



Club Of Rome Calls For Green Reboot After Pandemic

The writers state that “we can use the science to design economies that will mitigate the threats of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pandemics.” In fact, science has already designed such a system and it is called Technocracy, aka Sustainable Development. □ TN Editor

The COVID-19 coronavirus has forced entire countries into lockdown mode, terrified citizens around the world, and triggered a financial-market meltdown. The pandemic demands a forceful, immediate response. But in managing the crisis, governments also must look to the long term.

One prominent policy blueprint with a deep time horizon is the European Commission’s European Green Deal, which offers several ways to support the communities and businesses most at risk from the current crisis.

COVID-19 reflects a broader trend: More planetary crises are coming. If we muddle through each new crisis while maintaining the same economic model that got us here, future shocks will eventually exceed the capacity of governments, financial institutions, and corporate crisis

managers to respond. Indeed, the “coronacrisis” has already done so.

The Club of Rome issued a similar warning in its famous 1972 report, “The Limits to Growth,” and again in “Beyond the Limits,” a 1992 book by the lead author of that earlier report, Donella Meadows. As Meadows warned back then, humanity’s future will be defined not by a single emergency but by many separate yet related crises stemming from our failure to live sustainably. By using the Earth’s resources faster than they can be restored, and by releasing wastes and pollutants faster than they can be absorbed, we have long been setting ourselves up for disaster.

On one planet, all species, countries, and geopolitical issues are ultimately interconnected. We are witnessing how the outbreak of a novel coronavirus in China can wreak havoc on the entire world. Like COVID-19, climate change, biodiversity loss, and financial collapses 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.

The coronavirus pandemic is a wake-up call to stop exceeding the planet’s limits. After all, deforestation, biodiversity loss, and climate change all make pandemics more likely. Deforestation drives wild animals closer to human populations, increasing the likelihood that zoonotic viruses like SARS-CoV-2 will make the cross-species leap. Likewise, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change warns that global warming will likely accelerate the emergence of new viruses.

Governments that succeed in containing epidemics all tacitly follow the same mantra: “Follow the science and prepare for the future.” But we can do much better. Rather than simply reacting to disasters, we can use the science to design economies that will mitigate the threats of climate change, biodiversity loss, and pandemics. We must start investing in what matters, by laying the foundation for a green, circular economy that is anchored in nature-based solutions and geared toward the public good.

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