

There Is No Planet B

As the human population expands and as technology advances, we're consuming more and more energy (it's tripled over the past 50 years) which in turn creates a growing demand for fuel, but only 4% comes from renewable sources. Most (83%) comes from fossil fuel (coal, oil & gas) which is a major contributor to climate change via carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions. We need to curb the growth in energy demand, leave fossil fuel in the ground (and move to solar energy).

Food and its land-use is another major contributor to climate change (23%). With a growing population vs a finite amount of land available, we need to control how we use our land, consume less (especially red meat) and reduce wastage.

Transport is another problem. We should travel less (distance and frequency), use more sustainable modes of transport, reduce (ideally avoid) flying, as well as switch fuel types (away from carbon-emitting sources).



There Is No Planet B explains each of these problems and suggests a new mode of living through such dilemmas and conflicts. It sets out how we might measure success, the role government and business must play, and finally our part in terms of actions and values. It is an evidence-based practical guide to how humans could live better, whilst heading off the threats.

Together, these proposals will lead to a future where everyone has enough to eat (and money to live on), we're healthier, travel is easier, there's less violence, cities are vibrant whilst the countryside teems with wildlife. We enjoy higher standards of trust and truth and we have a better sense of global community.

The book is aimed at individuals, businesses as well as world leaders. It is a handbook of everything, showing how we currently live, and the opportunities to do better. The sections overleaf give a flavour of the main topics.

Food

We grow 2.5 times than current global needs, so why should anyone go hungry? It is down to how the abundance of nutrition is shared around. It is possible for everyone in the world to have a healthy diet whilst improving environmental dimensions of land and sea management.

Plant-based foods are much better than meat and dairy, since farmed animals require ten-times as much land to produce the same levels of protein. That same land is better used to feed our growing population and meet a future demand for non-fossil fuels). We should support a reduction in farmed animals, especially cows, sheep and goats (methane-burping ruminants).

We should buy local seasonal food, moderate our fish consumption, support sustainable supply chains and waste less. In fact, cutting food waste by half, would add 20% to the world food supply as well as reducing greenhouse emissions (by avoiding nasty methane emissions from rotting food).

Current food issues: plastic packaging, antibiotics fed to animals, biodiversity, land fertility (and even how rice is traditionally grown). Land conflicts include biofuel, biodiversity and enough land to feed a population of 9.7 billion by 2050.

Climate and Environment

We have had decades of warning about climate change. But we have wasted that time through denial of the problem (and nature) of the required solution.

Action is required *now* to put the brakes on the ever-increasing CO₂ emissions, so we can avoid 2°C global temperature rise (1.5°C ideally, but this is looking very unachievable). We need a global agreement to urgently stop using fossil fuel and to control energy use due to rebound effects, as energy efficiency always results in *more* demand (aka Jevons Paradox). Instead, we need mass-adoption of renewable energy sources (mainly solar) and atmospheric carbon extraction.

The book provides a list of 14 things that every politician needs to know about climate change (otherwise, they should be considered unfit for office)!

Over half the plastic ever produced now lies in landfill or scattered on land and sea, laid down over just the last few decades. We are producing 400 million tonnes of plastic each year and the amount wasting away in the oceans is set to triple over the next decade. We need to restrict production (it uses fossil fuel), reduce usage (especially in packaging and textiles) and avoid waste (recycle).

Energy

We can no longer have an unlimited supply of energy. It is possible to move quickly away from fossil fuels and still have our energy needs met, but this is only achievable if we slow down (or halt) our ever-increasing demand for energy.

Solar is (so far) the world's best renewable energy, it will allow us to move away from fossil fuels, but this requires a global agreement with regional incentives. Energy efficiency improvements are important, but we need controls to avoid new growth from efficiency gains (rebound effects) as by default, efficiency improvements lead to greater environmental burden. The use of biofuels require extreme caution as this threatens both food supply and biodiversity.

Transport

Transport consumes 38% of our energy (mostly as liquid fossil fuel). Our future transport needs could be met (but excessive use of energy e.g. space tourism, causes concern). Aeroplanes use vast amounts of fossil fuel, so we should fly more frugally, develop fuel from solar power and electrify short flights.

Electric bikes are the most efficient form of transport (especially if from solar power). Electric cars are better than petrol (but diesel is even worse). Shared transport (including short-term car hire) is much better use of vehicles.

Growth

World economics needs a major re-examination, moving away from financial gain and individualism, to more cooperative ways. A shift of focus to 'healthier' forms of growth, include compassion, global empathy, mindfulness wellbeing and an appreciation of small things in life. GDP is an inadequate metric.

Any global agreement should aim to ensure everyone has enough money to live on by addressing the unhealthy distribution of wealth (which also needs addressing internally within some of our richest countries).

Business

Commerce is the source of most environmental impact and is also hugely influential on human desire for more. Businesses need to: cut their negative impact (including throughout its supply chain); produce goods and services that enable others to do likewise; and push for a global arrangement to cap environment impact (especially fuel extraction and carbon emissions) and encourage us to live (more) sustainably.

Our Values & Skills

Mike's book highlights values that will help us live better, as well as values that won't allow people (and our planet) to thrive in the twenty-first century. Essential values include: all people have equal worth; respect and care for the world; respect for the truth (i.e. the public are not deliberately misled by media and politicians). We can all help play our part by working out who we can trust (there are six tests we can apply).

We need thinking skills and habits that are fit for the twenty-first century of enormous human power & technology on a now-fragile planet. Skills include: big picture perspective; global empathy; future thinking; appreciation of the simple, small & local; self-reflection; critical thinking; complex and complicated thinking; and joined-up perspective.

At a personal level, spend time thinking, talking and developing communities that exhibit these values; consume critically and mindfully (i.e. study supply chains and truth behind messages/actions); have contact with a wide range of people; insist on truth everywhere; and teach our children to do the same.

Now Read the Book

This leaflet was produced from *There Is No Planet B* by Mike Berners-Lee. Before you rush out to spend your £10 on a copy, practice exhibiting some of these new world skills and support retailers who uphold these values (i.e. real bookshops vs money-driven 'consumerism' organisations who treat staff, taxation and the environment with contempt).

We hope you will be inspired to adopt the skills and proposals within this book, spread the message to those around you, and for the sake of humanity help the proposals and values explained within this handbook become a way of life.

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