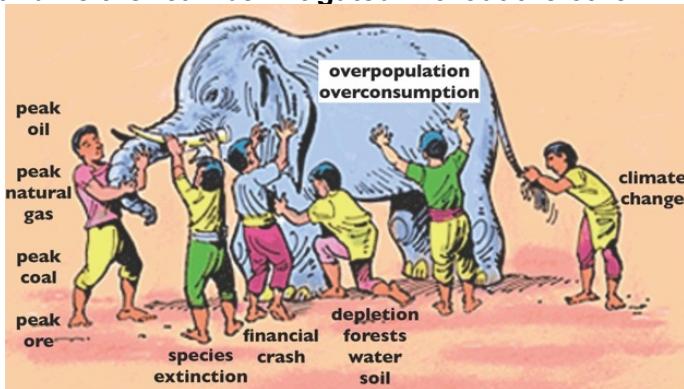


PEAKED ENERGY and CLIMATE CHAOS

The most important question facing humanity is how we respond to the interconnected crises of Peaked Energy, Climate Chaos, overpopulation, overconsumption and resource conflicts as we pass the limits to growth on a round, finite planet.

These crises resemble the parable of the blind men touching an elephant. Each observer correctly describes a part of the elephant, but none have a holistic understanding. **Peaked Energy and Climate Change are two facets of ecological overshoot, and neither can be mitigated without the other.**



The global crises of the end of cheap fossil fuels and the start of climate change require global levels of solutions — we need to relocalize everywhere. We are not merely at peak energy, we are at peak technology, peak money, peak communication, and peak everything else. Real solutions would require us to redirect the energy, talents and resources of global capitalism, the military industrial complex, media, universities, and other societal institutions.

We have enough resources and talent to shift civilization to create a peaceful world that might be able to gracefully cope with the end of concentrated fossil fuels, or to create a global police state to control populations as the resources decline. The "War on Terror" is actually a long planned World War to control finite fossil fuels as we pass their peaks.

Understanding why civilization did not respond to the warnings of resource depletion decades ago is needed if a shift toward sanity is still possible at this late date. This is a simple question that has a complex answer — and these decisions were not made democratically. Mitigating Peaked and Climate would require world peace instead of peak oil wars.

We are not "addicted" to oil — the modern world is completely dependent upon fossil fuels for industrial agriculture, transportation networks, and the growth based monetary system. Addictions are things you can give up — but oil runs our civilization.

Peaked and Climate are interconnected

Focusing on energy shortage while ignoring ecology led to the false solutions of offshore drilling, fracking, tar sands, liquid natural gas, biomass electricity, mountaintop removal, and nuclear power.

Focusing only on "carbon" while ignoring energy limits is one of the reasons for the political backlash against climate change awareness. Environmental groups frame these concerns as we *should* reduce energy consumption instead of we *will* reduce use because we cannot burn fuel that does not exist.

Framing the question as how we will use the remaining fossil fuels could bypass climate denial. We will reduce our "carbon footprint" whether we want to or not, since the oil, coal and unnatural gas will be mostly depleted before 2050, when our footprints are supposed to be much smaller. Reducing use by 2050 is code for depletion by 2050.

Our exponential growth economy has hit the end of growth of resource consumption, imposed by nature. Building lots of wind turbines, railroads and relocalizing agriculture would require reallocating resources used for endless warfare and wasteful consumerism. After Peak Everything there will be fewer resources available for "transition." We need triage on a planetary scale for the remaining fossil fuels and minerals.

David Holmgren, co-originator of permaculture, is author of *"Future Scenarios: How Communities can adapt to Peak Oil and Climate Change."*

www.futurescenarios.org

"Economic recession is the only proven mechanism for a rapid reduction of greenhouse gas emissions ... most of the proposals for mitigation from Kyoto to the feverish efforts to construct post Kyoto solutions have been framed in ignorance of Peak Oil. As Richard Heinberg has argued recently, proposals to cap carbon emissions annually, and allowing them to be traded, rely on the rights to pollute being scarce relative to the availability of the fuel. Actual scarcity of fuel may make such schemes irrelevant."

Living on our current solar budget would power a smaller, steady state economy. We will live on our solar budget as the oil, unnatural gas and coal deplete. Future generations need us to choose wisely and use remaining fossil fuels for relocalization and power down.