

Groundswell News Journal Lagos, Nigeria Edition

A project of the Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice

We are a Global Family. News by and about Climate Activists.

Our Motto: Use it up, wear it out, make it do, or do without.

A Celebration of Youth. www.gobackclub.org. Issue No. 60: March 2020



Photos Courtesy Nexus Exchange

The Adam Bradford Visit at Mr Kennedy Centre & Nexus Embassy Ikorodu Lagos. (left to right) Stanley Benson, Daniel Alonge, Gideon Newton, Jacob Emmanuel, Adam Bradford, Matilda Bradford, Ochoche Akpanga, Samuel Okoro, Chima Nwadi, Pope Kwuelum.

Nexus Exchange, Ltd. Partners with Adam Bradford Media Co., Ltd. for Youth Entrepreneurship/Skills Development

By Mr Kennedy Kwuelum, Founder/CEO Nexus Exchange Ltd.

Nexus Exchange: February 5, 2020

It all began with a casual conversation in Facebook Messenger when Mr Kennedy Kwuelum requested that Mr Adam Bradford share a conversation with him on youth entrepreneurship as he discovered that they both were passionate about

young people, especially in the continent of Mother Africa. Mr Adam, who at this time was in Nigeria, soon messaged Mr Kennedy on WhatsApp on the 28th of January 2020 and arranged a virtual meeting on the same day. During the meeting the two young global entrepreneurs discovered that they had a lot more in common than just the Commonwealth, with Mr Kennedy being the Diasporan Co-

ordinator of Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs West Africa, with the oversight of Nigeria, Ghana, Cameroon, Sierra Leone, and The Gambia, while Mr Adam is a Member of the Advisory Board of the Queen's Commonwealth Trust and an Associate Fellow of the Royal Commonwealth Society.

They discovered that they were both
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What is the Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice?

Coalition Founders: John and Iona Conner
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Wire Editor: Allen Hengst
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Mission of Our Journal

The mission of *Groundswell News* is to be a beautiful, inspiring, uplifting journal which educates and enlightens people about climate change through scientific articles and stories by and about activists who are working to protect life on Earth and preserve natural resources.

What is the Grassroots Coalition?

John and Iona Conner started this nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization in 1990. The mission was and remains “dedicated to cre-

ating the critical mass of active participants needed to bring ecological justice to this Earth by providing information and resources to individuals which encourage and assist them to make lifestyle changes beneficial to the environment and to effectively grapple with local and global environmental concerns.”

Who are we trying to attract?

We hope to reach people who are concerned about global warming and realize that they are part of the problem but don't know what to do. We invite them to sign up for our journal. Please tell your family and friends about us. They can go to www.gobackclub.org to learn more.

What are we trying to achieve?

We want to rapidly increase the number of serious climate activists in the world and inspire them through stories from other activists. Our goal is to keep their spirits up, their energy strong, their hearts open, and their eyes bright and alive.

Our Values

This journal is based on love for Earth, all people, all forms of life – plus air, clouds,

rain, snow, weather, oceans, forests, etc. We love Nature. We respect everyone and are willing to share our experiences, both good and bad, with others who may profit from them.

We are a global family.

Guidelines for Submissions

I do not get directly involved in fundraising. To submit a story, you need to write a regular article about your work and submit it in a Word document with 2 or 3 photos, including captions and photo credits and then email it to me at groundswellnews@pa.net. If you need funding, mention that in your last paragraph and be sure to give your contact information.

Since *Groundswell News* is a climate change activist newspaper, please be sure to mention how your work connects with fighting global warming somewhere.

I can't promise when or if your story will be published. Don't worry too much about punctuation or spelling since I proofread everything, just give me the history, heart and soul, dreams, and current project description plus your contact information at the end. I'll be eager to see what you submit.

Thanks so much.

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Fair Use Logo

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(left) Matilda chatting with Stanley Benson. (right) Mr Adam Bradford sharing a conversation with Mr Jacob Emmanuel – Team Leader, Nexus Exchange Port Harcourt on the activities of the team in Port Harcourt.

passionate about youth entrepreneurship, agriculture, recycling, and upcycling, Technical Vocational Education & Training, and steering youths away from gambling.

The two dynamic young business leaders went on to sign a partnership agreement electronically on the same day, thanks to digital technology.

Thereafter they arranged for Mr Bradford to visit Mr Kennedy Centre & Nexus Embassy – Nexus Exchange Africa Regional Headquarters in Lagos State Nigeria.

During the visit on the 5th of February 2020, Mr Adam managed to scale through all the travel glitches associated with the Nigerian Aviation industry and road traffic to fly from Abuja to Lagos with the excellent arrangement of the Logistics Officer of Nexus Exchange Nigeria, Mr Pope Kwuelum, who ensured Mr Adam and his AdamStart team's local transportation in Lagos was stress free.

Food and furniture were made by

the resident entrepreneurs at the Nexus Exchange. A true testament of a non-lazy generation of Nigerian youths.

Mr Adam Bradford and his team were absolutely blown away by the cheer hospitality and warmth with which they were welcomed at the Nexus Exchange Lagos HQ by the dynamic team of young people led by my Miss Matilda Dekpe – MD Nexus Exchange Nigeria who had only connected with Mr Kennedy on Facebook in September 2019 asking him for entrepreneurship mentorship and had since grown under his tutelage to become the head of the organisation in the giant of Africa and home to the largest number of young people on the continent.

The epoch-making visit saw Mr Bradford take a tour of the Nexus Exchange HQ and its facilities, a formal presentation of the Nexus Exchange Corporate Profile, and an extensive discourse on the operations of both organisations.

Mr Bradford was super impressed with the furniture at the centre which was made by the Nexus Team from used car tyres which the team had purchased from a local vulcanizer and this is a testament of Nexus Exchange's mission to save the planet through their innovative climate action projects.

Mr Bradford and his AdamStart team were treated to a variety of food and Nigerian classics which were made by the young people at Nexus Exchange. The team also gave Mr Adam a gift of a hand crafted slippers designed and crafted by the resident shoe

maker Miss Matilda Dekpe.

Also present at the visit were:

- Chima Nwadi – a resident entrepreneur & Nexus Exchange marketing lead.
- Ochoche Akpanga – resident coach & teens mentor, and Nexus Exchange Markurdi Team Lead who had travelled in from Benue State.
- Jacob Nsemeke – business strategist, resident Forex trainer and Nexus Exchange Port Harcourt Team Lead who had travelled in from Rivers State.
- Samuel Okoro – a resident foodpreneur & head chef.
- Daniel Alonge – marketing assistant and a singer songwriter.

Mr Adam Bradford couldn't hold back his excitement at the things he saw and heard from the young people at the Nexus Exchange Nigeria.

To consolidate their partnership, Mr Kennedy offered to name the basketball court at Mr Kennedy Centre & Nexus Embassy as Adam Bradford Court, an offer which Mr Adam excitedly accepted.

The duo are due to meet in London upon Mr Adam's return to the UK to discuss on the details of their partnership and set out the projects to execute for the entrepreneurial and human capital development of the over 140 million young Nigerians.

Some of these projects are likely to include a national entrepreneurship programme in partnership with the Federal Government of Nigeria and an Agricultural technology, food production & skills development programme with the Federal Ministry of Agriculture in Nigeria. They have also hinted on extending their col-

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(left) Matilda presents Mr Adam Bradford with slippers designed and crafted by the resident shoe maker Miss Matilda Dekpe herself.

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(top) Project members sit on chairs made from tyres at the Nexus Exchange Nigeria. Food and furniture were made by the resident entrepreneurs at the Nexus Exchange. A true testament of a non-lazy generation of Nigerian youths. (bottom left and right) Coffee tables at the centre which were made by the Nexus Team from used car tyres which the team had purchased from a local vulcanizer. This is a testament of Nexus Exchange's mission to save the planet through their innovative climate action projects.

laborations and projects to other countries across the region.

This union is projected to provide sustainable employment for 50,000 young people across Africa in the next three

years and is open to collaborate with other organisations, governments, corporates, multinationals & multilaterals who may want to invest in the African youth and/or do sustainable businesses on the continent.

Source: <http://thenexusltd.co.uk/nexus-exchange-ltd-partners-with-adam-bradford-media-co-ltd-for-youth-entrepreneurship-skills-development/>



Photo: Nma Galvez-Shorts/Earth Day Network

Jerome Foster II is the 17-year-old helming the Fridays for Future strike in Washington, D.C., the founder of the OneMillionOfUs movement to mobilize young voters, and the voice of a generation demanding climate action now.

He's Leading D.C.'s Movement for Climate Action – and He's a High School Senior

Submitted by Allen Hengst
Washington, DC

By Karen L. Smith-Janssen
NRDC: January 30, 2019

High school senior Jerome Foster II crams a lot in on a typical Friday. There's his internship with U.S. Representative John Lewis. And his afternoon #FridaysforFuture protests in front of the White House, where he's held a handwritten sign reading "School Strike for Cli-

mate" each week since last February. Lately he's also been participating in #FireDrill-Friday during the mornings, at the Capitol or elsewhere. Through these demonstrations, inspired by Greta Thunberg's weekly protests outside Sweden's parliament building, the 17-year-old D.C. activist is energetically highlighting dilemmas that adults have been unable to solve, against the backdrop of a federal administration that's repeatedly called climate change a hoax.

Simultaneously, Foster is calling for

unity. At a press conference last September ahead of the global climate strike, he said, "We need a truly diverse and multigenerational movement made of people from all ages and backgrounds, not just the youth." His message has resonated far. After the D.C. strike, which attracted 10,000 participants, Foster received an email from one of Jane Fonda's representatives saying that the actress/activist wanted to meet with him, find out what events he was holding,

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Iona's Column: International Franchise Prototype



I'm so excited that Mr. Kennedy Kwuelum of Nexus Exchange agreed to work with me to publish the first issue of a foreign edition of *Groundswell News Journal*. It has been a dream of mine for a while. I hope that the group of young people in Lagos will be willing to send me more local news for the next edition after my break. The idea is to devote a few pages pertaining to one country or one city (in addition to creating my regular, U.S.-based paper) and then combine it all so that the local group will forward their customized edition it to their friends. I'm looking forward to taking a break for a few months to take care of things I have let slide while my life has been so busy. Many of them will be to strengthen my efforts to build a very successful publication and hopefully get some grant money. May you all thrive in my absence. I will still be checking emails and Facebook. "Carry on!"

With Love, *Iona*

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and join the rallies. In a wholly uncalculated public relations coup, the subsequent repeated arrests of Fonda and her famous friends starting in October made #Fire-DrillFriday a household term across age groups.

Foster is a bright-eyed teen who speaks in rapid-fire delivery, as if he's running out of time – an attitude many climate scientists would say is justified. He's been interested in the environment since he started school, but in 10th grade, spurred to action by watching Leonardo DiCaprio's documentary "Before the Flood," he enlisted an English teacher to help him start a magazine called *The Climate Reporter*. In the beginning, he wrote 90 percent of it.

Then he changed tack, doing online research to find contributors who could weigh in on how climate change was affecting their respective communities. He soon stumbled across information on the Zero Hour movement, with its slew of young organizers tackling climate issues.

He contacted them and gave them agency, saying, "I want you to talk about how you've been resilient and how you've been impacted. Tell the whole story. Tell the victory story. Don't tell a sob story."

Foster notes it was important to him not to have anyone filtering the writers' narratives. While he's still the co-editor-in-chief and occasionally writes for the publication, he's stepped back somewhat from *The Climate Reporter* as his other activities take up more of his time.

Foster's first step into grassroots climate activism, beginning around February 2018, was advocating on behalf of the Clean Energy D.C. Act. It's a specific mandate that puts a price on carbon, requires renewable electricity, and sets out to reduce the District's carbon emissions by 50 percent below 2006 levels by 2032. Foster testified in front of the District Council and felt energized when the legislation passed in December 2018.

One of his fellow advocates in that process was Max Broad, who leads the D.C. chapter of the Citizens' Climate Lobby, where Foster interned in the fall of 2018.

"Jerome's abilities stood out," Broad recalls. "His storytelling about why climate action is important was powerful, concise, and drew on his identity as a youth activist." In addition to the teen's powerful testimony, Broad notes that Foster brought "new life to [the cause through] social media, rallying the youth voice for climate action."

Broad also points out that Foster's talents go well beyond his identity as an activist. "He is not only a great speaker,



Photo: Rene Foster

Second week of Foster's climate strikes in front of the White House.

graphic designer, entrepreneur, social media maven, media publisher, and innovator; he does it all while excelling in his academics." Foster has a big heart, too, he adds. "And he genuinely works to lift others up in the movement, often amplifying voices that are under-recognized and under-appreciated."

Foster considers Greta Thunberg to be a key influence in his life. Before she was the internationally recognized climate leader that she is now, Thunberg began striking in front of Sweden's parliament building on August 20, 2018. She was all alone – but actively reaching out to form a community. Foster says, "About two weeks before Greta first started her strikes, I got an email from her." Thunberg was messaging a lot of young people in the movement

whom she thought would be interested in joining. "Cool, but I don't really know how much impact this is going to have," he remembers thinking of his own participation. Nevertheless, he made room in his jammed schedule to start his own Friday protests and got a jolt of confidence by the media attention that Thunberg was soon attracting.

On week 56 of Thunberg's strike, on September 13, 2019, Foster finally got a chance to meet his Swedish counterpart in person when she traveled to D.C. to join him in leading a strike at the White House.

The following month, inspired by Thunberg's frank talk directed at those in power and her revitalization of the environmental movement, Foster started an ultimately

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Photo: Rene Foster

Greta Thunberg and Jerome Foster II at the White House Climate Strike, 2019.

successful Change.org petition to nominate her as *Time* magazine's Person of the Year. In it he wrote, "Greta is more than an inspiring leader for the climate movement. She is a symbol of the millions of youth who are taking the future into our own hands when adults in power continually fail to act."

Foster, too, has become one of the movement's most inspiring leaders, helping to rally political will to address immediate problems caused by climate change. His climate strikes have thus far led to an invitation from Thunberg's D.C. trip-planning team (led by OneMillionofUs and 350.org) to testify in front of the House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis and a role with the Citizens' Climate Lobby helping to build support for the Climate Change Education Act. That legislation, which would leverage funding from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration to increase climate literacy for K-12 students across the country, is now in Congress. Advocates say it would cement an understanding of climate change's basic science and effects in American schools.

The bill is also a natural convergence of Foster's interests in both climate education and advocacy; as a computing whiz who started his own virtual reality company, Foster spends some of his free time coding experiential VR worlds to show people firsthand, say, what a melting glacier in Iceland looks like.

As a result of his many extracurriculars, people often encourage Foster to run for office, but he finds the current political deadlock on climate action – as well as the fact that current lawmakers aren't representing young people – a reason to eye other choices. For now he's focused on making immediate changes. That's where OneMillionofUs, the nonprofit advocacy group that he founded last summer, comes in. Its goal is to get young people to exercise their right to vote in the 2020 elections and beyond. "We are making sure politicians don't just see us as young children who don't have an impact on our political system but see us as a strong, united political force," he says. He is wrangling ride-share companies to get students to polls free of cost and aims to have chap-

ters of OneMillionofUs on college and high school campuses and in community centers to educate people about why they should vote. In this matter, the influence of his Friday internship with Congressman Lewis, a civil rights icon, is clear.

Foster (along with Thunberg, Alexandria Villaseñor – a teen who holds weekly strikes in front of New York's United Nations headquarters – and other activists) seems uninterested in leading a cult of personality. When lauded for their leadership, all are quick to share credit with their peers. In one tweet responding to praise for the #FridaysforFuture movement from a climate science professor and former U.S. State Department official, Foster politely wrote, "Thank you so much, but this movement belongs to all of us. Activism is not about individual celebrity, it is about highlighting the climate and ecological crisis caused by the fossil fuel industry."

For Foster, it's also about lifting up the voices of those being harmed by that crisis – whom he notes are too often invisible within the ranks of the environmental

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Photo: NRDC

Foster (far right) with fellow youth climate leaders (from left) Avery M., Levi D., and Kiran Oommen at the Global Climate Strike in D.C., September 20, 2019.

movement.

Isra Hirsi, cofounder of the U.S. Youth Climate Strike and daughter of Minnesota Representative Ilhan Omar, has pointed out that a diverse group of organizers doesn't necessarily translate to diverse participants. Foster ponders this dilemma for a moment. "That's a huge thing: Whenever I go to any space, there's no one that looks like me," he says. "It's really discouraging because Black and brown people are most impacted by the climate crisis." He's referencing the people whose neighborhoods are disproportionately targeted for pollution-spewing industrial facilities and who are more likely to develop health problems as a result. So, he says, he uses

his public platforms, like *The Climate Reporter* and social media, to feature voices from these frontline communities that aren't otherwise heard.

This focus on empowering people on the margins to speak out and stand up for their communities' right to a healthy future also informs Foster's work building the OneMillionofUs movement. Currently the group is planning a summer bus tour to educate and mobilize would-be voters.

All the while, Foster has been keeping up with personal deadlines, including the current college application season. (One school he applied to is Harvard, where he attended an environmental social justice program last summer, doing his own

research and making friends with the campus's sustainability community.) Wherever he lands, it's likely that he will be involved in building the momentum of the youth climate movement. As Broad puts it, youth activists like Foster send a signal to other youth that their voices are not only important in the climate discussion, but critical.

Foster summed up the movement's collective goal best, perhaps, on his Twitter feed: "I'm happy that 'Climate Strike' is the 2019 word of the year, BUT let's make 2020's word of the year be 'Climate Action.'"

Source: <https://www.nrdc.org/stories/hes-leading-dcs-movement-climate-action-and-hes-high-school-senior>

**RING THE BELL THAT STILL CAN RING. FORGET THE PERFECT OFFERING.
THERE IS A CRACK IN EVERYTHING. THAT'S HOW THE LIGHT GETS IN.**

- Leonard Cohen -

<https://onejourney.net/leonard-cohen-quote-there-is-a-crack-in-everything/>



Photos Courtesy CELDF

Lake Erie Bill Of Rights supporters held a protest outside the Federal Courthouse prior to the Hearing.

Lake Erie Bill of Rights Court Update: A first-hand account from those in attendance

Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund
February 3, 2020

“I think what’s criminal is what the state is trying to get away with, including saying that we have trampled the constitutional rights of a company seeking the right to pollute us.”

- Markie Miller -

On January 28, oral arguments were presented for and against the Lake Erie Bill of Rights (LEBOR). At the federal hearing in Toledo, Ohio, Judge Jack Zouhary questioned the City of Toledo, the State of Ohio, and an organization claiming to be an agribusiness farm, about the merits of LEBOR.

Local residents with Toledoans for Safe Water, who petitioned to get LEBOR on the ballot, were denied access to defend the historic law in court. However, Sarah Skow of Spengler Nathanson was hired by the City of Toledo to defend LEBOR, which was passed by residents in February 2019. Thus far, the City is doing an honorable job.

Corporate attorneys from Voyrs, Sater, Seymour and Pease attempted to argue that their corporate client’s ability to dump

pollution into Lake Erie is protected by current law. They argued that any municipal law stating otherwise, including LEBOR, violates its constitutional rights.

The State of Ohio attorneys argued that the state “owns Lake Erie.” Further, they contended that the residents of Toledo have no power to use democracy to protect the Lake and the people who depend on it.

Following the hearing, LEBOR petitioner and host of Great Black Swamp Talk, Julian Mack, interviewed the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund’s (CELDf) Terry Lodge, who has advised the City of Toledo; Tish O’Dell, CELDF Ohio Organizer; and Markie Miller, organizer with Toledoans for Safe Water, following the hearing.

Below is an abridged version of Mack’s interview, edited by the respective speakers, for clarity. (All quotes are directly attributable.) The full interview can be found on Facebook.

Julian Mack:

“We just left federal court. I’m here with a couple of representatives – I’m a representative also – of the Lake Erie Bill of Rights. Can you talk to me about what you saw in there today?”

Terry Lodge:

“Yeah. What I saw in there was an interesting civil discussion. It focused an awful lot, and rightfully, on whether the corporate farmers who sued actually have any

right to pursue this [lawsuit to overturn LEBOR]. They actually state in their complaint that they don’t believe they violated [LEBOR], but they still feel uncomfortable and at risk, now that the people have spoken. And of course they filed [the lawsuit], what, 10 hours after the polls closed last February?”

My overall impression is that the judge was listening well to the arguments the City lawyers made, which were pretty high grade. They put on a very high-quality defense of LEBOR, and it showed today. The corporate attorneys kept hammering away on the fact that there are criminal enforcement provisions in [LEBOR] – and then couldn’t even talk about [how]... the maximum fine for a misdemeanor is about a thousand bucks. The judge even made fun of the corporate attorney, saying, ‘You could have a young associate look that up for you.’ Sort of strange.”

Lodge went on to explain holes in the corporate argument that LEBOR’s recognition of Lake Erie’s right to exist is too “vague.”

Terry Lodge:

“There’s a legal principle that courts are required to follow, which is, when there are things that are possibly interpretable as plain English, that’s what the court’s supposed to do. So to stand there and say, ‘We don’t know what exist means’—it’s just incredible.

Lake Erie continued on next page

Lake Erie *continued from previous page*

Overall, I think the City attorneys gave a very good accounting in defense of LEBOR, and that the judge was congenial, and he's very bright, and certainly was aware of a lot of the implications.

An awful lot of the discussion went beyond the threshold issue of whether the farm has standing. I think the judge has a very interesting decision to make, because I think the proper legal decision is this case shouldn't be here. Nobody's done anything.

I think that, actually, this federal lawsuit should be dismissed and the people should get more chances to try to enforce LEBOR and try to define what it means.

I'd also like to point out, when the Civil Rights Act was passed, or when the Voting Rights Act was passed, when laws are initially passed, there's a million questions, and a million possible interpretations, which we don't know the answers to.

Frankly, it's a very weak argument to say, 'My God, we have no idea what this means,' when in fact, you have some idea what it means, and there's some discussion, healthy discussion, about what motivated this. And Sarah Skow, representing the City of Toledo, very wisely reminded the court of the big things that are stated in the whereas clauses of the initiative petition. This is about factory farms, and this is about industrial pollution. This is about what's killing the lake, what's destroying something that we all depend on."

What's to be expected?

Terry Lodge:

"It's very hard to predict. It certainly is interesting to me that the court has the power of severability and could cut out things that it believes are not enforceable and leave other things in place, because I think that would leave in place the recognition and acknowledgment of the right of Lake Erie to exist. I think that's going to be a difficult thing to strike down, even if it remains as some sort of symbolic thing. Then our next step is to come up with new enforcement mechanisms.

I think, if nothing else, it's a psychological toehold for all of us in the local dialogue about this stuff, and this is about taking some power and bringing some attention to stuff that is affecting us."

Mack then turned his attention to Tish O'Dell, and asked her what local residents can take away from the day's events.

Tish O'Dell:

"What should they know? Well, it's interesting to me that this is all about the lake, and protecting the lake. I'm really glad that



Markie Miller, Toledoans for Safe Water Organizer

we finally got a forum to make that statement, and that it was argued so in-depth.

It was funny being in there, listening to all the contradictions that the state and corporate attorney made. On one side they're saying, 'This law will affect us outside the jurisdiction of Toledo.' But they're outside Toledo and they're polluting [outside their property]. So they have a permit to legally do the pollution outside their jurisdiction, but somehow the citizens don't have a right to protect the Lake within their jurisdiction.

The other comment that really stuck out for me was the state's attorney saying that the state has ownership of the lake.

I thought that was really interesting.

It's like, seriously? The State of Ohio has ownership, but yet you said that it was multiple states and another country [that border Lake Erie] and all that, when arguing against Toledo's right to legislate to protect Lake Erie...but the State of Ohio has ownership of the lake? And if they have 'ownership' of the Lake, it basically means that [in their eyes] the lake itself is like a slave, right? Because it's property that the state owns. That comment really stuck out for me.

They kept talking about criminal liability and all that stuff. Well, legalized pollution is what should be criminal."

Lake Erie *continued on next page*



Photo: iStockPhoto.com, Brian Lasenby

The Great Blue Heron is the largest and most widespread heron in North America. It is a large bird, with a slate-gray body, chestnut and black accents, and very long legs and an “S”-shaped neck. They are very tall and stand 38-54 inches (97-137 cm). common near the shores of open water and in wetlands over most of North America and Central America, as well as the Caribbean and the Galápagos Islands. But is the water clean and safe to drink? Is the fish safe to eat?

Can We Protect Nature by Giving It Legal Rights?

Around the world, communities are using “Rights of Nature” laws to defend waterways, species and more from human threats.

By Emily Levang
Ensis: February 4, 2020

A great blue heron walks slowly on long legs. A loud splash just might signal the presence of an endangered lake sturgeon. At the headwaters of the Great Lakes, North America’s largest freshwater estuary teems with life. This place called Gichigami-ziibi in native Anishinaabemowin – the St. Louis River in English. It is rich in biodiversity and an important place for migratory birds and native fish.

This body of water in Duluth, Minnesota, is also rich in challenges. Forty years

ago, U.S. Steel left behind what has been called the “most widely contaminated” Superfund site in the Rust Belt, where it’s still not safe to eat the fish or swim in the water. Currently over U.S. \$300 million is being invested into restoration. At the same time, concerned citizens worry that upstream the same river is threatened by two proposed projects: an open-pit copper-nickel mine that would store hazardous waste in an already aging and leaking

Rights *continued on next page*

Lake Erie *continued from previous page*

Mack then turned to Markie Miller.

Julian Mack:

“Do you want to say anything, Markie?”

Markie Miller:

“I’m emotional because I think this is just a really beautiful moment. I’m not sad, but I’m trying to observe and honor the history that we’re in right now, for sure. I don’t want [my tears] to be mistaken [for sadness]. But I have watched this law be called toothless and symbolic and poetry, and now today it’s ‘criminal.’ It has gone up and down, and it’s just, whatever argument serves the opponent best is used. I think that I can’t ignore that.

Especially if the corporate attorneys are

going to stand up and give a small poetic speech that they wrote ahead of time about ‘what is soil, what is life?’ And yet our law that we wrote, [...] is being called this poetic, symbolic gesture of our social values. Yeah, our access to clean water, our right to a sustainable, healthy environment – I don’t think that’s poetry. I think what’s criminal is what the state is trying to get away with, including saying that we have trampled the constitutional rights of a company seeking the right to pollute us. And they say they feel silenced, though we sat back there in the courtroom, being told to be quiet, and obedient, and to listen while they discuss what we’ve done.”

Lake Erie and the Bill of Rights proposed and passed by the people of Toledo

have already won. They achieved what no one else has been able to do in the U.S.: They passed a law recognizing the rights of a specific ecosystem and body of water, and they have organized to ensure that meaningful arguments in favor of not only Lake Erie’s rights to thrive, flourish and be healthy, but also the people’s right to govern locally to protect nature and their own health, were represented in court.

The people of Toledo have spoken for Lake Erie and will continue to do so. They hope that others will join them in this growing Rights of Nature movement.

Source: <https://celdf.org/2020/02/lake-erie-bill-of-rights-court-update/>

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Photo: © iStockphoto.com | Jacob Boomsma

The St. Louis River, which flows into the western end of Lake Superior, is a focal point for efforts to protect nature by recognizing it as having legal rights.

dam, and an oil pipeline that would bring the ongoing threat of spills.

The stakes are high, especially since the St. Louis River feeds Lake Superior, which holds 10% of our entire world's fresh surface water.

In August 2019, a group of citizens met in Duluth to learn about an unconventional strategy that could protect this place and potentially change its story going forward.

Rights of Nature is a growing international movement that recognizes species and ecosystems not simply as resources for humans to use, but as living entities with rights of their own. Twenty people from different backgrounds attended the gathering: activists and organizers, grandmothers, a Catholic priest, and an Indigenous elder, each with their own concerns about the ecosystem. Now community members are working on a ballot initiative for 2020 to recognize rights of the estuary.

This way of seeing the natural world is fundamental to many Indigenous worldviews. If Rights of Nature finds a place in Western law, it could transform our ability to protect nature.

Key Differences

Rights of Nature differs from conventional environmental protection in three key ways.

First, with Rights of Nature, communities work together outside of the regulatory system to establish legal rights. Under con-

ventional environmental law, "communities can't prohibit what state law permits," says Thomas Linzey, executive director of the Community Environmental Legal Defense Fund (CELDF), a Pennsylvania-based nonprofit law firm. Linzey says rights-based law steps outside of the state permitting system entirely, placing the power in people's hands to establish "constitution-type" rights for nature that could eventually take precedence over regulations.

For example, people in Duluth who are concerned about mercury, asbestos, cadmium, lead, and arsenic ending up in their drinking water as a result of the proposed copper-nickel mine upstream are funneled toward the state regulatory system, where their primary recourse is to comment on the project's Environmental Impact Statement, fight permits in court, and struggle to uphold pollution standards. But the regulatory system defines what, where, and how much pollution is allowed, not *if* the pollution is allowed. By recognizing the rights of nature, the community can make protecting the ecosystem the top order of business.

"The American legal system has been flexible enough to expand rights and legal personhood to slaves, women, children, and corporations," then-University of California, Berkeley, law student Allison Katherine Athens wrote in *Ecology Law Quarterly* in 2018. That, Athens wrote, sets a precedent

for expanding who and what has rights.

Second, Rights of Nature laws are enforced differently than other environmental protections. When a community bill of rights is adopted into law, it designates a guardian to enforce the rights of an ecosystem. Duluth residents would be the guardians, who could then take action to ensure that the estuary's legal rights are upheld.

A third key difference is that Rights of Nature attempts to incorporate Indigenous worldviews into the Western legal framework. In the Anishinaabe cosmology, Mother Earth comes before people, and there's a responsibility to care for rivers because they are her veins. It's a worldview that includes reciprocity between humans and nature, rather than a hierarchy that places humans above nature – and some humans above other humans.

This shift in worldview means treating both nature and Indigenous peoples differently, including honoring Native leadership. In order for it to be truly different from other environmental protections, the movement for Rights of Nature will need to have "genuine Indigenous voices, thought, and leadership," says Anishinaabe elder Ricky DeFoe. DeFoe says this begins with, "Each of us doing the work to decolonize our own minds...If you're going to be an ally," he says, "stand behind

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Photo Courtesy of Evan Goldenberg from Flickr, licensed under CC BY-SA 2.0

Thanks to legislation passed in 2017, the Whanganui River in New Zealand now has the ability to defend itself from harm in court.

us, beside us. We have our own speakers, orators, scholars, thinkers.”

Exist, Flourish, Thrive, Regenerate

The Rights of Nature concept has been gaining ground over the past decade. Ecuador wrote rights-based protection of nature into its constitution in 2008, so that any citizen can go to court on behalf of nature.

In New Zealand, the Indigenous Māori people worked with the government to establish rights for the Whanganui River. As a result of the law passed in 2017, the river can be represented in court by a governing body made up of two appointed representatives; one from the Māori, and one from the national government. For Māori leaders, this is more than a legal win: It is the beginning of a process of regaining the reciprocal relationship with the river that was lost in colonization.

In the United States, Linzey says, some three dozen communities in Oregon, California, Ohio, New Mexico, Colorado, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, and New Hampshire have laws that acknowledge legally enforceable rights for ecosystems: the right to exist, flourish, thrive, and regenerate. In addition, communities like Toledo, Ohio; Grant Township and Pittsburgh in Pennsylvania are adopting bills of rights that establish the right to local self-government, the right to a healthy environment, the right to clean water, and protection for the local environment. This challenges the belief that nature is proper-

ty, and the idea that state and federal laws prevail over local governance.

In Minnesota in 2018, the White Earth Band of Ojibwe passed a law in tribal court protecting the rights of manoomin (wild rice), the first law in the world recognizing that a specific species has rights. If the city of Duluth decides to acknowledge the existence of the rights of the St. Louis River Estuary and the wild rice that grows there, it would be the first municipality in the U.S. to recognize rights for an estuary through local law, by amending the city charter.

Mixed Success

Not everyone, of course, agrees with the Rights of Nature approach. Some argue that nature is an object and should not have rights. Others contend we should fix how we apply rights law to humans before bringing nature into the picture.

Where it has been adopted, the approach has met with mixed success. The world’s first legal test of the Rights of Nature approach took place in Ecuador in 2011. The Provincial Court of Justice of Loja ruled in favor of the Vilcabamba River as a plaintiff on the basis that the river has the right to flow and be healthy.

In the U.S., Lake Erie gained legally enforceable rights for nature in 2019 through a citizen group called Toledoans for Safe Water. However, Drewes Farms Partnership, an Ohio agribusiness, is challenging the law, contending that the city of Toledo didn’t have the authority to adopt it. Some

environmentalists worry that even if the law stands, the designated guardian may not have the resources to defend it, especially when faced with corporations that have much more money to dedicate to a lawsuit.

Whole New World

However it plays out, Rights of Nature offers a potentially transformative approach to environmental advocacy by offering an enhanced potential for alliance and coalition building. Currently, environmental battles are often fought on a case-by-case basis, with individuals and organizations lining up with a specific cause, rather than pursuing the bigger aim of protecting an ecosystem as a whole, now and into the future. By bringing together people who have previously worked separately to protect not only against the next looming threat, but to establish rights that can be enforced into the future, Rights of Nature could open the door to a whole new world of environmental protection.

DeFoe says that’s the beautiful part – the connections and community that come from doing this work together. “We can each have our own focus,” he says, “with the same goal: Life. Clean water.”

Editor’s note: Emily Levang wrote this story as a participant in the Ensia Mentor Program. The mentor for the project was Hillary Rosner.

Source: <https://ensia.com/articles/legal-rights-of-nature/>



Climate App Will Help People Stay Safe

By Milica Milosev, Team 54 Project International

Engaging the 1.2 billion of Youth across the globe to address the climate issues and harnessing their potential can help create great impact in addressing the climate crisis. Only digital technology has such a power to provide us with the platform that we need to effectively address the climate crisis and to build the foundation for sustainable development.

The “RepClime App” is developed as a real-time reporting system that will enable global people, especially young people, to become environmental stewards by speaking up and sharing live reports of climate incidents happening at their respective locations.

Its operating system will be linked with the GPS tracking system which will enable investors, governments, and organizations to get live reports and to better understand the impact of the climate crisis from their citizens.

In addition, it helps relevant stakeholders prioritize their investments and enhance the adaptational approach towards disaster risk management, using the data of the reporting tool provided by the RepClime App and collected by users of the app. This app can easily be integrated into the telecommunication system in any nation (phones).

The application can also bridge the gap between farmers and the agriculture ministries by collecting data that can be used to strengthen their adaptation skills and also help give citizens the likely real-time projections of extreme weather.

Finally the “RepClime App” will also be an alert-warning system for citizens and



tourists visiting vulnerable nations affected by unusual weather patterns, all in to bid to enhance adaptation and keep citizens safe. It will target the tourism industry to get interested parties to invest in climate change campaigns, as it will keep tourists updated in real-time on unusual weather patterns as well as to alert or warn people in targeted areas so that they can be safe.

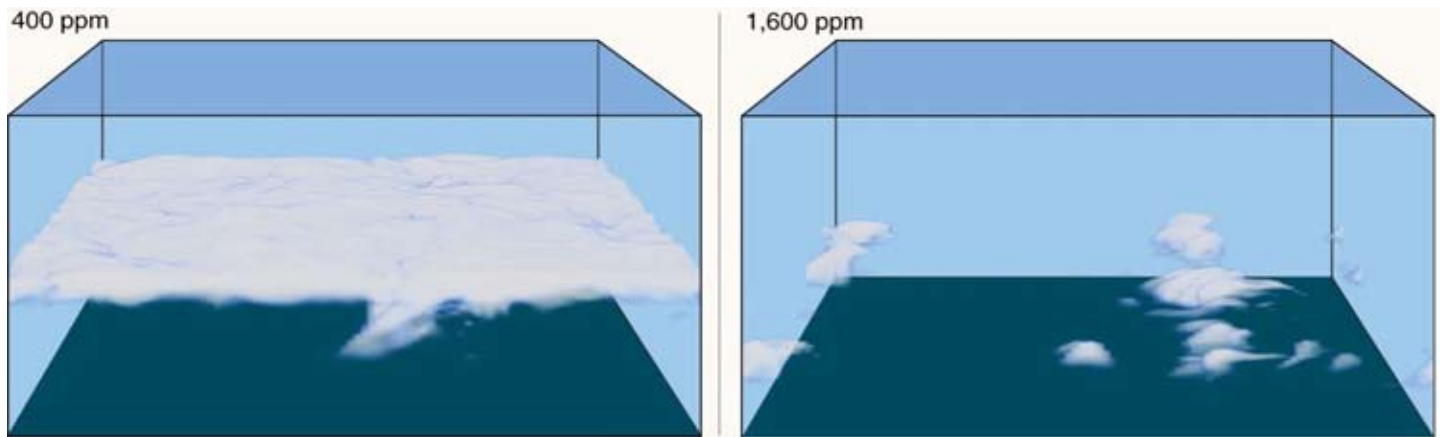
We address Google as our recipient because they can provide us the platform to make the RepClime App work.

Together, let's create The RepClime App and turn the digital era into the climate solu-

tions era!

Please click “I Agree” at <https://campaigns.wedonthavetime.org/the-repclime-app-f8c5cd5c-9199-4af6-b16f-0a6a17fe3854> to join this campaign to inspire young people to be environmental stewards and to effectively address the consequences of climate change and to persuade Google to see this as a corporate social responsibility. Together we can solve the climate crisis problem!

To learn more about Team 54 Project International, go to <https://www.team54-project.org/>.



Graphic: Schneider et al. *Nature* 2019

A model of clouds in current and future atmospheric CO₂ concentrations, showing a shift from stratocumulus clouds to scattered cumulus clouds, which would result in strong warming.

Why Clouds Are the Key to New Troubling Projections on Warming

Submitted by Jeannette Bartelt
Maryland USA

By Fred Pearce
Yale Environment 360: February 5, 2020

Recent climate models project that a doubling of atmospheric CO₂ above pre-industrial levels could cause temperatures to soar far above previous estimates. A warming Earth, researchers now say, will lead to a loss of clouds, allowing more solar energy to strike the planet.

It is the most worrying development in the science of climate change for a long time. An apparently settled conclusion about how sensitive the climate is to adding more greenhouse gases has been thrown into doubt by a series of new studies from the world's top climate modeling groups.

The studies have changed how the models treat clouds, following new field research. They suggest that the ability of clouds to keep us cool could be drastically reduced as the world warms – pushing global heating into overdrive.

Clouds have long been the biggest uncertainty in climate calculations. They can both shade the Earth and trap heat. Which effect dominates depends on how reflective they are, how high they are, and whether it is day or night. Things are made more complicated because cloud dynamics are complex and happen on small scales that are hard to include in the models used to predict future climate.

Recent concern about how accurately the models handle clouds has focused on

the blankets of low clouds that any international flyer will have seen extending for hundreds of miles below them across the oceans. Marine stratus and stratocumulus clouds predominantly cool the Earth. They shade roughly a fifth of the oceans, reflecting 30 to 60 percent of the solar radiation that hits them back into space. In this way, they are reckoned to cut the amount of energy reaching the Earth's surface by between 4 and 7 percent.

But it seems increasingly likely that they could become thinner or burn off entirely in a warmer world, leaving more clear skies through which the sun may add a degree Celsius or more to global warming. As Mark Zelinka of the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, lead author of a review of the new models published last month, has put it: The models “are shedding their protective sunscreen in dramatic fashion.”

The new predictions overturn a consensus about the planet's climate sensitivity that has persisted for the entire 32-year history of the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). All five of the IPCC's scientific assessments have agreed that doubling carbon dioxide, the most critical planet-warming greenhouse gas, from pre-industrial levels will eventually warm us by about 3 degrees C (5.4 degrees F), with an error bar extending from a low of 1.5 degrees C (2.7 degrees F) to a high of 4.5 degrees C (8 degrees F). This is known in the jargon as the equilibrium climate sensitivity.

That consensus was reaffirmed in 2018 when a widely cited review, headed by Peter Cox of the University of Exeter, found that the chance of climate sensitivity exceeding 4.5 degrees was “less than 1

percent.”

But the consensus has now been blown apart. Most leading climate models – including those from the U.S. National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) and Britain's Hadley Center – are now calculating the climate's sensitivity to doubling CO₂ levels as a degree or more higher, ranging up to 5.6 degrees C (10 degrees F). Their findings are almost certain to feature strongly in the next IPCC assessment of the physical science of climate change, due to be signed off in April next year.

In the meantime, the new findings should make disturbing reading for climate negotiators preparing a new deal on reducing greenhouse-gas emissions to be agreed in Glasgow, Scotland this November. That's because the revised estimates make the prospect of keeping global warming below 2 degrees C – let alone the aspiration of 1.5 degrees C agreed in the Paris climate accord five years ago – even more unlikely.

The debate about the role of clouds in climate change is part of a larger concern about feedbacks in warming the world. It has long been clear that the “greenhouse effect” of doubling CO₂ in the atmosphere will directly raise global temperatures by about 1 degree C. The physics of that is undisputed. But that is only the beginning. Things get more complicated – and concerning – because of amplifying feedbacks caused by how natural systems respond to this initial warming. None are easy to assess accurately.

One feedback is the melting of the ice and snow that covers large areas of the planet. This replaces light-reflective surfaces with darker land and ocean that

Clouds *continued on next page*

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absorb solar energy and then radiate it, heating the air. It remains far from clear how fast sea ice, in particular in the Arctic Ocean, will disappear. The trend, however, has been alarming, with Arctic sea ice extent shrinking by about 10 percent per decade over the last 40 years.

A second is the additional water vapor likely in a future atmosphere as higher temperatures cause more evaporation from land and ocean. Water vapor is an important greenhouse gas in its own right. Climate models estimate that the extra water vapor will at least double the direct greenhouse effect.

The third feedback, and the most uncertain, is clouds. A lot of the water vapor in the air forms water droplets that coalesce into clouds. We generally think of clouds as keeping us cool, and more water vapor should make more clouds. That may sound helpful. But things are not so simple.

While during the day, low clouds shade the planet, at night they act as an insulating blanket. Meanwhile high cirrus clouds predominantly act as heat traps, warming the air below them. Generally, at a global level, models have suggested that the warming and cooling effects cancel each other out, and the presumption has been that that will continue as the world warms. But the new model analyses suggest otherwise.

At a meeting in Barcelona last March, climate modelers first began to realize that most of the world's leading climate models were rejecting the old IPCC consensus. The data is now increasingly becoming public.

First, in July, Andrew Gettelman at NCAR reported that the center's revised modeling came up with a climate sensitivity – the temperature increase based on a projected doubling of CO₂ levels – of 5.3 degrees C (9.5 degrees F), a 32 percent increase over its previous estimate of 4 degrees C.

Others soon followed. Last month, American and British researchers, led by Zelinka, reported that 10 of 27 models they had surveyed now reckoned warming from doubling CO₂ could exceed 4.5 degrees C, with some showing results up to 5.6 degrees. The average warming projected by the suite of models was 3.9 degrees C (7 degrees F), a 30-percent increase on the old IPCC consensus.

French scientists at the National Center for Scientific Research concluded that the new models predicted that rapid economic growth driven by fossil fuels would deliver temperature rises averaging 6 to 7 degrees C (10.8 to 12.6 degrees F) by the end of the century. They warned that keeping warming

below 2 degrees C was all but impossible.

Zelinka said the new estimates of higher climate sensitivity were primarily due to changes made to how the models handled cloud dynamics. The models found that in a warmer world clouds would contain less water than previously thought. Clouds would thin out, and many would not form at all, resulting in “stronger positive cloud feedbacks” and extra warming.

This tweaking of the models followed recent field research over the Southern Ocean, which is currently one of the cloudiest regions on Earth. Flying through those clouds, researchers found they contain much more water and less ice than previously assumed. They were “optically thicker and hence more reflective of sunlight,” says NASA's Ivy Tan.

That sounds like good news. But it means that past models have overestimated how much ice in these clouds will turn to liquid water in a warmer world – and so overestimated both the thickness of future clouds and their ability to keep us cool. Eliminating that bias, says Tan, could increase climate sensitivity by as much as 1.3 degrees C.

Modelers have also changed how they characterize the effect of anthropogenic aerosols from burning fuel, particularly in clouds. In general, the aerosols make clouds thicker and better able to shade the planet. The recent recalculation follows new estimates of aerosol emissions during the mid-20th century, a time when booming emissions from rapid industrialization caused the planet to cool for several decades, masking the warming effect of accumulating CO₂.

Researchers have concluded from the new data that both the cooling effect of aerosols and the warming effect of CO₂ have been greater than previously supposed, causing them to revise upward their estimates of the climate's sensitivity to CO₂. With CO₂ continuing to accumulate and stricter controls on smog, the masking effect of particulate aerosols is bound to diminish in the future. So the increased climate sensitivity to CO₂ is set to dominate, giving an extra kick to warming.

Real-world data from satellites suggests that the modelers' predictions may already be coming true. Norman Loeb of NASA's Langley Research Center has shown that a sharp rise in global average temperatures since 2013 has coincided with a decline in cloud cover over the oceans. He argues that the clearer skies may have resulted from stricter pollution controls in China and North America.

Other researchers have reported fewer

low-level clouds in the tropics during warmer years. In his 2016 study, climate scientist Tapio Schneider, then at ETH Zurich, noted that climate models that incorporated this link in their calculations predicted faster global warming.

Schneider, now at Caltech, made waves last February by arguing that global cloud cover may have a tipping point, beyond which clouds would “become unstable and break up,” sending warming into an upward spiral. He used a model with a fine-scale resolution that, he said, represented the real dynamics of clouds much better than the models used to calculate climate change.

The tipping point would not be reached until CO₂ levels were at around 1,200 ppm, more than four times pre-industrial levels, and three times current levels. But once it was passed, he projected that temperatures would soar by an additional 8 degrees C (14.4 degrees F) as a result of the lost clouds. He suggested that such a tipping point “may have contributed importantly to abrupt climate changes in the geological past.”

This is not the first time that such scary climate predictions have emerged from modeling analysis of how clouds might change in a warmer world. Fifteen years ago, I attended a workshop of climate modelers where James Murphy of Britain's Hadley Centre discussed how he had tweaked his center's standard climate model to reflect more fully the uncertainty about cloud cover, cloud duration, and thickness. The resulting graph showed the most likely warming still at 3 degrees C or so, but with a “long tail” at the top end. There was a possibility – he put it no higher – that warming could go as high as 10 degrees C (18 degrees F) for doubling CO₂.

David Stainforth of Oxford University had done the same thing on another model and saw a “long tail” extending to 12 degrees C. They both later published their findings in *Nature*, but the findings were subsequently rather sidelined by modelers. They did not make it into summaries of IPCC climate science assessments. But the new, hotter projections emerging from the latest mainstream model runs suggest that Murphy and Stainforth were onto something.

Fred Pearce is a freelance author and journalist based in the U.K. He is a contributing writer for *Yale Environment 360* and is the author of numerous books, including *The Land Grabbers*, *Earth Then and Now: Amazing Images of Our Changing World*, and *The Climate Files: The Battle for the Truth About Global Warming*.

Source: <https://e360.yale.edu/features/why-clouds-are-the-key-to-new-troubling-projections-on-warming>



Photo: John Tann, via Wikimedia Commons

Vanishingly few, the prehistoric Wollemi Pines have been saved from Australia's inferno.

Rare Trees Saved from Australia's Wildfires

By Dan Drollette
Climate News Network: February 5, 2020

This story originally appeared in the *Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists* and is republished here as part of Covering Climate Now, a global journalism collaboration to strengthen coverage of the climate story.

Buried amid the horrific news from Australia about climate change and out-of-control wildfire was a positive story: the saving of rare trees.

CHICAGO, 5 February, 2020 – An Associated Press story titled Firefighters in Australia save unique prehistoric trees brought a scarce gleam of hope: “Firefighters winched from helicopters to reach the cluster of fewer than 200 Wollemi Pines in a remote gorge in the Blue Mountains a week before a massive wildfire bore down... The firefighters set up an irrigation system to keep the so-called dinosaur trees moist, and pumped water daily from the gorge as the blaze that had burned out of control for two months edged closer.”

This news had particular significance to me for a number of reasons. For one thing, the successful protection of this endangered species could hint at things to come – if we play our cards right.

For another, I know the Blue Mountains of New South Wales (though I have not been to that grove of trees – whose exact location has been kept a secret by botanists ever since it was first discovered in 1994.)

I spent four years down-under, first as an American researcher on a Fulbright grant to see what we in the States could learn from looking at the Australian experience, and then as a roving foreign correspondent for science-related U.S. magazines such as *International Wildlife*, *Scientific American*, and the journal *Science*, among others.

My job was to travel over the land down-under, reporting on natural history, the environment, and science in the Great South Land for publications back home in the States – as well as magazines like *Australian Geographic*.

Easy to Miss

Which was how I became acquainted with the Blue Mountains, a lesser-known area about 120 miles west of Sydney. They're a surprisingly steep, thickly wooded, and easily overlooked mountain chain, much like an Aussie version of our

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Trees *continued from previous page*

Appalachians. And much like the Appalachians, their deep ravines held up westward exploration and expansion for a long time. But there the parallels end.

Walking in Australia's Blue Mountains is an unworldly experience. There are no squirrels or chipmunks; instead, parrots occupy that ecological niche. My edition of the *Field Guide to the Birds of Australia* lists 23 different species of parrots alone.

Just a short list of the formal names of some of the individual species gives an idea of the colorful diversity you can see: Blue-winged, Orange-bellied, Golden-shouldered, Scarlet-chested, Red-rumped, and Turquoise parrots. Not to mention Elegant, Paradise, Superb, and King parrots.

And instead of smelling pine trees, your nose registers the scent of eucalypts. Look up at the stars at night, and there's not a single familiar constellation; instead you see celestial objects like the Jewel Box Cluster – while hearing the mocking laugh of kookaburras.

Even the food tastes different – in place of pepperoni or sausage, toppings at the Australian Pizza Kitchen in Canberra include emu and kangaroo (I prefer the kangaroo).

“These trees are descendants of individuals that had survived since the era of the dinosaurs.”

And some of the trees in parts of the Blueys – as they're called – resemble nothing so much as short stumps with ferns popping out of their sides willy-nilly; everything looks so primeval you half-expect to see escapees from Jurassic Park poking their snouts out.

Indeed, in far-north Queensland, I and my parents were to be stalked by a full-grown, adult male cassowary, defending his mate. We took shelter behind a large tropical tree, trying to keep the trunk between us and the approximately 200-pound, 6-foot-tall creature as it circled around.

This pervasive feeling of encounters with the primeval is appropriate. Australia is a very ancient land, which used to be part of what geologists call Gondwana – when most of the world's landmasses were linked

together in the distant past.

But while the other landforms went on to become continents such as South America and Africa, Australia remained a giant island continent, cut off from the rest of the planet. And species that died out elsewhere continued to thrive, and evolve, here.

(Just why species do so well on islands, and why evolution seems to speed up on them, is something that kept Charles Darwin busy. An entire field of island biogeography has sprung up to delve into its mysteries.)

Human Rarities

Even now, some parts of Australia are so isolated that the wildlife has seldom seen humans. So far as researchers can tell, no Aborigines, Melanesians, Micronesians, Polynesians, or Caucasians ever settled on Australia's Lord Howe Island until 1834; consequently, the wildlife never learned to be afraid of humans.

When I went there, you could stand at the foot of Lord Howe's tallest mountain, call up to the providence petrels nesting as much as a hundred feet above, and watch the birds glide down to land at your feet. If you're really good, you may be able to touch them, or at least have one land on your outstretched arm.

Due to these vagaries of isolation, ancient and unique species seem to abound in Australia – though they can be easily overlooked. Drive along the highway outside Shark Bay in the state of Western Australia, and you'll spot weird dark, mushroom-shaped, rock-like structures in the shallows of the hyper-salty water; they're actually living mats of blue-green algae known as stromatolites – Greek for “layered rock.”

Stromatolites are one of the oldest forms of life that we know of, essentially unchanged since their ancestors flourished 3.5 billion years ago. They were previously known to us only from fossils, until first discovered in this region in the 1980s.

So it's not entirely surprising that Wollemi Pines should survive in the wild, undetected, a relatively short drive from

Sydney for so many years; after all, these trees are descendants of individuals that had survived since the era of the dinosaurs – though they now exist in the wild in only one place in the world, with fewer than 100 adult specimens known.

Survivors for Sale

What was surprising was that these wild specimens were saved from the wildfires, in a complex operation that involved firefighters being lowered from helicopters into the narrow steep-sided ridges where the trees dwell, along with planes strategically bombing the advancing firefront with fire retardant.

And well in advance of events these past months, authorities had covered their bets by doing all they could to increase the species' chance of survival. Since 2006, a propagation program has made these trees available to botanical gardens so their numbers could be increased; I've subsequently run across Aussies who have grown the plants from seeds in their living rooms. (In Australia, seedlings can even be ordered online, and the Royal Botanic Gardens Sydney offer information on Wollemi care, conservation, and research.)

More than that, when it looked like the wildfires were in imminent danger of destroying the only existing stand of these trees in the wild, leaders had the foresight to rely on the recommendations of scientists, firefighters, and other experts as to how to proceed. They then worked out a plan and put it into action – actively dealing with the problem rather than denying it existed.

In short, in the time since the Wollemi Pines were discovered, government agencies, nonprofit organizations, private enterprise, and volunteer efforts successfully worked together over decades to protect the trees from extinction.

Which makes one wonder, once again, what we in the States could learn from observing the Australian experience.

Source: <https://climatenewsnetwork.net/rare-trees-saved-from-australias-wildfires/>

EVERY FARMER WHO PLANTS A SEED TAKES A RISK. WE WORK THROUGH FAITH THAT THE GOOD DEEDS WE DO ARE TO PUT DOWN ROOTS. THE ROOTS ARE INVISIBLE, BUT THEY SUSTAIN PLANTS THAT MAY NOT GIVE FRUIT FOR A WHILE. HOW LOVELY IS THIS PLANTING THE SEEDS OF LOVE.

- Omid Safi -

<https://twitter.com/GratefulnessOrg/status/1221775372771000320>



Photo: pattyickett4748@gmail.com, flickr

Groundswell News Journal received an email with so many great organizing ideas that we are sharing excerpts here, hoping this group inspires you, too.

Grassroots Organizing at its Finest

Submitted by Frank Kromkowski
Montana USA

Sunday, January 19, 1 p.m.: Workshop on Montana 2020 Renewable Energy Initiative I-187 – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1737254959850983/>

- Presentation by Dodie Andersen, Missoula Organizing Director for Initiative I-187

- 1:00 pm at St. Paul's United Methodist Church, Fireside Room at Susana Wesley Place, 512 Logan Street in Helena.

- 2020 Montana Initiative 187: Get Montana to at least 80% renewable energy by 2034....Protect our workers, protect our children, protect our environment.

Andersen will present information about Montana 2020 Renewable Energy Initiative I-187 and the initiative process to I-187 and get I-187 on the election ballot – Passing-I-187 will get Montana to at least 80% renewable energy by 2034. Once we get 25,468 approved signatures, it will go on the ballot for the November 2020 election.

Dodie has lived in Missoula for 10 years and was one of the founding members of 350 Montana, advocating for a livable planet and renewable energy. Currently she is Coordinator of Transition Missoula and serves on the board of AERO which is working for a sustainable Montana. Her five grandsons are the lights of her life and a strong motivation for her working for a livable planet.

Responding to climate change chal-

lenges, citizen initiative I-187 establishes a cohesive renewable energy policy; funds fossil fuel and railroad worker retraining and pension security; and replaces coal tax revenue.

Discussion includes:

- What is the I-187 initiative?

- Why is I-187 good for Montana?

- How can you help qualify I-187 for the November 2020 ballot?

There are many ways to help, from collecting signatures and working the phones to making donations and writing articles.

Get Involved Today <https://www.mtcares.org/how-to-help/> – <https://www.mtcares.org/how-to-sign-the-initiative/> – Initiative 187 was created by MT Cares: Montana Community Affordable Renewable Energy Saves <https://www.mtcares.org/>

- We envision a future where Montana's Children, Workers, Citizens are happy, healthy, and thriving.

- Renewable Energy, Renewable Future Initiative 187: Protects Workers

MT Cares

Montana Community Affordable Renewable Energy Saves <https://www.mtcares.org/>

Take Power Into Your Hands with MT Cares. By coming together, we can secure a brighter, more sustainable future for Montana and all its residents.

MTCares' Mission: MTCares advocates for building a better future for all Montan-

ans through environmental stewardship and sustainable development. Together we can protect our land, our pocketbooks, and our freedom.

The Initiative: We are focusing all our efforts on the I-187 Petition to get Montana to at least 80% renewable energy by 2034. Once we get 25,468 approved signatures, it will go on the ballot for the November 2020 election.

Our Team: MTCares is a fellowship of citizens concerned about climate change.

- I-187: Pension protection, job retraining, and more.

- The coal industry is steadily going bankrupt. Plants are already closing around Montana and as they close, more and more workers are out of their jobs. Their previous employers may be unable to pay all of the pensions those workers are owed. I-187 will provide pension support, unemployment benefits, AND retraining of displaced fossil fuel workers.

- I-187: Saves You Money
- Renewable energy is cheaper.
- Coal: Energy from coal-fired electrons costs Montanans between 5.5c/kWh and 7.4c/kWh. Adding 90% carbon capture elsewhere sent costs as high as 15.2c/kWh.

- Wind v. combined cycle natural gas (CCNG): The unsubsidized leveled costs for wind power in the U.S. ranged from 2.4c/kWh to 4.6c/kWh in 2019; the range for combined cycle natural gas turbine generation was 4.1c/kWh to 5.9c/kWh.

Montana continued on next page

Montana continued from previous page

- Solar v. Gas Peaker: A June 2019 contract for solar power with battery backup was signed by Los Angeles DWP for 2.9c/kWh, and GE abandoned plans for a California gas plant that could not compete with solar. In the U.S., gas peaking with a 10% capacity factor was producing 12.2c/kWh to 16.2c/kWh electricity.

- Coal is roughly two times more expensive than solar; sometimes almost four times more expensive than wind.

I-187: Promotes Free Markets

- America was built by combining government support with free-market economics. So, often businesses that best serve their customers were the most successful. However, governmentally-granted monopolies have not supplied the best electric service in Montana.

- Currently, renewable energy sources and conservation are limited by policies to protect monopoly interests. The result is that you end up paying more for your electricity. I-187 levels the playing field.

I-187: Allows You to Earn Money

- Right now, it is illegal for Montanans to put up more than 50 Kw of solar or wind power. That means that not only do you have to buy electricity that you might be able to produce for yourself but you also can't sell as much excess power back to the grid. You pay more, make less, and are more reliant on power companies.

- I-187 would make it legal for businesses and homes to install twice as much power – up to 100 Kw.

- Governments, churches, and non-profits could install five times what current law allows – up to 250 Kw.

I-187: Funds Libraries, Schools, and Water Projects

- Throughout Montana, many communal resources such as schools and libraries are partially funded by a tax on coal revenues.

As coal revenues continue to decline, the amount of funding earned from coal royalties and that tax will also decline. As a result, the services we all depend on will become underfunded.

To protect against this, as coal tax revenue dwindles, I-187 increases an existing tax on each kilowatt hour of electricity from all sources to ensure that those services don't suffer from the inevitable transition to renewables.

- The best part is that because renewable energy is cheaper than fossil fuels, citizens of Montana will still pay less for their energy, even with this small replacement tax.

Our MTCares Team

MTCares is run entirely by volunteers from across the state of Montana. We are a fellowship of citizens concerned about climate change. <https://www.mtcare.org/about/>

Join the MtCares team!

Together we can make a better future for our state, the people who live here, and the world. There are a dozen ways to help and something everyone can do.

How You Can Help

Go door to door
Make phone calls.
Organize events
Help fundraise.
Write articles and emails
Notarize signatures
Volunteer Now – <https://www.mtcare.org/how-to-sign-the-initiative/>
<https://www.mtcare.org/>

Take Power into Your Hands

By coming together, we can secure a brighter, more sustainable future for Montana and all its residents.

Get Involved Today

We envision a future where Montana's

Children, Workers, Citizens are happy, healthy, and thriving.

Join the team!

Together we can make a better future for our state, the people who live here, and the world. There are a dozen ways to help and something everyone can do.

Volunteer

There are a dozen ways you can help Montana move toward a healthier and more sustainable future, from going door-to-door and making calls to running fundraisers and rallies. No matter how little time or experience you have, there are ways to help.

Learn

There are many pieces to be considered when it comes to protecting Montana's residents and environment. No one has all the answers but we each have a duty to be informed and to partake in respectful dialogue toward a better future.

Donate

There's only so much our volunteers can accomplish without YOU! Your donations will directly impact the promotion of the I-187 initiative by funding events, canvassing, and polling. Let's make a difference together.

Contact: <https://www.mtcare.org> and <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1737254959850983/>

MT Cares is a Montana 501(c)(4) non-profit actively working to secure a brighter, more sustainable future for our state and all its residents by addressing the climate crisis and the need to move to renewable electricity, renewable zero-fuel-cost carbon free electricity, as soon as we can. MT Cares: Montana Community Affordable Renewable Energy Saves.

**THE MORE CLEARLY WE CAN FOCUS OUR ATTENTION
ON THE WONDERS AND REALITIES OF THE UNIVERSE
ABOUT US, THE LESS TASTE WE SHALL HAVE
FOR DESTRUCTION.**

- Rachel Carson -

<https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/43661-the-more-clearly-we-can-focus-our-attention-on-the>

Can Groundswell News Journal Become a Franchise?

Email exchange,
subject line "Brand new idea."

Passing the Torch: Two Great Women

Dearest Kennedy,

One of my long-term dreams would be to start something like a global/local franchise where I would prepare my normal *Journal* but leave several pages blank in the middle for local people to lay out local news and then forward their completed *Journal* to everyone on their list.

I don't mean just self-promoting what they're doing (which is fine for a couple pages) but looking around the county or the state in which they live for truly exciting, interesting, positive articles (mostly positive but also to sound alarms where help is needed).

I use an older version of publishing software called InDesign CS3 and have no desire to upgrade and learn new tricks. I'm not sure if you are capable of helping the Lagos people do something as creative as this and also somehow finding InDesign CS3 for them to use. It would be a magnificent prototype.

Any thoughts?

Iona

[reply]

Warm greetings as always my beloved.

I am glad to hear about your truly innovative approach to our *Journal*. More excitedly, yes we can help to make this work with your guidance.

As you know, we have the critical mass of youths and we are always looking for opportunities like this for our young people to hone-in their skills and make some decent income where possible whilst fighting hard to save our one young world.

I will share the main content of this with our team, especially the Lagos team, and give you feedback as soon as possible.

Sending love from all of us always.

Kind regards and speak soon!

Mr Kennedy Kwuelum

Founder/CEO Nexus Exchange Ltd.

Diasporan Coordinator of Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs-West Africa

Mobile: +447415618400

Email: iamrkennedyofficial@gmail.com

Nexus Exchange Ltd is registered in England 10803533. Registered Office: 210 St George's Road, Preston, PR1 1PS.

[reply]

Warm greetings returned, my beloved friend.

This is perfect. It's a start. I'm not sure how anyone will make money; I certainly have not learned how in my 12 years of publishing my global warming newspaper, but maybe you have a magical brain.

When I take a break to build up the non-profit and send the proposal to more foundations, perhaps the Universe will be at my back. If you can find a way for your team to profit, that will be an amazing bonus for them. The fact that I love doing my newspaper work more than anything else keeps me going. I'm sure your youths will have a blast working on it.

Thank you for taking this idea to the next step, no matter where it leads us.

**"What you do makes a difference,
and you have to decide what kind
of difference you want to make."**

- Jane Goodall -



Hans Lothar Köhl posted this photo on Greta's public group FB page January 15, 2020. Credit: Facebook/Thunberg

Sending love to you all,

Iona

[reply]

Hi Iona,

Am glad you welcome my suggestion.

Regarding our young people earning income where possible, we mentor our young people at the Nexus Exchange in ways of making their enterprises sustainable by monetizing their work appropriately. This includes learning how to fundraise, assessing funding & grants, attracting adverts from businesses that reflect the essence of their work, and serving secondary clientele who will in turn pay for their professional services.

Giving them a chance to work with you will help make these dreams come true and also be a testament to your support of our work with young people.

Kind regards and speak soon!

Mr Kennedy Kwuelum



Photo: Christian Gulain Ndamama

Launch of the Girl Up project.

World Merit Burundi "GIRL UP"

Submitted by
Nzigamasabo Leonidas
Founding President World Merit Burundi

Girl Up, Burundi is a comprehensive effort to increase female employment in Burundi through entrepreneurship and agribusiness.

Charity Registration No: 1161402

Women in Burundi often face all kinds of gender-based barriers to a quality life and lack the independence – financial or otherwise – to free themselves. World Merit Burundi is raising money so that they can put into place the “Girl Up” project. Girl Up helps offer women the financial means they would need to become independently financial. This is vitally important as generating Income will improve opportunities for Women - it will open doors to education, to personal independence, and create pathways to a better life for rural

women who are particularly at risk.

Mission: To increase female employment and economic empowerment in Burundi through entrepreneurship and agribusiness.

Vision: To promote successful agricultural-based entrepreneurship as a mechanism for Burundi’s women to take charge of their economic livelihoods and accelerate the development of their communities.

Project Components at a Glance Startup Advising & Mentorship:

For aspiring startups, micro-enterprises, and early-stage ventures, our services are geared toward helping our clients realize their idea. Our consultants offer comprehensive consulting, strategic planning, and marketing management alongside financial training. Together, these services help our beneficiaries bring efficiency to their business models and to take their revenues much further.

Female Economic & Financial Empowerment: Our project partners are already at work organizing groups of women

in rural communities to establish Saving/Lending communities as a means to help women-led, micro-enterprises generate startup capital.

Provision of seeds and fertilizers:

Since many female-led microenterprises in Burundi are rooted in farming, Girl Up supports women farmers by providing them crucial capital inputs like seeds and fertilizers. This will lower the costs of their production, increase total productivity, and allow them to increase their total profit more quickly.

Donate: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/WMBurundigirlup>

Facebook message: January 19, 2020: Yesterday we planted also 3,500 trees at Mboza Hill

Contact: Nzigamasabo Léonidas

Email: leonidas.nzigamasabo@worldmerit.org Or burundi@worldmerit.org

Mobile phone: +25761555324

Source: <https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/WMBurundigirlup>



Photos by Ngo Ban and Communications Officer Divine Sunjo

Children at “Ecole Publique de Didango” burst in joy as they experience the first flow of clean, fresh water from their school tap.

Pupils, Entire Population Jubilate As Water Catchment Rehabilitation Project Yields Anticipated Results in Cameroon

By Ngo Ban, Hope for a Better Future Cooperative Cameroon: February 9, 2020

It was on a glorious morning during a short break as pupils of “Ecole Publique de Didango” burst in joy as they experience the first flow of water from their school tap. None was left behind to witness and most importantly to have a taste of fresh and clean water flowing right in the school yard. These are rare irresistible spontaneous moments to witness the power of the saying: ‘Water is life.’ These pupils scrambled such that control to respect lines was a far-fetched idea. Everyone of them wanted to be the first to carry water, [have] some water to drink.

Before the timely intervention of Hope for a Better Future (H4BF) and RDF, there existed only a dilapidated tap structure in the school premises with total absence of water. This already dilapidated and blocked water structure that for years had not been

able to provide portable water, has been dismantled and properly reconstructed in order to enhance the constant flow of water in the school yard. Putting into consideration the carelessness and playful nature of children, the equipment used were expertly chosen to sustainably suit the environment.

The primary beneficiaries included, the lone health center, the primary school and the entire population of Didango for water was flowing in all the public taps and in private homes.

Activities implemented include:

- Cleaning of three main catchments;
- Construction of the newly identified catchment;
- Cleaning and rehabilitation of the 3 collection points;
- Cleaning and rehabilitation of the storage tank;
- Construction of a control point and installation of a filter;

- Construction of a new dam (animal drinking point); and
- Rehabilitation of taps and correction of connection joints.

PROJECT IMPACT

With your support, H4BF! will provide access to clean, abundant water for 1,500,000 people in rural communities in the North West, South West, West and Adamawa regions of Cameroon. By rehabilitating existing water Catchments, wells and installing solar-powered pumps and gravity-fed irrigation systems, these rural communities can advance towards achieving agricultural and economic self-sufficiency. H4BF! collaborates with villagers in rural Cameroon to help them build a sustainable future for their communities. 1,500,000 is our global goal. We aim to achieve that in five years. So it's 300,000

Water continued on next page

Water continued from previous page



per year. The budget you find there is for this year's target which is for 10 communities. And we are seeking partners. Please make a donation at <https://www.givingway.com/project/e55ad>.

givingway.com/project/e55ad.
Contact Ngo Ban at ngoitsnab@gmail.com.
The physical address for H4BF is:

Hope for A Better Future (H4BF)
Cooperative
S Bend Mile 3 Nkwen
Bamenda 00237, Cameroon



Photos: Mihigo Felix.

Members of We Do GREEN get ready to plant trees wearing matching GREEN T-shirts.

“We Do GREEN” Major Tree Planting in Rwanda

By Paulin Ntihemuka Shami, Rwanda

We Do GREEN Organization Partners with 8BillionTrees to plant agroforestry and fruit trees in Kamatamu village, Mageragere Sector in the Kigali Peri-urban conserving environment and fighting climate change.

Kigali/Mageragere, January 25, 2020 - We Do Green Organization In partnership with 8BillionTrees planted agroforestry and fruits trees to Kamatamu village in Mageragere sector, Nyarugenge District in Kigali City. This initiative aims at environmental conservation, fighting against climate change and food insecurity among other communities.

Emmanuel Sindikubwabo, The Executive Director of We Do GREEN, stated, “Climate Change is a global emergency and will continually be threatening people and biodiversity if we do not act now before it is too late. The effort needed to achieve zero carbon emission as well as keep the temperature rise below 1.5 Degree Celsius, calls for joint contribution in a more pragmatic way.” He also added that, “These trees planted today shall not only act as a carbon sink, but also shall bear fruits for communities fighting food insecurity and malnutrition, protect this area from soil erosion, and a lot more environmental, ecological, and socioeconomic benefits. We thank our partner, 8 Billion Trees for having been very supportive to make this activity a success today and Nyarugenge District, Mageragere Authorities and the whole community for showing high willingness and cooperation.”

Kamatamu residents show full sup-

port to this tree planting activity. Odette Musabyemariya, a resident of Kamatamu village, said, “We thank We Do GREEN Organization for choosing our village for donating and planting trees; the fruits and agroforestry trees we planted today will provide fruits to our families, purify our air, green our village, and we can always wish similar activities to happen.”

While narrating about trees’ benefits, the Chief of the village, Merewenzeza Rwumu-guza, has thanked We Do GREEN Organization for having carried out this environmental activity and said, “A tree is a great gift to people because it has multiple environmental, ecological, and economic benefits to communities and the country; therefore, we shall take care of these trees making sure they grow very well.”

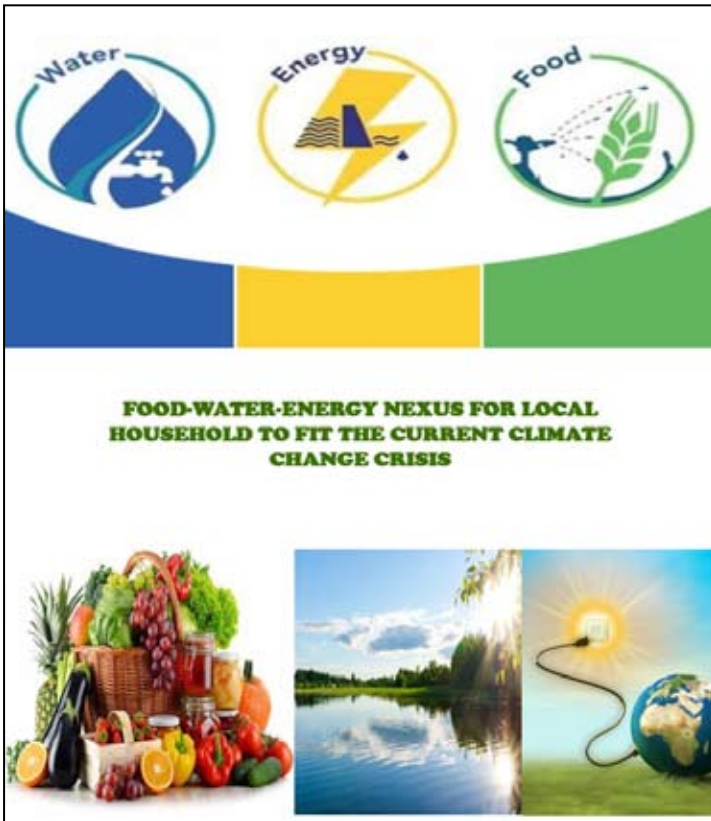
We do GREEN Organization is a certified non-Governmental, Youth-led environmental organization operating in Rwanda since August 2018 that envisions for cleaner and healthy environment, climate resilience, and the wellbeing of people and biodiversity

achieved through collaborative effort. With a mission to constantly, involve youth, communities, activists, and leaving none behind in key acts for environmental conservation and climate change mitigation while contributing to clean water access, food security, clean energy, and climate resilience. The organization focuses on environmental conservation and education, clean energy, and waste management, clean water and sanitation, and modern agriculture and community empowerment as well. This tree planting activity falls under its thematic areas of environmental conservation and community empowerment.

Kamatamu people were very appreciative for having been thought of and supported by We Do GREEN and requested for constant support to better their lives in many ways. Please have a visit to <https://8billiontrees.com/>.



Food-Water-Energy Nexus for Local Households to Fit the Current Climate Change Crisis



the adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climate stimuli which moderates harm.

Sustainable land use: Refers to practices that aim to meet human needs without compromising the ability of the resources to meet the needs of the future generation.

Introduction

The world is striving to find solutions to adapt to the current climate change crisis. Clearly identifiable ecosystem components that are highly affected by the climate change are food, water, and energy. The Food-Water-Energy nexus which describes the interlink among food security, water security, and energy security (Figure 1) helps to make informed decisions and modification in resource management for sustainability.

Climate sensitive sectors such as agriculture are at a stake, which causes a draw back on the well-being of the human race. To improve the well-being of the human race, there is need to improve on agriculture. However, agriculture is dependent on water and energy. For example, agriculture stands to be the predominant consumer of water. It accounts for approximately 3,100 billion m³, or 71% of global water withdrawals today, and is expected to increase to 4,500 billion m³ by 2030 (Dale et al., 2016), and use of energy for fertilizer production field operations and harvest.

This article is intended to bring to the readers a clear understanding of the food-energy-water nexus or, better still, give an additional simple design that can be adapted by local households to fit the current climate change crisis.

Figure 1: Interlink among food security-energy security and water security.

By Dr. Tamale Paul, Uganda, drpaulpawel4@gmail.com

Definition of Terms

Food-water-energy nexus: Refers to the interlink among the food security, water security, and energy security.

Food security: Refers to availability and access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet the dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Water security: Refers to the access to safe drinking water.

Energy security: Refers to access to clean, reliable, and affordable energy.

Climate change: Refers to the long-term shift in the global or regional climate patterns.

Climate Smart Agriculture: Refers to an approach for transforming and re-orienting agricultural development under the new realities of climate change (Lipper et al., 2014).

Clean energy: Refers to energy that doesn't emit greenhouse gasses.

Rainwater harvesting: Refers to the accumulation and storage of rainwater for re-use on site rather than allowing it to run off.

Climate change adaptation: Refers to

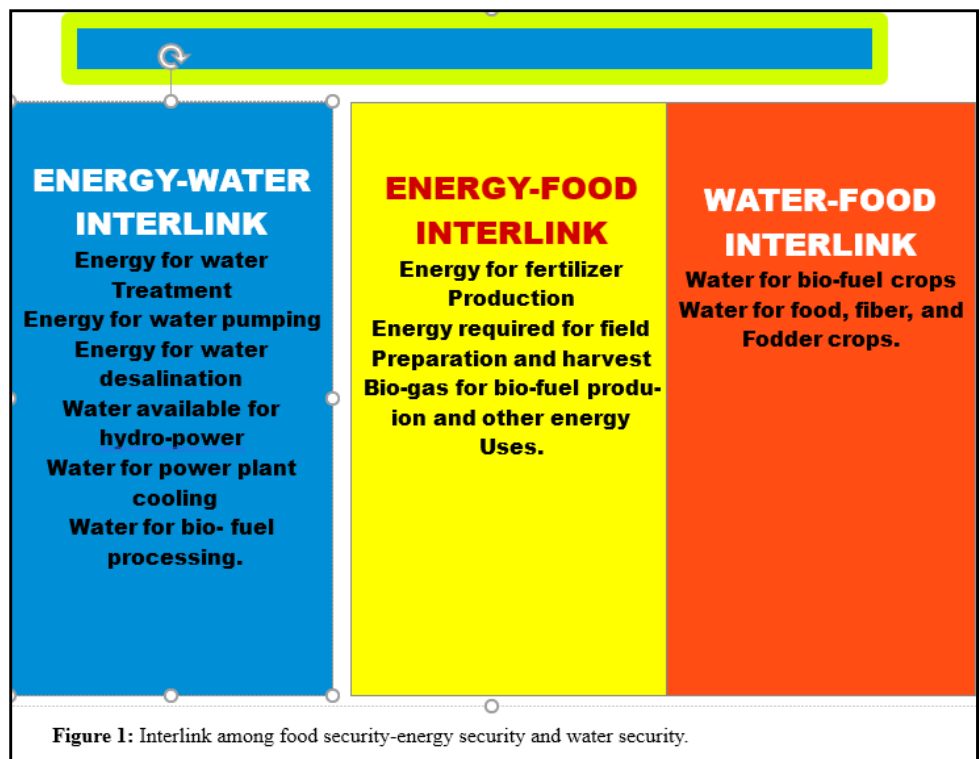


Figure 1: Interlink among food security-energy security and water security.

Households *continued from previous page*

Suggested Food-Water-Energy Nexus Design for Local Households to Fit the Current Climate Change Crisis

Local households are the main characters affected by climate change since they directly engage with local natural resources for their livelihood. For this matter therefore, there is need to modify the interlink between the food security, water security, and energy security. It has been tried by some communities to see to it that there is minimal resource use but with better satisfaction. Owing to low level income common for local households, there is need to minimize resource use, the suggested design (Figure 2) indicates a simple way of how local households can use the knowledge from the food-water-energy nexus to improve their livelihood sustainably at a low cost.

(right) Figure 2: Food-water-energy nexus suggested design for local households.

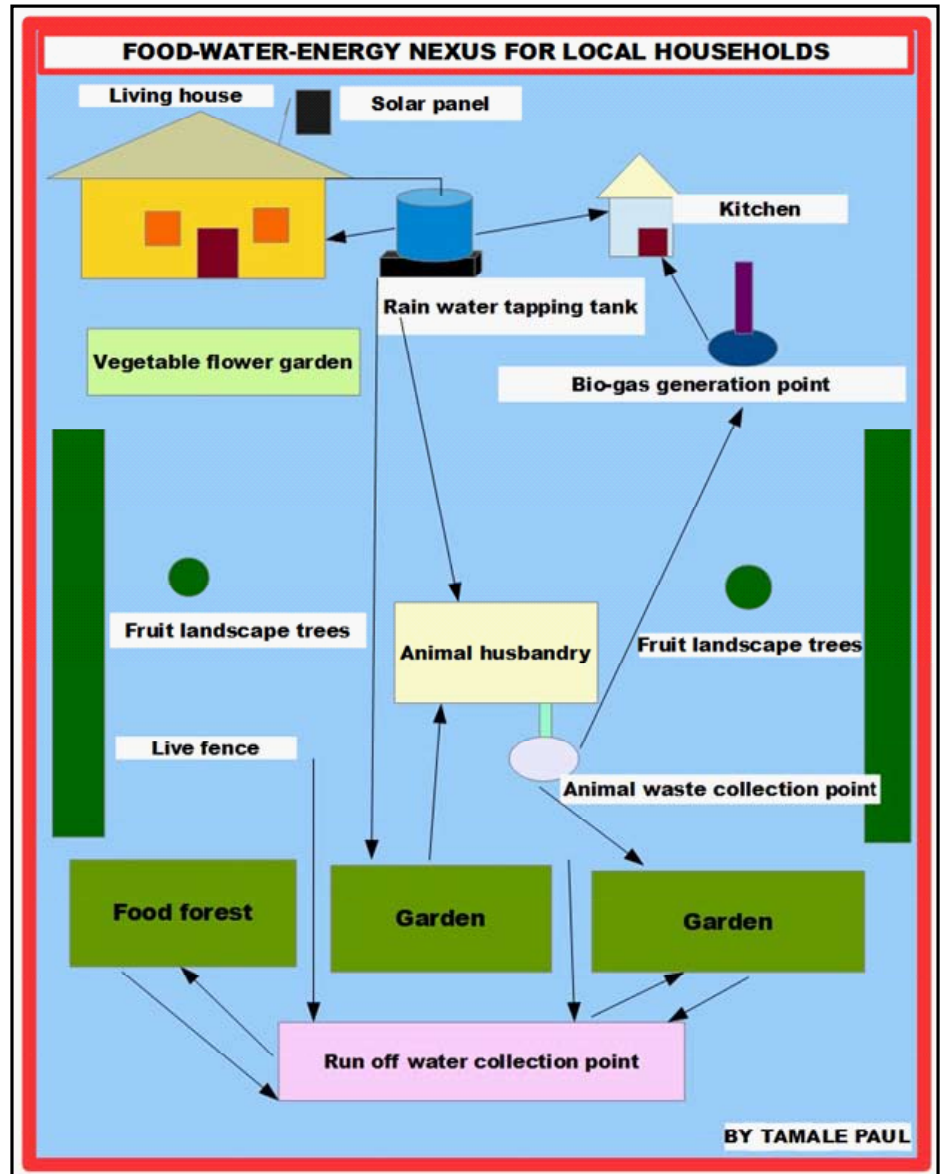
Arrows represent resource usage, transfer, and interconnections. There should be use of every opportunity that avails a resource. The design shows the tapping of rainwater from the living house to the water tank, which is used for kitchen and house operations, animal feed mixing, drinking water for animals, irrigation in the gardens, and making bio-gas. It also indicates the tapping of run-off into a ditch which can be channeled to the gardens to help keep moisture within the garden.

It emphasizes the concept of resource re-use and recycling; for instance, it shows the use of animal waste as manure and in the generation of bio-gas which is used for cooking and lighting.

The design focuses on clean energy sources rather than non-renewable energy sources; for instance, the use of solar energy and bio-gas. The shown solar panel indicates tapping of solar energy which is cheaper. The use of bio-gas is cheap since the raw materials used are locally available.

The design entails agro-forestry through the concept of food forest where food is grown in the forests, which forests then provide additional food sources, fuel in the form of firewood, and also mitigating climate change.

Lastly but not least is the use of edible landscape features in designing landscape. It shows the use of vegetables in the flower compounds rather than using non-edible plants. It shows the use of fruit landscape



trees in designing the compound instead of non-edible trees. It also shows the use of live fences rather than artificial fences, all these create an added source of food while conserving the environment, while mitigating climate change.

Conclusion

Water, energy, and food are three highly connected systems. Undertaking the interlinks will help the world adapt to the current climate change. However, it is clear that the concepts for sustainable land use through use of clean energy sources, green water, waste management, and conversational agriculture cannot be left out in the journey to solving world food, energy, and water problems using the food-water-energy nexus.

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Excitement, Hard Work, Success, Then Thugs Stole it All, Injured the Security Guard: Time to Rebuild and Start Again

Michael Josefowicz, New York USA
January 23, 2020

Herbert received one of the original grants to set up a cafe. It was running well. Then thugs stole all of the equipment. Once I can earn some money, getting

him back up and running is at the top of my To-Do list. I have to say that when Herbert told me about the thugs, it broke my heart. Attached are pictures of the cafe he had before he was robbed. Also, you can do me a big favor - you

could spread the word of my patreon page. Thanks in advance. Every time I get a subscription of \$25 a month I can hire one of my interns. As of today I have 4 interns in Africa I am mentoring.
<https://www.patreon.com/Printernet>



I am Rotarian Herbert Bagyenji Kajoki from the Rotary E- Club of Carolinas District 7750, South Carolina - USA. I am in the classification business (Tourism). I am the director of One Village Tours based in Kabale Uganda - Africa



Printernet Cafe Established in 2018

It was in 2017 that I conceived the idea of a computer skills training in my community but lacked how to start because resources were not enough with me to begin.

In 2018 I got **M Ichael Josefowicz** in New York City the man behind Printernet who through printernet project gave us \$1500 to begin with.

The cyber printer net cafe had 3 computers and a laptop, had a printing machine, scanning machine and had bought a photocopying machine on loan. It was sustaining itself as through internet surfing and printing charges. A number of youth in the community had got computer skills and also many were yet to be trained and the community was going on well.

Rebuild *continued from previous page*

Printernet Cafe Destroyed 2019

On a fateful day, thugs break off into our Internet cafe and stole everything as installed as above and injured our local security guard. We took him to the hospital and admitted in hospital for some time. We reported the matter to police and since then nothing has been done.

We are looking for re-establishment of a new cafe that needs 3 computers @ \$1300, a printer @\$:200, as can I ng machine @300, a photocopying machine @1000, rent and furniture @\$1500 and internet installation @\$100.

Because we experience a lot of loss in the rural communities, we are looking forward to have this printer net cafe in the city where its security is guaranteed.

We are therefore asking for generous people in the Diaspora to support us and make this cafe functional again."

All our documents were kept in the shelves of the cafe and when it was destroyed, we lost every data about the cafe, also it has taken long ever since it was stolen, almost a year now, so this is a huge loss to me and the community I serve."

This is what Herbert had created for his community. Everything was stolen.





Photo: Older Women's Co-Housing complex

An image of the Older Women's Co-Housing complex in High Barnet, London. The female only co-housing space opened in 2016 and includes 25 flats, shared gardens, and communal facilities.

A room of one's own? London Carves Out Spaces for Women

Projects that cater solely to women are cropping up around the British capital, carving out spaces for women to meet and support each other.

By Adela Suliman
Thomson Reuters Foundation: February 3, 2020

LONDON, UK – As she approaches her 90th birthday, Shirley Meredeem sits in her flat in a leafy part of north London, proud of the women-only co-housing space she helped to establish, which started as just an idea in her living room two decades ago.

The sprawling Older Women's Co-Housing (OWCH) complex, which opened in 2016, includes 25 flats, shared gardens, and communal facilities.

But Meredeem was clear – it is not a gated retirement community, but a self-managed women's space, she said.

"Older women have had lives and careers where men have taken charge," Mere-

deem told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "We thought if we allow men into the community we'll lose (our) autonomy."

From female-only housing schemes to dedicated women's marketplaces, projects that cater solely to women are cropping up around the British capital, carving out spaces for women to meet and support each other.

In an increasingly urbanized world – with almost 70% of the world's population expected to be living in cities by 2050 – women-only environments help combat loneliness, encourage female entrepreneurs, and diversify public spaces, say supporters.

Inspired by similar projects in Scandinavia and the Netherlands, the OWCH in London's High Barnet area is the only co-housing community for older women in the country, said Meredeem.

It's important that older women live in or close to cities, she added, as they need to access hospitals, shops, and neighbor-

hoods and feel part of a community.

Britain has a rapidly ageing population, with women living longer than men and more likely to live alone, according to charity Age UK.

With an average resident age of 73, all of the OWCH flats are full and the organization receives weekly email requests for people keen to join.

"We wanted to help each other," said Meredeem. "We'd much rather have women looking after us than men."

GIRLS' CLUB

Across age groups, however, women in cities face sexual harassment, economic disparities, and cultural barriers, a poll by the Thomson Reuters Foundation found in 2017.

Looking at factors such as access to healthcare and economic opportunities, the poll ranked London as the most female-friendly megacity followed by Tokyo

Women continued on next page

Women continued from previous page



Photo: Thomson Reuters Foundation/Adela Suliman

The “Lady Lane” street market opened in east London in 2019. The market is unique as it is run by female traders only. Photo taken November 29, 2019.

and Paris, with Cairo faring worst.

In 2018, London Mayor Sadiq Khan launched the year-long “#BehindEveryGreatCity” campaign to promote gender equality in public spaces.

The campaign includes public art by women on the London Underground, the first statue of a woman in Parliament Square – suffragist leader Millicent Fawcett – and an initiative to support women in leadership.

But social entrepreneur Wendy Davis, who has worked as an architect, said that, despite progress, cities such as London still do not take the needs of women seriously and are lacking dedicated single-sex spaces.

The last straw for Davis came in 2013, when a purpose-built women’s library in east London, which housed the most extensive collection of women’s historical memorabilia in Europe, was closed due to lack of funding and its contents relocated.

That motivated her to start a social enterprise called Rooms of our Own, which aims to build a permanent women’s center

in the capital.

“We thought it important to own our own building in perpetuity so it couldn’t be taken away from us,” said Davis, who had originally planned to develop the property on the site of a disused car park in east London.

Davis’ group was in the middle of buying the land, worth about 1 million pounds (\$1.30 million), when the decision to sell was overturned by local authorities in 2014 after a cabinet reshuffle.

Undeterred, she is on the hunt for a fresh spot in the capital and says that in the push for gender equality, people have forgotten that single-sex spaces are necessary for empowering women.

“At one time there was a real understanding that any group suffering particular issues, oppression or discrimination ... needed to have spaces where they could meet with each other,” said Davis.

“The whole (movement) has been towards making services generic ... actually it’s very uninclusive.”

Davis’ proposed women’s center will

house charities that deal with domestic abuse and female genital mutilation as well as offering yoga classes, study spaces, and a cafe and crèche.

A WOMAN’S WORLD

Among the hustle and bustle of a noisy east London street market, the traders of “Lady Lane” are discovering that a women-only space can also be good for business.

Selling everything from jewelry to hot sauce, Lady Lane is the first female-only street market in the country, say its organizers. “It’s a sisterhood,” one trader, 30-year-old Amiira Ismail, explained as passersby stopped to sample her spicy Somali-inspired date and tamarind sauce. “You get a lot from women helping you with ideas, networking – so it’s much better.”

Ismail trades at a few London markets but said Lady Lane is “special” because of the sense of community it fosters, unlike in other markets where most sellers are men.

Research by the Tower Hamlets Coun-

Women continued on next page

Women continued from previous page



Photo: Thomson Reuters Foundation/Adela Suliman

Market trader Amiira Ismail sells her Somali-inspired hot sauce at the “Lady Lane” market, run by female traders, in east London. Photo taken November 29, 2019.

cil, which runs the Lady Lane project, has shown that about 90% of market traders in the area are male.

Since its soft launch in November, the market already hosts a dozen women traders and the council has been “inundated” with interest, with new stalls added each week, said Kirsty Valentine, program manager at the council.

“(A marketplace) is predominantly a very heavy male-dominated environment, so we’re exploring to see if there is any way of re-balancing that because it’s important that a local market should reflect its local community,” she said. “We’re not doing it to be exclusive to anybody else.”

Men still dominate positions of power

across politics, the law, media, and other key sectors in Britain, according to a study by women’s rights group the Fawcett Society, with women from ethnic minority backgrounds particularly under-represented.

Fawcett Society chief executive Sam Smethers said initiatives like all-female housing or women-only public spaces can go a long way to addressing that imbalance.

“Women-only spaces are vital as often mixed spaces can become male-dominated, marginalizing women’s voices or deterring women from participating at all,” Smethers said in emailed comments.

“Spaces like this give women a chance to

network and support each other to overcome persistent structural barriers which hold all of us back.”

(\$1 = 0.7608 pounds)

Reporting by Adela Suliman @Adela_Suliman; editing by Jumana Farouky and Zoe Tabary. Please credit the Thomson Reuters Foundation, the charitable arm of Thomson Reuters, that covers humanitarian news, climate change, women’s and LGBT+ rights, human trafficking and property rights. Visit <http://news.trust.org> for more stories.)

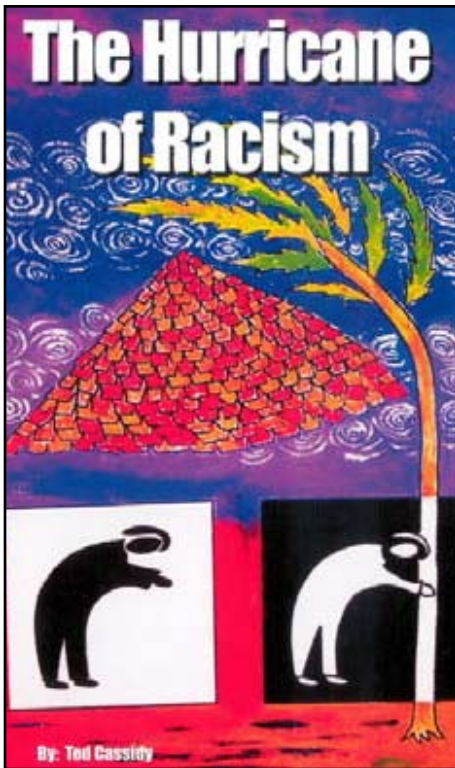
Source: <http://news.trust.org/item/20200203002532-95jld/>

I CANNOT CAUSE LIGHT; THE MOST I CAN DO IS TRY TO PUT MYSELF IN THE PATH OF ITS BEAM.

- Annie Dillard -

<https://quotefancy.com/quote/1008945/Annie-Dillard-I-cannot-cause-light-the-most-I-can-do-is-try-to-put-myself-in-the-path-of>

The Nature of Racism and How We Conquer It



By Fr. Ted Cassidy, SM, Ohio USA

Chapter 2: Emotional Ties Verses Knowing the Power in a System

I have met some extraordinary people and heard some painful stories since I have been doing this work against racism. An elderly African-American couple came to our retreat center for an anti-racism workshop. They were originally from Jamaica but had lived for many years in a small, mostly Caucasian town in the United States. They were very religious people and very involved in their church. The woman attended the meeting of the church women's group regularly for years and had evidently become friends with the other women.

When one of the women and her husband were celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary, my new friend was invited to the church ceremony. She got all dressed up, bought a gift, and went to the Church ceremony. Afterwards the other guests went off to a reception to which my friend was not invited.

At our workshop she explained how much this hurt her, yet she had become so used to this kind of treatment that she was able to brush it off. Her husband was much stronger. He complained voraciously

of how he had been attending church for years but never had heard a homily against racism, while many other moral problems were the subject of sermons.

Let's go out of the box and look at the situation described above. If we stay in the box we may feel only the hurt of the elderly black couple. If we go out of the box we can take a look at the power of the emotional system the couple was involved in.

In this emotional system, the church evidently has let the racist attitudes continue without any comment. There are the Caucasians who exclude blacks from certain levels of friendship without consciousness of the hurt being caused. There are also the few blacks who have been living in a holy anger for years without apparently doing much to try to change the situation.

I know another person who is very angry when he speaks to me about how African-Americans have control of the city government where he lives. His anger flares up as he tries to describe the graft that the black people are perpetrating. He is not able to look beyond what he sees and to examine how he is part of an emotional system in which he allows himself to be swayed.

An authentic leader is one who can separate himself or herself from emotional ties and not be manipulated by them. It is one thing to have friends or to love your family and another to be swept up unconsciously by ties to unjust and unfair pressures that keep others from their freedom, growth, and happiness.

Murray Bowen gives an example of a family that is caught up in an emotionally dysfunctional system. The family he described consisted of a husband, wife, and two children. The daughter was born first, followed by a son 18 months later. The mother did not have a high degree of self-identity and, in the process of raising her daughter, fused emotionally with her, rather than enabling the daughter to develop her own ego-differentiation. Her son, on the other hand, was left emotionally outside of the control of the mother and developed rather normally. The mother, for example, did not use enough energy when the daughter was very young to encourage her to go out and play with other children. The son, on the one hand, quickly went off to play with friends. The daughter remained with the mother for longer periods.

This pattern was repeated over and over

in the relationship between the mother and daughter. As a result, the daughter developed a relationship-oriented personality, rather than a goal-directed personality.

Later in school, the girl's favorite teacher through the early class years was one who continued this pattern of over-concern with the child. Although the young girl performed rather well in school, she did not develop strong ego strength on her own. By the time she was in middle school, she began to rebel from the mother.

During high school, the rebellion became very severe. The girl began to act out. After high school, she left the family and lived a lifestyle that was very different from what the parents wished. She actively used drugs and exhibited other antisocial behavior. Meanwhile, the son developed rather normally, did well in school, went off to college, and became close to a girl he planned to marry.⁵

Bowen says that once a child is "programmed" to a certain level of giving and receiving with the mother, that program remains relatively fixed throughout life. The mother's relationship with the girl was characterized by worry and over-concern, which tended to take over the child's life. The child's ego strength became similar to the mother's. The two became fused and neither had a proper level of ego-differentiation.

In order to learn how to relate well in life, the child needed a relationship with a parent who had a differentiated ego. As the girl became older, she was financially dependent on the parents but broke away from the emotional attachment she had with the mother.

The mother, however, remained emotionally attached to this child. This younger woman developed a relationship with a man similar to the one she had with her mother. The young man also was a refugee from a family where he had a similar pattern with his mother. The two of them maintained equilibrium of so called "giving to each other" as long as they did not work and were able to devote themselves totally to one another. They lived in a type of emotional cocoon that could not be threatened by inner or outer forces. Otherwise, they could not cope with ordinary life demands.

This family had become highly dysfunctional just as our society has become so in racial relations.

Racism *continued on next page*

Racism *continued from previous page*

GEORGE C.L. CUMMINGS EXPLAINS THAT CLASS, RACIAL, SEXUAL EXPLOITATION, AND IMPERIALISM ARE THE FOUR PRIMARY FORMS OF OPPRESSION THAT HAVE ARISEN FROM WESTERN CIVILIZATION.

In the family described above, the father remained manipulated by the power of his wife. If he had intervened and insisted that his daughter be separated from the unhealthy emotional pressure of his wife, the daughter could have had the opportunity to be raised without the mother's emotional needs determining her growth.

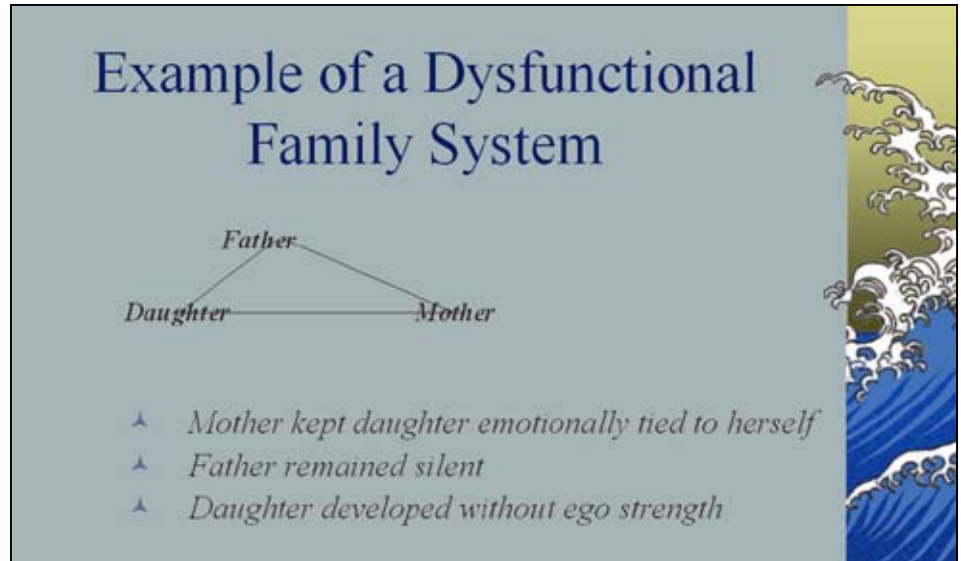
Racism has patterns similar to the family described above. To think and act out of the box is to be conscious of the emotional ties that are operating in our lives. It may be that we want to be loyal to a political party or patriotic to our country. We may even have a conviction that something is immoral. We must look beyond loyalties and grasp what controlling emotions are operating in the social systems involved.

I am not suggesting that these loyalties are not to be kept; I am asking you to recognize what is happening in the system in which you are involved. Ask yourself if you are being given a reward so that the controlling forces can keep their power.

The mother in the example above swayed her husband to be quiet and keep his ego undifferentiated, that is to say, with a low concept of who he was by some emotional tricks, as she appeals to a false loyalty. These tricks and manipulations are often hidden. Just as the black couple described above was caught in an emotional system, so the family described was caught in such a system.

The history of racism shows the same emotional dysfunctions. George C.L. Cummings explains that class, racial, sexual exploitation, and imperialism are the four primary forms of oppression that have arisen from Western civilization.

In explaining the economic dimension of this oppression, he views the Industrial Revolution as building a capitalist civilization that reinforced the four major types of oppression. The black slave trade



permitted during the American Revolution provided the cotton for the first large export market that, in turn, provided for the capitalist mode of economy in Great Britain, which became the first mass production industry as witnessed in its Lancashire mills.

This first major industry displays the central presence of the four types of oppression. Forms of class exploitation occurred in both the cotton plantations in the Americas and in the mills in Britain. Imperialist oppression took place in Britain's control of territory, resources, and people in the Americas; racism provided the chief ideological justification for the use of Africans as slaves in the Americas; and sexism was employed to defend the abuse of women on both the plantations in the Americas and within the mills of Britain.⁶

The discrimination and marginalization of blacks and other minorities in the United States are partially a result of the capitalist economy and the support of it in various degrees by the institutions of Western society. Bourgeois revolutions' grand ideals of liberty and equality were co-opted by the forces of undemocratic capitalism.

Today, the results of the control of capitalist elites are more powerful than the nation state. The four types of exploitation are still much in evidence.

In our American history, black slavery served as a platform on which white class,

ethnic, and gender struggles were diffused. Because America accepted black slavery and discrimination, the fundamental nature of human dignity for others could also be avoided.

The slave trade, exploitation of labor and child labor, and the imperialist expansion of nations was the emotional system on which the industrial revolution was built. This global system, the family mentioned above, and the black couple I described above are all involved in dysfunctional social systems. To extricate ourselves from similar situations we need to examine how we operate in the system.

In the next chapter I will speak of the first principle for changing a dysfunctional system.

Footnotes:

5 Murray Bowen, *Family Therapy in Clinical Practice* (NY: Jason Aronson, 1983), pp. 426-32.

6 George C.L. Cummings, *Racism in the U.S. from 1492 to 1992, Reading the Signs of the Times*; T. Howland Sanks and John A. Coleman (New York, Paulist Press, 1993), pp. 82-83.

A pdf of The Hurricane of Racism is available for free at <https://www.nacms.org/ebooks/special-articles/hurricane-racism>.

THE DESTINY OF HUMANS CANNOT BE SEPARATED FROM THE DESTINY OF EARTH.

- Thomas Berry -

<http://www.picturequotes.com/the-destiny-of-humans-cannot-be-separated-from-the-destiny-of-earth-quote-221845>

Woman with Humanitarian Degree, Needs Help Starting Project to Help Others

By Maahe Bob, Uganda

“Unstable and undefined sources of income, a major challenge to developing countries.”

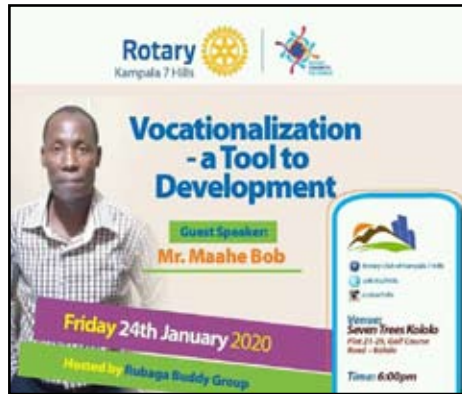
This is manifested by bigger sums of numbers of young people on the streets of urban cities and those in villages, but surviving on subsistence farming with no defined and stable sources of income that could facilitate for their basic needs.

This is a scourge that needs world friends' interventions. If not arrested in this 21st century, the developing world is heading for disaster. As if this is not enough, the daily source of income, is also affected by climate change. An increase in temperatures has been a hinderance to further growing in some parts of African regions, East Africa, Uganda being the victim, and yet this subsistence farming has been also an alternative source of small income to some families for meeting their basic needs.

Unlucky Marium was not able to escape this scourge. Marium, borne from Kabale district in Uganda, raised by a single mother, who throughout her life, has been worrying how to raise school fees to meet Marium's future dream of being a Human rights activist.

Like any other mother, Marium's mother, a local peasant, has struggled a lot to provide for her daughter's school fees until high school when things ran out of her hands.

Poor Marium decided to look for a job and started working in a local restaurant in Kampala and this where she met Maahe Bob, Maahe Bob's organization was a client to the restaurant. The restaurant used to serve the trainees and the workshop participants in the organization that Maahe



Maahe Bob

Bob heads. And he was touched to see a young girl serving in the hotel with no hotel management skills and intervened to know why she was serving in a hotel at that young early age.

On interaction with her, she shared a lot with Maahe Bob and they both (Marium and Bob) agreed that Marium should go back to school at least to complete a college.

Bob took a responsibility of paying Marium's half tuition and the mother also looked for other support to help Marium complete her course at Makerere University in a bachelors of Arts in Ethics and Human Rights program.

After her 2nd year, it was not simple for both Maahe Bob and Marium's mother to continue paying tuition for her courses and instead Marium resorted to Facebook as the only option of finding help from anonymous people.

Like any lucky person, this did not take long, she was able to link up with Tomas Browne from Ireland. Facebook being regarded as the source of scammers, this

was not easy for Tom to believe in what Marium was talking to him. And this manifested a lot of reference requests from Marium to Tom if help would be organized and indeed with what most people knew about Marium including Maahe Bob and Erica Enz with her husband based in California, had to recommend her due to previous meet up that Marium had experienced with them physically in 2013.

A couple of thanks too is extended to Iona Conner and her late husband John for the great supported rendered to Marium.

This brought back happiness to Marium as she was now continuing with her course. Today, Marium is a graduate, with a bachelors' degree in Ethics and Human Rights from Makerere University.

Following the situation that Marium went through, here she is with an idea of helping others as she was helped to achieve her dream.

Marium noticed that in order to achieve her dream of helping the needy, where she has been a candidate, she has to be mentored and decided to join Uganda Youth Skills Training Organization, founded by Maahe Bob, to aquire experience in managing an organization.

Marium requests for the support to help the needy in her communities and her organization is "Intervention for Humanity Development Organization-Uganda," and a website is under construction.

"Imagine being part of this wave!"

Maahe Bob's website: www.skillsfor-youths.org

Maahe Bob's email: bobmaahe@gmail.com, info@skillsforyouths.org

Marium's email: sheremunezero@gmail.com



Marium



Thomas Browne

Caretaker Position or Rental open at MYSTIC MEADOWS,
a Sanctuary for wildlife
& Native Plant Preserve

Qualifications:

- *must deeply love Nature
- *have some knowledge of wild plants and organic gardening and/or be willing to learn
- *be easy to work with and enjoy working alone as well
- *have at least a part-time job or some source of income
- *other things to be discussed during interview

Accommodations: a large room with private bathroom in main house as well as kitchen & living room to be shared with owner
or

a nice cottage near house (for the rustic type) heated with wood and backup electric heater

Location: 3 miles north of Thurmont MD, easy access to Rt. 15

Rental Option: for someone with a full-time job and unable to take on too many caretaker responsibilities, the rent would be \$500, or less as we discuss your situation. I am easy to get along with and am hoping to find someone equally agreeable here on my wonderful 11+ acres. ...

Hope to hear from you soon! Christine (240-469-7899)
a certified Master Naturalist in the
State of Maryland
(songbirdschant@gmail.com)

*A Glimpse
Into the Eye of God*

By Christine Maccabee

Coming down the steps
barely awake from sleep and dreams
Through the glass front door
I saw the bright red sun
just rising too
over the Eastern ridge
as though to greet me
to grab me
saying see
I am still here
to rise upon another
perfect day
see me
and so I did
as I stood there
then going to sit
on my stool
by the window
to continue to feast
upon its brilliant red
feeling as though I were
getting a glimpse
into the eye of God.

A few moments passed
coffee made in the kitchen
and within that time
clouds had moved in
leaving a tiny touch
of pink
where the sun
had just risen,
brilliant red,
as a blessing
for only my eyes to witness
or perhaps
some other lone soul
on a mountain top
or some sailor on the beautiful Bay
also caught a fleeting glimpse
of this eye of God
which opens all eyes from sleep.





IMBOLC, COSMOLOGY, AND THE PRESENT MOMENT

Genesis Farm, New Jersey USA
February 7, 2020

In 1543, Nicholas Copernicus asserted that Earth was circling the Sun rather than the sun, moon, and stars revolving around Earth. It was a leap from a belief system and culture based on the assurance of an Earth-centered (geocentered) Universe rather than a sun-centered (heliocentered) Universe. The leaders and ordinary people of Europe nearly ran him out of town.

Copernicus' story of the Universe (cosmology) was just too much to take. It was especially upsetting for the leaders and decision makers of 15th century Europe. They had built their lives, careers, and fortunes on the foundations of their cosmology.

With the multiple shock waves of this past month's events, it could seem utterly naïve to hope that today's adult decision makers could face the challenge of exploring a new cosmological perspective different from the familiar one of the past centuries. But that was exactly what Carl Sagan and Stephen Hawking were proposing in the messages we featured in our last ENews. They were entreating and encouraging us to change our own inadequate perceptions of the world around us. They were prompting us to trust our own capacities to weave together the core human wisdoms of the past with the present scientific insights that were simply unavailable to earlier generations of humans. It

is exactly what David Attenborough and Indigenous leaders, and untold legions of climate scientists, climate strikers, religious and moral leaders, Extinction Rebellion communities, and untold creative and courageous grassroots movements are proposing.

Given the monetized, commoditized, and digitized world view dominating present historic events, it has become possible to manipulate the meanings of truth and freedom. It has become easy to alter and suppress the innate human capacity to feel empathy with the suffering and cruelty experienced by any other living being. It has become easy to sanctify war. It has become easy to convince us we can surrender the human burden of thinking, judging, discerning, and choosing to the dazzling seduction of artificial intelligence and robots.

For a number of years, Genesis Farm has been shifting our time orientation from the "Hallmark calendar" to the primary planetary calendar, marking the orbit of Earth around Sun in its yearly cycle. After all, if the other beings surrounding and supporting us in this bioregion are attuned to this primary dependence on Sun, it makes supreme sense that we choose to do the same since we are ultimately one species among all the others.

Since late October, we have moved through the seasonal passages of Samhain and Winter Solstice. Now we will close

the portal of the richly significant passage of Imbolc, the time between the darkness of winter and the possible return of life in spring. For earlier peoples, this was the time of assessing the viability of new life, new possibilities, still hidden in the darkness of Earth's womb. Nothing was taken for granted. Nothing was assumed. Possibilities could only be nurtured with the expectation that new life was possible, not guaranteed.

Very recently, we received a gift of the 2019, revised edition of Brian Swimme's *Hidden Heart of the Cosmos*, originally published in 1996. It is profound and touching and powerful. It rekindles a commitment to do everything possible to hand on a meaningful future to our children and young people. We have been given permission to reprint Chapter 5, "The Sun as the Center," because it describes the utter, unspeakable generosity of Sun as the most trustworthy inspiration for awakening our lives and suggesting that humanity is still viable. Discovering Sun in new ways can provide enormous fresh air to our human spirits.

We were not designed by 13.7 billion years of evolution to normalize the cruelty and pathology of our present dilemma or be overwhelmed by the hysteria promoted by the mainstream media.

Cosmology continued on next page

Cosmology continued from previous page



The Sun as the Center

By Brian Swimme
Hidden Heart of the Cosmos

Excerpt from Chapter 5

...In the cosmology of the twenty-first century, the Sun's lavish bestowal of energy can be regarded as the spectacular manifestation of an underlying impulse pervading the universe. In the star, this impulse reveals itself in the ongoing giving away of energy. In the human heart, it is felt as the urge to devote one's life to the well-being of the larger community.

In a culture in which cosmology is alive, children are taught by the Sun and Moon, by the rainfall and the starlight, by the salmon run and the germinating seed. It has been so long since we moderns have lived in such a world that it is difficult to picture, but we can just now begin to imagine what it might be like for our children, or for our children's children. They will wake up a few moments before dawn and go out into the gray light. As they're yawning away the last of their sleep and as the Earth slowly rotates back into the great cone of light from the Sun, they will hear the story of the Sun's gift. How five billion years ago the hydrogen atoms, created at the birth of the universe, came together to

form our great Sun that now pours out this same primordial energy and has done so from the beginning of its existence. How some of this energy is gathered up by life to swim in the oceans and to sing in the forests. And how some of it has been incorporated into the human venture, so that human beings themselves are able to stand here, are able to yawn, are able to think, only because coursing through their blood lines are molecules energized by the Sun.

And then they will hear the simple truth about the necessity of such a bestowal. If we shine brightly today it is only because this same energy was shining brightly in the Sun a month ago. Even as we breathe out, our energy dissipates and we need to be replenished all over again by the Sun's gift. If the Sun were suddenly to stop transforming itself into energy, all the plants would die as the Earth's temperature plummeted hundreds of degrees below zero. In our veins and our flesh, all the heat-giving molecules would grow cold as we and everything else became hard as frozen dust.

The Sun's story will find its climax in a story from the human family of those men and women whose lives have manifested the same generosity and whose sacrifice has enabled others to reach fulfillment.

If through the ages the various cultures have admired people who poured out their creative energies so that others might live, they were admiring such humans for being true to the nature of the energy that filled them. Human generosity is possible only because at the center of the solar system a magnificent stellar generosity pours forth free energy day and night without stop, without complaint, and without the slightest hesitation. This is the way of the universe. This is the way of life. And this is the way in which each of us joins this cosmological lineage when we accept the Sun's gift of energy and transform it into creative action that will enable the community to flourish. . . .



GRATEFUL LIVING GENERATES SUSTAINABLE, RESILIENT WELL-BEING
IN OUR LIVES, AND IT IS HOW WE CAN BEST CARE FOR THE PLANET
AND ONE ANOTHER – GROUNDED IN LOVE AND GRATITUDE.

- Kristi Nelson -

<https://twitter.com/GratefulnessOrg/status/1225399248306528258>

Consumer Liberation

Use it up, wear it out, make it
do, or do without.

Email Iona at groundswellnews@pa.net and she will put you on our email list to receive monthly issues of our climate activist journal. “Every new one makes us stronger,” sings Pete Seeger.



Groundswell News

An activist publication bringing readers struggles and successes as well as climate-change news in the U.S. and around the globe. People everywhere are working to make change. Our beautiful journal will inspire and encourage you. Learn more at www.gobackclub.org. Email groundswellnews@pa.net to be put on our e-list.. It's free but donations are gladly accepted. A project of the 501(c)(3) Grassroots Coalition for Environmental and Economic Justice. Photo <https://www.google.com/search>

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Please consider placing your ad with us. As we are an alternative source of news, we have an alternative ad policy. Send me your material and pay what you feel is reasonable, depending on how much space your ad needs. If your ad requires some of my time to create it for you, there will be an extra charge. If you can afford \$50 for half a page and \$100 for a full page, that will be wonderful. Our distribution is small now but we hope to grow quickly and our readers are wonderfully supportive people!

Thank you.



Remember your dreams.



Messages from Our Friends



Thanks for sharing your most precious moments with us all my beloved Iona.

As much as I am big on the big screens and concerts, I have recently learned the rewards of singing by myself and for myself even as a worship leader.

We all should borrow a leaf and may John watch over you from the great beyond until such a time when we shall meet to part no more. Sending lot of love from my girls and all of us at the Nexus Exchange as always

[*second email*] You are our inspiration in our fight to save our environment and we're poised to do whatever it takes to make your fabulous work through the decades to go even further and we are here to work in concert.

Thank you for all you do for our Earth and especially your love for the underprivileged.

I speak for all our young people at the Nexus Exchange Limited and I send you their love and peace as always.

Mr. Kennedy Kwuelum, UK
Founder/CEO Nexus Exchange Ltd.
Diasporan Coordinator of Commonwealth Alliance of Young Entrepreneurs-West Africa
Mobile: +447415618400
Email: iamrkennedyofficial@gmail.com

BIRTH ANNOUNCEMENT

MR KENNEDY SUPPLIED MATERIAL FOR THE BIRTH OF A PROTOTYPE OF AN INTERNATIONAL EDITION OF GROUND-SWELL NEWS JOURNAL IN LAGOS, NIGERIA. IF ANY OF OUR READERS WANT TO SEE IT, PLEASE EMAIL IONA AT GROUNDSWELL-NEWS@PA.NET

ARE YOU A QUITTER, DOUBTER, OR IMPACT DRIVEN FIGHTER? It doesn't matter when and where you will start your journey through life. Since we were birthed on Earth, our lives have been nothing but a moment full of sorrowful pleasure.

Learning how to crawl was one of the times that we so fear as an infant (Child), yet it's a defining moment in our existence as well. When we crawled, learning to walk become another difficult journey for us. We stand, we fall. We stand, we sit on our tiny gluteus (Buttocks). In spite of all those falling and sitting periods that seem as obstacles to our crawling and walking moment, [they] were our inspiration to keep on trying no matter what.

Similarly is what we are going through now in the fourth phase of our lives. Sometimes we try, fight, struggle, yet, see no breakthrough. Sometimes we just want to quit and live a carefree life – that is, stop trying and just sit.

There's a point where we see things moving very fine with our friends and we began to think that nothing is happening, is changing in our lives and we start to make ourselves feel depressed and uncomfortable to the extent [we] shut ourselves from things that bring happiness. It becomes intense, especially when we see people we are older than or think we are smarter than enjoying or having their moment of success breakthrough.

Listen to this, never shut yourself out from enjoying what your current situation has to offer. Feeling depressed, uncomfortable, and thinking negative about yourself is not who you are. You are a walking fulfilment. That's our mind playing hide-and-seek games. It's natural to feel that way at times, but do not allow it to consume your heart and minds. Bear in mind that it doesn't matter how long or where you will start from but what is more important is that you have that positive mind and that you are starting or intending to start in spite of the challenges life and society throws you.

Always convince your inner self that

you too can become great like any other person. Keep the hope and dream alive. Not everyone completes the race together. Some start earlier [and] don't get to the finished line. Some people give up right to the point nearing the finish. Some don't start early but get to the finish line. So, stop doubting yourself and stay positive and determined. Remember, No Die No Rest.

Mohammed D. Konneh, Liberia
Contact: GREATNESS ACHIEVED THROUGH EXCELLENCE (GATE AFRICA-LIBERIA INC) CLARA TOWN, SANDFIELD COMMUNITY. MONROVIA, LIBERIA WEST AFRICA.

Email: gateafrica1@gmail.com
Telephone: 0777620270,0777753787

Iona,

I really appreciated the inspiring, investigative feature on Judy Wanchis's battle with the frackers (pages 4 to 9 in the February issue) – especially the photos. Is she one of your pals? [*Editor's reply:* I have never met Judy, but I have published her stories in the past. She is one amazing woman! I'm glad you enjoyed her story.]

Allen Hengst, Washington, DC, USA

Dear Iona,

I heartily thank you for your efforts and time as well because what you all (alongside *Groundswell News Journal* partners) do is so paramount to all of us... both sides: youths and grown-ups.

Keeping up this remarkable job is our DUTY.

Sincerely yours,
Paul Claudel, Burundi

Iona Conner,

Thank you so much. You were the first U.S. Editor in Chief to publish our story and since then it has been wonderful.

Daniel Chidubem Gbujie, Founder and CEO of Team 54 Project International

Hi Iona,

Thank you for all the work you do for God's creation.

Love,
Ron & Linda Feagley, Pennsylvania USA
Messages continued on next page

Messages continued from previous page

Hello.

My name is Daniel BAMBARA of Burundian nationality more precisely in sub-Saharan Africa. Really it is a great pleasure to consult your site www.gobackclub.org.

I really thank you. My email is "*****@gmail.com" to add me to your club.

Daniel Bambara, Burundi

Hi, Iona.

I am sitting here, looking out the window, worrying about why we still have no snow on the ground. Hey, this is Sweden, and it is the end of January! When I was a kid (do all of us old-timers say that all the time?), we always had a foot or two of snow on the ground at this time of the year. I remember how I used to get this enchanted feeling when I walked around in the woods, where the dense growth of spruces had the branches lavishly decorated with brilliantly white snow. The daylight barely penetrated to the ground, and on a windless day, it was so quiet that if I stood perfectly still, I could hear my heartbeat. I guess it was the blood pulsating in my temples. When I walked, the snow crunched under my boots. I liked the sound. It was the sound of winter, just like the sound of birds was the sound of summer. Come to think of it, we did not see and hear as many birds last summer as I remember from the summers of my childhood. Or bees.

In January, the sun sets at three o'clock in the afternoon here. If there was a moon in the sky, that still provided a dim, bluish, dreamlike light that almost seemed to come from the snow. It was quite sufficient for me to find my way on the familiar trails. Today, the trails are muddy and dark, and I am not sure I could recognize my surroundings out there after sunset.

I have to think about something else now. I long for summer. Summer here is an orgy of sunlight and color, and the smell of flowers, and the sound and smell of the sea on the beaches. Outside my hometown of Norrtälje, we have the largest archipelago in the world, with 50,000+ islands and skerries between Stockholm and Helsinki, Finland. It is a unique scenery, and quite beautiful.

Anders Eklof, Sweden

Someone asked me a month ago, "How is it that you are so determined and always seen in impacting even it's so small and you always claimed you are a living billionaire, yet you are so poor and broke?"

I look at the person and smile. They asked why am I laughing?

I told him that I am not poor, but your mind and eyes make you think so. I said to the person that am a living billionaire because I make it my duty to see people beyond their statuses. I breathe fresh air without paying a penny for it. I have never been to a hospital in 16 years and most importantly I give out the best of what I have in heart in term of love towards everyone no matter how many times they hurt it. Alhamdulillah (All Praise is due to GOD) for all. I have visions and dreams that are so big and huge to the extent that they don't allow me sleep at night. And lastly, I have learned to see further seeing the world with an eye compared to none, but with what my heart and intellect birth every day.

I then asked the person, am I poor?

He said, "Indeed I am moved by your words." Now I'm saying this to all of us. Don't let no one tell you otherwise. Keep on moving even if the light seems dim. Always decorate your mind with positive feelings and thoughts. Eventually we shall all leave our little footprints on the face of the Earth and let's make sure it's a print worth being proud of.

One Day! One Day!

Mohammed D. Konneh, Liberia

The Mentor (No Die No Rest)
"The Power of a Positive Mind"

Jewish Voice for Peace wrote: "Trump's 'peace plan' is a farce with deadly consequences... This is in no way a peace plan – it's an apartheid plan. This is all very distressing, of course. It's hard to think of an adequate response – and a viable alternative – but I think we all need to keep on working at it as diligently (and imagina-

tively) as possible. Thanks for forwarding!

Dan Adams, Pennsylvania USA

Hi Iona.

Well, I certainly hope that you can get enough funding.

Too many fine activists are diverted from directing their best and total energy by the imperative to survive personally. Another reflection on the state of our world.

Ah well....

Love,

Robert Burrowes, Australia

Hello mother this is Marium. I hope you have been well. I need your help, mother. I am planning to form a charity organization with the CEO of Uganda Youths Training Organization, Mahee Bob. He offered to give me space at his organization for some time. He already has donors from Norway and Sweden and it's already legally organized.

Please mother I was requesting that you help me find one or two donors to help one or two students if possible, who are more in a bad situation like I was. I know how it means to be helpless, sweet mom. I was once helpless, so I want to take a hand in helping. I told Mahee Bob to form a story and write it there if you cannot manage to get donors physically. Stay strong mother. I graduated [with a Bachelors in Ethics and Human Rights]. I need around \$300 for office rent, website, and a few staffs, which are still a challenge.

Marium Shere Munezero Ainebyona, Uganda (See her story on page 35. The photo below shows Marium in the red top with her colleagues in Uganda Youth skills Training Organization).



World of Wonder: On the Wild Side, Seed Stratification



By Christine Maccabee, Maryland USA

Winter Musings

Through the many days and nights of this long cold winter, trillions of seeds lay sleeping. They rest in their icy cradles of earth awaiting the warmth of spring. Offspring of last year's flowers, herbs, grasses, and trees, these seeds, though inactive, are preparing for change. Naked, these small capsules of life lay exposed to all the elements, without one word of complaint.

Yes, seeds of plants are in a state of dormancy, being prepared for germination by a process we humans call stratification.

I have learned through trial and error that the germination rate of wildflower seed mixes is much higher if the seeds are sown in the fall or winter, or put in sealed containers in the freezer until late winter or early spring. Also, some vegetable seeds we save from the past year of gardening need a period of freezing, such as spinach. However, I find most vegetable seeds do quite well kept in a cool dry place in sealed glass or metal containers to keep moisture

and mice out! Mice will chew through plastic if desperate.

As humans we experience many cold, sometimes difficult times in our lives, perhaps a form of human stratification. Surely out of struggle and depth of feeling have come some of our greatest symphonies, art masterpieces, writings, and other creative works. Even out of the depths of depression, and through sheer determination, and inspiration, creative potential and genius are released through the cracking of a sort of protective epidermis. I am thinking of Van Gogh's prolific paintings, Beethoven's music, in spite of deafness, and so many others whose flowering of inspiration inspire us all.

One of my favorite songs to sing is by Dottie Rambo whose pain nearly drove her to suicide. Instead, she wrote a song called "Beside Still Waters," a powerful song expressive of her pain, and yet the faith and hope she had in order to overcome it. Human stratification...hmmmm....

Sitting by my window on this icy cold day I gaze out at the gardens, fields, and mountains painted in shades of greys and

browns. Difficult as it is, I must acknowledge my own need for this 'down' time. For many of us January and February can be too cold, too solitudinal, even depressing. To comfort myself I reflect on the seeds out there of my favorite wild edibles, as well as medicinals for teas. Many of those wild plants depend solely on their seed progeny in order to come again in the spring. As I drink teas from the plants I dried last year, I find myself dreaming of spring, which cannot come soon enough.

Time passes all too swiftly, some say, so we must embrace the moment, finding joy beyond the sorrow. Even lonely, frozen days in January and February will pass more pleasantly if we contemplate the flowers to come, the potential within the soil, the seeds which are stratifying, and the potential within ourselves. All we need, like the seeds, is to weather the elements of our lives with patience and hope.

Spring is on its way! See you in March...

Source: <https://www.thecatocinbanner.com/on-the-wild-side-56/>
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