



An Image of Global Integrity: The parameters of an enlightened global society

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There is a growing awareness of the need for a systems shift in humanity's relationship to the planet, and that our present global trajectory is unsustainable. Tony Hodgson offers an alternative analysis.

Introduction

Despite growing concern over the impact of humanity on the systems of life, and despite accelerating knowledge of the predicament, we appear to remain confused about what it means to be all living together on a planet with finite boundaries. Those who believe in the dominant paradigm of economic growth without regard to what is contained within that economic view and what is excluded have been referred to as 'the new flat earthers'.

Globalisation, often referred to as the Washington consensus, is embedded in that unsustainable paradigm. The challenge we face is one of transformation to a new paradigm which acknowledges in practice, not just in rhetoric, the nature of Earth as a spherical planetary habitat. The times when some human communities could sustain an isolated and self-sufficient existence are over. Everyone is an inhabitant of 'space ship earth'. The trends of exploration, trade and conquest ensure an inescapable encounter of different cultures, customs and values. This has been going on for some time. For example, we can look back on, say, the Silk Road as a precursor of the Internet. More than silk was encountered and exchanged on that road from Europe to China. The current scope of this challenge is now that it is unavoidably global. But the 'Global Village' aspiration of the sixties eludes us. Brzezinski's assessment in 1969 is closer to our experience of the last fifty years.:

'A more appropriate analogy is that of a 'global city' – a nervous, agitated, tense, and fragmented web of interdependent relations. That interdependence, however, is better characterised by interaction than by intimacy. Instant communications are already creating something akin to a global nervous system. Occasional malfunctions of this nervous system – because of blackouts and breakdowns – will be all the more unsettling, precisely because the mutual confidence and reciprocally reinforcing stability that are characteristic of village intimacy will be absent from the process of that 'nervous' interaction.' (Brzezinski 1970 p.19)

We have not progressed too well in the matter of how to handle the differences and tensions in the context of the emergence of 'the globe'. The switch from a mindset of

globalisation to a mindset of globality has not yet taken place. Alvin Toffler has formulated the background to this as three waves of civilization. The first wave was the agricultural revolution; the second wave was the industrial revolution and the third wave is the current information revolution. All three 'civilizations' are present together in both the so-called developed and the developing world. So not only are there clashes between tribes and cultures within any wave, there are clashes between the waves. Inhabitants of any wave appropriate each other's instruments of propaganda and warfare. First wave tribes appropriate communications and weapons technology. Third wave tribes still cling to the use of second wave weapons of mass destruction and second wave functional hierarchies. Second wave societies still have first wave political systems.

The driver of these clashes is the need for domination. An emerging global human society is incoherent and unstable if it is driven by 'our way is best for everyone.' There appears to be only two ways of handling this. Tolerance of diversity is one way but it creates the difficulty of coping with uninvited invasive action that destroys the tolerant. Domination by the strongest coalition is another, but with the backlash of resistance as diversity is destroyed.

This points to the importance of the emergence of a fourth wave, that of globality, which displaces the dominant paradigm of modernity. Martin Albrow puts this well.

'For it is the way that globality enters into the frame of world society and state which displaces modernity as the dominant ordering principle of contemporary life. ... the unification of the world, which happens as an outcome of the Modern Project, signals also the project's termination. Moreover, the unification which has occurred is not as the project designed it, but arises as much from the limits of the world in which it was situated. The examination of these paradoxes is important to dispel illusions about what a new world order might mean.' (Albrow 1996)

Meanwhile, in the current climate of tension the issues of the emerging global era are simplified as the *global-antiglobal* polarity. Depending on one's viewpoint, there are good people pursuing a global agenda and bad people

protesting against them. Or there are bad people pursuing exploitative globalisation agendas heroically challenged by diverse good people who lack their antagonists' power and resources. In this article I aim to try and reframe the situation so that something more constructive than a bipolar tension can emerge and create new space for constructive and harmonious agendas.

The first step is to make a distinction between *exploitative globalism* and *benign globalism*. Equally a distinction must be made between *aggressive anti-globalism* and *constructive anti-globalism*. The implications of this distinction are set out in Table 1.

TABLE 1: The Four Fields of Interaction

	EXPLOITATIVE GLOBALISM	BENIGN GLOBALISM
AGGRESSIVE ANTI-GLOBALISM	Economic exploitation and exclusion confronted with hostile demonstration and rejection	Recognition that the human-biosphere system and consciousness expansion has a global destiny
CONSTRUCTIVE ANTIGLOBALISM	Constructive and courageous confrontation with the destructive aspects of the inevitability of some types of globalisation	An arena for new types of dialogue that has the potential to co-create a balanced global-local system

The focus of this paper is on the fourth field of interaction where benign globalism is able to meet constructive anti-globalism and develop a collaborative stance to the resolution of what, in so many areas, turn out to be mutual problems that will only be solved by collaboration.

This reveals that, even as we accelerate into the Third Wave, a Fourth Wave is emerging based on new understandings of the impact of humankind upon the planet, now referred to as the Anthropocene Age. This means humans now have the capacity to alter the Earth System in ways that threaten the very processes and components, both biotic and abiotic, upon which humans depend. In this context there is also emerging new understanding of human evolutionary potential and new forms of organisation of planetary and local systems. Such a view cannot be value free. It embraces the global as a 'no turning back,' the alternative being indeed an apocalyptic fragmentation and destruction in both man and biosphere. Its direction aspires to an evolution that is determined by a complex of interrelating values which constitute a planetary integrity that is non-violent, respecting of positive diversity, supporting multiple pathways of personal and social enlightenment and wise in the ways of dealing with the massive destructive forces which are not going to go away at all easily.

So instead of polarising as globalism and anti-globalism, this way seeks to explore a frame of interconnectedness that acknowledges the positive ground of conflicting views and place them in a larger system where they retain their validity but only if adapted to play their role in the greater whole. This is a higher and more subtle integration than the old order.

The First Global Revolution

The unavoidable meaning of globalism is the inescapable fact that human kind has reached a level of both scale and scope of impact which is commensurate with the actual scale of the planet's surface, its atmosphere and its biosphere. This is the first global revolution, well formulated

by King and Schneider (1991). The human population now, as biological beings, impacts massively on the living surface (e.g. reduction of rain forests, impact of emissions on climate change). The economic activity of this population impacts on the surface systems (lithosphere, biosphere and atmosphere) at a level which affects the toxicity, the species balance and the stability of the climate. The socio-technical activity has put information, communication and military technology in the hands of communities whatever their value systems and whatever their wealth and mental health. The accelerating take over of the human mind (especially the young mind) by the technotronic revolution at a trivial level is constraining millions of people to be uneducated in the human quality.

This situation has been developing for several millennia with obvious acceleration and it could be argued that there is no especial qualitative difference other than perhaps speed and scale. However, the world system has properties that are non-linear and, like all systems, has tipping points or knife-edge criticalities. Rather as water may flow at a constant rate behind a dam and nothing changes for ages, at a critical moment the water reaches a level where it will flow over the slipway.

The main symptom of this unprecedented development is a set of imbalances. Man with the biosphere: man is overloading the biosphere and has too big an ecological footprint. Man with man: 1.5 billion with some degree of so called wealth and 3.5 billion in poor conditions with 1 billion of those seriously deprived. Isolated cultures and value systems are thrown together by travel and communications and de-stabilise traditional community integrity. The trend towards liberal values and the open society is undermined by those who exploit its freedoms for corrupt, criminal and destructive ends. These form the modern 'four horsemen of the apocalypse' where the apocalypse is the transition to the first global civilisation. They could be named, in a rather negative light, as:

The People Overload

The expansion of world population to, say, 12 billion implies a near doubling of infrastructure support and more than a doubling of biospheric impact.

The Greed Plague

More and more economic wealth is being concentrated in fewer and fewer hands and is transparent to a highly communicated world population.

The Belief Wars

Deeper than physical wars is the tension of belief wars (which trigger the physical) in which emotional attachment and inability to learn in the unknown lock communities in conflict.

The Sinister Exploitation

The motives of leaders and their factions are clearly not all benign but are self-serving and exploitative. Their possessive ground and expansive tendency is not easily to be curbed.

The global imbalance creates a set of dynamic vicious cycles of tension and escalating conflict. This is the negative side that points towards the apocalypse. However, there is also an evolutionary dynamic that creates a virtuous cycle in which the positive value of the global revolution leads to a more balanced, integrated and yet vividly diverse world where man and planet become treated and live as one integrity. Human beings are beginning to stabilise the population and

potentially may well be able to sustain over 9 to 12 billion people with a balanced footprint. The technologies are being developed that would enable economic activity on a global scale and never-the-less reduce the overall footprint of man. Out of the clash of values around the world a global culture is emerging, albeit peripheral, which acknowledges and tolerates, even integrates, the insights and energies of all major philosophies and religions. Just as aberrations like slavery and nuclear war have been averted there is a continuing movement to 'clean up' the foundations and frameworks for human affairs. This counter force is characterised by the Four Spirits of Integrity which emerge from the reframe to globality.

The Spirit of Stewardship

This is perhaps best illustrated in the notion of steward leadership in which the values and behaviors of leaders are responsible as well as authoritative.

The Spirit of Enterprise

This is inseparable from innovative learning as distinct from maintenance learning in that enterprise integrates creation, ethics and responsibility for dealing with human needs and problems.

The Spirit of Enlightenment

Expanding the bandwidth of consciousness in a world where overwhelming forces are diminishing it is perhaps the most critical factor.

The Spirit of Authenticity

Integrity is also linked with authenticity, right relationships and hence the ethics of interconnectedness.

Daniel Quinn (1991) has described a view of the ancient origins of the present predicament of humanity as the switch from a 'leaver' culture to a 'taker' culture. The latter is characterised by treating the planet and its resources as there for man's benefit whether this is from the material economic standpoint or from a spiritual perspective. The Spirit of Stewardship is essentially a next step which does not have the 'fruit and berries' mode of life of the leaver culture but places the employment of technology, economics and life style as a restorative culture of 'living lightly on the planet'.

Most of the arguments on either side of the wealth divide between rich and poor put the emphasis on distribution. The Spirit of Enterprise moves us towards a society in which it is recognised that wealth, in all dimensions of value from economic to spiritual, is the fruit of being earned. It also seeks balance between these dimensions. Material wealth does not bring happiness and stewardship. Neither does impotent poverty.

The human mind, and especially human emotions, has difficulty in grasping the universality of values and the ability of the good to accommodate great diversity. Spiritual tolerance in the context of enduring fundamental values that recognise the interactive systemic nature of society is also an aspect of the Spirit of Enlightenment. The global situation redefines the common good on a global scale.

The Spirit of Authenticity moves us to recognise the corrosive or toxic nature of some forms of human behaviour when they are divorced from a deeper truth. The deep-seated tendencies that recur 'unto the seventh generation' imply there is no quick fix for human criminality and stupidity. But this spirit moves to go deeper and search for ways of growing the integrity of peoples everywhere without exception so that the foundations of society can support and be supported by conscious evolution.

A Framework for Practical Analysis

There are a number of obstacles to clear analysis of these dilemmas, the most endemic one being a 'flat land' approach. The inhabitants of flatland lack the consciousness to perceive the third dimension which enables sense to be made of behaviour that otherwise is either inexplicable or subject to impractical interpretations. In the case of the global problematique it is the absence of thinking in levels combined with thinking in systems. For the purposes of this analysis the global issue is divided into six levels and five feedback loops. The levels are:

- 1 GLOBAL SYNERGY
- 2 REGION AFFILIATIONS
- 3 COUNTRIES
- 4 NON-LOCAL INTEGRITIES
- 5 LOCAL INTEGRITIES
- 6 COLLOCATED COMMUNITIES

The global synergy level is the level at which human life is confronted by issues which it is ineffectual to fragment. Most notable in recent years is climate change and global warming. In socio-political terms terrorism is rising to the top of the agenda (although its counterpart, organised criminality, has been around for some time). The affiliations that form regions are the next level. This is determined in large part by geography, but not entirely. Countries are the third level. They may or may not operate their relationships within the confines of region.

At the fourth level we place a new concept, *non-local integrities*. We are using the word integrity something like community but since these groups or networks interweave in complex ways, the word community is perhaps too narrow. The fifth level includes local integrities which might be anything from a massive metropolitan complex (like the Midlands around Birmingham, Coventry and Wolverhampton) to an intimately connected region (such as Iceland) that is more like a colony. The sixth level is a collocated community which is more like the classical idea of a village or a neighbourhood.

Each level from 2 to 6 interacts in both directions with the global synergy (or fragmented dissonance) as well as with each other. To keep the first pass at this hypothesis we will not examine the other loops that exist between all the levels. That complexity needs tackling in due course.

This structure is very similar to the one proposed by Hazel Henderson in her thoughts towards reshaping the global economy. She makes the important point about taking a systems viewpoint. In which reshaping the global economy also requires including at all levels the missing feedback from nature, planetary and local ecosystems as well as the human beings also marginalised by the current runaway form of globalisation. We will now take a systems view of the runaway globalisation that we called earlier the exploitative form.

The Vicious Spirals of Globalisation

An apocalyptic view of the effects of globalisation and liberalisation is the destruction of culture and the domination of a new form of Empire which itself is subject to ruthless attack by the forces of terrorism, the desperate poor and anti-globalist factions. According to Hardt and Negri

'The concept of Empire is characterised fundamentally by a lack of boundaries: Empire's rule has no limits. First

and foremost, then, the concept of Empire posits a regime that effectively encompasses the spatial totality, or really that rules over the entire 'civilised' world.' (Hardt and Negri 2000 p.xiv)

In this situation, whether the mild version or the apocalyptic version, the coupling together of inadequate policies and actions as well as inadequate responses to the downsides of those policies, create a series of vicious cycles. The nature of a cycle is that, unchecked, it leads as inevitably as a law of physics, to escalation. Escalation then crosses discontinuities or turning points in the structure of the system that leads to catastrophic events.

We can break this major degenerative dynamic down into five distinct but mutually reinforcing loops. These are depicted in the diagram 1.

The loops are roughly characterised in the following set of statements. The statements should be read as a 'never-ending sentence' to emphasise the self-reinforcing nature of the dynamic.

Loop 1, regional capture, can be read 'globalisation as an imposed Washington Consensus forces regional arrangement which homogenise the spread of further imposed globalisation' and so on.

Loop 2, national constraint, can be read 'globalisation as subjugation of regional economies in turn imposes harsh regimes of world trade rules upon countries supporting globalisation' and so on.

Loop 3, dominant orthodoxy, can be read 'globalisation promotes unquestioned assumptions of the doctrine of *homo economicus* creating a global orthodoxy of globalisation' and so on.

Loop 5, accelerating gaps, can be read 'globalisation promotes conditions that grow some localities at the expense of others making them frustratingly dependent on globalisation' and so on.

Loop 5, only one way, can be read 'globalisation rides roughshod over colocated communities extracting their value and creating unhealthy dependence on globalisation' and so on.

The Virtuous Spirals of Globality

An optimistic view sees the five loops of interaction as virtuous cycles which are gradually establishing a global sustainable society with rich cultural diversity. We will use Martin Albrow's term *globality* to express the set of virtuous cycles. In this case the mutual influence of the loops establishes an evolutionary rather than a degenerative effect. Thus the negative consequences of both globalism and anti-globalism are seen as temporary mistakes, errors and teething troubles that will be overcome.

The positive loops are described roughly in the following set of statements.

Loop 1, regional development, can be read as 'enlightened globality naturally evolves efficient regional trade areas which enrich the arena for globality' and so on.

Loop 2, flourishing nationhood, can be read as 'enlightened globality supports national choices for scope of democratic diversity of trade and culture that strengthens the validity of enlightened globality' and so on.

Loop 3, global citizenship, 'enlightened globality provides supportive platforms for a challenging dialogue of socio-economic models which enables continuous improvement of enlightened globality' and so on.

Loop 4, innovative clusters, can be read as 'enlightened globality encourages development of flourishing wealth creation clusters thus safeguarding the local resilience towards enlightened globality encourages' and so on.

Loop 5, powerful emergence, can be read as 'enlightened globality is friendly and supportive to thriving diverse local communities participating in enlightened globality' and so on.

Diagram 1

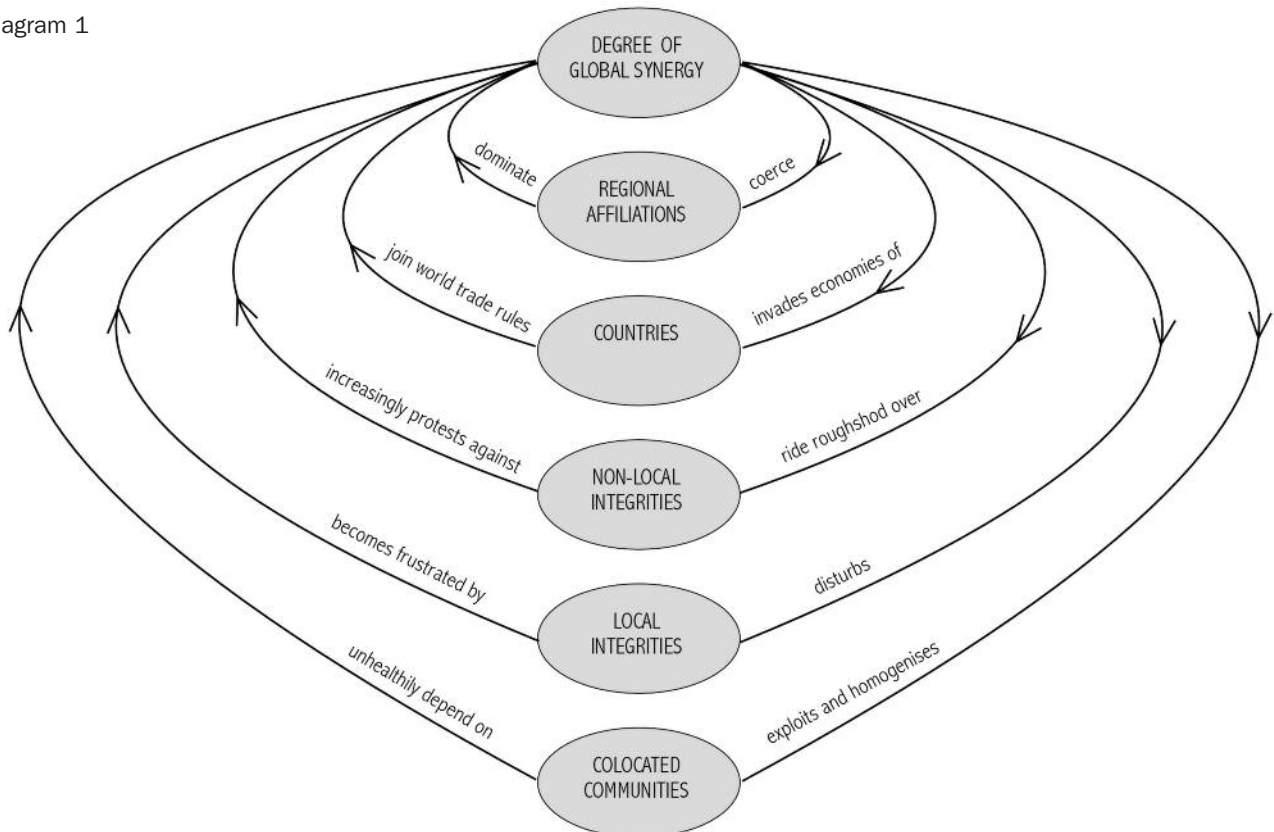
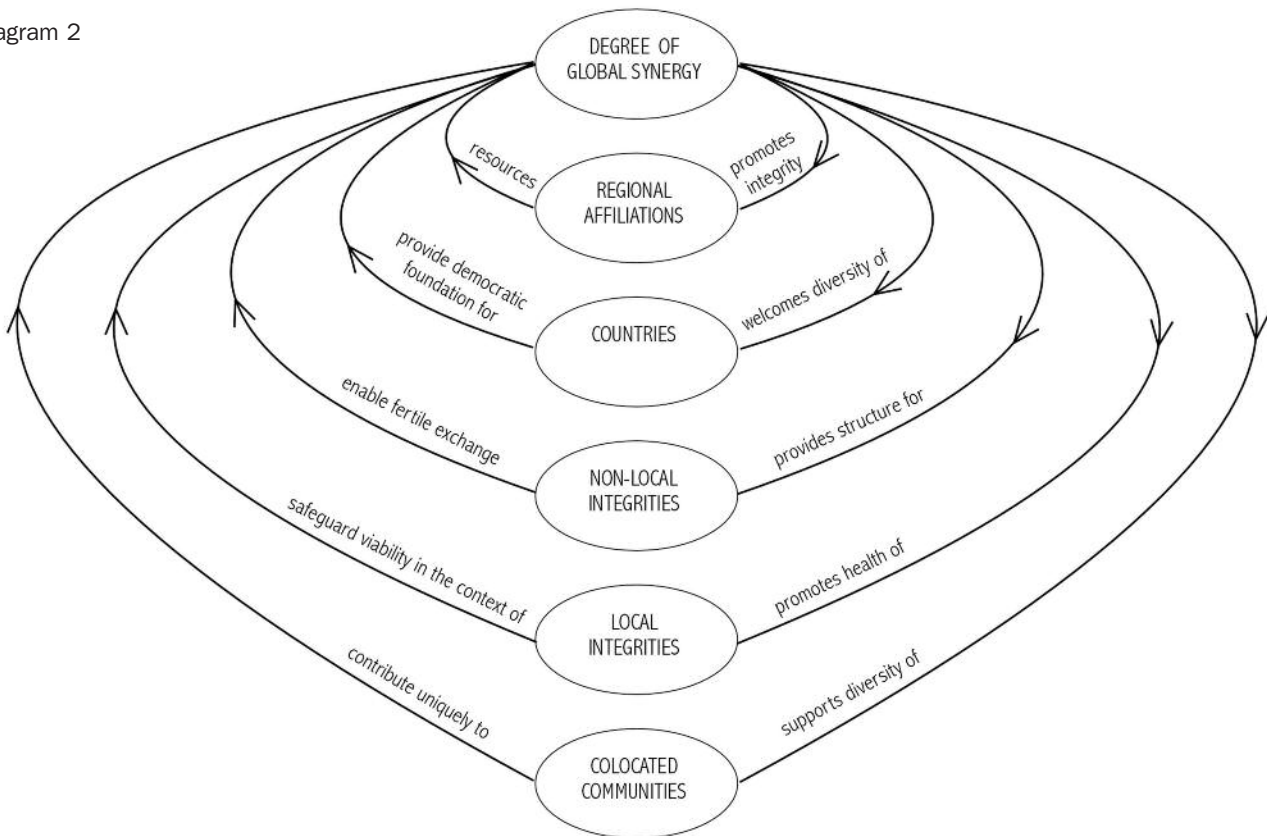


Diagram 2



A New Framework for Guiding Policy Formation

The combined diagrams provide a set of guiding principles that we can apply in guiding policy and action. The purpose of these principles is provide a balancing corrective to the analytical tendency to break things into smaller but unconnected parts and then, by solving each one individually, to hope they add up to a total solution. It is this procedure that has contributed greatly to the difficulty we are trying to overcome. Policies for a global age need to be based on deeper holistic and structural understanding than is usually applied and that reveals the reason why certain patterns will keep recurring unless we can change things at the structural level. This structure, as has been pointed out, is not a set of linear driving forces but a complex set of interacting feedback loops. Our guiding principles need to address this directly.

The first guiding principle, inhibit negative loops, is to recognise the negative loops as depicted in Figure 1. We need to ask if the policy that is being proposed is either directly or indirectly sustaining or even amplifying one of these loops. In contrast we should be aiming to inhibit these loops and diminish their strength. If a current policy is not working or seems even to be generating the opposite of the intended effect, we need to check whether one of the negative loops is dominating the situation. Seeing the specific form of these loops in the situation we are interested in may also give us clues to new places to intervene where small actions may trigger large beneficial consequences.

The second guiding principle, cultivate positive loops, derives from Figure 2, the positive loops. We need to identify the presence or absence of these loops in the situation and see how far policies might initiate or strengthen them. Each positive loop can provide a field for generating new ideas. The same principle of finding small efforts that have bigger effects also applies here.

The third guiding principle, balance the dynamics, is to recognise that negative spirals or vicious cycles can be counteracted with positive or virtuous cycles if we can match their strength and couple them together. Balancing cycles is not the same as setting up opposing forces. It is much more subtle. It is more like the oriental art of Aikido where the energy of aggression is subtly redirected with a circular motion to defeat the attack.

The fourth principle, pay attention to multiple levels, means that we need to look out for where the different levels become coupled together in a way that is unhelpful. For example a policy might seem to work well at a high level but is linked destructively to a local level which then defeats its purpose. We can see this most clearly when there are unintended consequences through policies and actions.

The fifth principle, resilience over efficiency, means that consideration must be given to the diversity and the availability of options. A 'one policy solves all' no longer works as society becomes more interconnected and subject to shocks and surprises. As the age of globality (Albrow, 1996) unfolds there will not be 'business as usual' as we have come to depend on it. We will need to invest in what we might call 'the resilience premium' which has a different economics to the efficiency of modernity. To the mindset of efficiency an oak tree making thousands of acorns is inefficient. To the mindset of resilience the oak is ensuring it has sufficient diversity and variety to meet the many possible conditions of being sustainable in a world that cannot be predicted.

Global Integrity

I have attempted to reframe the conflict of global and anti-global forces into a wider perspective which creates a space a different dialogue. Free market globalisation is likely to suffer demise as the project of modernity comes to an end.

A global culture will never endure in the face of the variety created by the human spirit and Mother Nature. It cannot provide a basis for the sustainability of a single planet. Something far more subtle than cultural and worldview homogenisation is needed. For this new age of globality there need to be the kind of integrity, of integrality, that respects diversity. There needs to be new ways of picturing and organising human affairs that require new understandings and new language. The ideas of holism, system and dynamic complexity are part of the new repertoire which I have attempted to illustrate in this discussion of the shift from globalisation to global integrity.

Most current efforts to resolve issues or pursue desirable policies are trapped in the paradigm of mechanism, integration and hierarchy. The whole of our thinking and action needs switching to a new paradigm of organism, integrity and holarchy. Only recognition of the organic nature of the local combined with respect for new integrities that link people at different levels and scale and in the context of principles of holarchy and systemic interdependence will provide a platform for reversing current trends and establishing planetary integrity.

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Anthony is the founder of Decision Integrity Limited, a research company pioneering ways to facilitate better decisions through application of holistic thinking, systems mapping, cybernetics, integrative group processes and sustainable values. His career long consulting experience has included international corporations including 3M, Agilent Technologies, BP, BT, Boots, Fujitsu, General Motors, Hewlett Packard, the Shell Group, Statoil, and Unilever. He is a founder member of the International Futures Forum, and his current interest is in creating 'platform for planetary learning' with colleagues in IFF for application as integral policy tools, community games and interdisciplinary synthesis.

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Worldshift 20 Declaration

Issued by the Worldshift 20 Council – November 21, 2010

An Initiative of The Club of Budapest

This is the response we might like to hear from our global leaders in the light of Tony Hodgson's article above.

The Mission of The Worldshift 20 Council

The Worldshift 20 Council is composed of twenty prominent global citizens from diverse cultures and religions worldwide. The mission of the Council is to give urgent attention to the new condition of the world emerging today and provide essential orientation so that an informed and determined movement toward a peaceful and sustainable planetary civilisation could be brought into being.

The Council's mission is to articulate the collective voice of humanity, drawing on the heritage of all peoples, cultures and religions. It is to transcend short-term and self-serving economic and political interests in recognition of the fact that thinking and acting in exclusive reference to narrow national or multi-national agendas cannot solve the problems currently confronting humanity. The pursuit of narrow interests are accelerating systemic breakdown in our presently unsustainable world.

The WS-20 Council intends to shift the attention of the global public and media from the increasingly intractable

problems and deepening crises of our deteriorating world to the opportunities and vistas of a new world where seven billion and more human beings can live in peace, prosperity and harmony with each other and the Earth's natural systems.

The WS-20 Declaration

Basic Premises

On-going efforts by the leaders of the industrialised states to re-adjust the collapsing systems of our unsustainable world are far from a sufficient response to the current crisis. Systemic collapse cannot be either wished away or ignored. Current global systems of economics, governance, societal organisation and ecological relationships between humanity and nature must be urgently re-designed based on the consciousness, values and principles which can provide peace and long-term sustainability for the human community. The 'window of opportunity' to begin such a large-scale