

Quick recap

The meeting revolved around discussions on the unsustainable nature of human consumption, the implications of artificial intelligence, and the potential for social upheaval due to climate change. The participants also explored the role of renewable energy, the need for a smaller energy supply to sustainably support a smaller population, and the importance of facts in addressing climate change. The conversation ended with a discussion on the need for individuals to take steps to deal with their own grief and the importance of survival skills in the face of the coming climate crisis.

Next steps

- Explore organizing more focused discussions on practical preparation strategies for potential societal disruptions.
- Update website to clarify the distinction between Cacor and the Canadian Club of Rome to avoid confusion for potential new members.
- Follow up on the suggestion to invite Art Berman as a future speaker to discuss oil industry perspectives.
- Provide updated data on global carbon emissions and renewable energy adoption trends for future presentations.
- Consider joining the Climate Alliance network to participate in larger climate action initiatives.
- Share information about Cacor's various Google groups and discussion forums with interested participants.
- Provide more information on Cacor's connections with the International Club of Rome and other affiliated organizations.

Summary

Human Exceptionalism and Ecological Overshoot

Ruben introduced Dr. William E. Rees, also known as Bill, who is known for his wisdom, integral thinking, and reflexive nature. Bill discussed the human obsolescent brain and its implications on modern techno-industrial society. He argued that humans are in gross ecological overshoot, destroying the biophysical basis of their existence, and experiencing the erosion of civil society. Bill also discussed the concept of human exceptionalism, which sees humans as apart from nature, and the implications of this belief on our understanding of ecological and social crises. He emphasized that humans are products of evolution and that our brains are functionally obsolete for life in today's world. Bill also discussed the concept of memes and how cultural evolution has outpaced biological evolution. He concluded by discussing the limitations of neoliberal economics and how it fails to account for the biophysical environment.

Addressing Unsustainable Consumption and Collapse

William discussed the unsustainable nature of human consumption and the consequences of ignoring ecological limits. He cited examples such as the Netherlands' reliance on imported resources to support its population and the failure of climate change mitigation efforts due to continued reliance on fossil fuels. William argued that the current approach to addressing climate change is exacerbating the problem, and that a shift towards a more sustainable, non-growth-oriented economy is necessary. He also referenced the work of Joseph Tainter, who suggests that societies collapse when they reach a point of diminishing returns in problem-solving. William concluded that humanity is nearing the peak of a population boom-bust cycle, similar to other species subject to natural selection laws.

Artificial Intelligence and Societal Impact

In the meeting, William discussed the implications of artificial intelligence and its potential impact on society. He argued that our current techno-industrial narrative, based on human exceptionalism, is reinforcing our natural expansionist tendencies on a finite planet. William also shared his personal experiences, including growing up on a farm and studying ecological planning, which shaped his worldview. Ralph asked about William's changing perspective on the probability of global civilizational collapse over the years, to which William responded that he has become increasingly disillusioned with the role of science and intellect in driving societal change. Mike asked about the attendance of environmental NGOs and government representatives at the webinar, to which Art responded that they were not specifically targeted but were welcome to attend.

Human Extinction and Cognitive Impairment

In the meeting, Mike and William discussed the potential extinction of humans due to their destructive impact on the environment. William suggested that while the world might recover without humans, human civilization might not. Lenka asked about the factors that enable some people to escape their cognitive impairment, to which William responded that it's a complex question with many factors, including education and indoctrination. Art asked if indigenous cultures could serve as a model for the future, to which William responded that while they have a more benign way of being in their ecosystems, their development was often a result of overexploiting their environment. Richard questioned the role of epigenetics in the obsolescence of human brains, to which William responded that while epigenetics is an important phenomenon, it doesn't seem to be a major factor in improving their capacity to deal with their current circumstances.

Renewable Energy, Climate Change, and Unrest

The meeting revolved around discussions on renewable energy, climate change, and the potential for social upheaval. William emphasized that renewable energy is growing rapidly but doesn't displace existing energy sources, leading to an increase in overall energy consumption. He also predicted that as cities face difficulties in providing basic

necessities, social unrest could escalate. Claude brought up William's previous statement about a revolution, and William agreed, suggesting that the pitchforks are coming. Charles shared his thoughts on the potential for continued oil use, despite peak oil predictions, and the implications of this on climate change. The conversation ended with Ted joking about sharpening his pitchfork, indicating the seriousness of the issues discussed.

Encouraging Participation and Global Conversations

Ted expressed his appreciation for William's frequent contributions to the group and encouraged others to join and participate. Ted also mentioned that the group's goals go beyond being a weekly social club, and that their website contains over 230 presentations. Jamen proposed the idea of a larger network of conversations to address global issues, and Ruben countered that many similar groups already exist but have not made significant differences. Richard discussed the Climate Alliance network and the need for transitioning to renewable energy. William agreed with Richard but emphasized the need for a smaller energy supply to sustainably support a smaller population.

Climate Change Discussion and Action

In the meeting, Ted facilitated a discussion on climate change and its implications. Claude expressed concern about the lack of action from government officials and suggested that individuals should take steps to deal with their own grief. He also mentioned a paper by June Secara reviewing studies on removing CO₂ from the air industrially. Dave emphasized the importance of facts and criticized the current US administration for its denial of climate change. Jamen proposed continuing the conversation on Zoom, which was agreed upon by others. Joe expressed surprise at the lack of preparation for the coming climate crisis and suggested that more people should focus on survival skills. Ruben clarified that Cacor is a platform for various conversations, including those on climate change, and encouraged members to participate. The conversation ended with Art suggesting that those interested in continuing the conversation should use the Zoom link provided by Raymond.

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