

How Can We Ever Convey The Existential Threats To All Life From The Climate Crisis And Biodiversity Extinctions?

A seminal 2021 article *Underestimating the Challenges of Avoiding a Ghastly Future*

Corey J. A. Bradshaw, Paul R. Ehrlich et al, 2021 at www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fcosc.2020.615419/full is a Review whose content and references fully support the title, indubitably "telling it how it is". In it you can read these words and here are my thoughts after reading them: **'Given the existence of a human "optimism bias" that triggers some to underestimate the severity of a crisis and ignore expert warnings, a good communication strategy must ideally undercut this bias without inducing disproportionate feelings of fear and despair...'**

Ever since my Damascene 'wake-up call' as a med student at St John's Cambridge in November 1959, I like others alarmed by the relentless growth in numbers of always (to some degree) planet-trashing, GHG-emitting humans, have found ourselves seesawing

BETWEEN:

- 1 **'Telling it how it is'** - and then either
 - <> being dismissed as a doomsayer, OR
 - <> being shot as the messenger (more than once people have said "if you think there are too many people on the earth, why not start with yourself") OR
 - <> causing feelings of despair and hopelessness OR even
 - <> inducing the response "well if it's already that bad it's too late, so why bother?" (with any of those annoying endeavours to be 'green'...)

AND:

- 2 **Sugar-coating the challenges by easy-to-do green messaging**, resulting in:
 - <> tokenistic 'green-washing' measures by big resource-consumers and GHG-emitters OR (AND)
 - <> ordinary folk, both politicians and voters, saying "if that's all, what's the fuss, let's continue with 'BAU', kicking the can down the road"

Either way, and both have been tried, the necessary **ACTIONS** - whether on pollution by GHGs and myriads of other chemicals to air water and land, or on resources and wildlife habitat-conservation, or in just removing the barriers to meeting women's rights everywhere on earth to have their babies by choice and not by chance - do not happen, have not happened, in a timely way and at the necessary **SCALE**.

To quote our two primary letters of Apology to the Future, at my website www.ecotimecapsule.com:

"We kept warning everyone who would listen, though there were too few of them. Our culpability is less, though few can claim to be blameless."

"In signing below, on this World Environment Day 1994, we pledge ourselves to respect the needs of our children and grandchildren in going about our daily lives. We each aim to make our contribution to a saner, safer and sustainable world. According to our talents and opportunities, we will work to advance the painful process of changing hearts, minds and policies before it is too late."

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John Guillebaud