Highlights from December 2023

Greetings to the MAHB Community

Discover the latest developments in our world:

Don't miss this article on the United Nations' advocacy for population denial. Thanks to the Canadian Association of the Club of Rome, watch the thought-provoking Q&A webinar on the implications of natural population decline. Catch up on the recorded webinar on transcending common carbon reduction strategies and commodity thinking with a specific focus on Africa.

Reflect on the **blogs** from last month: Marine biologist Maddalena Bearzi shares her reflections on the vanishing landscapes of her childhood and proposes actionable solutions. Also, read our MAHB Dialogue on human dysfunction with author and environmental scientist Jennifer Jacquet. Furthermore, discover an artist's transformative journey from anxiety of ecological collapse to constructive action.

Explore a wealth of **resources** from December, including a contribution to the Great Transformation Initiative on expanding animal ethics, a study addressing the threat to remaining wilderness areas in the Northern Hemisphere due to expanding agriculture, another study exploring the social and economic benefits of population decline, and a paper on the narrowing human climate niche due to global warming (all available for download). Delve into the systemic importance of large old trees and explore calculations of national sustainable population sizes with ecological footprints. Lastly, discover how our growing human and livestock population is crowding out other life on Earth, and learn about the systemic miscarriages of justice animal rights activists are facing.

Our highlighted **podcasts** from The Great Simplification include discussions with Bill McKibben on effective climate action and The Human Predicament in 22 Clips to round off the year with insightful perspectives.

Please note that due to the holiday season, there is no Art Section this month.

Wishing you a peaceful and happy new year from all of us at the MAHB.

Don't forget to check out the latest MAHB announcements here.

Not a member of the MAHB yet? Join the MAHB and help transform progressive civil society into an increasingly powerful force for positive change.

What's Happening

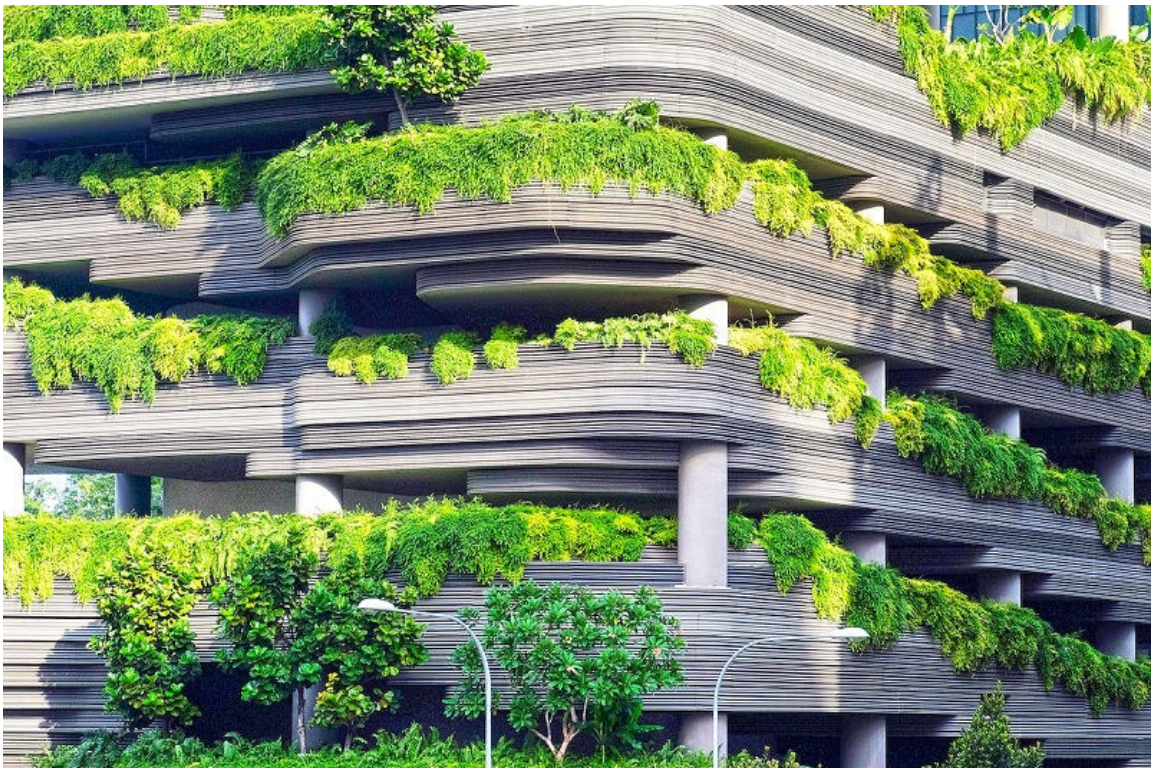
The United Nations Population Fund Promotes Population Denial

Despite the world population doubling in the fifty years since the UNFPA began, its recent press release on the 8 billion milestone doesn't call for action on population growth, despite the impact of the additional 4 billion people being evident in environmental damage and widespread poverty.

Webinar recording – Q&A with Dr. Madeline Weld: Is Natural Population Decline a Concern?

A presentation and conversation hosted by the Canadian Association for the Club of Rome

Dr. Madeline Weld examines natural population decline in the context of collisions with neoliberal economic systems that prioritize perpetual growth. Additionally, the implications of an aging population are explored.



Webinar recording: Navigating Beyond Zero Carbon Strategies

Catch up on this deep-dive webinar that goes beyond typical carbon strategies. It delves into the intricate world of carbon credits as intangible assets, challenging conventional notions of commodities.

Blogs for this Month

Inaction is Not an Option

What if the flora and fauna we love were to disappear forever?

Correcting Our Planetary-Scale Human Dysfunction – A MAHB Dialogue with Jennifer Jacquet

About Half-Earth, global commitment, and how the future for all life on Earth could look like

From Fear to Action: a Personal Journey through Art, Farming and Community Engagement

A story about how to deal with the polycrisis (art section)

Read More

Please add your thoughts to the conversations. Previous posts to the MAHB Blog can be found here.

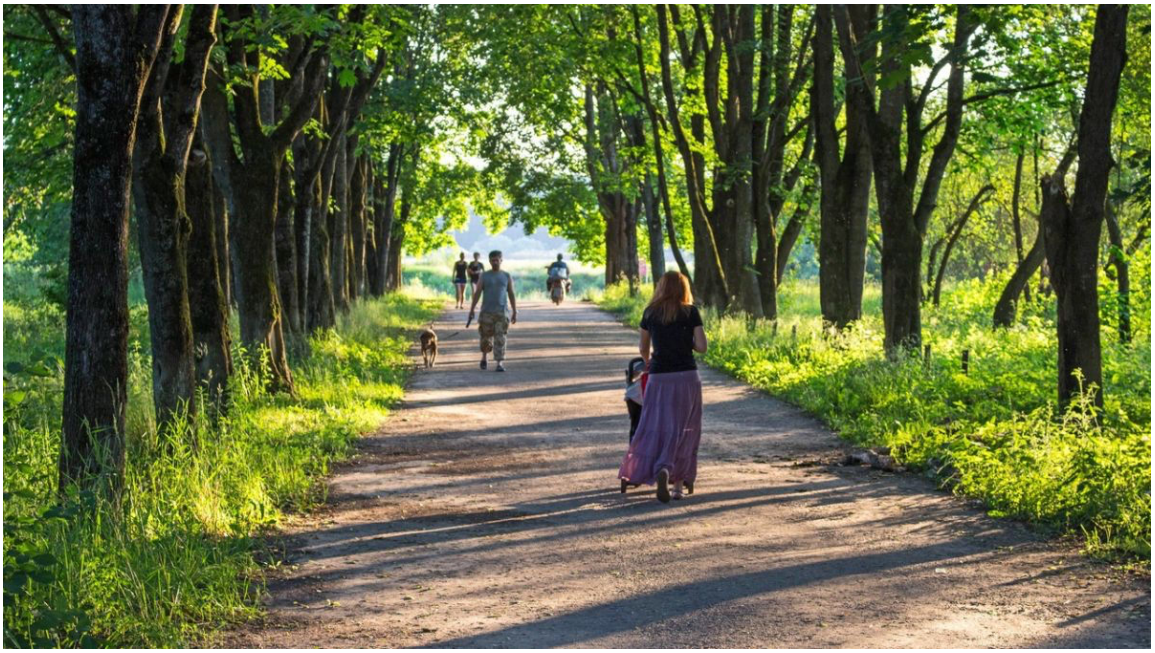
Resources

Enlarging the Ethical Imperative – Contribution to GTI Forum Solidarity with Animals

Utilitarian versus deontological view – a discussion of the two pillars of philosophical animal ethics and its implications.

Wilderness areas under threat from global redistribution of agriculture

As the climate warms, crop production will increasingly shift into wilderness areas. It is predicted that within the next 40 years, around 7 million square kilometers of wilderness will become suitable for agriculture. The high-latitude wilderness in the northern hemisphere is particularly vulnerable to this emerging threat. The expansion of agriculture is a key threat to wilderness areas.



Declining population and GDP growth

Business people and politicians seem to fear a shrinking population may trigger an economic recession. This paper explores how countries with declining populations experience changes in GDP, GDP per capita, unemployment, and labor force participation. It shows that population decline can go hand in hand with rising GDP, increased per capita GDP, higher labor force participation, and decreased unemployment.

The ecology, distribution, conservation, and management of large old trees

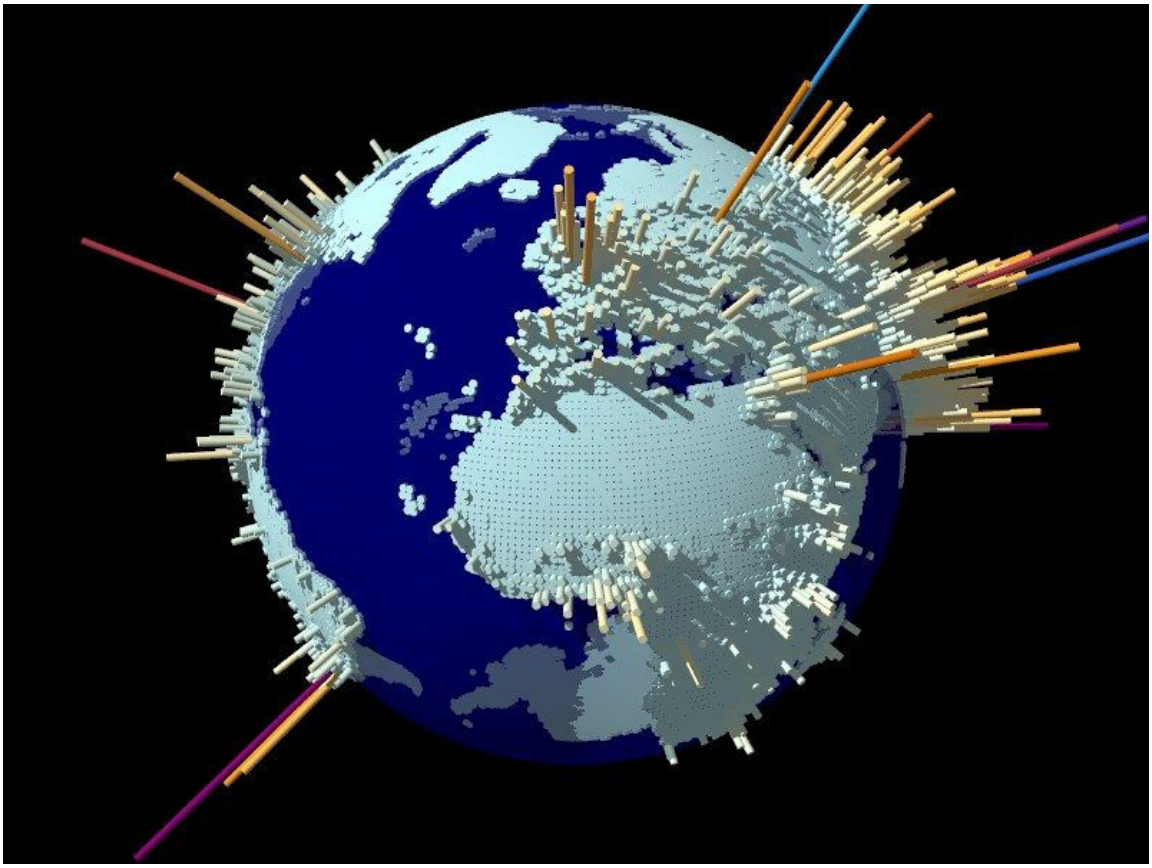
Large old trees are some of the most iconic biota on earth and are integral parts of many terrestrial ecosystems. This paper found that large old trees play an extraordinary range of critical ecological roles, including in hydrological regimes, nutrient cycles, and numerous ecosystem processes.

Ecological Footprint and Sustainable Population

With humanity currently in overshoot, societal changes must be enacted to return to sustainable levels. To achieve the necessary level, a country's ecological footprint or population size could be altered; however, combined efforts on both fronts would be the most effective.

Future of the human climate niche

Humans have historically lived in a narrow range of climates with annual mean temperatures of around 13°C. Due to population growth and warming, 1 to 3 billion people may face conditions outside of this range in the next 50 years. Without intervention, many will experience temperatures warmer than any currently experienced.



Planet Earth: Habitat for Humanity Only?

It's all about us, baby! The extent to which we have reversed the typical size and food pyramid is evident when considering our biomass – the weight of all humanity on Earth. Human biomass constitutes approximately 33% of terrestrial mammalian biomass, while domestic animals make up almost 66%, and wild animals only about 4%.

Conviction of Leading Animal Activist Could Ignite a Populist Revolution

Here's a disturbing fact: Prosecutors in the United States charge more penalties for the activists who reveal animal cruelty crimes than they do for the factory farms that commit them. This trend is a glaring miscarriage of justice and it must be reversed.

Podcasts & Videos

The Great Simplification – Bill McKibben: “Climate, Movements, and Power”

Environmental activist Bill McKibben and Nate reflect on the challenges of achieving ecologically balanced societies. Despite the importance of the mission, barriers to effective climate action persist, including power structures that hinder proactive initiatives. How can we prepare and organize as individuals, communities, and nations for the challenges we’re likely to face in the coming decades?

The Human Predicament in 22 Clips

Reflecting on 2023, The Great Simplification presents clips showcasing our challenging world. From global warming to geopolitical tensions, experts delve deep into insights to understand the chaotic world around us. These clips reveal a need for a systems view in our response to the human predicament.

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