

OPEN LETTER TO GLOBAL LEADERS – A HEALTHY PLANET FOR HEALTHY PEOPLE

Call to Action – 26 March 2020:

Emerging from the Planetary Emergency and partnering between People and Nature

It is time to harness our fears, build hope and drive action to respond to the human health, economic, climate and biodiversity crisis with solutions that build resilient societies on the longer term.

The world has been plunged into an extraordinary crisis. We share a deep concern for the human cost that the virus has already inflicted and **express a profound sense of solidarity** with the most vulnerable communities as the pandemic continues to spread around the world. The threat requires fast and strong responses and we fully support the emergency measures needed to save as many lives as possible and address the devastating impacts on peoples' livelihoods and security. This crisis is also demonstrating how much we depend on each other, as one humanity living on one planet, for our health systems, as well as for our food systems and supply chains.

It is important to acknowledge that the planet is facing **a deeper and longer-term crisis, rooted in a number of interconnected global challenges**. Emerging infectious diseases (EIDs) such as Ebola, bird flu, SARS and now coronavirus (COVID-19) cause large-scale deaths, disease and economic damage, disrupting trade and travel networks. About 70% of these diseases originate in animals, mainly wildlife. Their emergence results from human activities such as deforestation, expansion of agricultural land and increased hunting and trading of wildlife, activities that can also contribute to biodiversity loss. Many pathogens remain to be discovered so the diseases we know about are only the tip of the iceberg. Like Covid-19, climate change, biodiversity loss, and financial collapse do not observe national or even physical borders. These problems can be managed only through collective action that starts long before they become full-blown crises and must be acted upon not as singular threats but as a potential series of shocks.

Covid-19 has shown us that overnight **transformational change is possible**. A different world, a different economy is suddenly dawning. This is an unprecedented opportunity to move away from unmitigated growth at all costs and the old fossil fuel economy, and deliver a lasting **balance between people, prosperity and our planetary boundaries**. Now is the time to phase out fossil fuels and invest in the energy of the future.

How leaders decide to stimulate the economy in response to the corona crisis will either amplify global threats or mitigate them, so they need to choose wisely. The risk is making nearsighted decisions that increase emissions and continue to degrade nature in the long term. On the other hand, there is an opportunity to champion solutions that not only rebuild lives and spur economic activity in the immediate wake of the crisis, but also accelerate the transition to resilient, low-carbon economies and nature-rich societies.

We know what the solutions are: investing in renewable energy instead of fossil fuels; investing in nature and reforestation; investing in sustainable food systems and regenerative agriculture; and, shifting to a more local, circular and low carbon economy. These positive actions can also be a much-needed source of collective hope and optimism for life regeneration in these uncertain times.

We call on leaders to have the courage, wisdom and foresight to make their economic recovery plans targeted towards both short and long term health and well-being for all people. In doing so, such leadership will help secure a path towards greater resilience, by improving global health, reducing air and GHG emissions, rebuilding our relationship with nature, rethinking how we use land and transforming our food systems. The recovery

packages should not be designed as free tickets, but rather include some strong economic incentives and conditions for companies and industries to shift to a low carbon circular and regenerative business model with a strong focus on the future of jobs and employment.

It is paramount **that health, climate and biodiversity stay at the top of the agenda** in 2020 and beyond, and that leaders leverage every opportunity to keep up momentum on these fronts together due to the deep systems interlinkages. We cannot expect to emerge from this current health pandemic unless we take care of people and planet in a holistic fashion. Every effort must be made to ensure that the global efforts under the United Nations (UN General Assembly Nature Summit, UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, UN Convention on Biological Diversity) are still progressing. We must remember that countries are stronger working together, and international cooperation is the best option to resolve future existential threats.

This is the moment for all of us to rise to the challenge of **collaborative leadership** and work together to find pathways to emerge from this emergency with a **global economic reset**. **People and nature** must be at the center of this deep transformation for **redistribution, regeneration and restoration**. Prosperity for people and the planet is possible only if we make bold decisions today so that **future generations** can stay healthy, survive and thrive in a better world.

Full List of signatures:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1bc039DJP-rSoHa_GOaYupk0vIQ58TPBeq8h-viOwNCc/edit

Background information about **The Planetary Emergency Partnership**:

The Planetary Emergency Plan is a novel contribution to the emergency debate, recognising the inextricable interconnectedness of the three challenges referred to above, and providing a new approach to conventional short-term siloed policy action. Concretely, it combines a focus on protecting and restoring our Global Commons with implementing a series of economic and social transformations, to guarantee the long-term health and well-being of people and planet. The Plan and Declaration proposal were launched with WWF in the presence of a number of Heads of State and Government and received the support from Austria, Bhutan, Central African Republic, Costa Rica, Fiji, Monaco, Norway, Seychelles, UK as well as First Vice-President of the European Commission for the European Green Deal, Frans Timmermans.

The Planetary Emergency Partnership is a global platform of over **170 leaders** from governments, UN, international organizations, business, civil society, youth movements, scientific institutions and academia. Their common objective is to secure recognition of and concomitant action on the planetary emergency - the convergence of global social inequalities, the climate crisis and vast biodiversity loss. The platform grew out of a small group of partners convened by the Club of Rome to develop the *Planetary Emergency Plan*, and to promote the Club's narrative of "emergence from emergency", the notion that our current predicament is both an urgent call for action and an unprecedented opportunity for transformation. The platform's high level political access and bottom-up, local level efforts support the ultimate high-level goal of a Planetary Emergency Declaration and Plan being adopted by global leaders by the end of 2020, now that the connection between climate, nature and people's health is even more important..

Emerging from the emergency – One Planet, One Humanity, One Health

Website:

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1h2yacWSTLI9ROMSNKVwoBju0KvbHT8EGXnt4l1pEoa4/edit#>