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Name of the submission / Naam van de inlevering:  
**Living Forests**  
 Naam of the participant / Naam van de deelnemer:  
 WWF  
 Theme Statement / Themaverklaring:  
 - Bossen zijn van levensbelang voor mensen en dieren. Wereldwijd  
 36 voetbalvelden bos per minuut. WWF zet zich in om de bossen  
 - Wälder sind für Menschen und Tiere von lebenswichtigem Interesse.  
 Weltweit verschwinden 36 Fußballfelder Wald pro Minute.  
 Der WWF setzt sich dafür ein, die Wälder zu schützen.  
 Forests are of vital importance for mankind and animals.  
 Worldwide, there are 36 football pitches of forest vanishing per  
 WWF is committed to protecting our forests.  
 With the participation of / Met medewerking van:  
 FSC-Nederland

# World Wide Government Fund (1)

Organizational Profile, Finance, Influence and Economic Vision of the Dutch Wereld Natuur Fonds (WNF) and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF)



## The World Wide Government Fund -Part I

Organizational Profile, Finances, Influence and Economic Vision of Wereld Natuur Fonds and the World Wide Fund for Nature

*Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinion without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.<sup>1</sup>*

### The Reason for this Report

Stichting de Groene Rekenkamer (*The Green Accounting Office*) intends to publish an independent and critical profile of the *Wereld Natuur Fonds (WNF)*. The *Wereld Natuur Fonds* is the Dutch office of the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF), which was established as the World Wildlife Fund in October 1961. WNF was established on August 10 1962<sup>2</sup> and is currently celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

As a rule the Wereld Natuur Fonds receives a VIP treatment, no questions asked. Nevertheless, it has long outgrown its original purpose of protecting threatened underdogs<sup>3, 4</sup>. The world's largest green organization gained more and more clout over the past 50 years, both in terms of national and international policies. In the Netherlands, WNF currently has 900,000 supporters, which is more than its largest private conservationist organization Natuurmonumenten. It is also 45 times as many as in 1972.

Both WNF and the global organization WWF see their income grow. The global revenues have doubled since the year 2000 to about half a billion euro per year, where the share of governmental contributions and developing aid to what started out as a private fund has been growing rapidly. In the accounting year 2009/2010 WNF acquired a record amount of 64 million euro in funds and subsidies, where it claimed to have spent 81 cents per euro on the conservation of nature. As the human-geographer Pieter Lukkes put it:

*'The Dutch Head Quarters in Zeist ooze power.'<sup>5</sup>*

At the same time, but little attention is paid to the political side of WWF. This year saw the 2<sup>nd</sup> Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro, an environment summit in which WWF is an important participant. 'RIO' is short for 'Reshaping the International Order'<sup>6</sup>. The Club of Rome was a crucial influence on the global environmental agenda with its apocalyptic report 'Limits to Growth', issued in 1971. The Club

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<sup>1</sup> UN Declaration of Human Rights, article 19

<sup>2</sup> On this date the organization was called Stichting Natuur Noodfonds; the name Wereld Natuur Fonds was adopted in 1965, when its Head Quarters were located in Zeist, the Netherlands.

<sup>3</sup> Chapin, M. 2004, A challenge to conservationists. *WorldWatch Magazine* (November-December): 17-31

<sup>4</sup> Dowie, M. 2005, Conservation refugees: When protecting nature means kicking people out. *Orion Online*. November-December: 1-12, see also the website [www.conservationrefugees.org](http://www.conservationrefugees.org).

<sup>5</sup> Lukkes, P. (2012) *Klimaatbeleid in Eurocrisistijd*, page 189. Uitgeverij U2PI BV

<sup>6</sup> Tinbergen, J. editor RIO, *Reshaping the International Order*, a report to the Club of Rome, Dutton publishers, 325 p. The third report commissioned by the Club of Rome. In it, a club of 20 experts, led by economist Jan Tinbergen, presented its ideas for reshaping global economy. Its first report was the successful 'Limits to Growth', which has a much apocalyptic outlook and was less science-based. It did sell a lot better.

of Rome was founded by WWF Director and Italian industrialist Aurelio Peccei. WWF and the Club of Rome have been propagating similar political-economic views for 40 years. A global elite was to sideline the democratic order, invoking an unofficial state of emergency. This view was reiterated during the celebration of the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of WNF on the SS Rotterdam.

**What remains unclear is:**

- a. whether the influence exerted by WWF and WNF serve the common good, or whether it serves a political agenda of a minority/elite
- b. how funds meant for 'the conservation of nature' as donated to WWF/WNF are spent and what the net effect of this expenditure is
- c. the scientific value of communications issued by WWF via its own media and own channels to journalists, the general public and politicians.

**Method**

Using multiple sources, desk research and verifiable evidence, this report intends to paint a more realistic picture of WNF and WWF. For this, it uses the articles of association as submitted with the Chamber of Commerce, annuals accounts, scientific literature, interviews with conservationists in the field, scholars, field trips, audits of the articles of association, annual accounts and (internal) publications of WNF/WWF, and communications of WWF staff via international institutes such as the climate report of the IPCC climate panel of the United Nations, a panel which' interests are closely knit with the interests of WWF.<sup>7</sup>

**Summary and Conclusion: 'Two Faces'**

Although within WWF/WNF organizations there are different (political) factions, some general findings can be substantiated that show how WNF is an organization with two faces. Thus there can be reasonable doubt as to whether WNF/WNF do in fact serve the common good. Our research leads us to conclude that among policy makers and journalists a more realistic perception of WWF and the Dutch WNF is warranted.

- a. **WWF is also a political organization.** As a fundraising multinational, WWF prides itself in its collaboration with multinational companies, claiming to be politically neutral. At the same time, WWF expresses an anti-Western, anti-humanist, anti-democratic and anti-economic worldview, which is shared via platforms of such organizations as the Club of Rome. By invoking a global state of emergency it intends to sideline regular decision-making, for the benefit of a global elite and an inversion of all values. There is no room for an audit of feasibility and empirical validity of the propagated ideas. WNF is also not politically neutral with its 'Green Voter's Guide', developed in collaboration with Stichting Natuur en Milieu. In the field, WWF regularly teams up with partners who hold the same political objectives.
- b. **No external independent audit of expenditure and ROI of WNF and WWF.** WNF is spending more money on marketing than on the conversation of nature, unless one uses a very loose

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<sup>7</sup> Two thirds of the 44 chapters of the IPCC climate report were written by authors of the 'Climate Witness Scientific Advisory Panel' set up by WWF. The famous Himalaya glacier error ('melted in 2035') was taken over from WWF campaign literature.

definition of 'nature conservation' and 'nature education'. In terms of staffing – measured in FTEs – 67% goes to marketing and finance, 26% to conservation. WNF achieves its claim that '81% of every euro is spent on conservation purposes' by factoring in staffing costs (including communications), as well as the project overhead costs of foreign projects and (advertising) campaigns. A recalculation of the financial deployment exclusive of marketing costs shows that about 54% of the revenues are spent on nature (projects) in actual natural environments. WNF owns millions in external assets in real estate firm Baduin in Hattem. Where WNF spinoffs like Stichting Pan Parks are concerned, no annual accounts are available from the Chamber of Commerce.

- c. **Existing scientific literature comprising an audit of the efficacy of money spent by WWF is highly critical in this respect.** Ecologists with hands-on experience in local nature conservation are highly critical of the efficacy of WWF as a conservationist organization. For its 'flagship species' like the giant panda, polar bear, black rhino and the Siberian tiger, no positive correlation can be found between the presence of WWF and population trends, while negative correlations can be found. This inefficacy has been known for decades via internal reports. WWF has a turbulent past and via projects like Lock, people were executed summarily in the name of the prevention of poaching. Furthermore, local populations have been driven off their land more than once in the name of international nature conservation.

This first part of the report deals with the organization profile of WWF and WNF, elements a and b: its network, origin, finances, economic and social vision. Part 2<sup>8</sup> deals with element c.

## 1. Fifty Years of Doom Scenarios

The global World Wide Fund for Nature was established in 1961 as the World Wildlife Fund<sup>9</sup>, by conservationists Peter Scott and Julian Huxley, together with Prince Philip and Prince Bernhard. Scott was Vice President of the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN), which was established by Huxley in 1948. Scott designed the logo with the giant panda. WWF was to act as a fund raising organization for the IUCN. For this purpose it shared its Swiss Head Quarters in Morges, until the 1001, a Nature Trust of Prince Bernhard, gave WWF its own new offices in Gland in the nineteen seventies.

The first fund raising campaign started with a special 'shock edition' of the Daily Mirror in October 1961. A 'threatened' black rhino mother with its young was depicted across the pages as a donation animal. The title was 'Doomed' -- to disappear from the face of the earth due to man's neglect folly and greed.' The campaign yielded 50,000 sterling. Until 1973, however, WWF would not spend a penny on the protection of the black rhino.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> The World Wide Fund for Administration (2). Does WWF Protect Nature? A study into the efficacy of the Wereld Natuur Fonds in nature conservation. De Groene Rekenkamer 2012/©www.rypkezeilmaker.nl

<sup>9</sup> In 1986 the name was changed into World Wide Fund for Nature.

<sup>10</sup> This was discovered by investigative journalist Kevin Dowling, and it was published in his documentary 'Ten Pence in the Panda' broadcast via The Cook Report in 1990: in 1990 Dutch broadsheet de Volkskrant paid

The apocalyptic tone of voice has not changed over these 50 years. This type of marketing is said to work best.<sup>11</sup> The fact that it does, is shown by the exponential increase in influence, income and number of supporters over the past 20 years. This marketing angle was broadened from just almost extinct, large (African) mammals to include the entire planet.

*'WWF is a business like any other – except what is being marketed is a concept rather than a product.'*<sup>12</sup>

In its bi-annual campaigns WWF used the scientifically highly controversial Ecological Footprint<sup>13</sup>, Global ecological demise is imminent as a result of Western overconsumption. The claim is that the world is using 50% more than the planet can provide. Or so says WNF in de Volkskrant in May 2012. According to Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity of the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP), WWF stated that the world was living 25% over a 'biological capacity' in 2008<sup>14</sup>. Thus, the over-demanding differs per campaign.

Ecological model countries are war-torn Afghanistan, dirt poor Bangladesh, and the Palestinian territories where unemployment is rife. These countries hold top-5 positions, while recycling champion the Netherlands rank in the bottom 9 countries, despite the world's cleanest chemical industry in the Rotterdam-Antwerp axis. It finds itself in the company of the champions in wind energy, Denmark and Germany. Apparently the many millions Germany has invested in 'sustainability' have not helped to rise in the ecological esteem of WWF.

## **2. A cast-iron brand that gets a VIP treatment in the media**

WNF is a strong brand, which many a famous actress and supermodel gladly lend their body and face to<sup>15</sup>. Of the 106 FTE in the 2009-10 accounting year 45 FTE is guarding the brand through marketing. As a rule WWF is handled with kid gloves by the press, thanks to this cast-iron marketing strategy. The angle taken by journalists where nature and the environment are concerned plays a role here too. Philosopher and journalist Jaffe Vink already referred to the docility of de Volkskrant where Greenpeace is concerned by stating: 'most journalists write from an environmentalist perspective.'

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attention to Dowling's work. See also part 2: The World Wide Fund for Administration. Does WWF Protect Nature?

<sup>11</sup> Jeanrenaud, S. (2002) People Orientated Approaches in Global Conservation, Is the leopard changing its spots?' IIED 2002, page 37 refers to the efficacy of 'disaster stories' in fund raising.

<sup>12</sup> Jeanrenaud, S. (2002) People Orientated Approaches in Global Conservation, Is the leopard changing its spots?' IIED 2002. Jeanrenaud was WWF marketing director in the UK in 1979.

<sup>13</sup> A list of scientific criticism regarding the footprint and its uselessness in policy-making is given by Van den Bergh, J., Grazi, F. (2010) On the policy relevance of the ecological footprint. *Environ. Science & Technology*. 2010, 44, 4843-4844, and Fiala, N. (2008) Measuring sustainability, why the ecological footprint is bad economics and bad environmental science, in *Ecological Economics* 67, 519-525.

<sup>14</sup> Djoghlaif, A., Dodd, F. (2010). 'Biodiversity and Ecosystem Insecurity. A planet in peril.' The preface reads: 'According to WWF we are operating at 25 per cent above the biological capacity to support life.' This – the reference to the Living Planet Report 2008 – is half of what WNF said in de Volkskrant.

<sup>15</sup> Supermodel Doutzen Kroes shows her naked body in the 'pass on planet Earth' campaign. In the commercial she is overgrown by weeds.

German Tageszeitung journalist Michael Miersch confirms this same inclination in the German-speaking region.<sup>16</sup>

Dutch broadsheets like Trouw publish pages of items with just WNF as a source, in which they show their warm feelings for WNF's vision, and in which they fail to include any repartee or interpretation of facts.<sup>17</sup> Stories about the good deed of WNF brought as if they were news should rather be looked on as advertorials, WNF being the sole consulted source. The story 'Van Panda naar Palmolie' in NRC Handelsblad of May 18 2012 – written by media consultant Stef Verhoeven – describes 50 years of good deeds. It is clearly written in support of WNF, which is the only source consulted for Verhoeven's article. In its conclusion the article lashes out to the government, which is said not to do enough for WNF (or its agenda).

The apocalyptic message from the bi-annual Living Planet Report – a reproach at the Western consumer – was published full-page as a news item in national media on May 15 and 16 2012.<sup>18</sup> The message echoes the message of October 13 2010 after the Living Planet Report 2010 campaign, which was covered in the science section of NRC Handelsblad at the time. Here too, the same WWF employee, Natasja Oerlemans of WNF, was the sole source.

### **3. WWF: doubling of income since 2007 and 17 per cent of subsidies**

WWF raises funds for its international headquarters in Gland, Switzerland, and WWF network in more than 100 countries. In addition, WWF has 4 associate organizations in countries without a WWF office, e.g. the Fundacion Vida Sylvestre Argentina. The international WWF has two budgets, one for WWF International and one for WWF Network.

In 2007 WWF Network received 508 million euro, in 2008 this was 447 million. About half of the revenues of this network consist of private donations. In addition, WWF International received approximately 100 million euro in both years (in Swiss francs: 160 to 170 million)<sup>19</sup>. This is double the amount of the year 2000, when the total income was 360 million USD.

In 2008, WWF International spent 143,3 of the 174,5 million Swiss francs in revenues on Conservation Program, Conservation Policy and Awareness (82%). This 'awareness' concerning the influencing of opinions regarding WWF themes. In 2008, WWF Network spent 17 per cent on direct fund raising, 12 per cent on 'awareness', 9 per cent on administrative costs, which leaves about 64 per cent to be spent on conservation objectives (conservation program, policy, traffic, education).

After the first environment conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 the private WWF became more and more intertwined with governments, both in financial terms and with respect to the agenda. This

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<sup>16</sup> Michael Miersch, FDP conference Dresden, June 30 2012

<sup>17</sup> <http://www.trouw.nl/tr/nl/4324/Nieuws/article/detail/1847273/2011/02/10/rsquo-Natuurbehoud-We-moeten-verder-rsquo.dhtml>, Natuurbehoud, we moeten verder' – a 3-page article by Hans Marijnissen in which WNF director and lawyer Johan van de Gronden presents his views. The article received fierce criticism from the Dutch conservation sector, because WNF hardly invested in Dutch nature, among other reasons.

<sup>18</sup> Volkskrant May 16, 'Nederland drukt een te grote voet op aarde'. Author Michael Persson copies the message from WWF Living Planet Report 2012. WWF used two indices, i.e. the Ecological Footprint and an index of its own design for Consumer Pressure. In its leading article of May 15 2012, De Telegraaf reported a similar message and the same WWF employee, Natasja Oerlemans, is quoted as the 'expert'.

<sup>19</sup> WWF Annual Review 2008.

can be concluded from the growing WWF capital from US AID (100 million USD so far), Europe Aid, and other funds, which in 2008 accounted for 17 per cent of the revenues. The motivation behind the shift from strict conservation to developing aid has become obvious since the nineteen nineties, from the organization's 'people participation marketing' objectives. The 'sustainable development' agenda first set in Rio de Janeiro contributed to this.

WWF is a governmental extension by no small measure. The Brussels lobbying office of WWF – European Policy Office – receives an annual 'operating grant' of 600,000 euro from the European Commission<sup>20</sup> for lobbying with the EC, while benefiting financially from millions of euro's in annual project funds from Europe Aid<sup>21</sup>. In 2010, the rent of WWF office in Kinshasa, capital of Congo, was paid by the European Commission.

Klaus Rudischhauser, one of the executive directors of Europe Aid, does not wish to explain why the relatively rich WWF gets this financial preferential treatment. According to Rudischhauser, in chronology of answers<sup>22</sup>:

- a. 'office rent in Brussels is very costly for NGOs'
- b. 'it is a tradition of the European Commission to sponsor civil society'
- c. 'WWF shares many of our objectives'
- d. 'WWF is supposed to account for every euro spent'

#### **4. World Nature Cash: the funding machine**

WNF was established on August 10 1962 by Prince Bernhard, and was then called Stichting Natuur Fonds. The Prince became President of the fund. In 1965 the name was changed to Wereld Natuur Fonds. WNF grew to become the main green charity in the Netherlands, with 900,000 paying supporters (20,000 in 1972). WNF was set up as a fund raising organization for WWF/IUCN projects. According to its articles of associations deposited with the Chamber of Commerce in 1998, the WNF was obliged to transfer any incoming funds to Switzerland 'as soon as possible'. After payment to Switzerland, administration costs and staffing, a maximum of one third of the income could be spent on Dutch conservation projects, with a minimum of one fifth. The latter stipulation was dropped in the new articles of association, in which 'the development of nature' was added as an objective.

In 2009/10, WNF received 64 million euro in funds and subsidies. In 2011, this dropped to 62.4 million. The organization spent about 9 million euro on campaigns and campaign materials. A comparison: the largest political party in the Netherlands, VVD, had a campaigning budget of 2.5 million in 2010. A qualification: with its annual income WNF could buy one Chelsea footballer

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<sup>20</sup> EU Beneficiaries, [http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index\\_en.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/beneficiaries/fts/index_en.htm) states an amount of 3,142 million euro in EU project grants for WWF Indonesia and a number of research institutes for REDD+. In 2010, WWF took part in project to a value of 17 million euro in European developing and innovation funds.

<sup>21</sup> The term Non-Governmental Organization (NGO) thus becomes somewhat ironic. Non-Elected Organization seems to be a better term, considering the financial injections from governments.

<sup>22</sup> Interview 1100- June 5 2012 in Brussels.

(Fernando Torres cost 60 million euro). Director Johan van de Gronden earned over 150,000 euro a year. He dedicates himself to nature 14 months per year. The marketing director receives roughly the same salary.

In 2009/10 the total payment made to the international WWF work was 39,5 million euro. National offices are partly free to choose their own conservation projects to fund: in 2009/10 the amount spent on 'international projects' was 33,7 million euro, i.e. 52.6% of the total revenues.

*According to the articles of association WNF is 100 per cent owner of the real estate firm Baduin BV, which in 2011 had 1,893 million in assets. In addition, WNF owned 794,000 in assets in the wound up real estate firm Custodia Agris (a bequest). The annual accounts do not show what happened to these assets.*

The largest sponsor organizations – in addition to private sponsors and bequests – are the Postcodeloterij – which gives WNF a blank check for 10 to 20 million euro every year (in 2011 this was 15.5 million euro) and the government. Particularly the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sponsors WNF annually with 3 million euro in grants, even though this amount has been decreasing. An evaluation report by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs<sup>23</sup> reports a joint grant of 15.1 million euro for WNF, IUCN and Milieudefensie, in addition of a 3.2 million grant to WWF in Gland. Furthermore, WNF received project funds from the European Union, e.g. half a million euro for a climate project in Ghana, in 2010.

WNF annually contributes about 400,000 euro to projects in the Netherlands, mostly campaigns. This share for Dutch projects has been increasing over the past 3 years, however. In the accounting year 2010/11 the budget for Dutch projects grew to 1.4 million euro. The 500,000 euro extra budget (of 900,000 in total) reserved for conservation in the Netherlands in 2010 was spent on the preparation of a Stay Okay hostel in Munnikenland near Slot Loevestein, where WNF was supposed to sell its vision on nature among youths. This project was cancelled due to the negative publicity about the expropriation of farm land, as described in Brabants Dagblad. WNF contribution to Dutch conservation (campaign) projects –after deduction of failed projects – thus amounted to .6 per cent of its revenues. The 'Eviction for Conservation' theme is current in the Netherlands too, albeit in a mild form.

##### **5. Is 81 cent per euro spent actually spent on 'conservation of nature'?**

The emphasis on fund raising within WNF becomes clear from its work force: in 2010, 45 of the 106 FTE go to marketing and 26 FTE to Finance. For 'conservation' WNF has reserved 28 FTE. Marketing and Finance require 67% of staffing efforts. Still, on page 59 of its 2009/10 Annual Review, it claims that 81 cent of every euro is spent on the conservation of nature. This claim is substantiated by only deducting direct fund raising (13.6%) and administration/management costs (5.02%). WNF refers to all other activities as 'conservation', including overhead on international projects, and the salaries of communications staff.

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[http://www.minbuza.nl/binaries/content/assets/minbuza/nl/import/nl/producten\\_en\\_diensten/evaluatie/afgeronde\\_onderzoeken/2006/04/evaluation\\_of\\_the\\_theme\\_based\\_co\\_financing-programme\\_tmf/report/hippogallery%3Aasset](http://www.minbuza.nl/binaries/content/assets/minbuza/nl/import/nl/producten_en_diensten/evaluatie/afgeronde_onderzoeken/2006/04/evaluation_of_the_theme_based_co_financing-programme_tmf/report/hippogallery%3Aasset)



Campaigns and advertising promoting the highly specific WNF view and WNF initiatives are called 'conservation'. Campaigns leaning on the 'bad science'<sup>24</sup> behind the Ecological Footprint are 'conservation', as they are 'educational'. Approaching children on the Jaap Eden ice-skating rink in polar bear suits, in 2008, as part of the 'Ijsbeer in nood' campaign, therefore is considered to be conservation too. In part 2, chapter 4, it will appear that the use of the polar bear as a climate mascot is highly ironic.<sup>25</sup> Does this imply that the plastic-wrapped WNF greeting cards KLM Cityhopper serves with their lunches also count as 'conservation of nature'?

**New calculation of contribution to conservation, based on a stricter definition of conservation:**

**53.6% per euro is spent on conservation**

With a 20% correction (23% overhead is the standard in international conservation<sup>26</sup>) there is a 31.6 million euro budget left for international products. This is 49.4% of the total WNF revenues. A recalculation – leaving out campaigns, magazines and the salaries of communications personnel, but including conservation – results in the following estimate as to the percentage of the total revenues spent on nature projects:

- Conservation projects in the Netherland	.6 per cent
- Conservation personnel	3.56 per cent <sup>27</sup>
- Nature projects abroad with 20% overhead correction	49.4 per cent
<b>Total</b>	<b>53.6 (per) cent per euro in revenue</b>

An IIED report mentions a 55% share of all spendings on 'conservation' by WWF in 2008<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Fiala, N. (2008) Measuring sustainability, why the ecological footprint is bad economics and bad environmental science, in *Ecological Economics* 67, 519-525

<sup>25</sup> Zeilmaker R. (2012) The World Wide Fund for Administration (2). Does WWF Protect Nature? A study into the efficacy of the Wereld Natuur Fonds in nature conservation. De Groene Rekenkamer, p. 19.

<sup>26</sup> Scholfield K, Borckington, D. (2009) Non-Governmental Organizations and African Wildlife Conservation, a preliminary analysis, Brooks World Poverty Institute, University of Manchester: the calculated 23% is the mean overhead of all green NGOs active in Africa

<sup>27</sup> Calculation: 28 FTE 'conservation' / 106 total FTE x 9.3 million euro in salaries in 2009/10, means 3.56% of 64 million euro.

<sup>28</sup> The breakdown of WWF International's expenditure is: (% of total WWF expenditure): conservation 39%; conservation policy 3%; education .2%, awareness raising 1%; fundraising .6%, administration .2%. In total, therefore, conservation expenditure amounts to 55% (WWF, Annual Report 2000).

The dubious ROI of conservation programs and the absence of a link between priority areas and the scope of expenditure are discussed separately in part II<sup>29</sup>. This problem is not limited to just WWF.<sup>30</sup>

## 6. Global elite is working for WWF

Without exception, all former Presidents of the international WWF, were members of royal families and captains of industry of British-Dutch multinationals, or Commonwealth firms. Prince Bernhard was the first WWF President, from 1961 to 1976. John Hugo Loudon, top ranking official with Shell, was WWF President from 1976 to 1981. Loudon was a personal friend of Bernhard and was knighted both by the British and by the Dutch royal families. Loudon succeeded Bernhard in 1976, when the latter became discredited by the Lockheed scandal. Bernhard transferred money received from Lockheed to WWF in Switzerland.

Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh, was President of WWF from 1981 to 1996 and still is emeritus president. Many WWF offices in European countries were established by royal families, e.g. the one in Denmark (Prince Hendrik, who is President of WWF Denmark), and Juan Carlos of Spain (founder and President of WWF Spain and an honorary member of WWF). Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands was guest of honor at the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in Rotterdam, the Netherlands, on May 7 2012. The 'Panda Ball', a fundraiser gala for WWF in Singapore in 2009, was opened by the Dutch princess Laurentien.

In the early nineteen seventies, Prince Bernhard founded the 1001 a Nature Trust: nobility, captains of industry and dignitaries from his own network could become a member of the Trust on invitation and against payment of 10,000 USD. The 1001 is still a loyal sponsor of the global WWF<sup>31</sup> -- and its lobbies on behalf of WWF in the top echelons. The 1001 had controversial people among its members, e.g. the dictator of former Zaire – now Congo – Mobutu. Other members included representatives of companies like Unilever, Shell, and families like the Rothschilds, the Rockefellers (a family whose fortune was made in oil) and the diamond moguls of De Beers.

Former PM of the Netherlands Ruud Lubbers was WWF President from 2000 to 2002. Lubbers is a member of 1001 as well. The current President of WWF is the former Minister for the Environment of Ecuador, Yolanda Kakabadse. She succeeded the former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Nigeria, Emeka Anyaoku. People in top positions within WWF have often held top positions at UNEP or IUCN. Kakabadse was Chair of IUCN. Current UNEP member Achim Steiner used to lead the IUCN.

At a national level, WNF is good at enlisting influential people too. WNF Supervisor Teresa Fogelberg, Director of Climate and Industry at the former Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, led the Dutch climate delegation in international climate agreements. She contributed to the ratification of the Kyoto Protocol and the resulting emissions trading. Former Minister of the

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<sup>29</sup> The World Wide Fund for Administration (2). Does WWF Protect Nature? A study into the efficacy of the Wereld Natuur Fonds in nature conservation. De Groene Rekenkamer 2012/©www.rypkezeilmaker.nl

<sup>30</sup> See also: Ferraro, P.J. and Pattanayak, S.K. (2006) 'Money for nothing? A call for empirical evaluation of biodiversity conservation investments'. Plos Biology, 4, 482-488

<sup>31</sup> In its 2008 annual report WWF expresses its gratitude to '1001 a Nature Trust' for its financial aid and lobbying efforts.

Environment Jacqueline Cramer was Supervisor at WNF as well. Currently, Unilever Board Member Anthony Burgmans is Supervisor. Sustainability guru Jan Paul van Soest also used to be WNF Supervisor.

WNF and WWF are often found to be less radical than organizations such as Greenpeace. Still, WNF regularly teams up with Greenpeace, Milieudefensie and more orthodox organizations in campaigns, fundraising and marketing. Greenpeace and WNF together received a campaign budget for an 'ocean campaign' from the PostcodeLoterij. And WNF financed the Greenpeace ship the Rainbow Warrior in the nineteen eighties.

## **7. Strong effort for WWF themes**

WWF is the largest green NGO in the world, and the main vehicle for globalization of the environmental agenda. Especially in former British African colonies WWF is by far the largest Conservation NGO, being twice as large as the 2<sup>nd</sup> (American) party.<sup>32</sup> WWF directors initiated many institutes that influence global policy, e.g. the Club of Rome.

One of the most influential advocates of a global environment agenda, Maurice Strong, is co-founder of WWF Canada. He was a member of 1001 a Nature Trust, and he used to be President of the UN Conference on Human Environment, the Stockholm Conference in 1972. In 1972, Strong became the first Executive Director of the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP). This was established in Nairobi, Kenya. In addition to his environmental initiatives and the UN positions that he held, Strong also was the Secretary of the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Here, Agenda 21 was laid down, the 'sustainable' development agenda for the 21<sup>st</sup> century, which featured the redistribution of Western wealth towards the developing countries.

During the RIO conference, the CO<sub>2</sub>-focused climate agreements UNFCCC were ratified. These led to the 1997 Kyoto Protocol, an agreement that was aggressively promoted by WWF in the media<sup>33</sup>. In 2005, the Protocol led to the European system for emissions trading – actively encouraged by WWF – and the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM). WWF developed its own hallmark for climate projects: the Gold Standard.

WWF staff was active during all UN climate conferences that resulted from the 1992 Earth Summit. It contributed to the design of all IPCC climate reports. One third of the authors of the summaries of the UN climate panel IPCC report in 2007, as prepared for policymakers and journalists, were involved in WWF<sup>34</sup>. Principle 1 named in the preamble<sup>35</sup> to the global Convention on Biological Diversity established during the first Earth Summit is: 'People living in Harmony with Nature'. These are the exact same words used in the fundraising slogan of WWF USA.

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<sup>32</sup> Scholfield K, Borckington, D. (2009) Non-Governmental Organizations and African Wildlife Conservation, a preliminary analysis, Brooks World Poverty Institute, University of Manchester

<sup>33</sup> The Climate gate emails show how WWF pushed scientists to lend their names to petitions and how it used the media to put pressure on Japan to sign a more drastic agreement in Japan.

<sup>34</sup> Vahrenholt, F., Luning, S. (2012) Die Kalte Sonne, warum die Klimakatastrophe nicht stattfindet, Hoffman&Campe Verlag/F. Vahrenholt, May 11 European Energy Review

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.un.org/documents/ga/conf151/aconf15126-1annex1.htm>

WNF personnel members such as Donald Pols were among the Dutch national delegation that prepared UN climate agreements. WNF – together with Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth – also helped draw up ecological criteria for the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive. Its limitations are imposed on fishery and other users of the North Sea.<sup>36</sup>

## **8. WWF, a friend of the business community**

WWF International prides itself in its deals with Coca Cola, IKEA, Siemens, the banking industry, (palm oil investors) HSBC, and many other multinationals. Likewise, WNF boasts its deals and consultations with the business community, including Rabobank. Any lover of nature onboard a KLM Cityhopper is served a sandwich with a plastic-wrapped greeting card of animal pictures, courtesy of WNF. On the card they ask the passenger to sponsor WNF: in other words, more consumption is needed to help WWF in its million campaigns against, such as the Living Planet Report.

To explain its role in the Davos World Economic Forum, WWF describes the involvement of multinationals as follows<sup>37</sup>:

*'We found out that the most significant threat to our 35 priority places were 15 commodities: sugarcane, whitefish, fish meal, shrimp trawling, paper & pulp, salmon farming, palm oil, tuna fisheries, beef, soy, sawn wood, biofuels, dairy and cotton.*

*We also found out that only 100 companies controlled 25% of the trade of those 15 commodities. The reason why 25% of trade is so important, is because it results in 40-50% of producers. Producers that will compete to sell into those better markets. By working with those 100 companies, we can leverage almost half of global production of those 15 commodities and address those threats.'*

WWF's motivation can thus be described as economic realism. The strategy is criticized regularly by 'orthodox' environmentalists. Collaboration with governments and multinationals led to problems concerning the human rights of the population in areas that are under WWF policy rule. Problems like oppression and evictions of indigenous populations by WWF partners, in the name of conservation, has already been criticized in a report by the World Watch Institute in 2004<sup>38</sup>. The article in Der Spiegel of May 2012 called 'WWF helps industry more than the environment' also stated that this strategy of WWF can undermine its objectives.

The main criticism expressed by German filmmaker Wilfried Huisman in his documentary 'Der Pakt mit dem Panda' concerns the collaboration between WWF and a consortium of governments and large multinationals, e.g. the palm oil industry in Indonesia, and Monsanto in South America. These are said to do more harm than good for the rain forest, wildlife like the Orang Utang and the local population. The film was nominated for 2 awards at the Film Festival of Monte Carlo of June 16

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<sup>36</sup> [http://kennisonline.deltares.nl/txmpub/files/?\\_file\\_id=13767](http://kennisonline.deltares.nl/txmpub/files/?_file_id=13767) No fishery organizations were involved in the limitation advice for fishery in the name of a specific vision on nature – as developed by environmental organization. Just environmental campaign groups. The ecological criteria in the EU Marine Strategy Framework Directive were drawn up with Janette Worm, and are characterized by the holistic 'don't touch' philosophy, typically adopted by campaign organizations, which disregards evolutionary, dynamic characteristics.

<sup>37</sup> <http://www.ethicalmarkets.com/2012/01/20/why-is-ww-at-davos/>

<sup>38</sup> Chapin, M. 2004. A challenge to conservationists. *WorldWatch Magazine* (November-December):17-31.

2012. Observations made by Huisman about how the local population is driven off in the name of 'conservation' and 'sustainability' have been uttered by others before him, e.g. Mark Dowie<sup>39</sup>. Conservationrefugees.com is dedicated to this issue. Local critics/colleagues of Huisman think he is too high-principled in the stand he takes against multinationals and genetic modification<sup>40</sup>.

## 9. WWF, an enemy of businesses

While taking pride in its collaboration with and financial aid received from multinationals, WWF marketing often communicates strong anti-industrial and anti-economic sentiments. A study of the IIED, for instance, claims that WWF policies – paid for by the Dutch Ministry of Foreign Affairs in 2001 – demonstrates that attitude towards businesses diverge quite substantially within WWF.<sup>41</sup> The message in this next WWF press release shows strong anti-industrial sentiments.<sup>42</sup>

*'Brussels June 16 2009: In all of Europe the green economy offers jobs to more than 3 million people. Which is a lot more than the polluting industry. Thanks to our Knowledge Economy, green jobs grow on trees, here in Belgium. The Green Jobs for Europe reports shows that at the moment at least 3.4 million jobs across Europe are directly related to renewable energy, sustainable transport and energy efficiency. This is more than the current 2,8 million jobs in polluting industries like mining, electricity, gas, cement, iron and steel.'*

In this quote, pollution is only used to refer to CO<sub>2</sub> emission of fossil energy. Ironically, the construction, realization and operation of wind mill parks as propagated by WWF and WNF require – highly polluting<sup>43</sup>-- mining to gain the rare earth metals such as neodymium for the turbines (1 ton of ore per turbine), gas for the back-up power, and cement and steel for the structures. Moreover, 'green' jobs – translated by WWF exclusively as work related to the energy sector – can never lead to substantial economic growth, according to the Irish-Dutch economist Richard Tol, who states:

*'Climate policy does not contribute to economic growth or a growth in number of jobs. Quite the contrary: about 2% of the Gross European Product is spent on energy. If the energy sector grows 10%, the economy grows .2%. A small sector is not able to boost economic growth, especially not in terms of employment. About 1% of the workforce works in the energy sector. If the number of energy jobs doubles, unemployment will drop only mildly.'*

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<sup>39</sup> Dowie, M. 2005. Conservation Refugees: When protecting nature means kicking people out. Orion Online. November-December:1-12.

<sup>40</sup> Michael Miersch: 'One of the things I like about WWF is that they do in fact collaborate with companies. Huisman appears to think that WWF ought to be like Greenpeace.'

<sup>41</sup> Jeanrenaud, S. (2002) People Orientated Approaches in Global Conservation, Is the leopard changing its spots?' IIED 2002, p. 68, via <http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/9134IIED.pdf>

<sup>42</sup> [http://groenejobs.be/uploads/Documenten/am\\_2009\\_3\\_groene\\_jobs\\_rapport\\_wwf.pdf](http://groenejobs.be/uploads/Documenten/am_2009_3_groene_jobs_rapport_wwf.pdf)

<sup>43</sup> Chemist Prof. Koen Binnemans of Catholic University Leuven, in EOS Magazine, June 2011. Each turbine requires rare earth. And 99% of this rare earth metals for turbines comes from 1 mine in China, on the border with Mongolia, the rest comes from Canada. Binnemans about the environmental conditions at these mines: 'In 1995 I visited processing installations for rare earth in Baotou. What I saw there reminded me of the harrowing conditions in 19<sup>th</sup>-century European mining areas. Hardly any investments have been made in new technology since.'



According to WWF, the Palestinian Territories, where unemployment is rife, is *the* ecological model country of 2012.<sup>44</sup> Furthermore, WWF celebrates Earth Hour once a year via a blackout, when everyone is asked to off their electric lights. As such Earth Hour can be considered as an anti-modern vision on man and wealth. As it stands, economic growth is directly proportional to (fossil) energy consumption. Failing market-worthy technology (without government support) and given the current global share of wind and solar energy of between 1 and 3 per cent, advocating radical reductions in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions – by campaign groups like WWF and Greenpeace – means advocating radical economic downsizing.

During the celebrations of WNF's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary on the SS Rotterdam on May 7 2012, Sheila Murray of the Club of Rome Canada claimed that the West should look at Native Americans for a model. 'When European immigrants came to America, they considered the land to be empty. But this was the result of the Native Americans not having an impact on nature. This is why their footprint was so small.' Similarly, the knowledge of Inuit is considered superior of that of the Westerner. Such ecologicistic, anti-industrial and anti-technological images have been commonplace with the green movement for decades, as is an anti-humanist and any-Judeo-Christian view on how to interact with nature<sup>45 46</sup>. The nature-friendliness of primitive people was rejected 40 years ago by paleoecologic research.<sup>47</sup> The forest in 'empty' America has been burnt down by Native Americans countless times, as has been demonstrated by paleoecological research, for instance by John Birks. The idea of 'people living in harmony with nature' as propagated by WWF probably never existed in reality.

#### **10. 'Forest disappears for your wealth.'**

In 50 years of WWF marketing communications, 'The West' has always been the bad guy in terms of the environment. Earlier WWF campaigns, e.g. the one in May 1966 in Geneva<sup>48</sup>, referred to commercial logging as the main contributing factor to an 'extinction crisis', which would case 50,000 species to become extinct annually. The campaign appealed to anti-corporative and anti-modern sentiments, which are in flat contradiction with certain very basic facts:

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<sup>44</sup> Volkskrant May 16 2012. 'The Netherlands leave to large a footprint on the planet.' In the index reported in WWF Living Planet Report 2012 on which the article was based, the Palestinian Territories top this list.

<sup>45</sup> Lynn White Jr.'s pamphlet 'One the Historical Roots of our ecological crisis' in Science, in 1967, turns round on Christian and humanist ideas of mankind, the anthropocentrism that was said to have caused a separation from nature, and that was considered to be the single most important cause of the ecological crisis. Former director of the Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving, Klaas van Egmond, recently defended this view in Reformatorisch Dagblad. Staff of this planning agency for the living environment is involved in the Club of Rome, the Club of Rome initiative IIASA and the Club of Rome spinoff the Balaton Group (which includes Bert de Vries. Matthis Wackernagel of the Global Footprint Network is also a member.)

<sup>46</sup> Klaas van Egmond, former director of the Planbureau voor de Leefomgeving used the same rhetoric against 'The West' in Reformatorisch Dagblad in August 2011, setting it off against primitive people who live in harmony with nature.

<sup>47</sup> See e.g. the work of Paul Martin (1973) about the Pleistocene extinctions megafauna in North America after the arrival of 'Native Americans', 'The Discovery of America', Science vol. 179 No. 4077, pp. 969-74

<sup>48</sup> To mark the first meeting of the Intergovernmental Panel on Forestry

- a. According to FAO figures, the forest area in Western countries has grown significantly over the past 50 years; in Europe it grew with 8 million hectare, from 1950 to 1999<sup>49</sup>. In the Netherlands too, the total available acres of forest grew from 1 to 11 per cent in a single century.
- b. Not a single species known in the United States, Canada and Europe has become extinct due to modern forestry.

In a reaction to the campaign, Greenpeace co-founder Patrick Moore, wrote to then WWF President Prince Philip<sup>50</sup>:

*'Myself and many colleagues who specialize in forest science are distressed at recent statements made by WWF regarding the environmental impact of forestry. These statements indicate a break with WWF's strong tradition of basing their policies on science and reason. To the best of our knowledge, not a single species has become extinct in North America due to forestry.'*

Prince Philip answered:

*'I quite agree that this third statement (logging being the main cause of extinction) is certainly contentious and the points that you make are all good ones. All I can say is that he was probably thinking of tropical forests when he made the comment.'*

Still, in 1997 WWF USA continued to claim that 75% of North American forests were threatened. None of the '50,000 species' were registered by science: they were computer extrapolations of species that might have disappeared in the event of a possible land conversion. Over the past 5 years many more new species have been discovered and were newly described by science than have become extinct /were written off in 200 years' time<sup>51</sup>. Over the past century, 38 animal species became extinct, mostly subspecies of relatively common species like the puma and the ibex. Science described over 1.5 million species, half of which are insects.

## **11. Does Western wealth threaten animal species?**

It is difficult to relate campaigns against Western wealth to the main objectives of the WWF, the protection of animal species. Especially in wealthy countries deforestation has been turned around, and the loss of species has been stopped through investments in nature. Wealthy Western countries have the strictest nature and environmental laws. In the Netherlands the number of plant and animal species has been growing since the nineteen seventies, both in an absolute and in a relative

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<sup>49</sup> Nabuurs, G.J. et al. 2003 Temporal evolution of the European Forest Sector, carbon sink from 1950/1999 Global Change Biology, 9 152/160

<sup>50</sup> Personal website ecologist Dr. Patrick Moore [www.greenspirit.com](http://www.greenspirit.com) in 'Environmentalism for the 21<sup>st</sup> century'. Moore left Greenpeace in 1986 and became a consultant for logging companies, among others.

<sup>51</sup> <http://www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/abrs/publications/other/species-numbers/2009/pubs/nlsaw-2nd-complete.pdf> Chapman, A.D. (2009) Numbers of living species in Australia and the Rest of the World, Report for the Australian Biological Resources Study. Quote: 'Since the first edition of the Numbers of Living Species and the World' was produced in 206, we've discovered 48 reptiles, about 200 new fish species and 1,184 flowering plants.' Over the past 200 years 36 species of marsupials became extinct, due to the introduction of cats, rats and foxes.

sense<sup>52</sup>. International agreements between polar bear countries Norway, Denmark (Greenland), Canada and Russia, reached in 1972, concerning hunting limitations, made the number of polar bears grow from 10,000 to 25,000 in 2006<sup>53</sup>. Particularly in Canada – which has the largest population of polar bears – the population of polar bears grew spectacularly.

Poverty and the struggle to attain more wealth are what make nature suffer the most. Modern studies show that most of deforestation takes place in Africa for (small-scale) fuel (62%) and for houses, and that commercial logging plays a much smaller role (26%)<sup>54</sup>. Wetlands International states in the State of the World's Waterbirds 2010 that especially bird populations in North America, Australia and Europe are thriving thanks to investments made in the protection of nature, while<sup>55</sup>

*'Waterbird population status is least favorable in Africa, South America and particularly Asia, where 62% of known populations are decreasing or extinct and only 10% are increasing.'*

Seventy-five per cent of all extinctions described in the IUCN Red List took place in tropical islands, mostly through the introduction of exotic species. The most iconic victim is the dodo of Mauritius, which perished because of 17<sup>th</sup>-century Dutch trade missions of VOC, and the pigs and rats they brought along with them. The IISG, for instance, has a list of 100 'worst invaders', including the brown tree snake, that hitched a ride on a plane and killed the endemic bird population on Guam in the Pacific<sup>56</sup>

## **12. The roads of the global environment agenda lead to the Club of Rome and WWF**

WWF regularly points at apocalyptic projections from computer scenarios that are said to require a radical change in behavior. One of the influential suppliers of such doom projections is the Club of Rome (which has close ties with WWF). When the first Club of Rome report was issued in 1981 – Limits to Growth – 6 of the directors held that same position in WWF, including Aurelio Peccei, who was President of the Club of Rome<sup>57</sup>. The Club of Rome was a major influence on the globalization of the environment agenda.

In the Netherlands, 900,000 copies of the Dutch pocket edition of the Limits to Growth report were sold, among a population of 13 million. The Club of Rome initiated the Balaton Group. This think tank has its annual meeting at Lake Balaton in Hungary. Its members include Bert de Vries of the Dutch National Institute for Public Health and the Environment (RIVM) and Matthis Wackernagel, who developed the Ecological Footprint.

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<sup>52</sup> Haes de, H.U., W. de Snoo, G. Prins (2009) *Het gaat weer beter met de natuur in Nederland*, in Landschap, pp 161-168

<sup>53</sup> See the Polar Bear Specialist Group

<sup>54</sup> Dr. Martin Herold, Wageningen University press release

<sup>55</sup> [http://www.wetlands.org/Portlands/0/publications/SOWW2010%\(3\).pdf](http://www.wetlands.org/Portlands/0/publications/SOWW2010%(3).pdf)

<sup>56</sup> Facts about the relationship between modernity and biodiversity can be found in the SWNM Biodiversiteitwijzer 2012 via [www.swnm.nl](http://www.swnm.nl)

<sup>57</sup> Peccei is also founder of the Institute for Applied System Analysis –IIASA, in Salzburg, which develops computer projections for global environmental trends. Climate scientist Pavel Kabat is its current director, and well-known 'alarmist' researchers such as the Mr. Acid Rain who featured a lot in the media in the nineteen eighties, Leen Hordijk, are among the former Research Directors. Many authors of the IPCC report worked for IIASA.

The Club of Rome used projections from the world economic model MIT World3 by Jay Forrester as described in 'World Dynamics'. The first results were presented in Moscow and Rio de Janeiro. The collapse of the world was imminent without a radical change in behavior enforced by a global authority. The demise could only be averted with a 0-growth economy. The Club of Rome has been campaigning for a radical redistribution of Western wealth for 40 years. For this it invokes a state of emergency and a 'defining moment in history'. This principle of radical redistribution is also found in Agenda 21, the 'sustainable' development agenda of the United Nations. Agenda 21 was drawn up during the first conference in Rio de Janeiro in 1992.

### **13. 'A deeply religious respect *not* to use fossil fuel.'**

In its 40-year campaign, the Club has aborted old projection, as they did not come true, and traded them for new ones. During the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations of WNF on May 7 2012, attended by Queen Beatrix, for instance<sup>58</sup>, Norwegian economist Jørgen Randers, member of the Club of Rome, illustrated his risk most feared for 2052, a projected global warming of 2.5 degrees. It is why a 'deeply religious respect' must be instilled in young people 'for not using fossil fuel.'

Randers' recommendations in order to avert the disaster in 2052 are an echo of the Club of Rome, 40 years ago: the growth of the global population had to be stopped via emancipation ("empowerment of women"). According to Randers, growth of the population had to be curbed in the wealthy part of the world in particular<sup>59</sup> because of the large ecological footprint of Westerners. 'My daughter's footprint is 10 times the size of that of an Indian child,' Randers explains.

Also, current democracies are said not to be capable of developing the long-term global policies Randers considers to be necessary. An influential global authority must therefore correct the endemic short-term thinking of democracies. WWF President Yolande Kakabadse commended Randers' presentation and thanked the Club of Rome for 'helping to draw up an agenda together with WWF'. She claims that 2052 sounds so distant, while people in El Salvador already suffer the consequences of climate change, with the excessive amount of rain that falls there. 'For them, the end of the world will be tomorrow, could things get any worse?'

### **14. Time is standing still: at WWF it has been five to midnight for the past 40 years**

What visions for the future have organizations like the Club of Rome and WWF conjured up over the past 40 years? Let's start with 1971. The message of WWF director Aurelio Peccei in the report to the Club of Rome points to a decisive moment in history<sup>60</sup> – as do all apocalyptic movements:

*'Man has reached a point where he needs to find a new way for his cultural evolution.'*

In economic developments and developments in nature, the Club of Rome saw 'symptoms' of a general disease that it claimed was caused by overcharging the planet:

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<sup>58</sup> The presentation can be found at <http://www.houstonforesight.or/?0=1777>

<sup>59</sup> This in spite of the theory of demographic transition, which teaches that growth of population is curbed the higher the levels of development and wealth

<sup>60</sup> Meadows, D. (1971) Limits to Growth, report of the Club of Rome, Dutch translation Grenzen aan de Groei, Uitgeverij het Spectrum NV, p 13 in the preface by Alexander Kinf, Saburo Okito (WWF Japan), Aurelio Peccei (WWF International), Eduard Petel, Hugo Thieman (scientific director WWF Italy), Carrol Wilson

*'Given these circumstances people everywhere are increasingly confronted with a series of unmanageable and had-to-grasp problems – disturbance of the environment, a crisis of habits... inflation and other monetary and economic disruptions to name a few.'*

Twenty years onwards it is five to midnight once again. The preamble to Agenda 21 on the Rio Earth Summit of the United Nations in 1992 – presided by WWF Nestor Maurice Strong (secretary general) literally echoes the Club of Rome:

*'Humanity stands at a defining moment in history. We are confronted with a perpetuation of disparities between and within nations, a worsening of poverty, hunger, ill health and illiteracy, and the continuing deterioration of the ecosystems on which we depend for our well-being.'*

And 16 years onwards, in the introduction to the 2008 WWF annual review, it is five to midnight yet again. Unless coordinated global action averts our demise, that is:

*'It is now generally accepted that the world is in the grip of a downward spiral that only concerted action can reverse. The ecological impact of humanity's footprint has caused the Earth's natural biodiversity to deteriorate – reducing, in turn, its capacity to absorb further excesses.'*

#### **15. Empiric disproof of doom scenarios has no impact on WWF's global agenda**

WWF claims it uses 'the best available science'. Yet from the onset the scientific validity of the projections of the Club was fiercely criticized by serious economists like William Nordhaus of Yale University who denounced the Malthusian<sup>61</sup> character of the Club of Rome – as did many other economists. In his study 'World Dynamics, measuring without data', published in the Economic Journal, Nordhaus dryly concluded<sup>62</sup>:

*'Whereas most scientists would require empirical validation of either the assumptions or the predictions of the model before declaring its truth content, Forrester is apparently content with subjective plausibility. The discrepancy in scientific standards of acceptability is probably what lies behind the dispute about the value of World Dynamics.'*

None of the predicted collapses or 'depleting' of natural resources has come true<sup>63</sup>. The past 20 years, half a billion of people were drawn up from below the poverty line<sup>64</sup>, and the Green Revolution is now gaining ground in Africa<sup>65</sup>. And yet, the message of limits to (exponential) growth

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<sup>61</sup> In his 1798 essay 'On the Principle of Population' clergyman Thomas Malthus described the exponential growth of the population, while means of production grew along in a linear manner. This could not but lead to a collapse and massive death, until the point where the population was balanced with said means, e.g. available arable land and food production. Malthus inspired Charles Darwin for his theory of evolution. The Club of Rome refers to Malthus as well.

<sup>62</sup> The Economic Journal, Vol. 83, No. 332. (Dec, 1973), pp. 1156-1183

<sup>63</sup> For a detailed discussion and disproof of doom scenarios and related Malthusians like Paul Ehrlich, see Lomborg, B. (2001) The Skeptical Environmentalist. Measuring the real state of the world, 515 pp., Cambridge University Press.

<sup>64</sup> European Report on Development 2011/12. 'Confronting Scarcity: Managing water, energy and land for inclusive and sustainable growth', p. 28, cites a 2010 OECD report

<sup>65</sup> See [www.agra-alliance.org](http://www.agra-alliance.org)



in an (ecologically) limited system continues to appeal to an elite<sup>66</sup>. In Rotterdam, at the anniversary celebrations of WNF, the projections of the Club of Rome were characterized as ‘correct in terms of content, albeit poorly timed’. The irony can’t escape the wise.

## 16. Governing global elite has to by-pass democracy

With the Club of Rome and on the WNF anniversary celebrations on the SS Rotterdam, the vision of economists like William Ophuls reverberated. In his 2011 book ‘Plato’s Revenge’ he advocated a global elite government, which was to defuse an ecologic crisis. Ophuls and members of the Club of Rome already brought this message in 1974<sup>67</sup>. The Club of Rome already advocated a world authority back in 1971.

From Randers’ presentation and statements of the WWF elite a love of the democratic process and individual freedom can hardly be gleaned. Randers acknowledges the difficulty of this anti-democratic recommendations.

In doing so, Randers reflects the statements of philosophers/author John Gray: most environmentalists are not prepared to accept the anti-humanist implications that follow from an ecologic world view. Critical self-analysis of the travel behavior of global protectors of the environment shows that their many visits to international conferences cause at least twice the CO<sub>2</sub> emission of the average American<sup>68</sup>. Apparently the intended governing world elite does not have a ‘deeply religious respect for not using fossil fuel’.

Nevertheless the Club of Rome hopes that by invoking a state of emergency – as it did 40 years ago – should lead to a world authority that eclipses national democracies (one of Randers’ four main recommendations). The West needs to consume less, and give up wealth to achieve ‘a balanced world.’ A ‘balanced planet’ and ‘green growth’ and ‘sustainable development’ as propagated by UNEP<sup>69</sup>, and the WWF in its marketing communications may sound business-friendly and humanitarian, yet the single most important driving force behind this global elite is climate policy, which is unilaterally interpreted as CO<sub>2</sub> policy via energy. As the Irish-Dutch economist Richard Tol wrote in NRC Handelsblad of June 20 2012

*‘Notions like “sustainable development” and “green growth” may appear broad, yet in practice they are just another name for climate policy. The local environmental problems in Asia, South America*

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<sup>66</sup> Prof. Dr. Rudy Rabbinge, production ecologist and participant in the Agra Alliance in Africa states that doom scenarios in the spirit of Malthus are especially successful round a turn of a century

<sup>67</sup> Ophuls, W., essay ‘Lockes Paradigm Lost’ in Meadows, D. et al (1974) Beyond Growth – Essays on alternative futures, financed by the Ford Foundation. Ecologist Eugene Odium, author of the ecologic standard work ‘Fundamentals of Ecology’ advocates that half of all the land is reserved for undisturbed nature.

<sup>68</sup> Helen E. Fox, Peter Kareiva, Brian Silliman, Jessica Hitt, David A. Lytle, Benjamin S. Halpern, Christine V. Hawkes, Joshua Lawler, Maile Neel, Julian D. Olden, Martin A. Schlaepfer, Katherine Smith and Heather Tallis (2009) Why do we fly? Ecologists’ sins of emission. *Frontiers in Ecology and the Environment* 7:294-296. Thirteen ecologists calculate their own CO<sub>2</sub> emission and find a double CO<sub>2</sub> footprint compared with the American population due to their frequent conference visits, for which they travel by air.

<sup>69</sup> Djoghlafl, A., Dodd, F. (2010). ‘Biodiversity and Ecosystem Insecurity. A planet in peril.’ Ahmed Djoghlafl, executive secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity of UNEP warns – contrary to the observable truth of data about species described by science – that the ‘6<sup>th</sup> mass extinction’ is imminent, and that he therefore wants to create ‘a planet in balance’ by promoting radical changes in behavior of the world’s population.

*and Africa are not relevant in the eyes of the global environment elite. The environment-consciousness of the rich countries actually stems from the locality. Not in a single person in Europe would want to go back to the days of the dead rivers. Yet people in Asia are asked to ignore the suffocating air and to focus their attention on an abstract problem in the future.'*

The failing of global environmental conferences show that the strategy propagated by WWF and the Club of Rome has reached its sell-by date. According to the British philosopher Roger Scruton their 'predilection for salvation' via global bureaucracy has to be traded for a local solution. Scruton advocates the strengthening of the national state and groups that have strong links to their local environment in solving nature-related and environmental issues<sup>70</sup>.

### **Conclusion Part 1**

**There is not enough social debate about how the general interest is served by the elimination of the democratic process, the formation of conglomerates with preferred businesses and the promotion of economic stagnation. The 'charity' WWF supports this agenda, and its (former) directors are among its architects. There ought to be a debate about the question whether the Public Benefit Institution (ANBI) status of WNF can be justified.**

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<sup>70</sup> Scruton, A. (2012) Groene Filosofie, Verstandig nadenken over onze planeet, Nieuw Amsterdam, 320 pp. Chapter 3, De Hang naar Verlossing.