

The species vital to human health and life, and that are indicators of the health of the air, water and soil are dying off in massive numbers.

Bats, which keep insect populations in check, are threatened by extinction from an exotic fungus of unknown origin. Bird species, crucial for keeping down crop pests and for keeping plant populations healthy, are being wiped out by pollution and climate change. Half of the bee populations studied, vital for agriculture and plant pollination in nature, have decreased by 96% in the last three years! Snake species, which keep rodent populations (and thus diseases) down, are vanishing. Frog species – who are the “canaries in the mine” for earth, are disappearing, wiped out by contaminated water and habitat loss. These are the plants and animals we depend on for our survival and we are massacring them.

The end of the whole, evil mess is clearly in sight. But no one is slowing down. In fact, the process is speeding up as the 3rd World industrializes. As difficult as it is to believe and as insane as it obviously is, the socio-economic system controlling the planet is racing to murder every last living thing in its absurd quest for “profit” (as if money was anything other than a man-made symbol, of no value beyond human exchanges), and worshipping its cult of growth/development at any cost. It is a system that seeks to exploit every existing bit of nature, were it possible; every inch of arable land planted with bio-engineered crops, every habitable acre covered by buildings and subdivisions, every mountain containing metals reduced to ore and slag, every forest reduced to timber, every able-bodied person in bondage to corporations (excepting corporate shareholders, of course), their labor churning out “goods and services” until there is nothing left but a barren, poisonous wasteland, dead rivers and oceans and empty, lethal skies.

Those that oppose this evil design become targets of military force or police/security attacks. To try and impede the machine from devouring nature and enslaving the masses is to earn the title “terrorist”, an Orwellian mutilation of language, as the corporations and governments who crush life and create terror, falsely accuse their opponents – using fear as a weapon.

The machine will die, but it will not die quietly. Industrial civilization is about to be swept away, and it will take the natural world along with it.

We were the last generation that was able to do anything about it, and we just sat there and played with our fucking toys. And to think we fancied ourselves as “environmentalists!” Ha!

I wish I could change it. I wish that with all my heart. But I can't. No one can.

So terribly, terribly sad, to witness the death of a planet; indeed, be the cause of its demise.

So get angry. Fight the good fight, in spite of it all. Pick your targets and make every shot count.

All I can do is do my best, regardless.

You do the same.

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Your Mother

T. M. Hoy

“Apres moi, le deluge.”

Louis XIV

Some monsters have kidnapped your mother. She's bound and gagged, lying naked on a cold, concrete floor. They are taking turns raping her. They laugh at her moans, at the blood dripping from the wounds they've inflicted by beating her.

Eventually they tire of trying to outdo each other in sexual perversity. They decide to get down to business.

First, they strap her down to a gurney and cut out valuable organs, being careful to keep her alive. They strip off some of her skin, cut off her ears, gouge out her eyes, leaving her bleeding and mutilated. They ignore her screams as just so much meaningless noise.

Having taken everything of value they wanted, they're still not done torturing her. They inject poisons that cause agony in her veins, force open her mouth and pour in pesticides.

As a final insult, they bury her alive in toxic waste and garbage, and walk away nonchalantly, pleased with their day's work.

This is what we've done to our mother – the biosphere, that intricate, tightly interconnected web of beings that sustains us and gives us life.

Through greed, viciousness, and uncaring stupidity we have murdered the great family of living things of which we are one small part. And we have forgotten, or purposely ignore the fact that what affects one of us affects us all.

Between catastrophic climate change and human toxicity and destruction of the environment, ecological collapse is imminent – no more than 15 to 20 years away.

Worse still, it is inevitable. Unless human sources of pollution are radically curtailed immediately (which we know will not happen) nature's living systems will simply dissolve; they are already well on their way.

This is not a “wake-up call” or strident demand for action. It's far too late for that. The scale, the enormity of what we've done is scarcely imaginable. The earth is in her death throes – at least, a world that will support us. Consider for a moment the desolation we've inflicted upon nature, and what this folly has produced.

Take industrial agriculture, for instance. Tens of billions of tons of pesticides, herbicides and other lethal chemicals are poured into the land around the globe every year, an invisible holocaust. Hundreds of billions of tons more of petrochemicals (mainly fertilizers) add their deadly load to the soil, with terrible effects. Few people realize or care that soil is a living thing; aerated by worms, enlivened by microorganisms, fertile only because of the contribution of these tiny beings. Pesticides and fertilizers destroy soil and humans are unable to replace it at anywhere near the scale with which it's being destroyed. Thus, soil erosion has become a terrifying problem – hundreds of thousands of square miles of

farmland are lost each year to it, resulting in massive desertification. Scarcity of fertile farmland creates famines, food riots and wars.

This murderous chemical assault on life seeps into aquifers, poisoning groundwater, and then pours out into rivers, and thence into the seas, killing everything it encounters along the way. There are now over 400 "dead zones" (where nothing can live) in the oceans, some as large as continents, caused by pesticide runoff.

And industrial agriculture produces dozens of such horrors; from animal cruelty and disease in factory farming to the wipeout of 3rd World farmers and economies due to 1st World agribusiness dumping of subsidized commodities, like corn and wheat.

Or consider the effects of industrial manufacturing and its related activities of mining, oil and petrochemical production and energy generation. In every industry, the extraction process is almost always toxic (and/or horrifically destructive to nature), produces toxic wastes, and the end product itself is most often poisonous as well.

There are the grotesque effects of plastics, slowly killing us with PCB's, phenyls, phthalates, endocrine disruptors and carcinogens. Yet its most destructive aspect is the way it's choking the life out of ocean creatures and birds consuming plastic garbage. On land, plastics leach dioxin (among the most deadly chemicals known to man and that's saying something) into the soil via dumps, and into water supplies.

Then there are the effects of mining operations and metal processing wastes, such as the unspeakable practice of "mountain-top removal" mining for coal that is laying waste to parts of the South Eastern U.S. Mercury poisoning and pollution, are the result of the burning of that coal for electricity.

It goes on and on.

There's the collapse of food chains in the ocean. Fish populations have crashed from over-fishing, made worse by the massive plankton die-off of over 90% in the last 50 years from the heating of the seas from industrial wastes, oil spills and pollution. Plankton is the foundation of the entire oceanic food chain. The Deepwater Horizon spill, which basically killed off sea life in much of the Gulf of Mexico, was merely one of thousands of oil spills that occur every year (though less dramatically). In short, the seas are being rendered lifeless.

There's the (quietly ignored) crisis of urban and suburban sprawl; the burying of the landscape under concrete and asphalt, paving vast regions for auto and truck traffic. And all of the side effects of this "development" – natural habitat destruction, deforestation, the staggering load of pollutants and dangerous wastes produced by cars, cities and "average consumers." Half the world (3.5 billion people) live in cities, and the numbers are rising. The garbage dumps alone produced by this urbanization pose a health crisis of monstrous proportions.

Then there are the effects of nuclear waste from thousands of nuclear reactors (impossible to safely store for the 100,000-year half-lives of their radioactive elements), and that far more dangerous waste from nuclear weapon production and storage. There are the wastes from biological and chemical weapon stockpiles. There are the wastes from

pharmaceutical manufacturing and the toxicity of the "products" themselves.

Consider the entire process of producing chemicals for thousands of industries – paints, "cleansers," electronics, technology in all its guises, spewing countless tons of toxins onto earth, sea and sky. This is not to mention the toxic impact of those industries' use of these chemicals.

Can the sudden, catastrophic increase in cancer and immune system diseases over the last 40 years, be attributed to any other source? We eat, drink and breathe these poisons every single day.

There is the specter of "Peak Oil" haunting industrial civilization. Officially passed in 2006, as announced by oil and energy spokespersons at the International Energy Agency, "peak oil" means that just as our demand for oil continues to skyrocket, supplies are rapidly being depleted. The cheap, easy to get, high-quality oil is gone. From here on out, oil extraction gets dirtier, more destructive of nature, more expensive, difficult and dangerous. And, we depend on it utterly. Petroleum-based nitrates and chemicals for farming; as fuel for land, sea and air transport; in millions of consumer products – like the endless uses of plastics, in medicines, in cosmetics, even in food itself. It will be gone within 25 years, if it lasts that long. There are no adequate substitutes, and we will ravage the earth further in pursuit of the last precious drops.

Dwarfing the impact of the crises in this far-too brief list, we must face the catastrophes that are accompanying climate change. Forget the rhetoric and the political screaming matches; whether man-made or not, no one is arguing about the fact that the climate IS changing; the oceans and earth ARE heating up, and the consequences are too dreadful for almost anyone to bear to examine closely.

Like the simple, hideous fact that in less than 30 years, over 80% of the Himalayan glaciers will be gone. These glaciers are responsible for the monsoon cycle that waters Asia, and are the source of all the great rivers – the Yangtze, the Ganges, the Mekong (just to name three out of millions), that Asia depends on for drinking and agricultural water. Will Asia be without water in a generation? Yes. Lack of clean water causes wars, hundreds of millions of illnesses and needless deaths. The atrocious conflict in Darfur, Sudan, is a drought-induced war. Imagine that sort of vicious fighting spread across the world's largest land mass!

And, there's worse. Islands sinking beneath the rising seas and coastal cities inundated (over 30% of major urban areas will suffer severe damage from rising sea levels. New York, London, Tokyo, Los Angeles – these and thousands more will slowly drown over the next two decades. This will be accompanied by increasingly violent, extreme weather, harsher droughts and floods, more intense and frequent hurricanes, tornadoes and so on, driving human, animal and plant populations further over the brink into mortal crises.

Everywhere you care to look, the ecological systems we rely on for survival are dying.