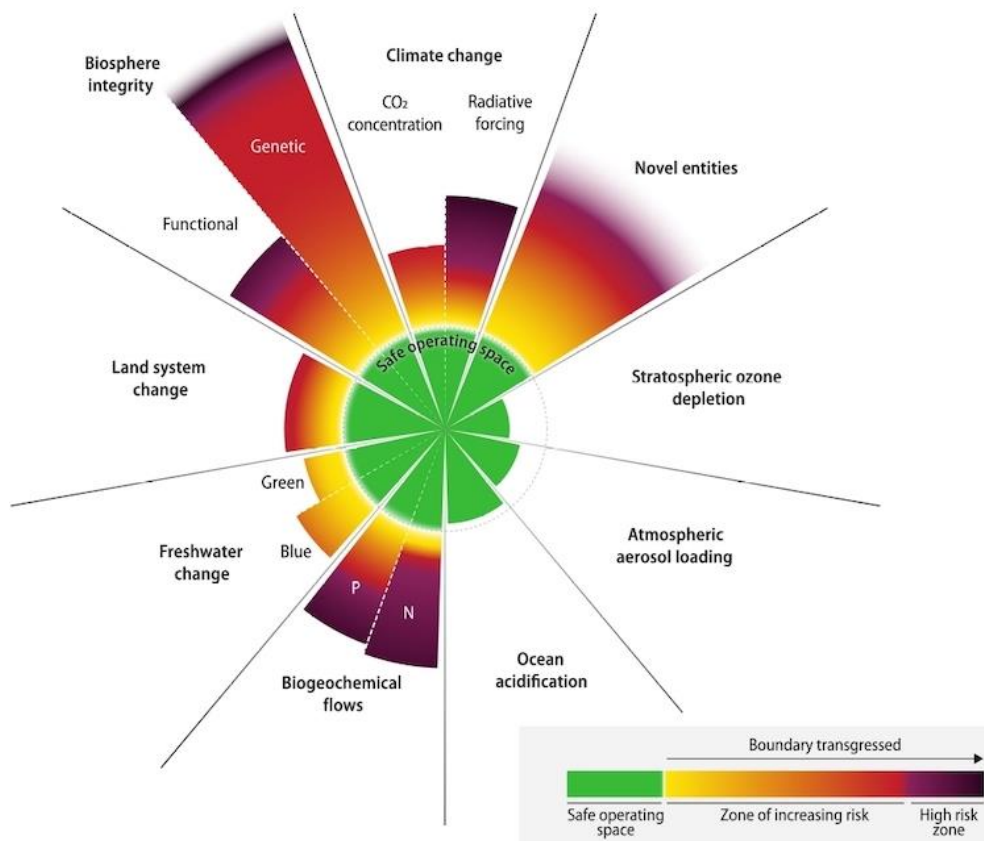


## The Top Ten Mass Delusions (and their Biophysical Realities)

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*“Those who can make you believe absurdities can make you commit atrocities”  
— Voltaire*



In his paper on the [Human Ecology of Overshoot](#), William Rees describes how the conflict between mass delusion and biophysical reality results in the destabilization of the ecosphere due to the excessive scale of the human enterprise. In a recent [Science Advances paper](#) by Richardson et al., the authors show that six of the nine planetary boundaries are currently transgressed, quantifying the excessive scale of the human enterprise. Yet, it is clear that our political leaders are not paying attention since there is no sign that they are scaling back on the growth of the human enterprise.

Schoolchildren will be ditching classes en masse and [protesting](#) over the next few days in anticipation of the UN General Assembly meeting on Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) next week in New York city. We are seeking your help to expand the student protestors' horizon beyond the fossil fuel issue, the Burning machine. Please download this [tri-fold brochure](#), print

them and hand them out to the protestors so that they get better acquainted with the impact of animal agriculture, the Killing machine, on the ongoing ecological catastrophes.

Meanwhile, the US Congress is trying to pass legislation that would nullify all state animal welfare laws through the Ending Agricultural Trade Suppression (EATS) act. The supposedly benign intent of the US Congress is to protect farmers from having to meet onerous animal welfare laws passed in other states, when they are merely selling their products in those states. As if merchants don't have to follow regulations in other locations when they wish to sell their wares in those locations.

Our global industrial civilization is based on several axioms or self-evident truths, that are clearly delusional. As any competent engineer can attest, it is only when we consciously reject these mass delusions and embrace the corresponding biophysical realities that we can truly solve the ongoing ecological catastrophes and become the heroes that our children and grandchildren are yearning for.

Climate Healers is [facilitating](#) The Greatest Transformation in Human History by strategically challenging the baseline normality of these mass delusions. Here is our list of the top ten mass delusions in modern techno-industrial societies, along with their biophysical realities:

**10. Only humans have souls, while other animals are soulless automatons:** The scientific revolution originated with this assumption and hence, the mostly unnecessary mass experimentation on animals that is still going on in academia. However, scientists are slowly beginning to unearth concrete evidence that other animals have feelings and remember experiences, as any layman who has ever lived with a dog or a cat could have told them ages ago. Yes, sometimes, scientists are among the slowest to latch on to biophysical reality.

**9. Animals don't suffer in the dairy and egg industries:** This mass delusion is quite common among vegetarians. The biophysical reality is that animals suffer grievously in the dairy and egg industries and probably suffer worse than any other animals in the food sector. In the dairy industry, mother cows are repeatedly impregnated and their babies are taken away from them while they are milked. Eventually, these mother cows are also sent to the slaughterhouse, just like every other animal. Alternately, she ekes out a painful existence in the garbage dumps of cities in India and dies a horrible death with plastic in her stomach. Female hens are selectively bred to undergo menstruation at such a rapid rate that they secrete 10X to 15X the number of eggs than they might normally secrete in nature. Due to this extreme stress on their reproductive systems, they experience bone-loss and other debilitating illnesses before they reach about one-fifth of their normal lifespans and then they are "processed" into chicken nuggets.

**8. Calcium is only found in dairy products:** This mass delusion is subtly drilled into our heads in school textbooks by incessantly associating the mineral calcium with dairy products. The biophysical reality is that calcium is found in all plant foods, most abundantly in leafy greens. We have compiled a list of plant foods that contain more calcium than cow's milk [here](#).

**7. Protein Is only found in meat and other animal products:** This mass delusion is also subtly injected into our heads in school textbooks by incessantly associating the macronutrient protein with animal products. The biophysical reality is that protein is found in all plant foods and in fact, ALL amino acids can be found in [ALL plant foods](#). We have compiled a list of plant foods that contain more protein than beef [here](#).

**6. Humans are superior to other animals in terms of intelligence:** This is part of the human exceptionalism that William Rees identifies as one of the most important roots of the ecological catastrophes unfolding at the moment. The biophysical reality is that humans are good at some tasks, for example, making tools, and bad at other tasks, for example, sniffing out a predator. All claims of superior human intelligence are based on the former kinds of tasks devised by human beings. If dogs were to devise intelligence tests based on sniffing abilities, humans would perhaps rank dead last among animals in terms of intelligence.

**5. The pursuit of happiness necessitates consuming more and more stuff:** Modern society depends upon this mass delusion as we are flooded with thousands of advertisements each day purportedly to increase our happiness. The biophysical reality is that beyond the bare necessities of life – food, clothing and basic shelter – happiness is largely [decoupled](#) from consumption.

**4. Some CO<sub>2</sub> molecules are emitted more equal than others:** In an Orwellian twist, the UN IPCC and its adherents cling to the mass delusion that while all CO<sub>2</sub> molecules are emitted equal in terms of the greenhouse effect, the CO<sub>2</sub> molecules emitted from the burning of fossil fuels are emitted more equal than others.

The UN IPCC’s greenhouse gas accounting convention counts 100% of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the burning of fossil fuels, 28% of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from deforestation and 0% of the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from animal respiration and other anthropogenic biological sources. The common rationale offered for this peculiar accounting convention is that animal respiration is part of the “balanced” natural CO<sub>2</sub> cycle (this doesn’t pass the sanity test, considering that humans have proliferated the planet with domestic animal biomass far exceeding the wild animal biomass that existed 10,000 years ago, as pointed out in our [position paper](#)) and deforestation is partly offset by reforestation on other lands (thank heavens that Nature is still trying to heal, but is that a justification for discounting emissions from deforestation?). However, the UN IPCC does not show how the photosynthetic processes on the planet selectively use the CO<sub>2</sub> molecules from deforestation and animal respiration, while rejecting the CO<sub>2</sub> molecules emitted from fossil fuel burning so that the latter accumulates in the atmosphere.

**3. The earth is an infinite source of raw materials for our global industrial civilization and an infinite sink for the waste that it produces:** This common delusion is falsified by the pressing need for deep sea mining at the moment to extract rare minerals for the “Green New Deal” electric transport transformation, even as there are mounting piles of landfill waste and the Great Pacific Garbage patch assumes gargantuan proportions.

**2. There is an invisible hand that turns the rank self-interest of individuals into the best interests of society:** There is a common delusion within capitalist societies that greed somehow turns into social well being through an invisible hand. The biophysical reality is that rank self-interest is destructive to society since it misallocates planetary resources.

**1. Technology will overcome any biophysical limitations on economic growth imposed by a finite planet:** What can we say about this one? The biophysical reality is that billionaires are building spaceships to high tail it out of planet Earth, knowing that this is a delusion.

Heal the planet:

Eat plants.

Live simply.

Plant trees.