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A book for our times? Survival: One Health, One Planet, One Future

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Planet Earth has been here for over 4.5 billion years, but in just two human generations we have managed to place our only "home" at great risk. Given today's uncertainties – social, economic, geopolitical, and environmental, it is clear that many lessons from history have not yet been learned and new lessons may prove equally, if not more, difficult to take on board as we head deeper into this century.

My new book – released on October 8, 2018 (Routledge) – builds on two earlier works (1,2). It is meant for policy-makers, NGOs, academics, teachers, students, interested members of the public, and seeks to raise awareness about major global issues we face, stimulate discussion or debate and find ways forward to ensure planet and people sustainability.

The publication highlights what I believe are two of our greatest social problems: changing the way we relate to the planet and each other and confronting how we use technology (dataism) for the benefit of humankind and the planet. In keeping with the United Nations 2030 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), there can be no question that firstly, most of the challenges we face are caused by *Homo sapiens* – us! And, secondly, the "big" issues - energy, food security, disease, population explosion, technology, employment, education, environment, conflicts and modern lifestyle – are all interconnected and must be tackled together.

Given global uncertainties with regard to ecological, geopolitical, economic, demographic and technological threats, this century may be shaping up to be one of the most difficult we have yet encountered and, according to some, we are now facing an "ingenuity gap": the problems we face can no longer be addressed simply through reductionist and silo approaches but necessitate collaborative, holistic, multi-disciplinary enabling actions and placing the sustainability of people and the planet over vested interests. Taken together – along with plenty of evidence – the case for re-orienting society toward a sustainable future is both inescapable and urgent.

Lifelong learning for sustainability is key to our survival

The book contends that lifelong learning for sustainability is key to our survival. I argue that the concept and approaches associated with *One Health and Well-Being* - recognising the

fundamental interconnections between people, animals, plants, the environment – necessitate the adoption of a new mindset - replacing our current view of limitless resources, exploitation, competition and conflict with one that respects the sanctity of life and strives towards well-being for all, shared prosperity and social stability.

To this end, Chapter ten is devoted to global education drawing on projects involving UNESCO, the World Bank, the Commonwealth Secretariat (53 African countries), and Harvard University, to name several developments. While current attention – including budgetary – on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Mathematics) continue to be very important for achieving economic prosperity, we must not forget the subjects that foster our creativity and nurture our understanding of each other's cultures and values through the arts, humanities, physical activity and the natural world. Here education, formal and informal, government, civil society and business, must increasingly play more pivotal roles.

One Health Education Task Force

This body advocates the need to integrate our understanding and appreciation of the concept of 'One Health and Well-Being' – starting with early childhood education and progressing to more advanced levels. To these ends, Chapter eleven provides a comprehensive overview of the global and national cooperative. 'One Health' and related initiatives, involves contributions by such organisations as the World Bank Group, the University of Geneva, the International Veterinary Students' Association (IVSA), the World Medical Association, the World Veterinary Association, the InterAction Council, the Centres for Disease Control and Prevention, the Southeast Asia One Health University Network and the One Health Commission, to mention only a few. Central to the future sustainability of people and our planet is shifting from silo thinking to collaborative engagement, policy and approaches in every aspect of human endeavour.

A point of convergence in the book is the identification in Chapter twelve of 'Ten Propositions for Global Sustainability'. These reflect a longer-term view of global commitments – enacted – say – in the next 5-10 years – and that decision-makers at all levels might wish to consider. As the late acclaimed physicist Stephen Hawking reminded us,

Sir David Attenborough echoes in BBC's Blue Planet II series, and the book concludes: Unless fundamental societal transformations occur leading to a sustainable path and peace, 'the shelf life of Homo sapiens could be extremely short.' With their increasing awareness of the vulnerability of the planet, the futility of national divisions, the need for using technology as a global good, Generation Z – those born c. 1995 might be our best hope in the next few decades to help turn things around globally ... fingers crossed!

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investigating the impact of global factors on humans, animals, plants and the environment. glueddeke@aol.com

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