

CLIMATE CHANGE CHRONICLE 31

The Trip to 2030

Scientists are telling us that we must take decisive steps by 2030 to deal with climate change or we will face severe consequences by 2040. Here is how I picture myself on the trip to 2030....literally.

I'm getting on a plane. It will not be an ordinary trip, say, to a resort on a South Sea island. This is a more mysterious journey. I've signed on with a group of other people to something called *The New World Creation Project*. Its purpose is to help create a new kind of world for a climate changing era.

Standing in the aisle waiting to get seated, I'm thinking about having packed the essentials –my extra eye glasses, my hearing aid batteries and my meds. I'm travelling light because it probably won't be a long trip for me.

Just as I get to my seat and start to hoist my carry-on bag into the luggage rack, a young woman in the aisle seat behind me sees I'm an oldie struggling with my bag. She says, "Let me help you with that." She gets up, reaches down for my bag and hoists it effortlessly into the luggage rack. I thank her and remember having noticed that most of the passengers in the lounge were young, some of them very young.

As I settle into my seat I think back to the training session we had a couple of weeks ago. A young man welcomed us to The 2030 New World Creation Project. Then he described what was ahead of us.

"You are about to go on an interesting and challenging trip. You are journeying into a world unlike any you have experienced before.

In the world ahead you will find colleagues who share your vision. The vision might be implemented in different ways but they all come down to the same thing. We all want to create a world where there is a mutually enhancing relationship between our species and Earth. This vision is essential because we have been damaging the Earth we depend upon for our own survival. There are some things you will have to leave behind—some systems.

We have to leave behind our current economic systems. They are based upon the need for corporations, especially large resource corporations, to make continual profits. They have been given the status of persons and many of them feel that they have an unlimited access to the limited resources of Earth.

We have to leave behind our political systems, even those in our so-called democracies. We have seen that these political systems are highly supportive of the economic systems because they need their funding to stay in power. But, as you know, we don't elect political leaders to give them power. We elect them to give us power.

Unfortunately our political system has degenerated into tribes more concerned about their base than the population as a whole. They give ready access to the large corporations that spend millions of dollars on lobbying for their interests.

Finally we have to leave behind our legal systems. They, too, are often influenced by political interests. It is those interests that have the loudest voices. The environmental laws do not protect the environment. These are human laws that limit the amount of damage we can do to the environment. And, as we have seen in recent years, they can be removed at the blink of a political eye. Also, unlike many countries around the world, our Canadian and American constitutions don't protect your right to clean air, good clear water and productive soil.

So, to summarize, your job is to help develop economic systems that can live and thrive within a living Earth. It is to develop political systems that respect the rights of nature and the ecosystems that we all depend upon for our existence. And it is to develop legal systems which recognize that the living Earth has laws and rights that have existed for millions of years. Today they are simply ignored. So that will be very much part of your work.

And one more thing. We need transitions. We can't just stop what we have been doing and start doing something else. But it makes no sense to sustain the current systems because they are what are causing the problems. We need to generate new systems, and in the process, we must become climate change triage workers—using what we can use and abandoning the rest.”

As I was thinking about the training session, a voice came over the loud speaker.

“This is the captain speaking. Thank you for signing on to flight 2030. Along with my co-pilot and crew I want to thank you for your commitment. We are proud of you.

You are in for a great adventure and though it may seem like a long flight it will actually be rather short in the time you will have at your disposal. So enjoy the trip. And a personal note. I was one of the first pilots on a 2030 flight. Our company has increased the number of flights and companies around the world are developing their own 2030 flights.”

“Oh...and one more thing. Fasten your seat belts. We are expecting a fair amount of turbulence.”

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