CREATING A SUSTAINABLE AND DESIRABLE FUTURE

Insights from 45 global thought leaders

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Insights from 45 global thought leaders

Editors

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Preface

As a society, we need to think more deeply and discuss more broadly the kind of world we really want. This book is an attempt to deepen and broaden that discussion. It is a collection of positive ideas about what a sustainable and desirable future might look like from a broad range of perspectives.

In the environmental community, there is a growing pessimism about the future. Climate disruption, biodiversity loss, overpopulation, and a host of other problems seem to be getting far worse with no sign of our ability to solve them. The majority of the business and political communities are still in denial about the severity of the problems. They are counting on the ability of “business-as-usual” (with perhaps some tweaking) to solve them. But, as Paul Raskin has said: “It is business-as-usual that is the utopian fantasy.”

This book is **not** about business-as-usual. It is not about projections of future technologies or extrapolations of past trends. It is a collection of multifaceted descriptions of better worlds that are both plausible and possible. These are not predictions of what *will* happen, but visions of what *could* happen if we, as a society, put our minds to it.

Most of the chapters are versions of articles that have been published in *Solutions* (www.thesolutionsjournal.com), which has a regular section that challenges authors to envision a future society in which all the correct changes have been made. Think of it as a “best of” collection of *Solutions’* visions plus a few additional chapters from other sources. The chapters are written in a broad range of styles. We see that as an advantage. Describing the future we want must take many forms. We hope the reader will find in these chapters inspiration, hope, and motivation to help envision and then create a better world.

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Robert Costanza
Ida Kubiszewski
Canberra, Australia, 2013

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About the Editors

Dr Robert Costanza is a Professor and Chair in Public Policy at the Crawford School of Public Policy, Australian National University. Prior to this, he was Distinguished University Professor of Sustainability, in the Institute for Sustainable Solutions at Portland State University (2010–2012), Gund Professor of Ecological Economics and Founding Director of the Gund Institute for Ecological Economics at the University of Vermont (2002–2010), Professor at the University of Maryland (1988–2002) and at Louisiana State University (1980–1988). His transdisciplinary research integrates the study of humans and the rest of nature to address research, policy, and management issues at multiple time and space scales, from small watersheds to the global system. He is cofounder of the International Society for Ecological Economics and founding editor-in-chief of *Solutions* (www.thesolutionsjournal.org). He is author or coauthor of over 500 articles and 24 books and has been named one of ISI's Highly Cited Researchers since 2004. More than 200 interviews and reports on his work have appeared in various popular media.

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