

Attaining Oneness in Our Material and Spiritual Transformations



RIO+20
United Nations
Conference on
Sustainable
Development

Alfredo Sfeir-Younis
Dzambing Cho Tab Khen

SFEIR-YOUNIS, Alfredo

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Dzambing Cho Tab Khen

Mr. Alfredo Sfeir-Younis is an economist who graduated from the University of Chile, with a Master's and Bachelor's degree, and holds a PhD from the University of Wisconsin and the University of Rhode Island, United States. He is the former representative of the Institutional Focal Point on human rights and related issues of the World Bank and President of the Zambuling Institute of Human Transformation.

-----Dr. Alfredo Sfeir-Younis

Build The Spiritual Foundation to Address Global Warming, Biodiversity Depletion, and Sustainable Development.

Dzambing Cho Tab Khen-----

A few fundamental questions to pose before it is too late:

1.- First, what will this conference offer that we, the public, will recognize clearly as new and innovative?

2.- Second, is this conference going to be, again and again, dominated purely by economic and political considerations, with some brush of social issues?

3.- Third, will the conference ignore other paradigms, approaches, and views that have a great deal to contribute if one is to really resolve the challenges facing humanity?

4.- Fourth, will the conference ignore the importance of indigenous peoples and indigenous nations and their wisdom, as it has done in the past?

5.- Fifth, is the conference to proceed in a way that “more of the same yields more of the same”?

Professionally speaking, I am a direct outgrowth of the First Conference on Development and Environment, which took place in Sweden, in 1972. It was as a result of that Conference that many universities in the USA decided to create PhD programs that would focus exclusively on the economics and social aspects of natural resources management and the environment. Probably, we were one of the first PhD programs in environmental economics in Latin America. Certainly, I became the first one to be hired in this professional capacity by The World Bank (I was told that my hiring was an experiment). I was the first to hold the title of Senior and Principal Natural Resource Economist. However this recognition was given by the Technica Panel and not by the Economist Panel. At the time, the Economist panel refused to accept environmental economics as a thematic area within economics.

During the period of 1972 and 1980 a lot of work was done to create analytical frameworks and instruments to properly evaluate development interventions that had environmental impacts. Many of us wrote extensively about new forms for

doing economic and social analysis. We met in many places to discuss and learn how to value a tree, a clean river. prevent the depletion of the California Condor, etc, etc. Economics had no adequate toolkit to offer at that time. Now, there is plenty; most of which are on the shelves and little being applied. Thus, the view that economics is not creating the needed conditions for sustainable development is accurate.

As an economist I was never satisfied with the way we addressed such issues as global warming, biodiversity depletion, and sustainable development. I made many proposals to change the nature of the analysis and offered several solutions instead.

More than 3 decades ago, I began to write about the interplay between economics and spirituality. Economics is just a collection of values that assist us in predicting people's behaviors under conditions of material scarcity. It was clear that the guiding principle of our decisions emerged from our values and belief system. Thus, it was within this frame of mind that I proposed a new set of values for economics and economic development. All under the rubric of spiritual economics. It was not abstract; on the contrary, it offered many avenues to make investment decisions and avoid major environmental problems, as we witness today.

For many people, I became the subject of much laughter because spirituality and economics was seen as oil and vinegar. For many decades, I published notes, articles and books on the many aspects that explain the spiritual foundation of Sustainable Development. This topic has not made it yet to a Conference like the one we witnessed in Rio two decades ago. Many of the proposals written then were shared within the premise of the United Nations, when I was The Special representative to the United Nations for the World Bank.

A couple of years ago. I was invited to address the Values Caucus there. They requested a statement on the spiritual role of the United Nations. I had a very telling experience. When it came time for the debate, one old hat in that Caucus told me that was passe; that they do not use the word spirituality any longer in the NGO community or the UN. That the new word was Kcsmos. I was shocked. as I spent so many years building a foundation one brick at a time. As it happens, we are still at square one on this matter and there is very little being done to mainstream spirituality in public policy making.

In presenting those statements and writings to the public, careful attention was given to show that there are many reasons why

economics alone should not be the sole criteria for public or private choices, particularly of those choices having to do with the environment and sustainable development. A big group at the UN, led by Inge Caul of LIND P worked diligently to bring the notions of international public goods. This was another angle of the same analytical problem.

Years later, I challenged the establishment regarding the merits and implications of the so called triple bottom line. My contention is that it was void of the “Human Factor”; the human factor being people conceived not as numbers, or capital, but as levels of consciousness. And it was then when I proposed to explicitly connect spirituality and environmental sustainability. Most of what the paradigm shift needed, was detailed in a recent book entitled ‘Global Warming; Inner Warming. This paradigm represented to me a complete departure from all the traditional approaches to global warming, biodiversity depletion and sustainable development.

That book has been complemented by many articles and statements made in many countries of the world. Most recently, a 3-hour lecture was given at Penn State University, and several YouTube videos are available on the Internet from that lecture.

An additional complement was a paper written for UNDP on the theme of Ethics and Biodiversity in Latin America.

In a similar way, and based on the same framework, human consciousness as the sole foundation of economic development -- the concepts of business entrepreneurship and social entrepreneurship were challenged. Several conferences were given on that subject in a recent college-tour in the United States. De Paul University of Chicago video taped the lectures and has made them available through YouTube. The core of my contention is that none of the traditional approaches will materialize in higher levels of human welfare without creating the needed conditions for the creation of a spiritual entrepreneur". The business entrepreneur" is mindful of the business, the "social entrepreneur" is mindful of the external impact of business (social and environmental), but the "spiritual entrepreneur" is mindful of the inner-self. Without the last form of entrepreneurship it is not possible for the other two forms of entrepreneurship to yield the expected results.

In some ways, I was an important participant in Rio 1992 Conference. Not only did I attend the Conference, but I had the privilege to be the principal author of the report that The United

Nations Economic Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) had to present to that Conference. It was seconded by the World Bank towards the end of 1990, and the report was finished in 1991. This report was essentially about the economic and financial foundations of sustainable development. It was not about spirituality and sustainability, as no one was prepared to even talk about that. The report, as traditional as it was, created so much controversy that ECLAC decided that it should not be reprinted. To me, it was such a basic report that, when I read it today (as I have a copy), I think about it as a very conservative report.

This leads me to say something as a professional economist, highly trained in economics of the environment i.e., that the economic analysis one sees today on investment and policy decisions is extremely poor. It is so poor, in my view, that blaming economics and the economic criterion for the environmental problems we have is not all fair. We must cite bad economic analysis ECLAC confronted the political power of the recently nominated Ministers of Environment in that region. They wrote a report, *Our Own Agenda*. This was a very well written statement that addressed mainly the political economy of the environment. This exercise was financed by another part of the UN!

The work continued in the 1990's and 2000's. Based on a study of more than 2000 completed development projects in developing countries, we concluded with another colleague at the World Bank that the story of development and transformation did not end with sustainable development. That we need to create all the conditions to open the era of Empowered Development". This includes both outer and inner powers of the people. This idea came from the deep conviction that we are violating several fundamental spiritual laws. One of them being that 'there should be a total balance and coherence between material growth and transformation; and spiritual growth and transformation'. This is the law of equilibrium and coherence.

Today we are promoting a development paradigm that aims at becoming materially rich while ending it up being spiritually poor.

Material things are an inferior form of empowerment, notwithstanding its importance at certain levels of human welfare. The true form of empowerment is the people's spirituality: identity, wisdom, awareness, Humility, consciousness, etc. So, the frontier of development is not sustainable development as it is conceived now; and, far from it, given its traditional definition and applications. The new frontier is empowered development".

In my own professional evolution on these matters I experienced three distinct phases:

One, where my attention was on the environmental phenomenon (e g pollution); I did lots of research and policy work based on that frame of mind.

Two, where my attention was on who pollutes; this was perceived as not being politically correct; one could not name countries, corporations. or individuals as the polluters. Naturally, survival prevailed and I did not pursue that for too long, though some good work was done in this realm.

Three, where I am now, my attention is on why people pollute. What state of being causes them to roll the window of the car down and throw their plastic bottle on the highway. What causes a corporation to knowingly pollute a river, and act as if nothing happens or there is no impact in doing so, What is the cause of willful acts by all actors to pollute and then live as if they have no responsibility for these acts.

It is in this third phase where spirituality comes into full view. Not as a criteria per se; this view would reduce spirituality to

nothing. Even if we are interested in reforming the triple bottom line, Spirituality must be a new objective function that is over and above any criterion like the triple bottom line, Spirituality as a way of life and as a way of understanding a series of phenomenon that are at the root of human transformation, Spirituality as the cradle of a new vision for humanity. Again, not Spirituality as another addition to a set of criterion.

This text presents several snapshots of very central building blocks to bring spirituality into public policy making including sustainable development and the issues at hand. These building blocks are presented in a very summarized way; each of them deserves a separate book.

In essence, we are where we are because we have violated many spiritual laws that must be reestablished. The fundamental one is that The Inner is Like The Outer and The Outer is Like The Inner. If we just concentrated on this spiritual law alone, it is possible to experience the importance of addressing our inner gardens. We discover that due to the inherent relationship between the inner and outer that there is no real impact on the outer garden without tending to the inner gardens. Global warming is here because of our inner warming (see many explanations below). Addressing

the inner self: we would become aware of the importance of all forms of interdependence, and of how we have to acknowledge our major responsibilities in protecting our Planet Earth.

Many of the important spiritual laws are addressed below. The emphasis will be on global warming, but they apply to every aspect of environmental sustainability.

We must change our notions about the Earth. It is not an inert entity. It is a living entity. It is infinitely intelligent, It is completely woven into our own existence. Thus, environmental management in the future will also be about coherent mutuality. If you do not self realize this aspect of the problem, you will subjugate your views and analysis to a minimalist form of existence. Nature is us and we are nature. This is a fact not a proposition.

We must also concentrate on the matrix of actors. This is not about pollution, it is about those of us who pollute. This is not about CO₂, it is about those who are behind those emissions. This is not about an animal species, it is about human activities that lead to the killing of animals. It is all about us and the impact of our human presence. Thus, Rio Plus 20 must be the conference where we open the way for understanding this matrix of actors.

One way the establishment avoids this discussion is by atomizing the debate. By using a language where the person does not exist and where it is impossible to identify those who are destroying what belongs to all of us. Thus, it will use the term consumption instead of consumers, it will use production instead of producers, it will use corporations rather than corporate owners, etc. This is something we need to stop. Let us call a sword a sword.

When humanity realizes that there is not only a relationship between environmental sustainability and our material welfare, but also environmental quality and our spiritual welfare, then we will actively seek a new paradigm and we will fight for it.

Rio Plus 20 will miss a great opportunity if it does not address at the start the importance of spirituality in sustainable development, global warming and biodiversity depletion. The economic and technical issues are important, but less important than determining if we have the right collective vision for humanity. Today, we are failing by design and not by default.

At the core of the paradigm shift, is our understanding of nature and acceptance that this is not about a theory, or something abstract. Instead it is about understanding the different forms

of self realization of life in its infinite manifested forms. If this realization is not present, within the inner core of our consciousness, nothing will critically change the course of humanity, and we will be running immense risks of self destruction.

So, before I make the full argument in what remains of this document, I would like to answer the questions I posed above.

1.- The only aspect really innovative in Rio Plus 20 would be a very serious debate and exchange on how to mainstream spirituality into public policy, including global warming, biodiversity depletion, and all aspects of sustainable development.

2.- The conference should not be dominated by the same groups that have dominated the previous conferences. All of us who have more than 40 years of professional experience within this framework know extremely well who will attend, how they will position themselves to control the inflows and the outcomes.

3.- The conference should not be a place to rehearse the past and repeat the same stories again and again. It should be the place where the most innovative visions, language and actions

are freely shared and brought into the light of day. The right vision and understanding are of essence here.

4.- Indigenous Peoples must be involved from the very beginning of the Conference . They have a crucial knowledge and message to share with humanity. Their cosmovision is what we need to break down the traditional approaches to sustainability. Let us act humbly and listen to them. They should be the main speakers and we the main listeners.

5.- If this conference will yield more of the same, then all the expenses of the conference must be paid by the organizers and not the countries: which in the end is being paid by the people of those countries. They must have some responsibility in parity with the way we apply the polluter pay principle. Do not pollute us with more of the same.

Rio Plus 20 must include A World Spiritual Forum For Sustainable Development, where many spiritual and religious leaders are invited to speak on a new paradigm and explain its different parts and functions. The conclusions of the Forum must be presented at the plenary with equal weight to any other activity of that Plenary.

Because of the importance that will be given to global warming, many of the thoughts and ideas will permeate that topic. However, the principles and suggestions apply to all the environmental phenomenon not at the top of the agenda.

Let me now substantiate the above with several short sections of various subject matters.

I. An Issue of Inter-Temporal Choices

In its pure essence, the domain of sustainable development has to do with the form and functions we use in addressing inter-temporal choices. Who is to benefit and when and who is to pay the costs? This is not a new debate. In its beginning it was labeled 'Issues with the Discount Rate" . In particular, using high discount rates in economic and financial analysis, it means that future benefits worth little or nothing, in present value terms. The bias of the discount rate was against investing in the future; investments that yield results far in the future (investing in diminishing global warming, plantation of oak trees).

This debate of discount rates, which looked very technical (with major social and human consequences), was later on accompanied by a major exchange on the so-called intergenerational equity issues. This debate was impregnated with ethical and moral issues as well as issues from the realm of spirituality and religion. The core question is what shall we leave for future generations. Shall we foreclose their options by abusing the Planet today? Of course, the answer is No. Addressing the issues of inter-temporal choices required some form of "supra

objective function” far beyond gaining financial, economic or social returns. Many of these supra objectives were advocated. One of them was to leave the Earth at least as well off as it was given to us as a generation. Another was portrayed by the Precautionary Principle, which would advocate for having built in mechanisms for the replenishment of whatever we extract from the Planet.

This precautionary principle has been successfully applied in forest management and in the management of the Carbon Fund, linked to global warming.

To facilitate the debate on sustainability, economists resorted to all sorts of ideas. The simplest one was to tell the public that there were at least three dimensions of sustainability: economic, social and environmental. This idea was handy as it helped to justify what economists were doing in the areas of economics and social policy. The above provided the rationale for the creation of the well known Sustainability Triangle (each vertex represented one of those criteria). Many triangles were brought to light. An important one was that which distinguished manmade capital, social capital, and natural capital. And, all sorts of research were made around each of these three topics. I believe, the most

seminal research and studies were on social capital. Even today, research and policies in the area of social capital tends to capture most of the attention. In fact, the NGO community, which was so outspoken in the advocacy of environmental and ecological issues, has moved away to address mainly social issues.

Because the results were not acceptable, we resorted to all forms of regulation. However, regulation is not very effective if it does not have a human face and high levels of consciousness to understand what is at stake and not to defeat the regulation. In a regulatory approach it is essential to know who pollutes. The emphasis on who pollutes has brought important information about the various economic activities, the behavior of actors including countries, and the nature of many decision-making processes. Putting a face on global warming, for example is essential.

People must know that it is people who pollute. Factories are people, policies are people, and so on. To depersonalize the process of environmental degradation only benefits those who bear the benefits but not the costs of that degradation.

The ultimate question and perhaps the most interesting of all

is “Why people pollute?” Experience shows that there are at least two important reasons why people pollute. One, because of the inability to self-realize the values that lead to sustainable development like solidarity, interdependence, and the respect for nature (to name just three). Until and unless these values are self-realized, people will continue destroying nature. Two, because of the high levels of toxicity. This toxicity numbs our senses and we become less connected with the genetic codes of nature and, thus, insensitive to environmental destruction.

In addition to the above there are other possible reasons:

- **The wrong value system in relation to the uniqueness of nature (less intelligent, inert and material).**
- **The culture that says that the Earth is an infinite sink of waste and thus, people may pollute without any major consequences.**
- **The view that humans are so intelligent that technology will save them no matter what level of environmental destruction takes place and, thus, all one needs to focus on is technological change.**

- **The paradigm promoting the idea that we need to grow first and clean later, although no experience shows that one comes back to clean later (this is changing).**
- **The fact that people have very low levels of consciousness and collective coherence and, thus, we do not really have the strong energy needed to act.**
- **The inability of governments to manage the public good nature of our resources and the environment.**

In the end all is about human consciousness. It is the inner minds and souls of people that need to be changed. It is the inner minds and souls of those actors who are responsible for environmental degradation and sustainability that need to be changed. The type of change suggested here is not something societies will attain by fiat. Human transformation processes need to shift and through such shifts people will behave differently. Thus, the future of sustainable development lies on the creation of a collective consensus about the quality of life we want to have as a collective. This consensus will be attained out of empowering people. In turn, this will be attained out of meaningful participation and representation in decision and policy making.

II. Global Warming

The earliest debates saw global warming as a physical phenomenon resulting from economic activities happening outside us. In this regard, all the efforts were made to bring the best scientific evidence to construct a correlation between man-made activities and the warming up of our Planet Earth. In the sixties and seventies, the evidence showed little or no correlation. It is only recently that this correlation has been heightened and actors are paying more attention to the way in which our human activities are affecting the environment.

It is only now that major attention has been given to the “public good” aspects of managing our Earth resources. These resources belong to all of us and to future generations, and imposed market solutions to our collective destiny will simply not do. The “invisible hand” , promoted by Adam Smith, in his book *The Wealth of Nations* -as a mechanism to reconcile individual objectives with attaining higher levels of collective human welfare-- is now dirty and polluted, in a way, with gangrene. Market solutions are a main source of environmental destruction.

Putting a face on global warming, at both the international and national levels, created heated debates and lots of controversy, as it was immediately apparent that the benefits and costs of such degradation are often asymmetric in their distribution. This is to say that those who pollute most do not bear the true cost of pollution. Similarly, it became known that the major negative external effects as a result of global warming are being born by societies that have little or nothing to do, for example, with emission of CO₂. The world knows, for example, that Small Island States will suffer immensely as a result of sea water rising while, at the same time we also know that those States essentially do not pollute the air.

In addressing why people pollute, and doing this comprehensively, it demands a shift to focus mainly on the interplay between environmental management and human consciousness. This shift opens the door for a debate on more subtle levels of human existence and it understands the phenomenon of global warming in many other different ways. In particular, one of the fundamental messages here is that while global warming - "outer warming" or "external warming" - is happening as a result of pollution (generally), it also rises because we are experiencing warming inside us. Inner warming is also a major cause of global warming.

For those who operate strictly from their rational mind, and who happen to be individualistic or materialistic in nature, such a proposition will appear ludicrous and without much interest.

However, in the end, global warming and inner warming are to be understood as 'experiential' phenomena. Not as a rational phenomena. Thus, to approve or disapprove of such a major proposition, it demands that we as human beings experience our inner warming and the influence on the outer warming. For this to happen, we have to develop a special sensitivity through the wisdom of our five senses, the mind and our different forms of interaction. This experience will show that there are no boundaries separating our inner-self from some or all the outer-phenomena. In essence, we live in a world with no boundaries. By implication, as the outer phenomena affects us in many ways (the rays of the sun can burn us), so our inner self may affect the state of external phenomena as well. Therefore, one may conclude that powerful and sustainable ways to address global warming will not result from external actions alone.

In summary, it is here, where we must reflect upon how our inner human transformation often leads to the transformation of our external environments and, thus, influences the levels of

global warming. All that belongs to life is alive. All that belongs to life is sentient. Nothing is inert or lifeless. Within the infinite manifestations of life, spiritual and material, there are neither boundaries nor unequal intelligence. Thus, every manifestation, including us humans, belongs to a One Shared Reality. We live in an infinitely interdependent, interconnected and indivisible reality.

The people who, on the other hand, live in duality between the inner and outer reality, and feel or act as if they were independent and segmented away from the rest of the world and from nature, must understand that such a way of life represents a very limited form of existence. It is now essential to have a global understanding of life.

III. A New Eco-Morality.

Rio Plus 20 must establish the ground for a New Eco Morality. This is to provide some canvas to individual and collective forms of interactions. This will challenge many people. Even the word “morality” may bring them to a stand off. If true for some, then, use another word if needed, but the point must be conveyed: the environment will not be enhanced with the ethics and morals of the market. It is clear also that traditional ways of understanding nature are not very valuable any longer. Given the challenges we are facing today, we all must aim at a new way of understanding nature, natural law, and all living beings. They play a fundamental role in both our material and spiritual transformations. In the past, the emphasis has been on the linkages between the state of nature and our material wealth and betterment. Today, we must look into the links between state of nature and our processes of spiritual transformation. It is in this sense that I introduce here the idea of a New Eco-Morality.

At the core of this New Eco-Morality is the view that destroying nature not only has material consequences -including global warming and ozone layer depletion – but has immense

implications in our spiritual transformation. A New EcoMorality is founded on several important spiritual laws we must not violate, as the violation of these laws is having grave consequences in the establishment of a better future. Examples of these laws are: a) the Law of Interdependence, b) the Law of Equal Intelligence, c) the Law of Karma, and d) the Law Self-Identity. Let me only say a few words to illustrate:

The Law of Interdependence, which states that we are completely interdependent of each other as human beings, interdependent of other living beings, and interdependent with nature. The ultimate expression of this law is that we are also indivisible. Only our intellect gives us the impression we are separate and divisible. In fact, this is intimately connected to a life long correlation: between the quality of the external environment and the quality of our inner environment.

The Law of Equal Intelligence, which states that everyone and everything is a depository of equal intelligence. There is not a hierarchy of intelligence in creation and thus, humans are not more intelligent than nature. The genetic code of nature is essential for us to achieve higher levels of human transformation. Thus, subjugating nature, or exploiting nature, constitutes violations

of this law.

The Law of Karma, which states that all that exists has causes and conditions and that there is a very intimate connection between causes and effects. This has also been called The Law of Infinite Balances through all the material and spiritual manifestation of life. It is essential to gain positive karma through positive action, thoughts and intentions. It is essential that we approach nature in positive ways.

The Law of Self Identity, which states that there is nothing to be wasted. Everyone and everything has a mission and are part of an Organized Order. Thus, we need to understand that the existence of nature has a free standing value and that those values given by the economic markets should not govern all we do.

In this regard, it is essential to understand the different contributions we are to make in attaining all forms of sustainability: ecological, economic, social, and spiritual sustainability. This principle of Eco-Morality (operating in the non-material) will serve as a navigator in the matrix of social, political and civil actors, in the great reform of organizations, and in the formulation of

private and public policy. In particular, it will move the emphasis of whatever we do from just Knowing, Doing, Making and Having to succeed in life to understanding the core of Being and Becoming. This shift in emphasis suggests the need to actively create all the conditions to reach the core of our Being and Becoming, and, thus, of human self-realization.

Communications. In embracing this New Eco-Morality we need to generate a global consensus, using the great power of the media. We must use the power of communication to change the course of humanity. In today's world there are so many instruments of communication, and the younger generations are constantly linked to one or more of them, at any point in time. The Internet could have a tremendous transformational impact in all societies. Wireless phones and other devices, for example, are now spreading everywhere, and people have "real time" experiences of war, destruction, and other things that are happening in the rest of the world.

Science and Technology. Also, we must address science and technology. We must see that science is relevant and central to the attainment of the great aims of this new Eco-Morality. We all must assist in the transformation of sciences in finding

peaceful methods of treating our body, mind, psyche, and soul. Violent science must be transformed into no-violence generating science, into peace science.

The Actors. Also, we must now focus on the actors rather than just on processes and outcomes. It is through change in the level of consciousness of the actors that will make human activities advance towards a sustainable civilization. It will be the change in the consciousness of these people that will make sense of instruments that will move towards less destructive means and thus make peace with our environment.

Devoid of spirit, humanity will continue to live in a dangerous duality that translates into more diseases and other social and personal problems.

IV. The Self Realization of Values

One friend once told me, sustainable development is all about values and the self-realization of those values. But what values are to be self-realized? Given the nature and scope of the problems we face, it is clear that we must move from individual materialistic values to collective humanistic and spiritual values. The two most fundamental collective values in our human existence are love and compassion. Naturally, there are other values, like solidarity, interdependence, connectedness, equity, ecology, respect freedom, justice, caring and sharing, to name a few.

It is essential that we transparently acknowledge that human values -like any value-- are not just words to be proclaimed, although it is indeed important to advocate love and compassion. However, advocacy for the sake of advocacy has no meaning in the end. Thus, it is essential that we understand these human values as States of Being. These States of Being influence our gross, subtle and very subtle levels of our human nature. As such, these values must be self-realized. This means, we have to become aware of those humanistic and spiritual values and

we must embody them. In a figurative sense, we must wake and compassion. It is only through this process of self-realization that these values will have a transformational power and real impact. Values that are only on the shelf of words, or that hinge upon a list of terms to be advocated, will have no impact whatsoever.

And, I would like to add, that these values must be self-realized at three levels of human existence. Thus, (a) at the gross level, love and compassion must be translated into social justice, equality, shared wealth, and so many other material and social needs. At (b) the subtle level, this must be self-realized in our thinking, reasoning, and feelings. Finally, at (c) the very subtle level, these values must be self-realized at our energetic level and at the level of our inner existence (the level of our five elements).

For the moment, the national and international debates have remained at the level of advocacy of humanistic and spiritual values. Our dialogue must not remain at that level. It must go beyond advocacy, and this demands a serious look into our education systems, from primary level to higher education. Nature and notions of sustainability must not be just adds-on to the materialistic approaches to human development and transformation, but rather essential to everything we do. This is

much easier said than done.

V. Natural Laws

Global warming is one of the most important natural phenomena facing humanity in this millennium. Global warming is not just a physical phenomenon. It is a very intricate and vast happening out of both material and spiritual realities. This phenomenon can be traced back to a number of key relationships, including our human spirituality and the spirituality of all living beings.

This is why it is essential for us to start by recognizing that spiritual laws --the laws guiding our spiritual transformation-- and natural laws --the laws guiding the processes of material transformation-- belong to the same realm. But, this common realm is not well understood. In most cases, it is easier for people to know, or simply experience, the relationship between any states of nature (quantity and quality) and the processes of material transformation including, for example, production, consumption, disposal, and trade. In those processes, one of ten has a direct or an unequivocal experience about how the destruction of nature translates, for example, into food shortages and hunger, climate change, and proliferation of varied diseases. Specifically, soil erosion, air and water pollution, desertification, clear-cutting

natural forests, polluting the oceans, and eliminating existing wildlife, for example, are major conditions of the relentless poverty, loss of productive assets, and immense human suffering evident now.

In some sense, the above would normally dictate that we should reverse the trends in environmental destruction. Our material nature depends on that process. Nevertheless, despite this information and our growing awareness of these conditions, we know that little is being done to reverse most important trends. In contrast, we often ignore the rather unique relationships existing between those fluctuating states of nature and our inner human evolution: i.e., our individual and collective spiritual transformations. For instance, we hear very little about how changes in environmental quality (e.g., pollution of air and water) affect our ability to attain higher levels of human consciousness, awareness and coherence. Despite this disconnectedness, we have experienced that all of these relationships are essential to our spiritual transformation, universally.

In addition, we also ignore the relationship that exists between our spiritual evolution and nature (i.e., our outer environment). We believe that the state of our spiritual evolution affects nature.

In particular, it is through these relationships that one is able to experience how the state of our own human consciousness (inner soul) impacts (shifts) the state of the natural environment. In a sense, we are suggesting that the relationship with nature is a 'two-way street' . Also, we are suggesting that the state of our inner self, and the unfolding of our inner qualities and capacities, directly influences the state of the outer natural environment.

The relationship between our inner self and nature is not a new discovery. This relationship has been taught by many spiritual groups in our societies, particularly amongst indigenous people throughout the world. They see no boundaries between human existence (in all its forms), living beings and nature. All those inner and outer dimensions are part of a holistic whole.

It is to a large extent paradoxical that we, human beings, see no recognition of the relationship between spirituality and global warming. This is particularly interesting when we know that most ancient cultures, and the fundamental spiritual origins of humanity, were founded on the notion, premise, and practice that there is a one-to-one relationship between the quality of the environment and spiritual transformation.

Today, in places where indigenous cultures still exist, it is ingrained in them that Nature and Spirit are One and, as such, all people accept the fact that nature affects our spirit and our spirit affects nature.

In essence, natural law is one with all spiritual laws, and vice versa.

Some indigenous peoples explain this multidimensional State of Oneness through embracing, accepting, and practicing exactly at the “junction” of Natural Laws and Spiritual Laws. These inseparable interactions are illustrated by the shared symbols between many religions. They have plenty of teachings, traditions, and stories in which nature plays an important role. Think about Moses and fire, the Red Sea...

One important spiritual law, for example, is that “the inner is like the outer and the outer like the inner” . If one embraces such a law, it would imply that we, in our inner development, are responsible for global warming and that global warming is a State of Being manifesting inside us. One may also say that our personal and collective ozone layers are being depleted, and that what we see outside us (external environment) is actually

the mirror image of our inner spiritual crisis. There is nothing that happens outside, which is not inside us. Another spiritual law states “there is a perfect relationship between the quality of the natural environment and our capacity to evolve both materially and spiritually” . This means that in order to evolve spiritually here on Planet Earth we must have a high quality environment. In this case, the destruction of the environment is therefore a major constraint to our spiritual evolution and it represents also a major limiting factor to finish the mission we have come to implement during this lifetime. For those beings that are to implement complex missions, the existing environmental degradation represents a very negative phenomenon. Yet, a third spiritual law states that “nature, all living beings, including us humans, have equal wisdom and intelligence” and thus, in this earthly existence there is no such thing as a differentiated intelligence in creation. Human beings are not more intelligent than nature and vice-versa.

Similarly, natural law (the laws governing nature) would also be seen as separate from the whole process of spiritual transformation. Some may understand these two as very different processes, one material and the other spiritual. However, the same people have all somehow experienced that this is not the

case, and that there is a deep and meaningful interdependence among all forms of transformation: spiritual transformation and material transformation. Somewhere, somehow, these relationships have been lost, and we intend to explore some of the reasons why this is so.

And, we will make a few suggestions regarding how to recover or rediscover those spiritual relationships. For me, the external and internal states of being or/and becoming are two inter-dependent and inseparable aspects of our reality. This book unfolds some hypothesis explaining the reasons behind our insensitivity in relation to how our material reality connects deeply without spiritual transformation.

VI. Interdependence: Beyond Material Choices

In addressing global warming, countries must go beyond material choices alone.

For the moment, debates and private or public decision making processes regarding global warming are dominated by purely material considerations, as if global warming were only material in nature. This is said, notwithstanding the fact that many material interventions are crucial to curving down global warming (e.g., carbon fund, taxes, technological change, regulations). Today, the emphasis of policy makers is on attending only material/ external solutions to environmental problems in general and global warming in particular. These solutions have reached serious limits in effectiveness terms - particularly when applied as single standing and separate from other possible non-material solutions.

I am of the opinion that material solutions ought to be complemented with spiritual ones.

It is not difficult to see why this is so, when dogmas, some

cultural knots, or daily trends and fashions convey the idea that our material existence is all that really matters. It is in this context that spirituality, as intimately linked to the states of nature, has been trivialized, negated, denied, or lost. For the moment, we have become insensitive and we are unable to feel existing relationships, or we neither believe in nor embrace them. By refocusing on the non-material dimensions of life and on our spirituality, we suggest very strongly: (a) that once again there is a direct link between the state of our inner welfare and global warming (outer welfare) and (b) that global warming may deeply affect our process of spiritual transformation. These suggestions apply more forcefully to our collective forms of transformation.

During the sixties and early seventies, many scientists and policy makers suggested that opening up to a debate on global warming was too premature. In part, this choice was so because of their notion that global warming was simply an exaggeration of what they saw as a passing phenomenon. At that time, we were also told -another choice-- that global warming was not really a man-made natural phenomenon and, thus, by implication, we could do little or nothing about it. For example, we were told that the weather and related environmental conditions would be selfcorrected in due course. International debates at the United

Nations and elsewhere have shown that there are still many key countries that act as if individual, separate, and uncoordinated choices and corresponding actions would resolve their problem around global warming. These countries like to be left alone from the rest of the world, to make their own separate independent/individual decisions, as if global warming could be managed and be curbed down solely from within one given set of country borders.

This choice ignores or disregards that we are indeed a collection of interdependent societies. It also ignores that the weather experienced in one country is influenced and affected by the weather in another country.

Still, there are others who believe that material -technology-driven solutions will eventually make global warming go away.

For these people, technology always represents the magic bullet. Maybe yes or maybe not, as the quality and pace of technological change depends upon human creativity which, in turn, may be greatly damaged by global warming.

In terms of evaluating such a choice, it may not be always

possible to rely exclusively on technological change, as the level of our inner warming (anger, loss of identity, stress - see below) may affect our capacity to bring about lasting and effective technological solutions. You may meditate on your own past experiences in relation to how stress blocks and affects your capacities (memory, clarity, imagination) as these may illustrate more clearly this latter point. Technology is a product of our inner development, which materializes into physical and tangible solutions. The ultimate source of technological change is intelligence and human consciousness. Once again, this leads us back to addressing the non-material dimensions of our human lives.

By going beyond the character of material-based choices, and seeking a more spiritual perspective, it is evident that global warming is not something that could be sought as being in the realms of either the rich or the poor. Or, of a rich nation, or a poor nation. Global warming is something affecting everyone. Thus, rich people, or those who pollute more must stop now and should give a chance to the unfolding of better material and spiritual forms of transformation. Equally important, is the spiritual work all people and all nations can make in developing their inner souls to assist in addressing global warming everywhere. Nobody

should feel disempowered to act or intervene. Addressing the theme of spirituality and natural environment in simple and transformational ways is not an easy task, as one often encounters major barriers coming from cultural biases, values and beliefs or, simply, existing western modern thinking.

All that is proposed here is about shifting into a new form of human transformation.

VII. The Art Of Making Choices

Life is the result of an infinite sequence of choices. And, it is on these choices that we need to focus on, so that we may have the possibility to change the outcomes we experience today. Many times, the problems we suffer from today are the direct result of what was meant to be a highly recommended solution (a choice), or an idea forcefully advocated, in the past. Global warming is the result of those past decisions and recommended solutions. Those well thought-out solutions of the past are often the source of our current day problems. This vicious circle must be broken. Why is this so? Are our decisionmaking processes faulty? Have conditions changed and, thus, the need for new decision-making processes to emerge?

As we look inside and outside ourselves, we ought to conclude that no one else has created those problems. They arise out of our own past. Thus, to establish a new trajectory for human transformation, we must focus on what we are doing today to garner a better collective future for tomorrow. Thus, there is a need for new choices if we are to attain new solutions. Today, the state of nature - ie., the natural and human environment—is

indeed the direct outcome of our past decisions. One known landmark is that of the industrial revolution, coupled with modern capitalism and globalization; they have all had deep -rooted negative effects on our environment. Industrialization has been one of the main sources of pollution and thus global warming.

Should we detach ourselves from those effects and just say: it is someone else' s problem?

Those past decisions are to be put into context. In some instances, for example, it was postulated that natural resources were infinitely abundant and, thus, amenable to high rates of exploitation -e.g., much beyond “the maximum sustainable yield”. Or, it was recommended to accelerate the pace of industrialization, or of traditional modes of transport, which have all resulted in high levels of air and water pollution. In turn, pollution has had major impacts on climate change and ozone layer depletion. Thus, it is a sequence of choices that have ended up with significant un -intended negative -external-effects from socio-economic development.

But not everything should be cast as the results of an “external to external” form of interaction (e.g., that industrial pollution, as an

external phenomenon, causes global warming). Our individual and collective souls have also been involved in significant ways in creating global warming (e.g., anger and stress as an inner phenomenon, causes changes on the external stress and natural environment). Judging from the outcomes we see today (a results oriented perspective), the existing decision-making rationale has also been affecting both the gross and subtle levels of our existence. Pollution may also happen within the soul. One may call this “inner pollution” We strongly experience the fact that our inner pollution impacts significantly the outer environment. How do we create inner pollution? We pollute our souls with bad thoughts, negative emotions, unnecessary beliefs, limiting value systems, twisted intentions, negative egocentric actions and many other forms of questionable behaviour.

At the gross level, we pollute ourselves via our bad eating habits and the negative ways we treat our bodies. This, in turn, pollutes our five elements of life: water (blood), earth (bones), wind (breath), fire (body temperature) and space. All these elements are fully present within our body. At the subtle level, we pollute ourselves via the power of negative thinking, affecting others and us. We experience this daily. Needless to say how much you affect others via your own personal or social behaviour (interactions).

Because we are fully interdependent and interconnected, the external effects produced by our gross and subtle levels of existence also reach other people's bodies, minds, and soul.

This is why it is essential to pay attention to the spiritual pollution within our lives. We pollute our spirit via distortions of the truth, creating unnecessary contradictions and rejecting our mission in this lifetime (whenever we happen to know what that mission is). The effects of negative thoughts are particularly acknowledged here. We know that thoughts do not disappear in outer space. Most of these thoughts stay in our minds and bodies for many lifetimes. Thoughts are energy, and as such, they may stay inside an organ, or in any gross or subtle space of our body, and affect the rhythm of our lives and cause major diseases. Having negative or positive thoughts also involves a decision.

There is an ancient saying that may be relevant here. It says that you could understand the quality of your life today by simply analyzing the thoughts you had in the past. Similarly, you will be able to predict the quality of your life in the future by analyzing the thoughts you entertain today. As a paradigm of the soul, this is an interesting dimension of human transformation and a practical way to recognize the power of your soul through the

power of thinking and decisions.

Many decisions are made within a clear set of boundaries. In many ways, these boundaries are vanishing, as is the case with globalization and national policies. It is difficult to see domestic policies as separated away from international ones. In many ways, this is the result of the global markets and the way we are all opening to the rest of the world. But, you should also note that there are no boundaries, for example, between the air outside us (outer air) and the air we have inside our bodies (inner air). There is free flow from one medium to the other. As a result, it is not any longer possible to think that pollution of the outer air will not affect the quality (i.e., pollute) our inner air. Therefore, decisions having to do with pollution of the air are totally universally in time and space.

It is interesting to note also that the same may apply to outer and inner water and to all the five elements of life. Then, if our soul is polluted, this will pollute all the outside elements of the external natural environment. It should be easier to accept that pollution of air and water, environmental destruction, effects of traffic congestion, etc. -which is a result of our decisions--are all affecting the state of our bodies and souls. When we breathe

purely clean air, our lungs will provide excellent oxygenation to our blood, which, in turn, would irrigate our brain better. This process will bring clarity in thinking, less stress, and happier behaviour.

Everyone knows how the quality of the external environment affects our decisions and the allocation of our material resources. This is so well known that it affects how we make decisions regarding where to take our vacations. Specifically, most people choose natural and human environments that will make them happier, peaceful and joyful. These are often identified with those natural environments of highest quality. Even the willingness to pay for those vacation spots within pristine environments is increasing at a geometric rate. Prices are very high and those who can afford those prices pay for them. Eco-tourism and other forms of rural adventures are extremely popular among consumers of high quality leisure. This is why attention must be paid to the adoption of an approach to life that recognizes explicitly what happens in our souls -in our inner environments— as a result of our interactions with the external environment.

The proposed solutions to today' s problems must be carefully

scrutinized. Otherwise, as it has happened in the past, we would be creating, once again, the causes and conditions for the unfolding of negative outcomes of development and human transformation. A poor decision would be, for example, to cut down a natural forest to resolve the demand for furniture and, thus, leave us without such a crucial element of nature. For some people this example may be seen as exaggerated, but this is not at all the case. Just see how much furniture is made out of hardwoods from tropical forests. The same is true of fisheries, where we are willing to over-fish a variety of ocean fishes to satisfy a demand for a specific delicatessen (shark fins) in a particular country.

History has demonstrated that not all decisions that are linked to the functioning of markets (supply and demand) bring the right solutions. The market orientation of many solutions may run counter to a long-term positive and sustainable human transformation. During a rather short period of time, humanity has witnessed fast, steady and transcendental material changes affecting all we do over space (spatially) and time (inter-temporally). Many of us have experienced these changes in such areas as communications, transport, medicine, trade, migration and globalization, to name a few. At times, the net impact of these

changes is very difficult to measure, or to rationalize, whether they are positive or negative. What we know is that many people have benefited and gained from material changes, while a huge number of people are still behind. This is to say, we experience very mixed results. Those negative changes are manifested, for example, in the form of poverty, inequities, discrimination, environmental destruction, epidemics (HIVAIDS), and much more.

We also experience fundamental shifts in our daily lives. These shifts are both individual and collective. In this new millennium, perhaps, it is this collective dimension of human existence that we would need to focus most of our attention. One reason is that human welfare will depend much more on how we nurture the human collective, as a collective, than simply thinking about human welfare as an arithmetic sum of nurturing separate individuals. Population and demography are playing an important role in carving out our human collective destiny. Now that we are more than six billion people, inhabiting what looks to be a small planet, there is an increasing tendency for one group anywhere to influence the lives of groups everywhere. Thus, air and water pollution in developed countries not only affects their inhabitants but it affects the lives of everyone on Earth. Today, this situation

applies to practically everything we do.

As so many changes are happening at every moment and in every sphere of our lives (industry, informatics, infrastructure, medicine, agriculture), it is difficult to predict what their accumulated effects are on the people and on all living beings. Despite the great advances in science, these are not powerful enough to give us the definitive hard evidence to make appropriate decisions. Knowing is not sufficient any longer. In part, this situation reflects the fact that what may look good to one individual may be the opposite for the collective.

Therefore, in measuring and evaluating how well we are making decisions today, it is not possible to look just at ourselves individually. We need to focus also on how we are affecting our collective existence. And, assess the extent to which our individual decisions result in a type of phenomena that impact the whole (all of us) and not just a few. Actually, global warming is not the only example of a collective dimension of human lives. The destruction of the environment in general, human insecurity, hunger, violations of human rights, gender discrimination, war and conflicts, etc., are all examples of the collective challenges facing humanity today.

Global warming is an outcome of choices that relate to our material and spiritual transformations. It is not all about pollution from industries and transport, although this is extremely important. It is much more than that. While what is being shared here is from a book on global warming, what we share here may also apply to many different aspects of human life. At the core, we must make decisions that are essential to nurture the mind and the soul. These are decisions that are established to create a new awakening on the relationship between nature and inner transformation. While much is discussed on the scientific evidence behind global warming, yet a few dare to explain the spiritual dimensions of this phenomenon. Spiritual growth and human transformation are in the end the essential ingredients for making peace with the environment, healing the world, and finding effective solutions for a better future.

VIII. Traditional Understanding of Nature

Most people see nature outside themselves. Nature is there to be visited, to be explored, exploited, and dominated. This prevalent view exercises a major influence in the ways our professions approach nature. In particular, and as one example, the prevailing view for a long time was one whereby nature was infinitely abundant, a major sink for disposal, and “something” to be appropriated by private or public means. This view is progressively changing. However, most professions still relate to nature as a material entity, and we focus mainly on outcomes resulting from external human activities. In environmental economics, for example, most of the attention has been on such negative states of nature as pollution, desertification, global warming, biodiversity depletion, and the like. This attention has become the essential ingredient in addressing the negative natural phenomena and in selecting the economic policy instruments that are to minimize or eliminate them. A material view of pollution, for example, has given major emphasis to issues of technology and technological change. This has been essential. However, even with granting technology immense importance towards an eventual solution, a purely technological solution will never work in a sustainable

way.

Traditionally, and from a decision-making perspective within public policy, nature has been seen as a functional collection of resources. This is why national statistics, for example, are classified in terms of mining, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, irrigation, production, consumption, trade, etc. All of those atomized categories pay exclusive attention once again to nature as a “thing” . Of course, within each of the above-mentioned functional categories there are sub-categories of more classifications to give the public some sense of disaggregating and completeness. Thus, agriculture may be divided into irrigated and rain fed agriculture. Or, statistics may be disaggregated into low income and high -income consumers, or into import-trade and export-trade of agricultural commodities.

This functional approach to nature leads to compartments and silos where no holistic approach is possible. Forestry investments are designed independently of soil management programs or agricultural mechanization programs. Mining has been seen as far away from climate change though it destroys glaciers and other resources that are essential for a stable climate. In essence, the main aim has been to maximize outputs or profits per unit of

outcomes. And we are witnessing such an approach either by the actions of the market -what is produced, consumed, or traded – or by a set of public interventions, designed to safeguard existing resources, increase productivity and enhance processes needed to maximize those material outputs. The private sector -a key actor-- acts through the different markets and civil society organizations -another set of key actors-- act by means of participation, opportunity and empowerment. This engineering-economic approach to nature has reached its limits. Material solutions do not work in a vacuum, particularly with regard to institutions, organizations, people, and many dimensions of human transformation.

The above commentary does not invalidate the importance of technological solutions, or of the physical approaches to natural resources management, or of the traditional works of the market. We are simply saying that such an approach is incomplete and has to be complemented by other forms of interventions and interactions. There is no doubt that the traditional approach to management or interactions with nature have yielded some important results. Think, for example, of the genetic improvements embodied in many seed varieties that have been often presented under the umbrella of the “green revolution”

This revolution was science at its best, helping poor families in rural areas to diminish the risks of hunger, malnutrition and diseases, and the results have been excellent in many parts of the world. However, the impacts of the green revolution have been uneven and accompanied by several negative external effects (e.g., depletion of micronutrients). The discovery of hybrid seed varieties is yet another example that has revolutionized the world and has seemingly helped many poor families worldwide. Today what is touted as beneficial, tomorrow becomes a consequence of great detriment. Altering the genetic code of nature is of grave concern.

Our human interactions with nature must involve many other components, if we are to succeed in the longer-term with the minimum number of negative external effects. In a similar way, one tends to see global warming as a natural and external phenomenon. It is an effect or an outcome of human activities - some of which are very well identified. All is seen in a functional way as it was the case of previous examples, and the policy instruments recommended are mainly geared to break down those cause-effect relationships. Examples of these external material instruments are to cut down on pollution, diminish economic activity in some sectors (e.g., transport), tax the

polluter, subsidize clean technologies, favour renewable sources of energy, and the like.

Would these actions be enough to end with global warming? We believe that it will not be enough. An approach that is only geared to modify outcomes is limited and will not work in the longer term.

IX. Our Public Goods

Another way nature and its many phenomena are seen in policy making as “public good”? The theory and practice of public goods is vast and it is not the intention to address all of that here. The essence of the above is to take into account the fact that these goods, like nature, belong to all citizens of the world and not just to one group of individuals or nations. They belong to the public and there are, in principle, little limitations to their consumption worldwide. In the case of public bads, like pollution and diseases, one would also need to take into account the external impacts of one group who create the bad (e.g., air pollution) in relationship to the rest of the world. One may pollute in one part of the world but the effects will be felt everywhere. Thus, the production of CO₂ by one country will affect global warming and ozone layer depletion somewhere else.

This is why the issue of global warming is seen as a public good, requiring public intervention. In other words, the existing market structures and the forces of supply and demand are not effective enough to address the phenomenon in question. Markets are concerned mainly with economic efficiency and not

with attaining socially and collectively acceptable outcomes. In many cases these negative external effects are the result of the lack of property rights, the inadequate participation of those finally affected, and of many other institutional, human and social factors.

There is a famous case in institutional economics that is addressed under the heading of The Tragedy of The Commons. This tragedy often happens when there is not a clear system of property rights over the resource in question. Since nature is without a status of being, every person uses it to its advantage, no matter what happens to the available stock or to the other potential users. In the end, the resource is depleted and the people depending on that resource suffer a great deal, if not, potential beneficiaries vanish in an economic and social sense. There are many debates with regard to the best instruments to address the public good nature of global warming or the public good nature of any aspect of our external environment.

One of these instruments is to assign private property rights. These private rights impose a clear form of exclusion (from those who have no rights) and eliminate “free riding” over the resources in question. Today, there are many countries that take a (“free

ride” in utilizing clean air available to all countries in the world. They pollute without any desire to respect the collective interest for the quality of the ‘global’ clean air available. Thus, global warming represents some form of the Tragedy of the Commons. Another suggestion to manage these public goods is to enact and enforce regulations and assign, for example, production or consumption quotas linked to certain levels of emissions. Often, these instruments require lots of good data and a very accurate system of monitoring. Yet another suggestion is to create a surrogate market for emissions or pollution rights (permits), via planting trees or acting around any other form of positive contribution to clean air. And, there are many more instruments.

Experience shows that it is often difficult to deal with the public good nature of environmental management (including global warming) as it depends on the will, capacities, leadership, and vision of governments with respect to the functioning and welfare of our collectives. Unfortunately, there are no worldwide agreements that are supported by every nation. Or, when these agreements are in place they are not necessarily respected, enforced and acted upon. At the root of the management of a public good is a consensual and holistic vision accompanied by a high level of collective consciousness needed to attain that

consensual vision. Judging by the results and by the actual state of our external natural environment, collective consciousness seems to be lower than desirable and, thus, the management and use of many of our public goods are creating public bads: pollution, desertification, global warming, ozone layer depletion, biodiversity depletion... The view, that global warming is a public good, goes one step beyond a concept of nature as a commodity to be exploited indiscriminately. Thus, it raises awareness of the need for collective action and collective responsibility.

X. Who is Who?

Yet another way to address global warming and other aspects related to nature is by focusing not only on outcomes but also on who creates those outcomes. This is a different angle that often puts a human face on pollution rather than looking into pollution in the abstract. This dimension focuses on you and me and all of those who are in different modes of human nature's interactions. And, through this approach, one is able to trace back the results of these interactions to specific actors (people) and organizations rather than to see global warming as an output of inanimate entities. Furthermore, this dimension of global warming also brings about a debate on (a) the nature and scope of decision-making processes, (b) the institutional aspects of consensus building at the national or worldwide levels, and (c) the issues of individual and collective rights and responsibilities.

A few examples may illustrate the importance of these aspects of environmental management.

One: it is well known that water pollution is worse in cities and that, within those cities, the most urgent problem is within low

income neighbourhoods, like shanty towns and areas where low income people create their settlements. Water pollution may come from river-water that is polluted by industries, mining, agriculture or services upstream. This pollution is now a major source of water-borne diseases, like diarrhoea and dysentery. These preventable diseases are the major cause in child death around the world. Therefore, industrial owners must become aware that their industries are indeed killing children. Pollution is not an inanimate entity that someone else is to shoulder and remedy. It has the mind of an adult (polluter) and the face of a child (polluted)!

Two: it is air pollution that is responsible for many pulmonary diseases and brain cancer (lead pollution) of many people around the world. This is prevailing in all areas and not only lower income areas of cities behind both developed and developing countries. Industries and urban transport are major causes of such pollution.

And behind those cars there are drivers, there are specific people like you and me who need to take responsibility for standards, maintenance, usage and more. Air pollution has a face, has a person or a group of people, it has emotional consequences like

inner suffering and despair.

Three: it is forest and biodiversity depletion that is responsible for climate change, microclimate shifts, weak water holding capacity of soils, desertification, genetic degeneration and losses, etc. If one brings also the disappearance of wildlife species, like elephants and Bengal Tigers, it is easy to understand the major spatial and inter-generational impacts we are experiencing today. Those who are cutting the forests are people. Those licensing loggers are people. Those gaining from that form of destruction are people. Thus, those peoples must be held responsible and made visible to the public at large. National and multi-national corporations are to be identified and programs are to be implemented to correct the situations we live in today. They are not the only ones! However, it is important to understand that everything has a human face - those who seemingly gain and those who lose.

The instruments to address the abovementioned situations would force us to bring those actors to the forefront, and create the necessary and sufficient conditions so that the situation in question is corrected. Training, capacity building, education, human resources development and many more are the type

of instruments we need to put in place. In this case, human resources development goes far beyond teaching something, but rather go for increased awareness, consciousness and coherence, both on an individual and collective basis.

In advancing the thinking in these areas, we should mention that the outcomes we see are the result of the decisions we make. In principle, this is something that may appear to be just a trivial proposition. But, it is not. Just to focus on outcomes, and not on the actors responsible for those outcomes, neither reveals nor establishes the grounds to provoke a significant shift to another plane in human transformation. If the decision-makers are engaged in competition, exclusion, consumerism and materialism, the outcomes will be rather different than if they are engaged in inclusion, cooperation, solidarity, interdependence, and respect for nature, peace, love and compassion.

Finally, we should mention that a motion towards the identification of actors in the effort to curve global warming, ie., global warming with a human face—has created lots of controversy and it has heightened the role that existing power structures play in the creation and the solution of this problem. These are power structures inside a given country or among nations within the

international system. These power structures are thick filters through which many of the issues are addressed. The current debate on the Kyoto Protocol is an example of how these power structures work in practice.

Focusing on actors heightens the role of institutions --from where those actors come from--and the role of human consciousness and coherence in addressing the complex issues surrounding global warming. These may be national or international institutions. In this regard, special attention is to be given to the corporate world and international corporations. They are mostly responsible for the global warming we face today. This approach makes explicit who is to benefit and who bears the costs.

XI. Why Do We Pollute?

It is important focus on the natural phenomenon, establishing the ground for management of a public good, or identifying those who pollute. While there is no doubt that each of these three dimensions offers important insights, they are yet incomplete to see the whole picture that is to be comprehensively addressed.

In particular, an additional shift in paradigm has to take place. This shift involves a primary step, which could be framed via the following questions: Why do people pollute? Or, Why do people lack a sense of care or respect for the natural environment? While answers to these questions are not trivial, there are certain hypothesis and facts that may shed light on a few critical dimensions of the problem, The “why” of global warming opens new understandings of the actors, it makes them responsible for the solutions, and it sheds lots of light on important behavioral issues having to do with development and progress. When asked to respond to such questions the large majority of people make reference to the role of education, or lack there of, and existing western culture.

XII. The World Is Hurting

Global warming is the fever the world feels as it is wounded by so many human activities. In order to eliminate global warming, a symptom of a world that is ill, we must heal the world. Wherever one looks one finds some form of conflict, violence, environmental degradation, corruption, misery, diseases. etc. All of them manifest either at the individual or the collective levels. Many people are now asking: How can they heal the hurting world? Do we know how to do it? Do we have the inner capacity to heal the world? But, more importantly, we must ask why the world is hurting in the first place. Given that the world is you and I (and this is neither just semantics nor a metaphor), why are we hurting each other? Actually, we are the world, there is only one world: our world.

There is no doubt that the world is hurting, and it is hurting because of both material and spiritual reasons. The world is hurting, because there is nearly half of the global population living in poverty with less than two dollars a day, and millions of beings in absolute poverty with less than one dollar a day. There are nearly one billion people who go to bed hungry everyday, while

we witness a world full of wealth with plenty of food. There are thousands of children who die everyday of preventable diseases. This is not only a shame, but also the greatest ethical and moral dilemma we will ever face. There are 600,000 women who die every year, because they have little or no access to health care services during pregnancy and delivery. The world is hurting today because of the way we are treating the children and the youth. The youth face unemployment and see no real opportunities for betterment of their lives. Many youth are joining gangs in the world. This is not a phenomenon only of developing countries, this is a worldwide phenomenon, because these youngsters have lost hope and they have no reason to believe in the existing political system or a better future.

Millions of children do not go to school and the majority are girls. Millions of children are combatants and at war. In fact, the weapon industry is producing lighter and more effective weapons so that children can carry these weapons. Through media and toys, we are teaching the children how to kill, and it is devastating to think about how they are going to decide between war and peace when they have to push the button that they are so well trained to push in their war games.

The world is hurting, because we are not respecting the elderly people. They are materially fragile, and they are disempowered. Their wisdom, their spiritual guidance, and their contribution are not allowed to be made, so the transition between our generation and future generations is being ignored. The world is hurting because of social injustices, and because we are not respecting human rights. We are still violating the rights of women, as if we needed to discuss again and again whether men and women are equal. This is really a shame and a tragedy of great proportion. We are destroying indigenous cultures, as if they have nothing to contribute to human history. In fact, we are burning the library of humanity before we have the chance to read the books.

Yet, this is not all. What is most tragic today - and why the world is hurting - is that we believe that conflict and war are normal states of being. This is not acceptable. We have created millions of innocent victims and we have destroyed the inner fiber of society and devastated the principal social unit of our lives that is the family. The world is hurting because we are destroying the environment, which is so fundamental not only for our material existence but for our spiritual existence as well. The world is being crushed today by a value system that is individualistic and is bounded by economics and finance. These values dominate

our lives and the present course of globalization. But people should know that while some economies are globalizing, their respective societies are not necessarily globalizing.

Spiritually, we are hurting, because we see so much discrimination in the world, because we are taught that there are lives of different values. Specifically, the life of the rich is worth much more than the life of the poor. Spiritually, we are not respecting the most sacred aspect of our lives and we see how one religion persecutes another religion. We are hurting spiritually, because we insist that our way of life today somehow requires that we sacrifice someone for the betterment of someone else, as if we need to leave some people behind to move other people forward. We are unhappy, and this is not a matter of just being materially developed or underdeveloped. Material wealth is not a guarantee to healing the world. There will be no material wealth that will be capable to buy peace, love, compassion, happiness, joy, or security.

In the past we have tried to cure the world using just material means. For example, we have spent billions and billions of dollars on poverty elimination programs, and we have tried to help in many

ways, but actually the success is not that great. And many of us feel that we are losing key ground. Human welfare is not just a matter of material means. It is the Lack of political power and human will. Are you prepared to heal the world?

XIII. Economic Diseases And Radical Detoxification

Global warming could also be considered the fever that comes from a number of economic diseases. In many ways, all forms of pollution and global warming are also powerful forms of toxicity. They are toxic and have become a major source of human diseases of the body as well of the mind. To address the major sources of economic diseases like global, humanity needs to engage in different processes of human transformation. The changes will not necessarily be easy for some people. A few examples are outlined below:

Changing Our Approach to Health. Today, most societies follow a health approach that could be labeled as a human adaptability model rather than a human health model. In many instances, medicine is not addressing the ultimate causes and conditions of diseases, particularly of those diseases that result from the deterioration or contamination of our environment. Instead, medicine generally addresses the symptoms, rather than changing the quality of the environment contributing to many diseases. This has led to a pharmaceutical industry, which produces medicines that maintain a state of toxic equilibrium rather than

produce the conditions for healing. And, technological change is biased in favor of the development of external palliatives instead of solving the causes of diseases that plague humanity.

Diminishing The Negative Impacts. Many times those making decisions do not foresee the possible negative impacts into our material or spiritual transformation. As stated at the very beginning of this book, most people do not understand how the destruction of the natural environment affects our spiritual growth. We are less sensitive to this form of interdependence. Our spiritual development is now compromised and can be mutilated by the destruction of our natural external environment.

Avoiding Sensorial Deterioration. We are in an advanced state of sensorial degeneration. As we maintain ourselves at higher levels of toxicity, we numb our senses (vision, audition) and consequently seeing more destruction, for example, does not disturb us. This process clearly begins by the shutting down of our sensorial system. It is our senses that play the role of connectors with our inner self, influencing our perceptions of the external world. These perceptions also affect our ability to tap into our inner wisdom and we must avoid the existing process of degeneration. To live a healthy life in the material world, it is

not only important to see and have a healthy physical optical system, but we need also powerful wisdom in our vision. The same applies to other sensorial capacities and organs.

How do we induce or actually realize the needed changes? Maybe a few possible steps may help in the reflection over economic diseases and toxicity.

1.- Focus on Our Human Collective (Mahayana). To conceive material and spiritual growth not for our individual benefit alone but for the benefit of all human beings, living beings, and sentient beings. Our transformation must be embedded in the transformation of everyone else. This is not just an issue of equity or justice, but also an issue of balancing the already imbalanced process of human transformation. We are failing at the level of the collective. The value system is generally individualistic, not universal and in favor of exclusion. It is competitive and not cooperative.

2.- Understand The Ultimate Causes and Conditions. To understand that the ultimate cause of economics and business diseases -like those resulting from global warming-- is the low level of human consciousness. For example, money is human

consciousness expressed in a material way. Money could never provide the functions of exchange or unit of account if there were no trust and awareness for that to happen. In the same vein, the ultimate cause of matter is non-matter. Thus, we need to bring consciousness into the process of material transformation. To get rid of many negative aspects of our lives we have to eliminate their causes and conditions. Otherwise, there will be more of the same.

3.- Create An Appropriate Enabling Environment. To create an enabling environment for change within both the outer and inner environments. Material development is important and, therefore, our material environment outside us is very central to a sustainable society. Equally important is our inner environment so that spiritual growth can also take place. As we reach higher and higher levels of human self-realization we will experience that there is no difference really between the outer and inner environments, both of them forming one holistic reality.

4.- Exalt The Importance of Morals And Ethics. To know with more precision whether we are moving towards the “right” direction and whether the process of human transformation has to be changed and in what direction. In this respect, no human

activity -including economics and business-- can exist within a moral and ethical vacuum. In most cases, the morals and ethics of human activities are revealed through the value system that supports it. We must develop a new form of eco-stewardship. It is a stewardship based on love and compassion.

5.- Bring The Non Material And The Sacred. To realize that human change must not only be dominated by material considerations, as we have to embrace the non -material and the sacred in everything we do. We must bring the spirit into all professions -in the case of economics by making it the science of abundance rather than the science of scarcity. This implies that the core goal of all we do must nurture the values of life. This is the most effective way to major investments in enhancing and expanding our spiritual capital.

6.- Embrace 'Being' and 'Becoming' In Action. To know that life is an experience. Our professions are also an experience. They happen mostly as a result of the human desire for doing, having and knowing. But, these are not enough as we must develop the experiences of being and becoming. Our professions must create the space and time for human self-realization in each their respective processes. Each and every aspect of one' s material

life must contribute to the human self-realization of one or more dimensions of our lives.

7.- Get Engaged In The Search For Total Inclusion. To adopt universal and all inclusive human values. Everything we do must be for the benefit of all. Exclusion creates more problems and violence around the world. Universality is the space that holds everyone without judgment and attitudes. In a world of so many people, it is essential to live in the realm of the universal and to make peace with the environment.

8.- Become Fully Aware of The Welfare Of All Beings. To know that we are one collective reality and that we are all one. The more we feel alone, independent, and isolated from the rest, the more negative the outcomes we will create. Higher realms of human progress and transformation are, by definition, collective. Thus, we must become fully aware of the impacts we have on others and the impacts others have upon ourselves and act with this awareness. A community of love, compassion, reciprocity and generosity are preconditions for human renewal.

XIV. Healing The World

By healing the world of its diseases and malciises, this fever of global warming will significantly diminish. Thus, we need to heal this hurting world. Today, everyone can contribute to the healing of our hurting world, although important conditions must allow it to happen. One of those is to truly understand and practice the golden rule governing this era. Every era has its challenges. In the past, one of the challenges was to reconcile science with religion. As we know now, many people were killed because those two aspects of our lives were not reconciled. Some died, for example, because they believed the Earth was round. The basic golden rule of that era, which still permeates this era, is very simple and powerful: As I know, so act.

Knowledge was and still is the central stage of our lives. It is the central stage of public policy-making—as its authorizing rule—as it is a powerful rule in our individual and collective lives. This is why many people are not content with just having a high school diploma. They aspire to a Graduate or even a Ph.D. degree, as if a given degree gets them somewhere. However, in practice, we do see how the marketplace honors this golden rule by allocating

more money (salary) to those who have a higher degree than to those who have a lesser degree.

Today, the challenge facing the world is different, and this shift in awareness is to suggest neither that science and religion have been necessarily reconciled nor that knowledge is not important. The greatest challenge we face now is the reconciliation between our material life and our non-material life. We have also equated that challenge to the need for reconciliation between economics and spirituality. This reconciliation is demanding a different golden rule: As I self-realize, or as I experience, so I act. Thus, this rule brings to the fore the centrality of experiencing and self-realizing the states of our human reality, the process of human self-realization, and the process of human transformation.

To heal the hurting world will require that we go beyond matter and beyond the material expression of our human existence. No level of material wealth will resolve the pains of the soul. These pains are deeply rooted in us, both as humans and as beings. One would need to be self-realized person. This is why policy makers' legitimacy is on their capacity to become the poor, homeless, disadvantaged. And, public policies must be an outgrowth of this process of being and becoming. Otherwise public policy is

just empty promises and shallow decision-making processes.

A major source of optimism is the fact that the ultimate solution to the above-mentioned problems lies within us. We are the architects of our own destiny. The solution does not depend on something else or someone else. The solution depends on each and every one of us, here and now, individually and collectively.

To heal the world we must heal ourselves too. Only recently we have understood the phrase “life is a serious business” . In many ways we must work towards the re-establishment of these spiritual laws. But, this is not a trivial proposition. What we have found however is that you do not have to work on all the laws at the same time. There is a very important aspect of the spiritual paradigm, that enables us to self realize one law or spiritual value and then we will self-realize all of them at the same time. For example, can love exist without compassion? Can compassion exist without justice?

The answer is a definite No.

To gain the full experience of the suggestions made above, we

would recommend that you focus also on how compromised and mutilated life has become by the destruction of our natural external environment. To make peace with the environment a number of steps are to be taken in the near future.

One is to recognize the need to raise human awareness to place of realizing that our individual and collective body, mind and spirit depends on the kind of environment we live in: the air we breathe as a source of life energy, the earth to grow our food, and the water to drink; all are essential sources from which we take our energies. Furthermore, it is also important to recognize that our natural and human systems are one, and that separating them in the name of economic and other forms of development and progress, is the principal cause of much suffering and instability in the world. Human interdependence and linking the roots of human wellness to the laws of nature is imperative.

Two is to understand that protecting, preserving and living in harmony with nature and our surrounding environment will save the future of our communities, our health, own energy and the integrity of our environment.

Three is to create the needed conditions for a holistic debate on

environmental and human betterment and alternative ways to live well together on this Planet, by focusing on the role that nature and its laws play in human transformation and the more subtle and sacred dimensions of human existence going beyond material welfare. This will also mean to experience the interdependence and interconnectedness between our outer and inner environments and of making peace with the environment for inner and outer harmony.

Four is to remember that “everyone has the right to a clean and green environment” and “adequate health facilities will be accessible to all under a cleaner and greener environment”. Therefore we must all make an investment in taking care of our sacred mountains, oceans, rivers, and lakes, our plants, trees and all the beings, which depend on them for their lives. Pure beautiful environments are desirable to many and attract visitors whose energy, health and peace are often restored in these areas. Health, environment and world peace shall therefore become accessible to all beings throughout their life.

Five is to convince policy makers and people in general that health, environment and world peace are fundamental pillars of human rights, democracy and sustainable development and

that we need to ensure co-ordination and co-operation across and between the various sectors including science, economy, media, sustainable development, human rights, education and spirituality.

Six is to believe that the solution to problems related to health, inner and outer environments, physical, mental and spiritual life will be conditioned by a shared vision of the future society and the role assigned to education, in general, and to media education, science education, economic education and spiritual education in particular.

Seven is to be aware that it is the duty of all the world citizenry to ensure that the values and ideals of a culture of peace prevail and that all communities should be mobilized.

Eight is to consider the necessity of enhancing the quality of health and environmental education requires the full involvement of governments, and all stakeholders (e.g., students, families, teachers, business and industry, public and private sectors, legislatures, media, community, professional associations) and to take greater responsibility and accountability in the use of public/private, national/international resources.

Nine is to emphasize that educational systems should aim to educate highly qualified and responsible citizens with a worldview of love and compassion so that they can reach their highest potential as global citizens.

All of the above brings some important forms of action and human behavior if we are to attain peace with our environment. In particular, it is important to help others to understand, interpret, preserve, enhance, promote and disseminate national and regional, international and indigenous cultures and the world's spiritual traditions, in a context of cultural and spiritual pluralism and diversity. And to contribute to the development and improvement of education at all levels, including through the training of teachers in the areas of peace, science, economics, environment health, values, ethics, happiness, and human improvement.

Let us make peace with our inner and outer environment as a form of empowerment and human transformation.

XV. Live Earth, Live Consciousness

The Earth is a living entity. Every aspect of it is alive manifesting material aspects of higher consciousness. These have been understood and holistically integrated in many of the indigenous peoples' cultures and values. This is why it is difficult to ignore those Maya Priests from El Salvador and Guatemala who teach and share unique instruments to enable someone to speak to the trees. As one would expect, it would be odd for a western trained mind to even entertain the possibility of speaking to trees. The western mind often judges this as not possible or, it thinks about this dialogue as something negative, and often concludes rapidly that this a scam. Whether this is true or not, useful or not, will depend in the end on one's personal or collective experience.

Tapping into the infinite wisdom of nature is a privilege and a powerful spiritual experience.

It is not less important to recognize the relationship that some humans have developed with animals of all sorts. The forms, the procedures, and the actions behind those relationships are different and not always well understood. Recently, we observe

the use of horses and other animals to cure children from depression. In our own observations we have seen that it is a two-way street!

Also, many indigenous nations relate in profound ways to the divine aspects of the Earth (Mother Earth), or to other planets, the sun, moon, pole star, plants, and animals. All is done in ways that capture deep and subtle states of our own existence. One of these traditional ways is by recognizing many of the important energy centres of the Earth and most particularly what human beings have recognized as sacred sites. These are often identified in relation to a non-material manifestation, a feeling, or an inner experience with or through nature, or via the connectedness with any other form of living reality. Most sacred books (e.g., Bible, Vedas, Guru Mantra, Koran, Torah) share plenty of examples of how nature and living beings are involved even in so-called miracles, teachings, signaling a path, and much more. The essences of spiritual dialogues are often presented in conjunction with natural phenomenon, a dimension of natural law, or simply within a given natural environment. Thus, we would like to assert explicitly that the Earth is not a dead or on inert entity. For us, and based on our own spiritual experience, the Earth is a lifecore, expressed materially and spiritually through

a huge number of living beings.

In many ways. Earth is a special form of high consciousness (you may call it Divine or God Consciousness) expressed with an unbounded and an unlimited intelligence, all-manifesting in infinite diversity, wisdom and spiritual realities. Ultimately, we are the Earth, and the Earth is us. This is one of the true meanings of the spiritual phrase in the Bible: “from dust to dust” . The Earth is not something separate from us, even if we experience such a state and form of relationship that way. This experience of separateness is no more and no less than a sharp error of the intellect. It is the mirror image of our relatively low level of consciousness and coherence that do not enable us to truly embrace wholeness and unity. It is our experience that we are inseparable from all living beings and all living beings are inseparable from us.

The view that we humans are superior to nature is just a wrong cultural perspective, very much rooted in distorted interpretations of religious, cultural, and spiritual values. This sense of superiority reflects our limited ability to communicate with our own natural elements. This view of humans as superior and other living beings as inferior is the mirror image of our own ignorance and inability

to tap on an infinite source of high levels of consciousness and coherence. If we were truly superior to Nature we would have found ways to live independently of Nature. In that case our intelligence could then “by-pass” Nature. But this is not possible, and we know such a reality on a daily basis as we deplete the forest and existing biodiversity, and as we destroy our natural environment. Human life is completely interdependent -in all ways—with other living beings and nature.

The idea of differentiated intelligence -more or superior intelligence versus less and inferior intelligence—is a creation of the human intellect and ego. In many ways our intellect and ego have separated us, and fragmented us, from what is an integral part of our selves. As stated above, there are no boundaries between external water and the water in our human bodies. The same applies to space, air, earth and fire; the elements of life. If we would be superior to nature, we should not feed and nurture ourselves from nature. We would be feeding ourselves with lower levels of intelligence and vibrations and in the end we would be converted and brought back to those levels. We would be feeding our cells with lower levels of intelligence, coherence and consciousness.

Of course, this is not the case. Nature has become our source of life, as we cannot live without the sun. It has become a source of energy, as we cannot live without those intakes. It has become the source of growth as we need each and every natural element to become one with ourselves and one with Nature. Today, the use of plants, aromas, rocks, mud, rain water, roots, resins, animal created liquids (some frogs create a liquid that are being used as pain killers, which are more effective than morphine), and so many other natural elements of life, have proven essential in the treatment of diseases and in expanding the most subtle inner intelligence of human cells. In addition , experience shows that our presence on the planet influences greatly the patterns of natural growth and development, as these are traced back to our own ways of being and behaving.

Ancient techniques and approaches to household life, such as Feng Shui, have also contributed significantly to a better understanding of how nature and human interaction and transformation may help to attain their corresponding best. At a more crucial level, it is essential to embrace the view that the genetic code of nature is a substantive component of human life as it is the genetic code of humans a fundamental component of natural life. Our inner gardens are totally connected to the

outer gardens. And, we know that when we enter inside the boundaries of pristine areas our body, mind and soul feel in sink with every aspect of that environment. To postulate that our DNA is something that it is to be understood in isolation from the DNA of other living beings is a construction that has no foundations. Our identity is as much individual as it is collective. Our identity must be understood here as something multidimensional: physical, environmental, emotional, cultural, social, and spiritual.

Modern forms of education have mutilated our connection with the genetic codes of nature. Today, it seems to be foreign to the nature of people to connect with trees, animals, water or wind, except in some corners of the world (e.g., where indigenous peoples live). As global warming takes place, it is essential to raise awareness of the abovementioned dimensions of nature itself. Global warming should not be conceived as separate from us, and our inner souls, or be defined simplistically as just the result of CO₂ emissions. While we may eventually bring down those emissions through a variety of existing programs, whether these programs will result in the effective curving down of global warming is something to ponder.

All is life. All is alive. We are part of all and all is part of us. Global

warming mutates this wholeness and we must address it both inside and outside ourselves.

XVI. Individual and Collective Destiny

Global warming is the result of a very limited way of understanding the alternative forms of human collective existence. We still live as if we could survive being separate individual entities. Because of that, we realize that our individual actions per-se do not lead necessarily to a better collective future. Indeed, in most situations the total (collective benefits) is less than the summation of its individual parts (individual benefits). It is clear that we, as a human race, have major difficulties in understanding our unique form of collective existence. The term unique is used here to denote the fact that we are in a well defined and unique collective' that has its nature, scope, character, personality, and lots more, of its own.

Every human being and every living being comes to earth with a specific mission. Our lives are not the result of some form of random parachuting to do something unknown or to become part of the realm within an unorganized order. Our existence and our mission are part of a macro order' in which nature and humans are undistinguishable, interdependent, and interconnected. Unfortunately, a great deal of attention is paid to us as individuals

and little is said and taught about us as a collective. This is why, for example, it is very difficult to agree on treaties, protocols and many instruments of international law for the collective. Individual countries still believe that our collective existence can be controlled by a few, or even, one country, and that leadership from the top will do for the rest of the world. Also, this is why most international organizations are failing to adequately manage the collective.

They are still dominated by the interest of individual countries and many of our collective goods and elements of our collective existence are disregarded or mismanaged. In our view, even the top international organizations are not embodying the collective nature of living existence on Earth. At best, these are world organizations attempting to generate consensus on some issues that, eventually may nurture the collective.

However, and despite the situation we are living today, we should know that individual existence is not separate from collective existence. They are two sides of the same coin. While there is a foundation for your own individual mission, your own self, this mission is always defined in terms of all human beings, all living beings, and nature. This suggests that your material transformation

and spiritual transformation have both an individual and a collective component. Thus, I cannot really accelerate or improve my individual process of material or spiritual transformation without at the same time, addressing the challenges of the collective. In other words, individual and collective transformations are in the same plane of existence. This is why it is not possible to think about “salvation” (a Christian concept) if one is only on the side of individual salvation. Individual transformation takes place within collective transformation. This is why the Commandments are always related to “the other” .

Furthermore, it is not possible to think about “enlightenment” (a Buddhist concept) without providing the foundation for the enlightenment of everyone. There are many Buddhist prayers that clearly exalt the relationship that exists between individual and collective enlightenment. Spirituality does not make any sense if it is only for the benefit of the individual. This is why spirituality is understood here as the instruments, behaviour, actions, interventions that help us to remember our individual and collective missions on Earth. The nature of spirituality is collective because our mission on this Earth is in itself collective. One may also bring this conversation to a very pragmatic level. We are over 6.2 billion people and in 2008 we will experience

for the first time that there are more people living in cities than in rural areas. The levels of interconnectedness are increasing as the transport and communication revolutions reach every corner of the world. Technologies like the Internet present an example of this interconnectivity. From an environmental perspective, pollution of water and air in one place of the planet is affecting the whole planet. Destruction of our biodiversity is also another example of collective existence. Cutting the forests and eliminating wildlife affects us all in many ways.

So, we are now in the era of collective existence, and global warming is just one example of an issue that must be addressed as a collective and not just the summation of individual nations. Global warming represents a fundamental manifestation of the negative effects resulting from collective mismanagement. It is our inability to identify ourselves with our collective mission. It is a failure of our inner memory to recognize that part of the mission that is collective- The time has come to reflect upon our collective existence, bring this identity back in all we do, and act collectively and, thus, expand our collective consciousness and coherence. Out of such a process we will eliminate global warming.

XVII. Inner Warming

External global warming is the mirror image of our inner warming as well. How does this happen? The public knows more or less how the external global warming happens as result of economic growth, industrialization and material progress in general. However, as presented in the introductory chapters, the relationship between our spiritual transformation and nature happens in both directions: the state of nature affects our spiritual transformation and the state of our spirit affects the transformation of nature. This leads us to postulate that global warming is a direct correlate of some inner state of warming as well. As individuals, we can exercise a great deal of influence on the quality and dynamics of the warming external environment. This will be called here inner warming. And, by implication, we are saying that inner warming is a major influence and cause of external warming.

Inner warming can be felt physically when for example a person has fever. This fever may be the result of a large number of conditions, which, in the end, causes the body temperature to go up. But inner warming is not just the result of heat and

temperature changes. Inner warming is also the result of anger, negativity and anxiety, and most important of all, the result of stress and emotions of all sorts. All of them are being stimulated by internal or external causes and conditions.

Anger is a major source of inner warming, reflected in the external warming as well. Recently, I was in a war zone in the Middle East where the large majority of people are boiling inside out of anger in relation to one another. You can feel how affected they are with this anger and how such anger expresses in every thing they do to each other. Young soldiers are forced to be in positions of power and exercise that power in negative ways. All of that contributes to more anger and more inner warming. Anger may be the result of so many issues at the personal, cultural, family and social levels. It is no point listing here all possible sources of anger.

Negativity is invading our lives. It seems News that really matters is negative and little is said about the positive aspects of our lives. Negativity overwhelms us in so many ways, and results in diseases of the body, mind and soul. Our emotions tighten withk negative reactions and human behaviour is ever more violent, erratic, and unpredictable.

Negative thoughts, negative intentions, negative perceptions, etc., are part and parcel of our human nature. Pessimism also helps to trigger negativity as a result of lower material and spiritual welfare, lack of vision and strategic road map, and clear lack of hope for a better future. Negativity is a major source of inner warming. It is as if we have little patience and capacity to understand other human beings and living beings. Diseases of the heart and soul abound; all being a demonstration of how heat increases in our inner selves.

Anxiety is the major disease of this century. It expresses itself in so many ways, from early age to the day we die. This anxiety comes from the loss in our ability to become ourselves in a free and encompassing manner. We see too many constraints in our lives. We do not see or believe that we may become who we want to be.

For many people the sky is not the limit any longer, as they are being oppressed by the lack of opportunity, empowerment and security. As there is no clear or certain future, our emotional bodies are shattered daily and our inner warming increases as a result. Big cities also create anxiety as many people live in unacceptable conditions, suffer from acute poverty, and are

cornered physically where the services are worse. Stress is the most popular illness of modern times. Even little children are suffering from stress and are affected by medical treatments that tend to suppress their true emotions. Stress causes or accelerates the processes of gestation of diseases, and many of them can be traced to stress. Examples are: heart disease, chronic fatigue, depression, sleep problems, high blood pressure, poor immune function, headaches, and alcoholism. Stress is often accompanied or caused by worries that people have in relation to their present and future welfare. It not only affects the body and mind of a person but it also accumulates socially and worldwide.

As human interactions get more complex and intense, it is evident that stress is on the rise everywhere, and global warming in the world is a mirror image of it. All the above is also expressed socially, institutionally, politically, religiously, and the like. Just look around how they manifest into fundamentalism, incentives and justification to go to war, establish lines of discrimination and ethnicity everywhere, and more. In the longer term, global warming may disappear as we eliminate our inner warming. Material solutions for one must be accompanied by spiritual solutions for the other.

XVIII. The Inner Awakening

An essential solution to global warming is to create a massive inner awakening. This is the awakening of a new consciousness and highest level of coherence and awareness. Attached to the external world and wired to having and doing, most people are literally sleeping and there is no interest in awakening. Global warming is of no concern to them. We are enchanted with the dreams created by modern technology, and many people are in deep sleep consuming as much as they can. Others are slept within the house of suffering and are acutely attached to a number of basic needs. Even those who believe they are awake, they are in the end indifferent and passive. They see the theatre of life being played somewhere else while they remain in their seats waiting to here and see the end of the drama.

Awakening has several dimensions. One is the rising of some inner force that has been constantly there to guide us towards the fulfilment of our individual and collective mission. The mission we are all to attain together, and in an interdependent way . The true awakening becomes real and meaningful when it is directly embedded in our missions.

Will you wake up soon?

We have some sense of optimism that this massive awakening will take place soon, or that it is already taking place in many parts of the world. It is possible to witness the fact that there are major forces creating better conditions for your inner awakening. There is already a major spiritual awakening taking place. The number of spiritual groups, the millions of spiritual practices being adopted everywhere, and the importance that spirituality is getting in public policy making, are all signs of this macro awakening. True awakening also manifest within each individual with singular characteristics and unique in its horizon. It must be an inner awakening that is unique to you. Thus, you must become an active spiritual being now, right now. Part of your awakening may be enhanced, for example, with prayer, contemplation, meditation and yoga. it may also awaken through better nutritional habits, diminished stress, transparent behaviour, and the like. It is not the purpose of this book to list all possible forms of meditation, contemplation, prayer and yoga. These are now available everywhere and in every religion and spiritual groupings. These practices must be part of a culture of spiritual transformation where everything you do is linked to your spirituality and to the path towards the total fulfilment of

your mission.

You may also awaken your body Your body is your vehicle. This is a very effective and indispensable vehicle towards the realization of each and every aspect of your mission. Otherwise you would not be in the form of a human body. Your gender, ethnic background, colour, etc, are a very special assets needed for your awakening. Thus, if you are black, a woman, and native of Africa, these are extremely important elements for the effectiveness in accomplishing your mission, at least in this lifetime. Our country of origin, family members, and many dimensions of our life are intricately related to your awakening.

Global warming is affecting our ability to awaken. This is not difficult to experience if you have the sensitivity to see and experience your inner warming and what it is doing to you. Wake up now Those who do not wake up will suffer a great deal via confusion, desperation, uneasiness, disorientation, unhappiness, suffering, etc. Wake up to your inner warming. Wake up to the external global warming and become actively engaged in eliminating it. Connect yourself to global warming. The inner temperature is getting your senses numbed and therefore you are less sensitive to the inner shifts that are taking place in the

world. Make your awakening your duty and your commitment. Use any means in harmony within Universal Laws to wake up now. The first possible solution to inner and outer warming is to awaken people from within. It is essential to involve all people, from all walks of life, into a process of inner awakening. The most powerful instrument of awakening is silent meditation. The power of silence is essential to listen to the Being from within. Silence is essential to heal and grow spiritually. Silence is not equivalent of being quiet. It is going beyond quietness and it is tapping the wealth of silence, the richness of the inner self. This is the state of emptiness, where we are at the “source” of everyone and everything. Silent meditation should be practiced everywhere and by everyone. It will calm and eliminate gradually your inner warming and thus will powerfully and sustainably address global warming. Silent meditation is a normal state of our existence. We have been detached from silence and, therefore, we need to make an extra effort to be silence. We are so connected to television, radio, computers, ipods, etc, that it seems odd to be in silence. The baby in the womb of its Mother spends more than nine months in silent meditation becoming aware and actively participating in its own awakening of its human body. It is natural and normal to tap into our silence.

XIX. Embracing Feminine Energy

Global warming is the mirror image of a major imbalance between feminine and masculine energy, biased towards masculine energy. Our inner warming experiences that imbalance too. Thus, global and inner warming has a strong component of masculine energy and, therefore, curbing down warming inside and outside us requires rebalancing masculine and feminine energy in favour of the feminine. Wisdom is rooted in our different forms of energy. Wisdom surfaces through those energies, and one of the most powerful is the “feminine energy” Feminine energy is in all that exists, materially and spiritually. It is not exclusively embodied in women or female existence. The same applies to masculine energy that is in everything that exists on those two realms. Thus, every human being and living being may develop and manage the existing feminine energy.

We naturally think of our planet as having a predominantly female energy, and we generally refer to it as Mother Earth. In one way we consider ourselves to be her children because the planet itself gives, grows and nurtures life. In our society both men and women are involved with taking care of the planet and

environment. But to actually heal the environment the female energy is more suitable and therefore more powerful than the male energy. If we carefully check on the energy level and look at the qualities of the male and female energies, we will see that women naturally have more feeling, are more sensitive, and have a greater sense of responsibility towards the environment and the nurturing of life than men.

Most of the wars and weapons that have led to mass destruction in our history have been created by men. Through the ages, we have collectively held the wrong view that, if necessary, we should take care of our society, homes, family and environment by force. Until now male energy has also been used to make war on the natural environment. It is now time for us to use the female energy to make peace with our environment. Women's energy works mainly through feelings and sensations and so, they have a particularly special sensitivity for life and the natural environment. They also possess a very special intuitive wisdom quality. Women are the holders of many traditions, as they are responsible for the day to day family stability and the passing on of many cultural aspects and customs to the next generation. You can see in many ancient societies which are in transition, such as the Tibetan community in exile that women will continue

to follow the traditions and customs for a longer time than men. In these times women are definitely more attuned and sensitive to spiritual energies and traditional wisdom than men.

All of us began life and developed for nine months inside the womb of our mother. Immediately after birth, we were completely helpless, we could only cry, sleep and drink milk, but our mother, through her great love for us, took very good care of us from that time until now. If we were born in a traditional society, our mother also arranged many auspicious healing ceremonies, divinations and astrological charts to be made for us. On the absolute level, this female energy can be felt as “space quality” and as the carrier of the wisdom of emptiness and dependent arising. As we stated earlier, it is from the space of emptiness that all the phenomena of the outer and inner worlds arise, and this we sense when we call our planet Mother Earth.

We are all born from the space of our mother’s womb. the “space quality” gives them the possibility to nurture life and give birth. The connection between these energies and functions gives the woman a stronger natural feeling to take care of the environment. The womb is a very small place when we enter it, about the size of a finger, yet this small space is able to hold all the essence of

our human energy. Conception is the true moment of birth as a human being, although we have to wait for nine months before our body is sufficiently developed to leave our mother's womb and function by itself in the outside environment. The space held within this union and the fundamental consciousness is bigger than all of the space in the universe. In this space all of our karmic records are stored, the imprints of all the good and bad thoughts, words and actions that we have done during all of our lives.

We need to utilize both the male and female energies on our path to liberation and to address environmental phenomena. Over the past years, the balance between the male and female energies has been lost as we have emphasized the male energy more and more. This has brought us many benefits in terms of technological progress, but now we are beginning to realize that this excessive male energy has been too expensive as we measure the associated aggression, competitiveness, and desire to conquer the environment and other cultures. We have had many wars and experienced many deaths, and now the whole environment and elements are polluted, sick, weak and dying. To overcome this we have to collectively recognize and learn that the female energy is very precious and sacred, and

that women's intuitive wisdom is worth listening to.

Both men and women have suppressed their female energy, and so now, both need to get in touch with the positive side of their female energy to address global and inner warming. We feel deeply that we are unable to feel space. We see all the things around us and we feel crowded, we feel that we would like to live alone or stay in a quiet place. This means that we actually feel the need to use relative space energy to make peace. After we have spent some time alone we recover our peace and then we feel that we can return to our normal busy lives. Absolute space is the best chance we have to overcome our deep problems. Our body and mind consist of five energies which are: body, speech, mind, quality and action.

We should clearly understand that it is very important for us to develop the female energy of peace-space, weather-space, or action-space in our daily lives. On the gross level we can see the elements around us in the form of mountains, sea, air, space, fire and so on. These five elements pervade all phenomena, but their relative percentages vary. For example, we can say that a mountain is made up of earth because it has a high percentage of the earth element, but within the mountain there are also

present smaller percentages of the space, fire, wind and water elements.

In global warming we may perceive lots of the fire element at stake, but it is important to know that all the other elements are also involved. Earth in the form of particles, and wind and space as embodied in the phenomena and also water! This has major implications for the battle against global and inner warming. Specifically, it suggests that global warming and inner warming will be effectively addressed only as a result of a very comprehensive natural resource management strategy, and not only out of focusing on just the traditional forms of air pollution.

XX. Redeploying Our Inner Technologies

Will outer-created technology resolve the issues we face with global warming? Is technology the saving hand that will come to our rescue? Shall we wait and not act until technology finds the solution for global warming?

We depend so much on the speed and quality of technological change. But technology and technological change are embodied within us. In essence technology is our own individual and collective consciousness and coherence translated into different forms of matter. It is our level of consciousness that defines the pace and quality of change. Intelligence, wisdom, and inventiveness are representations of collective consciousness. However, these representations will be able to bring solutions to world problems only if the level of consciousness is really commensurate with the desired form of change. For the moment, present trends show an asymmetry between the rather low level of consciousness (particularly collective consciousness) we experience and the complex challenges facing humanity today.

It looks like only a few people are the source of most

technological change. We, the rest of the world, wait for the next solution to our problems to come about, from somewhere. But, as a matter of fact, we are all equipped to resolve all problems and it is in this sense that we have to “unleash” our inner technologies. The future of the world depends on our ability to tap into our inner technologies. In Hinduism and other traditions a distinction is made between inner and outer technologies, although science and spiritual transformation are always part of one inseparable whole. In the Western world science and the self are separate, as if this state of reality were never possible. The subject is separated from the object. This is only one form of science in our view. This is outer science.

Outer science brings forms of knowledge that are essentially derivatives of the external world. Another form, of science is that which results from the direct interaction and interface between the subject and the object and within the subject itself. This is inner science. Inner science brings us forms of knowledge that unfold from our inner existence. In my view, these two forms of science and knowledge are inter-related and complementary in nature. Not everything is about understanding the object of knowledge. In many ways, and given the state of humanity today, the challenge is also to focus on the understanding of the subject

of knowledge.

The outer knowledge brings instruments and tools to know as well as to resolve these outer challenges we have. Not always these outer technologies have the ability and quality to address our inner challenges. We know today that the negative external effects of those technologies far outweigh their apparent benefits. Inner knowledge brings instruments and tools to know as well as to resolve our inner and outer challenges. If the inner is like the outer and the outer is like the inner, then it is via this inner science we will master our real future. The time has come to develop and unfold our inner technologies.

There are many ways of knowing. Reading books is one way. This is very passive and also extremely incomplete way to acquire knowledge. Another form of learning is via our direct experience of reality. In this sense, our sensory capacities and inner powers are essential to acquire true knowledge and to reach what we see as parameters defining our own existence. Silence and the expansion of the mind are also core to frame our own future. Via silence we perceive the true nature of all objects as well as the subject of our existence. It will be through silence that we will be able to get the whole nature of global warming and how

it impacts our lives. It is in the fullness of silence where learning actually takes place.

In addition, and as stated earlier, if we believe in the intelligence and consciousness of our external world, then to chose also inner forms of knowledge may be a very effective way to influence the external environment. And, it is here where the interplay between inner and outer warming are to be understood. Outer science may assist us to use the powers' available in the material/outer world.

However, in the world of our mind and souls that type of knowledge may be less useful. This is why it is important to address forms and methods to accelerate inner knowledge. In the end, true knowledge is knowledge that comes from selfrealization of the Self, the self-realization of who we are. This is why it is so important to see inner warming as the mirror image of outer warming. This is to says to see global warming as an inner and outer phenomenon at the same time.

XXI. Contemplative Techniques

For good reasons contemplative techniques are becoming not only popular but indispensable parts of the professional curricula of many careers. In medicine, for example, many programs are going beyond behavioral sciences and entering into prayer, meditation, contemplation, chanting, rituals, symbols, yoga techniques, concentration, and much more. There are too many to present an exhaustive list here. The active involvement of doctors, nurses, students and patients is expanding at very rapid rates.

Another example is that of business management and MBA programs from the most prestigious universities around the world. Due to the level of stress and the nature of management in the corporate world many managers are learning contemplative techniques of all sorts. Some are doing this as a matter of work environment enhancement while others are doing it as part of a more directed and oriented spiritual life.

One essential understanding is that human identity is essential in the learning and practicing of any profession. Thus, there is

a need to strengthen that human identity as an integral part of professional life. Corporate identity is not enough. This human identity is an important part of the very fabric of the individual character and personality, and a key instrument to live a constructive life both at work and at home. Furthermore, if one defines the main functions of a manager as being mainly “problem solving” and “predicting the future” , then, it is essential that we expand the consciousness and coherence of managers. Attaining a series of contemplative states of the mind and soul are essential in those regards. This is not new in the East but it is finding its way rapidly in the West.

The quality of the subjective experience is essential in any form of management. Without that, managers are frustrated, unfulfilled and erratic. The great difference between the good managers and the best is on the quality of his/her contemplative life put at the disposal of management. Those who do not use those contemplative techniques often resort to drugs and alcohol abuse, as well as to physical abuse with those around them. Many of the results now claimed by those techniques are being greatly corroborated by traditional scientific research. It was not long ago that medical insurance companies would not pay for acupuncture treatment or the learning and practice of yoga and

meditation. The situation has radically shifted today.

In our experience for the last 30 years we have seen how fast these techniques are being learned and put at the disposal of many treatments of the body, mind and soul. These techniques accompanied by traditional and complementary medicine and herbal and natural treatments are all improving peoples welfare a great deal. These contemplative techniques are essential to get rid of inner warming and thus global warming. This is why we have mentioned them here. The contemplative techniques are very effective in getting rid of anger, frustrations, anxiety, stress, panic attacks, and so much more that is at the core of inner warming.

XXII. Inner Like Outer-Outer Like Inner

We live in a world without boundaries. We live in a world of total interdependence.

These are two spiritual laws that are to be completely mainstreamed in all we do for peace, security, empowerment, freedom, love, compassion, and solidarity. In the realm of intelligence and subtle human existence these laws are of fundamental importance. This is why some sages have stated that “the outer is like the inner and the inner is like the outer” . This is not just something mysterious or esoteric. It is of transcendental importance in addressing every aspect of our material and spiritual transformation. In addition, this spiritual law has important and intricate implications as regards how we make decisions and choose instruments to create a better future for humanity.

First, if the outer is like the inner, it is evident that what happens in the outer will greatly affect our spiritual transformation. This is to say that a destruction of the external environment will be the basis for the destruction of our inner environment. That

external environment is like our container and if the container is rotting, so it will happen to the content -he., all living beings. One policy implication is the mandatory nature of addressing, for example, air and water pollution. This is to be done not just as a material phenomenon that embodies a material outcome, but also as a major source of cleaning our inner water and inner air. The contaminated air and water will contaminate the internal ones. Similarly, the existence of external global warming is creating inner warming too. Our CO2 levels are also rising and all the conditions of global warming are penetrating our minds and bodies the some way. Thus, it is very plausible that global warming may be a major cause of nervous system breakdown, depression, and all of that, which relates to inner warming (stomach diseases and some type of cancers). Therefore, all the efforts to combat global warming will have major beneficial effects on people's lives including health and inner welfare.

Second, if the inner is like the outer, this means that whom we are inside is also having great implications for the quality and extent of our outer environment, where most human interaction takes place. In particular, behaviour that is egotistic and full with anger will influence the external natural environment in a different form than a behaviour that is full of love and compassion. The

above also means that my inner pollution, which may come from negativity, bad thoughts, and the like, will change the quality of outer pollution. Our inner tsunamis will manifest somewhere in the outer environment.

Third, it has implications by the way in which we choose instruments to correct distortions or support shifts in one direction or the other. This is to say, it is possible to correct what is happening outside -like global warming --with personal or collective work and inner transformation. As it is presented elsewhere -when we speak about self-healing or making peace with the environment—it is possible that by cleaning our five elements of life we would be able to clean the same elements that are outside. Furthermore, changing our thoughts into positive thoughts, we will have positive results on the outside. One specific example is that of material success. It is often said that optimistic people have more success materially than pessimistic people.

To conclude, the most important message to be conveyed here is that inner development and transformation may be extremely effective in combating global warming. This inner work should not be discounted.

XXIII. Outer (Material) and Inner (Spiritual) Interdependence

Many people see material growth, development and transformation as independent of many other things that belong intimately to our lives. We are witnessing a material evolution, or maybe a material revolution, of great proportions. Just think about the revolution in the field of communications. Billions of contacts are carried out everyday via the Internet. Also, all forms of telephones are around, enabling us to reach so many people who live on the other side of the planet.

This material revolution has been expanded significantly through the process of globalization where money has no frontiers and economic transactions are going in the same direction. Globalization has heightened the importance of our material interdependence. In this respect, it is interesting to see even in village supermarkets fruits and vegetables from every part of the world, be it winter or summer. Products move millions of miles to reach consumers. However, this outer revolution in the material world has not yielded equitable benefits. There are many who have nothing and a few who have a lot. These inequities

are creating serious social and institutional instability and the revolution is now in question. This outer material revolution not only has created million of victims, but is also a major source of environmental destruction, poverty, injustice, and more.

Many people are questioning the powers of the market and of the multinational corporations. The power of the media is also huge and many call it the Third Column in the power structures of the world. In many countries, it is no point to accelerate their rate of material growth as the benefits keeps staying in the hands of a few families. Technological change has been responsible for this material revolution. This is a revolution that comes as a direct outcome of human knowledge. It is the outcome of the “I Know” and, then, “I Do” . In turn, these two states of human reality have translated into what characterizes most of material revolutions: the “I Have” This is ‘the trilogy’ guiding our outer transformation: knowing, doings and having. However, if there is a relationship between the state of nature and the process of human transformation, then, the destruction of nature is greatly influencing the nature, scope, and pace of the “I know” .

Thus, human intelligence, which is the foundation of the “I know”, may be dwindling day after day, with grave consequences in

relationship to what we do and what we have in the end.

But, we know that the problems facing humanity today are not really those related to production, consumption or trade. We know how to produce, consume or exchange. The issues are more related to the existence of our collective reality. And this collective reality should be guided by a value system that goes far beyond economics and finance. That it goes far beyond the values of knowing, doing or having. This is why the problems facing humanity are related more to equality, freedom, solidarity, cooperation, caring, sharing, respect for nature, love, compassion, etc. The fundamental step to resolve present day challenges is to move towards a new phase of transformation. This is the phase of the “I AM” . And, in the ultimate, one is to move any revolution to the “I”.

The principal message here is that there cannot be sustainable material revolution without having at the same time strong, meaningful and high yielding inner and spiritual revolutions. One has to go with the other. The spiritual revolution is the revolution of empowerment, inclusion, universality, collective consensus, meaningful participation, self-identity, horizon, known mission, and more. The material revolution is now going on its own and

dominated by ego, competition, hoarding, power, exclusion, etc.

The material and the spiritual revolutions are interdependent. They must go hand in hand. Thus, the issue is not technological change but the level of consciousness of the person who uses that change. This is why the problem is not nuclear energy. Is the mind of the one who is to use it; it may use it for combating breast cancer or to bomb another country. As we say often in our lectures: The problem is not the wine, but the person who drinks it! It does not matter what level of material having one has, it is essential to enliven deeply one's spiritual transformation. The theory that material needs are first and the rest will follow is a great fallacy of the intellect, in addition to insulting poor people as void of self-identity and inner power. In essence, there is nothing material that has no spirit. The source of matter is non-matter. Thus, to assert that we can continue in this material revolution without addressing the nature and quality of our spiritual revolution is a risky strategy which will end up promoting a world that is materially rich for a few, and spiritually poor.

XXIV: The Quality Of The Environment: Material And Spiritual Transformations

It is important to insist that all forms of interaction take place within the environment. Thus, the quality of the environment has become a major determinant of our material and spiritual transformations. Thus, as global warming exists, and this deteriorates the quality of the environment, we are greatly jeopardizing those processes of transformation. Here we address both separately for presentational purposes only.

The Material. For a long time now, humanity paid attention mainly to our environment and natural resources from the perspective of reproducing “quantity” of output: how much do we have. How much forest can we cut or how much fish can we catch, or how many animals can we hunt, or how much oil or minerals can we get out of a mine. Long ago as hunters and gatherers, human beings had to know how much was available for their survival and the furthering of their welfare.

However, during the last centuries, as population growth expanded rapidly, now reaching over six billion, and as the industrial

revolution deepened, we went from a process of spatial expansion to a rapid process of intensification. The use of lands, forests and other natural resources brought us into a strategy consisting mainly of a maximization of output per-unit of resources available (e.g., land). In this process of intensification we have been over exploiting (cutting) the natural forests, killing the wildlife, using fragile marginal lands, destroying our biodiversity, polluting the air and water, depleting our ozone layer, and the like. Rapidly, we have had to move from a notion of “quantity” of output to one of “quality” of life. The more we intensify at the margin, the more it becomes important to maintain the quality of our whole natural environment.

Today, the material form of evolution that humanity has embarked upon depends more and more on our capacity to maintain the quality rather than the quantity of our environment (if this expression can be used in a general way), though they are, to a large extent, unseparable.

Nevertheless, at this juncture in human history, the amount of physical raw material embodied in one unit of output seems to have diminished a great deal. Now, it is human knowledge that constitutes the principal embodiment in production. Thus,

environmental quality is even more important (see below). However, we are not diminishing the importance of quantity in the management of our environment. In particular, to maintain the quality of human life and of all living beings we still demand to draw on what constitutes a major dependency from fuel oils and other non-renewable resources. Quantity still constitutes a strategically relevant element of natural resources management. Excessive intensification of fragile ecosystems has led to deserts and the creation of wastelands. It is essential not to devalue the importance of proper management of these areas.

A material evolution or revolution that is unsustainable must be stopped and everyone must shift towards new production and resource management systems. We are fully aware that many people are aware of the tangible possibility of an environmental collapse in many parts of the world. The areas where such a collapse may take place are often called "hot spots", where people are, or will be, suffering from famines, and are affected by unstable weather conditions, flooding, land slides, mud slides, and other dangerous natural phenomena. The life and food chain of all living beings depend on the quality of the natural environment. Any material evolution is also intimately related to quality, and this is to be preserved at all costs.

The Spiritual. Spiritual transformation only makes sense in our state of human life on the planet; this is to say, as human body, mind and soul. In this context, spirituality embraces all those principles, instruments and actions that make us remember our mission on Earth and to execute that mission. The mission has to do with the nature of your spiritual transformation in the realm of the spirit. The life experience on this Earth is an important one that is to contribute directly to your spiritual evolution. The mission may be simple or complex. But, most people do not remember their mission and therefore they are unhappy and unfulfilled.

Spirituality happens within the multidimensional space of multiple interactions within our environment. These interactions may be between humans themselves, between humans and living beings and between humans or living beings with nature. All these different forms of interaction are interconnected to our spirituality, be it individual or collective spirituality. That is why it is so important to preserve and enhance our human and natural environments. These are the containers of our interactions and, thus, determinants of our spiritual evolution.

In this regard, there is a fundamental law that it is important to consider here: “there is a direct correlation between the complexity of your mission and the quality of the environment” . Another way to express it is that “the more complex your mission is on Earth, the more fundamental it is to be part of a high-quality natural and human environment” . The corollary of such a law is fundamental to be understood. The destruction of the environment is limiting our capacity to evolve spiritually. Thus, the destruction of the natural environment is not only an issue of material welfare but of spiritual welfare as well. In addition, the quality of the environment is essential in decisions regarding reincarnation on this planet. This is so because reincarnations are always linked to decisions regarding space and time and, thus, they are also linked to the quality of the environment. All of this, in turn, becomes of keen interest to those souls who are in line to reincarnate as a major step towards being able to fulfil their spiritual evolution.

Global warming and ozone layer depletion are major environmental problems that are changing every aspect of human life on the face of the Earth. Both at the material and spiritual levels, not addressing global and inner warming it will greatly limit our human evolution.

XXV. The Human And Social Matrix

Global warming is about the decision -making by, and external behaviour of, key actors. These are the actors who are engaged in public policy as well as in investing in technological change, production and so many other activities that affect the natural environment and, ultimately, the level of global warming. The same actors affect the social and human environment within their areas of influence and, thus, affect the state of human welfare of millions of people. Indeed, they affect their level of inner warming in many ways (e.g., unemployment, poverty, marginalization, exclusion).

In the aggregate we see that the accumulated effect of those actors is global warming as well as environmental deterioration. In this regard, if the behaviour of these actors does not change -both inner and outer change—then our future is not very desirable. There is a complex and diverse matrix of actors. It is not just one or two.

One can see the influence of those actors as being individual and collective. There are also free agents in that they act very

independently of the rest (like the average consumer), and who are having -directly or indirectly -- almost-unlimited access to our environment, and there are those actors that are bound by different forms of organizations (e.g., governments employees). Tone could also identify actors who are elected by “others” (e.g., presidents, representatives in parliament) and actors that are often self-empowered (e.g., most entrepreneurs). And, there is much more. All of them have a view and experience with global warming and depending on the existing incentive structure, they will act accordingly. Within their own sphere of influence, each of them has an interest to defend and promote (e.g., buy more cars, locate an industry somewhere, and promote the consumption of fuels). Each of them uses instruments (e.g., government people use regulations, industries use technologies, distributors use prices) and alternative forms of government (e.g., democracy, dictatorship) or governance (e.g., representative, centralized). In sum, in addressing the issues of global warming we are confronted with a complex matrix of actors and institutional arrangements.

As one sets a strategic path to address global warming, the challenge becomes identified with the need to find the most appropriate forms of individual as well as collective action to

benefit the largest number of people who form part of that collective. Not an easy task. For example, how would, then, self-interest be managed and checked -the interest of one individual or of one country in relation to the rest of the world? This is not a forced situation. On the contrary it seems to be a rather common scenario around the debates on global warming. We have seen that in the debates within the Kyoto Protocol self-interest tends to dominate most decisions.

Among the many collective organizations, it is important to note those that are on the international arena. They have world-based mandates and, in principle, they should be extremely effective in addressing a globe! problem like global warming. However, they are often far from being collective in their nature, policies and behaviours. It is well known that individual country interests dominate the debate and thus, the behaviour of such organizations simply reflect the power of those countries, particularly the richest ones. When pollution levels are highly correlated with country wealth, then the situation becomes very difficult to manage from a collective point of view. One is to rely on the wisdom and enlightenment of those leaders in key positions of power and hope for the better. If the record of the past were any indication of organizational behaviour of the future,

we would expect major chaos to be the norm of the future. This will be a chaos in which the issues of global warming will never be resolved. The latest meetings to address global warming are perfect examples. The same is happening in other areas critically linked to the reduction of pollution levels around the world.

For international organizations to become global, their staff must become global citizens, and their bylaws and policies should embody the collective interest. That is not very easy to do as internal and external interest keep these organizations very much sanitized and away from that collective interest. New forms of governance and effective management practices must be introduced, starting from a totally new criterion for the selection of their leaders. Wisdom and enlightenment must be part of the criteria. The world needs enlightened leaders. It needs enlightened organizations. We need corporate enlightenment as the path in institutional modernization.

Private business groups without any doubt are an essential group of actors who must be considered at both the international and local levels of decision making. Global warming is not just the affair of governments. The popular saying “think globally and act locally” , may only become a reality if, for example, multinational

corporations mirror image it. If they do not, then, it is very difficult to see significant changes taking place for the better. It is within the great domain of private business that global warming will be curved down effectively.

The media also groups extremely important actors. These are actors with public messages that reach billions of people. We live in the world of communication. We are all linked to each other through alternative forms of media. Today, there is a giant media that controls most of the existing channels of communication: newspapers, radio, television, magazines, etc. The power of the media is essential in the battle over global warming. Media not only has the power and the means, but it also has the responsibility to act collectively. This is to say to act in favour of the collective interest and not just in the direction of individual interests.

There is no doubt that the other important actor is government. Traditionally the management of public goods (as presented in another chapter) and public bads has been enthroned to governments. It is often the case that people act based on their personal interest and, then, it expects that any bad created from that action would be addressed by a government. However, the records behind government actions in the realm of the collective

are not that effective. This may reflect the lack of quality around government services, lack of well trained human resources, shortages of material means, inflexible forms of power structures, corruption, and much more. Governments are the king pin in the present system, although the foundations from which they have operated in the past is collapsing at a rapid speed. In particular, governments have been operating under the key principle of sovereignty. This is to say, under the principle that they are free to act within a given geographic boundary or delineated frontier.

However, globalization is creating a world without frontiers. In the case of environmental management, like global warming, the world indeed does not have frontiers. Pollution navigates everywhere and, thus, the destruction of the ozone layer is not exactly over the countries that pollute most. Also, we know that the major impacts are not happening within those frontiers. It is extremely visible to appreciate that the impacts of global warming around the world will not be necessarily in those countries that pollute the most. In a world without frontiers, government actors are weak and suffer from a major loss of sovereignty. This loss in

sovereignty is particularly evident in the enactment and implementation of domestic policies. This is aggravated by the

natural impact of international agreements.

When those who pollute do not bear the costs of that pollution then there is a major spatial and inter-temporal asymmetry among actors. This also results from the inadequacy of governments and the corresponding loss in human capacity to act both locally and globally. Thus, we recommend that governments be strengthened and find alternative forms of governance (new rules) to address global warming. Part of this governance includes international treaties, but they are only as good as the governments that sign those commitments. There are many international agreements that governments sign but do not implement.

Finally, it is immensely relevant to bring civil society in its several manifestations to the discussion of actors. This is a very diverse grouping that includes unions, non-government organizations, local organizations, religious and spiritual organizations and the like. Each of them has a special set of objectives and goals as well as with a differentiated form of governance. Their effectiveness at the local and international level varies a great deal, notwithstanding their contributions to advocacy, dialogues, meaningful participation and representation, and more. Civil society has played a fundamental role in the fight against global

warming. However, they must improve their effectiveness and their integration with all other actors.

In the future, it is essential to recognize this matrix of actors. All actors are to participate in the solution(s). In collective challenges, it is important to know how to navigate through that complex matrix of actors. In this sense, it is important to create some sort of a Social Contract that is agreed upon among all these actors, so that global warming can truly be addressed in the shortest term as possible. We all have to participate in the creation and implementation of that contract. It must be part of a global consensus. This is a consensus that results from a very high level of collective consciousness.

XXVI. Collective Rights and Responsibilities

A clean environment is a human right. It is an individual as well as a collective right. Global warming is violating these rights and we have to reflect deeply upon this situation. However, all rights are accompanied by responsibilities. There are no rights without responsibilities. To articulate better this position in public policy making -dominated by economics and finance issues—is not an easy task. Given the plethora of organizations, and their forms of governance, addressing global warming may end up being atomized to the point that little action would take place. Therefore, one needs to bring about a “supra goal” (an eminent reason) capable of uniting and bringing all the above organizations together into strong and concerted actions.

We believe that such a “supra goal” (or eminent reason) should be the empowerment of “collective rights and responsibilities” . Once again, this will bring us back to the explicit recognition of the critical importance of understanding our life as a human collective. This is to say, in relation to other living beings’ collective and nature’s collective. Thus, the issue facing us today is not just one of having the right to live in a clean and healthy environment

as an individual, but also as a collective. And, the jurisprudence and justifiability of this collective right must be nurtured and enforced, so that we have no cases where individual rights override our collective rights. This idea of collective rights represents a major departure from many of the debates and discussions we have had in relation to traditional “human rights”. Generally speaking, the traditional instruments to get acted upon those collective rights have been treaties, international agreements, conventions, etc. While some of them have shown high levels of effectiveness in securing our collective rights, their unit of account’ is still far from being collective. At best, these use the ‘governments’ as the unit of account -still an individualistic concept. To enforce those instruments, some level of responsibility has been given to existing international organizations. Also, new administrative bodies have been created in many instances. Nevertheless, there is neither collective collateral nor collective sharing of rights and responsibilities.

We are fully aware that the restructuring of these collective rights demands a new set of values and institutional arrangements. Maybe, these are difficult to even conceive under the international governance system we possess now. However, as a first step, one is to move into a new set of values, many of which have already

been listed in a previous chapter; e.g., cooperation, respect for nature, inclusion, interdependence, interconnectedness, collective empowerment, meaningful participation and more. The existence of collective rights is becoming mandatory. It is not only about global warming. These collective rights would apply to practically every aspect of our global environmental management. These collective rights will apply to any human activity that presents a “public good” character. Thus, such right would even apply to the management of the global financial markets, where financial stability’ should be considered a form of public good.

Clearly, the notion of collective rights must be carefully worked out, to be properly applied to the case of global warming. This may imply new alternative administration schemes or new forms of governance, in order to implement and enforce the collective right. However, collective rights must go hand in hand with collective responsibilities. These are not to be camouflaged behind some general statements of intent. These responsibilities must be identified with specific actors and groups in society that must embrace those rights and responsibilities. As it has been the major theme of this book , for collective rights and responsibilities to become a reality in addressing global warming,

one would need a high level of consciousness and coherence. Otherwise, everything will remain just as another interesting desire or intent.

High levels of human consciousness are required to maintain the unity and holistic nature of the collective values and goals we are to serve and fulfil. Otherwise, we will experience a break-down' in the whole process of enactment and the actual realization of those rights and responsibilities. Societies will remain at the level of good intentions, but with no real capacity to self-realize those collective rights or assume those collective responsibilities. As a consequence, a major effort is to be made to increase the levels of our collective consciousness. And, in this regard, media and education will play a fundamental role. This is in addition to what we can do at our individual level through the practices of contemplative techniques and other effective ways to increase consciousness and coherence. If these collective rights and responsibilities are not in place, so that actors act in a particular way, humanity will face what is known as the "Tragedy of the Commons". In particular, we will see that global warming will create lots of suffering and will diminish human welfare in many parts of the world.

XXVII. The 200 Percent Society

Global warming is a result of our human and social interactions. These are inter-personal as well as collective interactions. In addressing collective interactions we come to be confronted with defining the type of society we would like to live in. This demands a change in the way we see our societies, our horizons and our critical paths for a better future. This is a broad and very complex subject to tackle. However, we would like to introduce a conversation of what we have called The Two Hundred Percent Society. To understand the basic concept of the Two Hundred Percent Society, we would like to repeat and set this as a starting point: we are beings who live in the realm of the collective. But, there is more than one collective. We should at least consider three fundamental collectives: the human collective, the living beings collective and nature collective. This collective nature of our existence results from two very important dimensions: interdependence --we are totally dependent on each other-- and unseparableness -- we are totally inseparable from each other.

However, we notice that contrary to this collective interdependence, our education system, for example, is fully geared to create

independent and individualistic beings. By acknowledging and feeling in our heart and souls our interdependence, we will understand

- **Why the suffering of others affects us as well. Poverty is not an individual phenomenon, it is a collective one.**

- **Why our human transformation is not an individual quest but a collective one.**

- **Why our mission has a collective component.**

- **Why our future is a collective future.**

- **Why our destiny is a collective destiny.**

You and we are two expressions of the same source: life itself. Those who feel independent and separable have a serious problem of duality in their lives. They are experiencing an emotional and a personal problem of great proportions. They have lost the sensitivity for “the other”. They have lost the sensitivity for nature and all living beings. In part and it has been stated all along, this insensitivity and duality is due to high levels of all forms of

toxicity in our societies. Let us share a preliminary definition of what constitutes a Two Hundred Percent Society. A Two Hundred Percent Society is one which has as a primary objective to be materially (100%) and spiritually (100%) advanced. These are societies where the creation of welfare and wealth is based on both dimensions of life: material and spiritual.

Unfortunately, we all know that most of our societies are paying attention only to the material aspects of human lives. This is why in this millennium we must reconcile the material and non-material dimensions of our lives. This we have often coined as the reconciliation between economics and spirituality. Only through this reconciliation we will be able to construct The Two Hundred Percent Society. Let us focus on the possible alternative scenarios we are living today. In particular, we may be living in societies that provide little hope to people, as they show to be materially and spiritually poor.

Furthermore, we may live in societies that may be materially rich and spiritually poor. These types seem to be an outgrowth of modern capitalism, and are drawing the attention of many people and thus the desire to become like that. In some ways, this type of society represents a real tragedy for every one in the longer

term. In the short term there is an illusion of having higher levels of human welfare. This societal architecture is very popular as we see immediate personal material gains at the expense of the collective. In many ways, these two typologies of societies may also apply to other forms of collective organizations. For example, Could you map your family into this? Could you map your neighborhood into any of those categories? Could you map yourself into any of those possible scenarios?

We should note that those societies that are materially rich and spiritually poor also embrace forms of interdependence as something purely materialistic. This is why today some societies see their foreign relations, for example, simply as the promotion of free trade agreements and other forms of bi-lateral or multi-lateral agreements. These agreements are mainly defined in relation to these material dimensions of life (international trade of commodities). It is an irony to see also that the most powerful international organizations in the world mirror image the above-centered on material welfare. They are essentially to promote the material advancement of people, sometimes, at the expense of their inner development. What constitutes a relevant strategic issue for them is mainly in the material realm, like the control of oil fields. People are completely out of their strategic concerns.

In the language we have used in other places of this note, these societies are mainly based on doing, having and knowing, and little on the being and becoming!!

It is in this sense that foreign policy must change to the being and becoming. This is not all new as we can see very powerful elements of these new forms of foreign policies in Nordic Countries, for example, in the ways they link their allocation of foreign aid in relation to the compliance with human rights.

Another form of society is that in which there is a high level of spirituality and less material welfare. These are societies with strong identity, clear values, and powerful cultural patterns and with a major commitment to the welfare of everyone. They may not be rich in material terms, but each aspect of their material welfare is embraced with the richness of the spirit. Before we move on, or we are misunderstood, it is very important to say that we are not against material welfare or material advancing. We live in a material world and we need matter to survive. Our point is different: if we only devote ourselves to our material needs and leave aside our spiritual needs, most probably we will have little welfare in the longer term. For those who still need to have yet another example of our collective existence, they

should think about globalization. This concept and the reality it brings to us are all collective. What happens in one part of the world affects everyone else. Think about economics and finance, where capital markets behave in a very peculiar way in relation to what actors do in those markets, no matter the country of origin.

Global warming and environmental destruction is another example of our rich and powerful form of interdependence and collective existence. Using a more religious language one could make reference to the meaning of salvation. For us individual salvation cannot materialize without being immersed in a holistic process of collective salvation. Let us add yet another dimension of the Two Hundred Percent Society: the dimension of human consciousness. In a very rudimentary way, one may measure human consciousness by focusing on the extent to which we are willing to share our wealth with the dispossessed. In particular, let us think for the moment about the relationships existing between material and spiritual wealth and human consciousness. In those societies where material wealth is well distributed, and shared, one would say that they constitute “just societies”. With the same token, those societies where the wealth is totally concentrated in a few hands one would say that they

constitute “unjust societies”, and so on.

In the case of spiritual wealth and good distribution, we could say that they are “enlightened societies”, and in cases of high spirituality and low consciousness, we would say they are “contradictory societies”:

- **Where are you in those scenarios?**
- **Where is your family in those scenarios?**
- **Where is your organization, town, country, etc. in those scenarios?**

The nicknames that we have given to each of these societies are only illustrations of the type of scenarios one is facing today.

This concept of the Two Hundred Percent Society is universal and it must be thought as important in most decision-making and public-policy situations. Clearly, in its application we must adapt it to the specifics of a given scenario. Let share a few additional thoughts.

First, the most central element we need to know is that a precondition to the creation of the Two Hundred Percent Society is the healing of the world. It is the healing of ourselves and the healing of all living beings and sentient beings (addressed in another chapter of this book). Thus, it is important to become healers. And, to become healers there is only one path: the self realization of love and compassion.

Second, the creation of a two Hundred Percent Society is not just another option, it is our only destiny. It is the only collective destiny we have and will ever have. The more we delay the process of construction and consolidation of that society, the more we will accelerate the contradictions we are already witnessing today. You may decide to get into action, either as a result of war and conflict or as a result of peace. The choice is yours.

Third, the Two Hundred Percent Society is not a homocentric concept or idea. The message is not something that concerns us humans only, and alone. It would be a tragic mistake to see that the welfare of other living beings and of nature is to deteriorate. The path of exclusion of other living beings and of nature will create the most effective grounds for a collective suicidal path. We are part of all living beings and nature. in essence, we are

also nature itself. It is an error of the intellect to think that we are superior to nature, or that we are more intelligent than nature. The origin of creation is the same and at the origin, there is no unequal intelligence. This is just the creation of our intellect.

Fourth, the apathy and lack of commitment to advance in the direction of the Two Hundred Percent Society is at the roots of our problems today. This apathy and numbness are the result of our intoxication, which now reaches alarming levels. We must shift the course of human history for the betterment of everyone and everything in this Planet. Nobody and nothing should be sacrificed.

Let us not be mistaken, we have full responsibility over our destiny and we are also accountable -in matter and in spirit— for this destiny.

XXVIII. Call For Action: The Spiritual Forum

To resolve the global warming and the inner warming we all face, it requires action of all sorts. Some of these actions will continue to be at the material level, and would be of a very traditional type (bringing the level of pollution down). Other actions will be at the more subtle and spiritual levels (meditation to diminish inner anger). Naturally, each person, each society, will discover what is best in that unique environment. However, we together must take many forms of collective actions. Probably, these collective actions will be the most difficult ones to embrace and implement.

Here, we will narrow the number of suggestions and focus mainly on a proposal that will be under the title of The World Spiritual Forum. This is a proposal for an institutional arrangement, for the moment lacking, that should be seriously considered at this juncture in human history. The Forum is founded on a number of premises and it responds to a specific background, which may be worth outlining here. The world of the future will be extremely different from the one we are experiencing today. At the core of our intent here, it is the important consideration that

a new human reality will only be the result of a new state of consciousness and coherence. In the last few years, we have been given many warning with regard to climate change. In 2004, we saw the Tsunami that hit Asia. Thousands of lives were lost. And, coupled with that, globalization as an economic and social phenomenon, has negatively affected millions of people.

Today, global warming represents another major warning and, as a wake-up call, right action must take place. To change the course of humanity demands a new process of human transformation, which cannot take place in isolation from our natural environment. It is not just material or outer transformation. It must also be spiritual and inner transformation. In the past, material solutions have dominated all that we do. Obviously, we live in a material world and thus, these material solutions are important. However, we observe that there are many material solutions that are not sufficient for sustained human betterment. In this new millennium, the challenge is to revise these material solutions and move beyond traditional means and processes.

Public and private policy makers, and the international community in general, play a vital role. Institutions, like the United Nations, are at the center stage of those challenges and solutions. However,

for long lasting solutions, we need not only the participation of the different actors but also to embrace a new set of values, with a new human perspective. One of the missing links at the United Nations, for example, is the creation of a permanent World Spiritual Forum. It would be in this Forum where these challenges will be addressed in terms of the material and spiritual welfare. The spirit of the original declaration of the United Nations in 1944 clearly recognized that human freedom, for example, would only result from material and spiritual growth, together. Today, it is not any longer possible to think just about material satisfaction through material solutions.

To seek material growth alone, without spiritual growth, is a false proposition and a very dangerous one too. With the same token, if there will be a debate on the eradication of poverty, it is essential that the debates pay equal attention to the material and spiritual dimensions of poverty. And, these apply to all our collective challenges. Otherwise, one would continue to observe that many parts of the world are becoming materially rich at the expense of being spiritually poor. The importance of the inner spaces of life and the spiritual dimensions of human activities apply everywhere: government, business, economics, politics, environment, civil society, research, technological change, and

all aspects of our human lives. Thus, if countries are to focus on diminishing external global warming, they must also address inner warming of all living beings. If we were to engage in a process of positive human transformation, and if we were to target the most sacred aspects of our lives, it is important we take action now. Time is of essence.

The challenge is clear: we must write the history of this new millennium with the hands of the spirit. This is an act of generosity and respect with all the future generations following us. This is why, it is important to expand this traditional notion of material betterment to include the betterment of the human spirit, of our human consciousness, and of our inner souls. It is necessary to revise our wealth creation to include our spiritual wealth as well. We know by now that higher levels of material betterment, without inner spiritual growth, will result in more poverty, inequality and social exclusion. Thus, we exalt the need to focus on our spiritual capital. As we should not separate the body and mind, we should also not separate the mind and body from the spirit. Our spiritual reality is at the foundation of all we do, including all of our professions and daily practices.

Within this context, it is important to recognize the fundamental

importance of indigenous peoples and indigenous knowledge, particularly within developing countries. Indigenous peoples' understanding of traditional medicine is an invaluable asset for humanity as a whole and to future generations. They have been custodians of our Planet and have created many positive conditions for the healthy transformation of humanity. They have greatly emphasized the need to improve the quality of our natural environment, the protection of our biological diversity, and the management of socioeconomic development patterns. In the interim, there is no doubt that in order to recover and strengthen our identity, we need a major process of healing and reconciliation.

This is healing of the most profound nature and reconciliation with our selves and others. All our activities have a healing quality. We know that being in love is a healing experience. We know that serving is also a healing experience. We know that respecting and being respected is also a healing experience.

We need to learn from each other as we have the responsibility of our children's future and of future generations. It is in our hands to give them a good future - it is our responsibility. Today, there is much interference, many disturbances and violence. We

need to give them inner peace. The essence of spirituality, of all religions, is inner peace. Inner peace is the best medicine. It is very inexpensive to have inner peace - we just have to learn how to have inner peace. It is very near and present at any moment.

The way forward requires three fundamental steps.

First: the basic distinction between our outer global warming existence and inner warming. Most of what humanity and leadership is doing to attain some acceptable level of global warming is to grab the outer elements. And in doing so, we are attempting to use more sophisticated technologies in production, consumption, disposal and trade. We have seldom gone beyond the management of physical outer global warming; despite the fact that we know that there are so many other forms of warming. These remain totally unattended. Of course, the results are clear: stress, anger, despair, very high suicide rates in teenagers, increased trafficking and prostitution of young girls and of highly illegal drugs, and so on. Global warming is in many ways a state of consciousness. It is an inner state in each of us, with individual and social connotations. Therefore, if any progress is to be made we must focus on its inner values, its inner dimensions, and its inner realities rather than on its outer elements alone. This

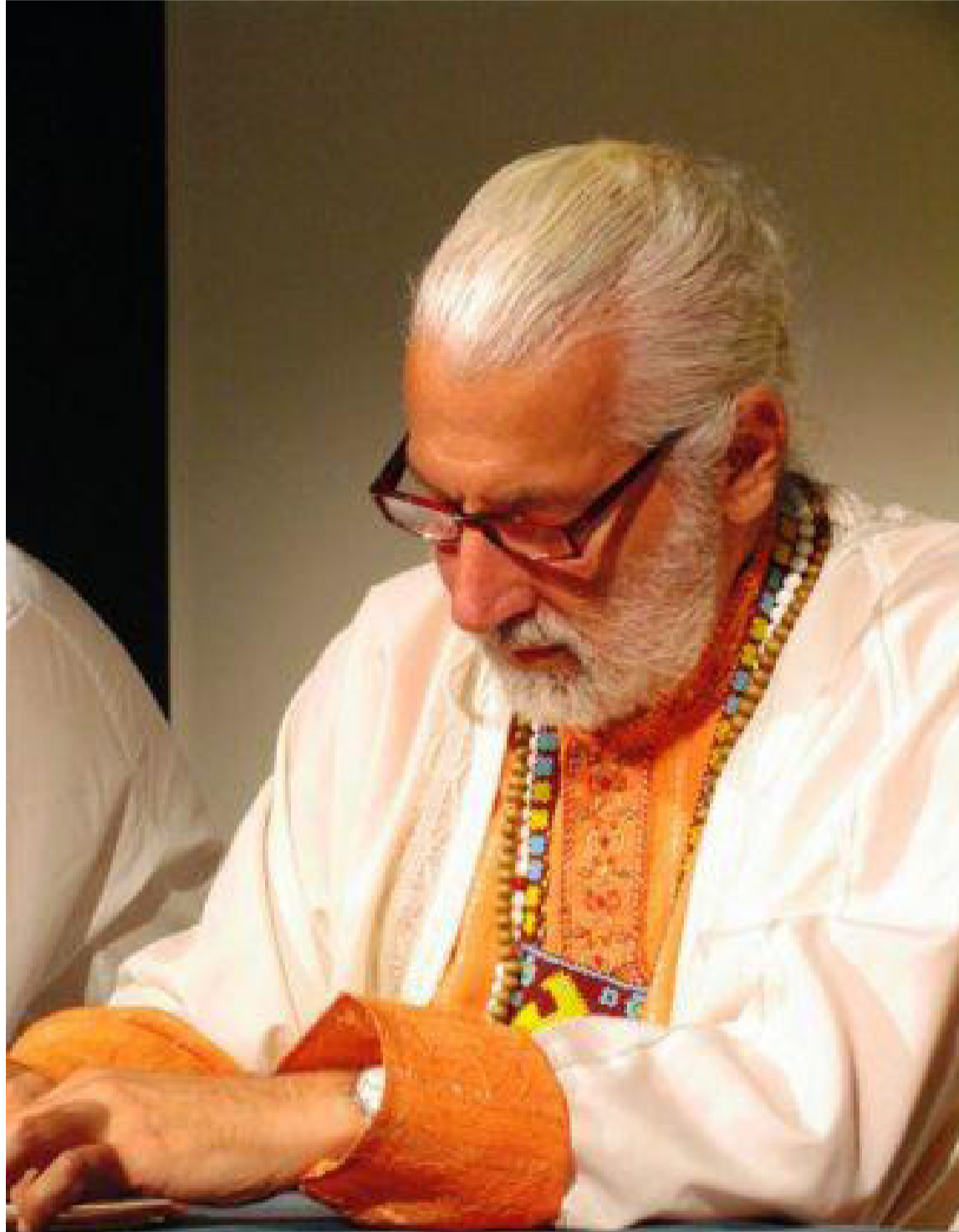
approach will demand a different discourse, a different attitude, a different system of education, and a different way of facing life in all its dimensions within this planet.

Second: to recognize the importance of the “human presence factor” . Many of our meetings and many of our institutions are filled with people who advocate and promote environmental management, but who are not coherent with their inner environmental self. Many people need to experience a state of normal inner warming. As long as you have not had that experience, everything tends to stay in a state of abstraction. We simply cannot promote that which we have not integrated and realized. How can we allow those who are experiencing high levels of inner warming within themselves to sit at the table to negotiate a new Kyoto Protocol? How can we trust those who are in deep inner warming to resolve the problem? This is an element we must understand and strive for in the next few years. Yes, the future leaders of the world, some of whom may become the most effective machines of environmental destruction. This is simply not acceptable. This presence factor also applies to our teachers, our political and spiritual leaders, and to everyone who is in an influential position. We must take massive steps to assist and contribute to diminish inner warming of those who are making

decisions that affect each and every one of us. We must get closer to them now. We must approach them with huge respect and compassion, but with a firm and unequivocal message that diminishing inner and outer warming is the objective.

Third: to diminish global warming through immediate actions. Diminishing global warming must be an intrinsic element of all we do. We must address this phenomenon within every institution and organization, as a coherence factor as well as a performance factor. We must diminish the warming taking place among religions, ethnic groups, and all possible communities of interest. This is a step we all feel comfortable with, although it has proven to be the most difficult one to attain in practice. Global warming in action means addressing it in every aspect of our human existence.

-----**Dr. Alfredo Sfeir-Younis**
In service to humanity
With love
Dzambling Cho Tab Khen-----



-----**Dr. Alfredo Sfeir-Younis**

Dzambling Cho Tab Khen

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