



**“2052”**

## **SHAPING OUR FUTURE**

On May 9, 2012, the Club of Rome launched a new Report to the Club of Rome, entitled “2052 – A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years” (published by Chelsea Green). In it, author Jorgen Randers (one of the co-authors of the original “Limits to Growth”) tries to answer the question, what our world will look like in forty years time. “2052” has been accepted as “Report to the Club of Rome” on the basis of a peer review by Club of Rome Members. “2052 – A Global Forecast for the Next Forty Years” is part of a larger “2052” – campaign by the Club of Rome.

In launching this Report, the Club of Rome continued its tradition of raising fundamental questions about the challenges facing humankind in a systemic, holistic and long-term manner. This Report revisited issues first raised 40 years ago in *Limits to Growth*, a report that created shock waves when it was published.

*The Limits to Growth* did not offer predictions, rather it portrayed different scenarios based on trends and different policy decisions. *2052*, like *Limits to Growth*, is pragmatic. It dares to give highly educated guesses, combining data, modelling and hard science with an understanding of human nature and its systems and intuitions. Its findings are sufficiently unsettling and startling to start the debate about the need for fundamental change.

The response in Europe and the rest of the world since its launch (resulting so far in hundreds of articles and features) has demonstrated that the time is right to take a pragmatic look into what might be our future in four decades time.

## **THE NEW REPORT TO THE CLUB OF ROME**

### **BASIC ASSUMPTIONS**

Humanity’s systems, which uphold “business-as-usual” are very resilient towards real change. Rapid change does not happen until people’s patience caused by the negative consequences of “business-as-usual” (climate change effects, inequity, resource depletion) runs out. Society’s main institutions: democracy and economy are based on short-termism, resulting in a slow societal response to challenges, which need long-term solutions and investments.

### **SOME FINDINGS**

“Limits to Growth” addressed an important question: Is the world in overshoot and if yes, will the landing be soft or will it be hard? Randers clearly believes, that humanity is in overshoot (mainly

climate-related) and that the landing will not be soft, but less hard than feared. He believes, that

- Humanity has a forty-year window to avoid the most serious negative consequences of its decades-long overconsumption splurge
- The process of adapting humanity to the planet's limitations may be too slow to stop planetary decline. Currently the human demand on the biosphere exceeds the global bio-capacity by some 40%
- Global population will grow, peaking at 8.1 billion people in 2042 because of rapid decline in urban fertility
- Global GDP will grow, but much slower than generally expected because of slow productivity growth in mature economies, and lack of take-off in the 186 poorer countries.
- Global GDP will peak after 2052, and investment share of the GDP will grow as society is gradually forced to handle issues of depletion, pollution, biodiversity decline, climate change and inequity, slowing growth in consumption growth will slow, with fall in disposable income in some places
- Global energy use will reach a peak in 2040, because of continued increase in energy efficiency
- CO2 emissions will peak in 2030, because of a shift toward low-carbon sources of power and heat. Nevertheless, CO2 concentrations will grow, and the global average temperature will pass the danger threshold of +2 C by 2050, and peak at 2.8 C in 2080, which could trigger self-reinforcing "run-away" warming with a possible collapse in the second half of the 21<sup>st</sup> century
- The United States will experience the greatest stagnation, while the process of stagnation will occur more gradually in the other OECD countries. China and Brazil, Russia, India, South Africa and ten leading emerging economies will progress, but this will still leave 3 billion people in severe poverty.

## **"2052 – SHAPING OUR FUTURE"**

### **THE CLUB OF ROME CAMPAIGN**

#### **THE RATIONALE AND MAIN THRUST BEHIND THE CAMPAIGN**

Today's cataclysmic climatic effects demonstrate that regardless of modern society's many achievements, we could be on a path of un-managed decline. We have the opportunity to fundamentally change our ways, but it seems that rather than controlling our destiny, we are merely drifting into our future.

The fundamental questions are:

- Where is the world heading?
- What world do we want to live in and how do we get there within the time available?
- Are our main societal systems: capitalism and democracy capable, in their current form, of leading us into an equitable and sustainable world? Are they truly fit for purpose?

Over the next 18 months, the Club of Rome *2052: Shaping Our Future* campaign is opening a debate on the future of the planet. It is asking: What will the world be like in 40 years time? Where will the current dynamics lead us? Will it be the sort of world in which we want to live? What world do we want to live in and how can we make it a reality?

## **Opening the debate on ideas**

The Club of Rome campaign addresses the root causes of the systemic crisis from a number of important aspects: the need for a different set of values underlying society and economy; the need to change economic theory and practice and safeguard resources; the need to create a more equitable society, which also produces near to full employment; and the need to redesign governance systems that put people at their centre.

A number of activities are planned to open the debate on ideas., amongst them several new Reports to the Club of Rome, an interdisciplinary project on values and an interactive website "Change Course":

### *Money and sustainability*

A report by Bernard Liaeter on the fundamental flaws of our monetary system, which make our financial system intrinsically unstable, and threaten human wellbeing and the environment. The Report has been published on May 30, 2012, in Brussels.

### *Bankrupting Nature*

A report on what is going wrong in economy and how outdated economic theory and practice destabilize the planet. Anders Wijkman and Johan Rockstrom will present this Report (Published by Routledge/Earthscan) to the Club of Rome in early autumn 2012

### *An interdisciplinary project on values.*

This kicks off with a brainstorming meeting in June, bringing together religious thinkers, economists, atheists and academics to outline what values for the future should look like and how to integrate the values needed for a sustainable and equitable society into our daily life, our economy (of which finance is a part) and our governance systems.

### *Change-Course*

A web-based campaign launched in April, 100 years after the sinking of the Titanic, a symbol for human hybris and short-sightedness. It is an open forum to develop ideas on why we need to change course if we want a sustainable and equitable future.

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***To learn more, to contact us, to share your ideas, to give us feedback and to join in, go to***

***[www.clubofrome.org](http://www.clubofrome.org)***