. Other terms for the stages with the same meanings are OK if they add up.

The first stage of forming new lives is typically rapid growth, with very small steps then bigger (A). The real path can vary but must produce what the next stage can continue. Then there’s the turning point to perfecting and coordinating the starting form (B) with big steps getting smaller to be finally ready for long life and good use (C). It’s what all of us do to accomplish anything, get things going, then improve on them to be of good use – though we seem to have never thought of doing it with civilization. Something to do!!

Nature has a trick for changing directions when needed, a way of letting the approach of a crisis of overextended growth signal newly formed systems to change plans. The usual change in plans is from growth needs to care for fragile new systems not yet able to navigate by themselves. Human lives fit that pattern, of exploding life of formation in the womb, then a long period of perfecting their abilities to live independently. The general pattern fits the growth of other organisms, cultures, businesses, and any other kind of system that develops by growth. Common to them all is that the turn from A to B is often not seen till it’s quite urgent. So, in a way, humanity may be right on course, feeling a need to turn but not quite seeing what it needs to be yet.

### **Our power to change the course**

Our special power, of the UN and of the world’s passionate activists acting in the interests of the whole, is that we feel what’s happening, not precisely knowing what to do. The people using old rules in a new context don’t feel what they’re doing, emotionally blind to the multiplying impacts their old plan for the future is now causing, so...they need our help. Left on their own, as we’ve seen for 50 years now, they will keep steering the world blindly by old rules till it collapses their way of life, along with everyone else’s.

One of the great ironies that open the door to making the change possible is that the people steering the system are our best educated, most successful, engaging, and risk-averse individuals regarding their families. They care deeply about their own survival and that of their communities, but because they have not checked their rules against reality In a while (well, in hundreds of years for some of the worst), they still don’t see all the fuss. After all, they’re just doing their jobs! **So what seems needed is a massive caregiving intervention. The people steering the economy need to see and feel the benefit to themselves and the future of their families, friends, and communities to create a new model for sustaining the world economy long-term.** It’s a practical project. And, it will end badly without inspired intervention to change the present pattern.

A concise Tweet thread talks more about how our ability to feel what’s happening can help us steer the system, helping the blind to learn how to steer.

## **2.5 Twitter Links for**

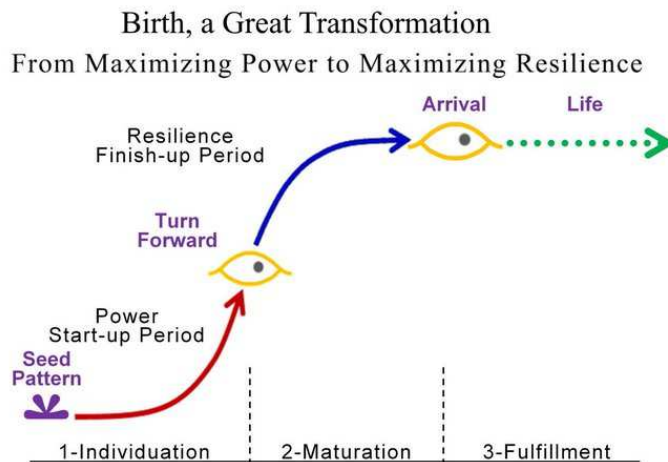
1. Jessie Henshaw - <https://twitter.com/JLydiaHenshaw>



2. Peter Dynes - <https://twitter.com/PGDynes>
3. Paul Maidowski - <https://twitter.com/ppmv>
4. Christian Wolf - <https://twitter.com/whitespacewold>

## 2.6 A Helpful Twitter Exchange – w/ Peter Dynes & Paul Maidowski

5. [@JLydiaHenshaw](#) 8:18 AM · Jul 22, 2022, -- to - [@PGDynes](#) [@\\_ppmv](#)  
 Peter, you may not have studied how regularly and casually many natural systems face the sometimes dangerous limits of their explosive growth, radically changing plans to smoothly shift from feeding the used-up needs for growth to feeding the needs to make the new life thrive. 1, 1



6. [@JLydiaHenshaw](#) Jul 22 – Reading the figure as a deterministic model fools many people. What’s certain is that nature will build continuity from beginning to end of any emergence. The model is for help in discovering nature’s continuity, often unlike the curve. The initial lively burst of new system design will need coordination with their future world.
7. [@JLydiaHenshaw](#) Jul 22 –I first noticed it from experiential learning in the late 70s and thought a little research would make it easy to explain when the urgency for change emerged (I thought in 30 years or so). It isn’t easy to get people to merge their conceptual and experiential thinking, though. Hopefully, lots of others will come out soon too.
8. [@JLydiaHenshaw](#) Jul 22 – But, what if it spread like news around the world, with the well-educated and successful managers of the world’s systems seeing that what they thought offered lasting security to their families and communities was on the way to be their greatest threat? Would they see it, feel it, and make the right choices??
9. [@JLydiaHenshaw](#) Jul 22 – I think studying how nature and people bring things to life in much the same way would help. It starts with an inspiration that grows and then faces a need to perfect its design and fit with its larger worlds. Every time it traces all the main cues and signs of how to steer a life.

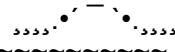


10. [@JlydiaHenshaw](#) Jul 22 – My writing on it is good in spots; still working on that, though. <http://synapse9.com/signals> Cheers!
11. [Paul Maidowski @\\_ppmv](#) Jul 22 – Replying to [@JlydiaHenshaw](#) and [@PGDynes](#) – Brilliant, covering the range in one thread. Thank you.

## 2.7 A Helpful Twitter Exchange – w/ Christian Wolf

Below is the best discussion thread of the proposal since first released on Jul 27, 2022. It is about the emotional challenges that professionals might face in changing to follow nature’s design for resolving growth system limits, giving the system a much longer life. Moving resources from growth to caring for what growth created calls for a worldwide career change for the well-educated and successful professionals steering the economy. Though it was unintended, the old way (now destroying the earth) is also deeply engrained, headed for catastrophe and the alienation and exhaustion of everyone, unless we change to caring for what we built.

12. [@whitespacewolf](#) 7:23 AM · Aug 5, 2022, · Twitter Web App – “Trust is cultivated with the utmost care and respect” Dr. Terry Jackson
13. [@JlydiaHenshaw](#) Aug 5 – Yes, but how do we gain the trust of the well-educated, successful risk-averse professionals intending to defend the security of their families and communities by managing the economy’s ever more confusing and faster disruption of the earth?
14. [@whitespacewolf](#) 1h – we won’t, I guess 1, 1
15. [@JlydiaHenshaw](#) 58m – Yes, good chance only a splinter group of professionals would feel their mortal conflict of interest. It would show caring for them to spread the information, though, that to survive, our money needs to care for the world we built, not keep multiplying its problems. It’s a thing. 1, 1
16. [@whitespacewolf](#) 43m – a conflict that most humans carry within themselves in one way or another 2, 1
17. [@JlydiaHenshaw](#) 37m – Well, we all wonder what our influence is. I loved architecture but hated how it also celebrated profiteering and excess. So the first chance I had I changed to doing my other passion for good design. It’s it an increasingly common kind of career choice? 2, 1
18. [@JlydiaHenshaw](#) 23m – Other ways for people to change the systems they’re part of include organizing office workgroups on “Changing the work with the needs of the world” and other kinds of exploration. 2, 1
19. [@whitespacewolf](#) 1h – there are lots of half-hearted attempts to follow through on this issue/question. they hardly work because ppl don’t want to do their inner work 1, 1



20. @JLydiaHenshaw 1h – Oh yes, that’s where the people who DO feel and have studied what’s happening need to see others as needing care, not an argument, to bring them along.
21. @whitespacewolf 16m – besides: as long as ppl are identified w/ status/money and the like, they won’t challenge the existing system leaving aside that they/don’t know how to do it 1, 1
22. @JLydiaHenshaw 5m – Yes, the people who don’t feel what’s happening won’t respond without help. So the people who do feel it, like their families, need to help them change sides. Like the big protest movements, there might be “Join life” movements for changing the rules for living on earth.
23. @JlydiaHenshaw 8m – AND to help others help the earth.
24. @whitespacewolf 4m – even if they would need care, as long as they don’t see it for themselves, chances are they would reject help/support
25. @JLydiaHenshaw 1m – Oh, of course, but then there’s that “sliver” of responsive ones that were people they trusted, raising opening them to the question. It could include an updated “Occupy Wall Street” movement as “Regenerative Wall Street.”

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### 3 References

1. Henshaw, J. (2019). Growth Constant Fingerprints of Economically Driven Climate Change: From 1780 origin to post-WWII great acceleration. draft pending revision. [https://synapse9.com/drafts/2019\\_12-GrowthConstFingerprintsOfCC-preprint.pdf](https://synapse9.com/drafts/2019_12-GrowthConstFingerprintsOfCC-preprint.pdf)
2. Henshaw, J. (2020). Top 100 world crises growing with growth. Author experimental list. [https://www.synapse9.com/\\_r3ref/100CrisesTable.pdf](https://www.synapse9.com/_r3ref/100CrisesTable.pdf) Accessed 04/13/2021
3. Henshaw, J. (2021). Understanding Nature’s Purpose in Starting all New Lives with Compound Growth - New Science for Individual Systems. *ISSS 2021 Proceedings*. <https://journals.iss.org/index.php/jisss/article/view/3911>

### 4 Figure Data Sources

#### 4.1 Climate

1. Scripps Global average Atmospheric CO2 ppm, combining splined ice core data before 1958, and yearly average mountain top measurements from of Mauna Loa and Antarctica including 1958 thereafter. [http://scrippsco2.ucsd.edu/data/atmospheric\\_co2/icecore\\_merged\\_products](http://scrippsco2.ucsd.edu/data/atmospheric_co2/icecore_merged_products)

#### 4.2 Economy

2. GDP (PPP) 1971 – 2016\* Fig 8  
Archived IEA PPP data extended with recent World Bank data, see Fig 13 for illustration  
WB: <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.PP.CD?end=2016&start=1990>





3. World economic energy use 1965-2017 – Fig 8  
BP: <https://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/energy-economics/statistical-review-of-world-energy/downloads.html>
4. Modern CO2 Emissions – 1971-2016, Fig 8  
Archived IEA CO2 data extended with WRI CO2 emissions: <https://www.wri.org/resources/data-sets/cait-historical-emissions-data-countries-us-states-unfccc>
5. Historical Co2 Emissions 1751-2013 Fig 8  
US DOE DOE CDIAC data: [https://cdiac.ess-dive.lbl.gov/ftp/ndp030/global.1751\\_2014](https://cdiac.ess-dive.lbl.gov/ftp/ndp030/global.1751_2014)
6. World Meat Production – 1961-2016 Fig 8  
Rosner - OurWorldInData: <https://ourworldindata.org/meat-and-seafood-production-consumption>
1. World Food Production – 1961-2016 Fig 8  
FAO: <http://www.fao.org/faostat/en/#data/QI>