

Acknowledgments

This book was conceived in the fall of 2008 during a conversation over dinner with former Worldwatch Board Chair Øystein Dahle. Over pasta in Oslo, the two of us discussed how much consumer cultures will need to change for the human species to truly thrive. Upon returning to Washington, I proposed the idea of confronting this issue head-on in *State of the World 2010*. Somewhat to my surprise, the Worldwatch staff and Board of Directors gave me the green light to proceed. First, a thank you to all of them for trusting that such a topic would be a valuable theme for our flagship publication, even if it proves controversial. Thanks especially to Worldwatch President Christopher Flavin for trusting me to run with this idea.

After that brief moment of elation, the long process of building this book began. A *State of the World* committee was formed and the counsel of its members proved essential throughout. Many thanks to all of you for the hours spent discussing the newest ideas as they developed, for suggesting authors and topics, and for helping the project move forward.

Much of last spring was devoted to recruiting the highly talented group of authors who are listed on the Contents page. I want to especially thank these individuals—all of whom agreed to freely share their knowledge and insights with *State of the World* readers. Without their generosity, this book would not have been possible.

This year we have a number of short Boxes

as well, which complement the longer articles and add more voices and views to the report. Many thanks to these authors as well for their time and thoughtful contributions: Yann Arthus-Bertrand, Eduardo Athayde, Almut Beringer, Michael Braungart, Raj Chengappa, Patrick Curry, Øystein Dahle, Anne H. Ehrlich, Paul R. Ehrlich, Gregory C. Farrington, Satish Kumar, Serge LaTouche, William McDonough, Julie Ozanne, Lucie Ozanne, and Alexander Rose.

Those who helped with the research over the past year deserve special attention here. I am grateful for the ideas shared and the assistance given in making this book possible. Thanks to Franny Armstrong, Diane Assadourian, Andrew Balmford, Mark Beam, Guy P. Brasseur, Gene Brockhoff, Brian Burke, Tony Carr, Robert Corell, Joel Cowan, Scott Denman, Nancy Durkee, Duane Elgin, Hilary French, Jim Freund, Nina Frisak, Marcin Gerwin, Alex Hallatt, Harry Halloran, Jody Heymann, Yeşne Iren, Chris Jung, Hayrettin Karaca, William Kilbourne, Lynne LaCarubba, Shawna Larson, Kalle Lasn, Annie Leonard, Ling Li, Lisa Lucero, Jan Lundberg, Mia MacDonald, Michael Maniates, Susanne Martikke, Marc Matthieu, Jim McDonough, Krystal McKay, Bill McKibben, Olivier Milhomme, Molly O'Meara Sheehan, Pete Palmer, Nadina Perera, Barbara Petruzzi, Andrea Prothero, Paul Reitan, Joan Roberts, Regina Rowland, Peter Sawtell, Vernon Scar-

borough, Blair Shane, David Stoesz, Robert Welsch, and, at UNESCO, Aline Bory-Adams, Bernard Combes, Hans d'Orville, Mark Richmond, and Ariana Stahmer. I am grateful to all of you!

I'd also like to thank Muhammad Yunus, who kindly shared his wisdom and his story with us in this year's Foreword. His support for our humble book is quite an honor.

One other special contributor I'd like to acknowledge is artist Chris Jordan, whose beautiful image graces our cover. *Gyre* is one of the most striking portrayals of the threat of consumerism and the possibility of this moment to change course that I have seen, and we are very happy to have the chance to display it on the cover.

Behind the scenes, there were three special people without whom this project would not have succeeded. First and foremost, Linda Starke, editor extraordinaire and *State of the World* elder, who was a joy to work with and selflessly put this project over herself time and again. She was an exemplar of calm throughout the stressful concluding months and, considering the challenges, was truly a role model for me. Thank you, Linda.

A large thanks also to Gary Gardner for helping to improve several of the contributions, including my own. While surely a thankless job at times, I appreciate the many hours of the summer that Gary sacrificed to get this book from manuscript to finished product. Thanks as well to Lisa Mastny, who also spent several weeks this summer helping to polish several articles and produce a fascinating chronology of the environmental events of the past year.

Even further behind the scenes, but without whom this book would have been significantly weaker, are the eight project interns who this year pursued hard-to-find data, examples, and ideas, helped recruit authors, and even contributed several interesting Boxes and an article. In order of their appearance, let me express my appreciation for each one.

Helene Gallis—intern of many countries, candid, and creative—started when this project was still formless and played an important early role in molding it. She then continued to prove herself invaluable as she helped out to the very end, researching, reviewing, and writing.

Eddie Kasner, when not studying public health and farmers' use of pesticides in China, helped recruit several authors and research sustainable dietary norms and health care. Amy Han was truly a "Jill-of-all-trades," cheerfully becoming the creator and Webmaster of the Transforming Cultures Web site, doing research, writing blog posts, and finishing off with a captivating article on music's role in building sustainable societies.

Valentina Agostinelli of Italy also enthusiastically assisted with research and assiduously monitored the year of environmental events, helping to produce this year's timeline. Kevin Green was a data-finding machine, which at a place like Worldwatch is a compliment of the highest order. Without Kevin's diligent research, the overview chapter would not be so chockful of useful information.

Mami Shijo, coming from our partner organization Worldwatch Japan, played an important role in finding several bits of data and helping to explore the Japanese blogosphere—a project intern Emiko Akaishi expanded further in her month here. The message of *State of the World 2010* is one that will need to be heard in Japan—a leading consumer culture—as much as in North America and Europe, so thanks to both of you for helping start that conversation.

And finally, in the last month of production, Fulbright Fellow Stefanie Bowles swooped in and helped finalize the book, expanded its content, and kept me on task. Good timing, Stefanie!

My wife, Aynabat Yaylymova, deserves a special note for putting up with me these last several months, as I increasingly lived in the office—and all the ideas of sustainable living

discussed in these pages started to fade from practice and even memory.

At Worldwatch, I'd like to acknowledge the staff and the many ways they contributed to this book. First, thanks to Robert Engelman, Gary Gardner, and Michael Renner for sharing their expertise in their articles and expanding the breadth and depth of this volume. A special thanks to Alice McKeown, who reviewed many articles and raised the bar in every case. Juliane Diamond, Brian Halweil, Danielle Nierenberg, Thomas Prugh, Molly Theobald, and senior fellow Zoë Chafe also helped with reviewing—thank you.

While the words of this book come from the authors, its beauty comes from Worldwatch Art Director Lyle Rosbotham. Lyle designed this book from cover to cover and found the gorgeous pictures to grace many of its pages. If a picture is worth a thousand words, then he singlehandedly added a hundred rich pages to *State of the World 2010*, all without destroying a single extra tree!

Thanks to Patricia Shyne for all her work with our partners around the world to ensure that the ideas and examples of *State of the World* are dispersed far and wide. And to our communications team, Darcey Rakestraw and Julia Tier, for spreading this message even further, both through press outreach and through helping to coordinate the new Transforming Cultures blog.

A big bow of gratitude goes as well to the development team—Courtney Berner, Trudy Loo, Meghan Nicholson, and Mary C. Redfern—for helping ensure the support needed to make this book a success.

Thanks also to Ben Block, Amanda Chiu, Anna da Costa, Yingling Liu, and Janet Sawin for suggesting topics and authors. And to John Mulrow and summer intern Ben Gonin for help in analyzing just how little we can consume before hitting unsustainable levels. Finally, thanks to Barbara Fallin for ensuring the smooth administration of this project and

to Corey Perkins for keeping Worldwatch's electronic infrastructure humming.

Beyond the Institute, I'd like to extend my gratitude to our many publishing partners. First, in the United States, we appreciate the dedication of W. W. Norton & Company, which has published *State of the World* in all 27 years of its existence. Thank you Amy Cherry, Erica Stern, and Devon Zahn for your work in producing the book and ensuring that it gets distributed broadly in bookstores and university classrooms across the United States.

Without our strong network of international publishing partners, we would have a limited international audience and lessened effect. We very much appreciate the work that all of them do to get Worldwatch's findings translated and disseminated as quickly and as widely as possible. We give special thanks to Eduardo Athayde of the Universidade Mata Atlântica in Brazil; Sylvia Shao of Environment Science Press in China; Tuomas Seppa of Gaudeamus & Otatieta in Finland; Klaus Milke and colleagues at Germanwatch, Ralf Fuechs and colleagues at the Heinrich Böll Foundation, and Jacob Radloff of OEKOM in Germany; Yiannis Sakiotis and Michalis Probonas of the Evonymos Ecological Library in Greece; Zsuzsa Foltanyi of Earth Day Foundation in Hungary; Kartikeya Sarabhai and Kiran Chhokar of the Centre for Environment Education in India; Anna Bruno Ventre and Gianfranco Bologna of WWF Italy; Soki Oda of Worldwatch Japan; Melanie Gabriel Camacho and Cecilia Geiger of Africam Safari and Diana Isabel Jaramillo and Fabiola Escalante of UDLAP in Mexico; Marcin Gerwin of Earth Conservation in Poland; Monica Di Donato of Area Sostenibilidad CIP Ecosocial and Anna Monjo of Icaria Editorial for the Castilian version and Helena Cots of the Centre UNESCO de Catalunya for the Catalan version in Spain; Sang-ik Kim of the Korean Federation of Environmental Movement in South Korea; Øystein Dahle, Hans Lundberg, and Ivana Kildsgaard

of Worldwatch Norden in Norway and Sweden; George Cheng of Taiwan Watch Institute in Taiwan; Yeşim Erkan of TEMA in Turkey; Professor Marfenin and Anna Ignatieva of Center of Theoretical Analysis of Environmental Problems at the International Independent University of Environmental and Political Sciences in Russia; and Jonathan Sinclair Wilson, Michael Fell, Gudrun Freese, and Alison Kuznets of Earthscan in the United Kingdom.

Our great customer service team at Direct Answer, Inc. also helps ensure that our readers are effectively served and their questions are swiftly answered. We are grateful to Katie Rogers, Katie Gilroy, Lolita Harris, Cheryl Marshall, Valerie Proctor, Ronnie Hergett, Marta Augustyn, Heather Cranford, Colleen Curtis, Sharon Hackett, and Karen Piontkowski for providing first-rate customer service.

We want to express our deep appreciation to the many foundations and institutions whose support over the past year has made *State of the World 2010* and Worldwatch's many other projects possible: The Heinrich Böll Foundation; The Casten Family Foundation of the Chicago Community Trust; the Compton Foundation, Inc.; the Del Mar Global Trust; the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; the Goldman Environmental Prize; the Richard and Rhoda Goldman Fund; the Good Energies Foundation; the Hitz Foundation; the W. K. Kellogg Foundation; the Steven C. Leuthold Family Foundation; the Marianists Sharing Fund of the USA; the Netherlands Environment Ministry; the V. Kann Rasmussen Foundation; the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs; the Shared Earth Foundation; The Renewable Energy & Energy Efficiency Partnership; the Shenandoah Foundation; Stonyfield Farm; the TAUPO Fund; the United Nations Environment Programme; the United Nations Population Fund; the UN Foundation; the Wallace Genetic Foundation, Inc.; the Wallace Global Fund; the Johanette

Wallerstein Institute; the Winslow Foundation; and the World Wildlife Fund–Europe.

State of the World 2010 would not exist without the generous contributions of the many individuals who support the Institute as Friends of Worldwatch. These gifts make up nearly one third of the Institute's annual operating budget and are indispensable to our work. We are profoundly grateful to all the Friends of Worldwatch for their commitment to the Institute and its vision for a sustainable world. And thanks to the many Worldwatch supporters who invested directly in this year's report when they learned about it through a fundraising appeal this spring. Your generosity—even at a time when this project was still just a concept—is much appreciated.

Finally, saving the most important acknowledgment for last, I want to thank you. If you are reading this, I can assume that you are interested in digging deeply into this topic—as who else would plow through four pages of names? The goal of this book is to help get human cultures back on track before we undermine the ecological systems that we as a species depend on. Your help in changing cultures is essential. As the book indicates, there are countless ways to get involved. Many more will be discussed on our Web site, at blogs www.worldwatch.org/transformingcultures. And while visiting the Web site, consider starting a discussion group about the report or mobilizing your own network to bring about the change you want to see. This is how new cultures start!

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