
Can a collapse of global civilization be avoided?

An article by Paul R. Erhlich and Anne H. Erhlich, 2013

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In this article, Paul and Anne Erhlich focus on the analysis of global civilization collapse in order to extract what are the signs showing the actual trend of evolution towards collapse, the potential solutions to go out of this trend, and the specific detail of every actor's roles.

Referring to human societies history, it seems that the collapse of one society is triggered by several factors which feed each other and drive the society and its organization into chaos and poverty. In our actual global situation, we are facing for the first time in human history a global factor of potential collapse, which is climate disruption, but also other problems showing signals of rapidly escalating severity (going from biodiversity decrease, toxic components spreads, ocean acidification, etc.).

The most prominent sub-factor which might be impacted in close future times would be the **food supply**. Indeed, population feeding failure would automatically lead to a collapse, and there are three main explanations for this. 1) The rapid technological agricultural revolution has created a very vulnerable agricultural system, dependent on stable climates, crop monocultures, but also industries productions and transport. 2) Evidence for people starving all around the globe. 3) A growing population indicating that in 2050, the production will have to increase by 70% in order to feed mostly everyone.

In order to limit that higher problem issue, the article enlightens the need for everybody to collaborate in order to act on a lot of different points. Limit the climate disruption, restrict expansion of land for agriculture, make soil conservation efforts, decrease meat eating, reduce food wastage, stop ocean degradation, reduce feeding inequalities. Thus, we need to revise entirely our system of energy extraction and mobilization in order to make it more efficient (and phase out more than half of global use of fossil fuels by 2050), and limit the climate-related mass famines.

The feeding problem is not the only one, global toxification, epidemiological crisis and nuclear war are also major threats which could lead more (nuclear war) or less (epidemics) to a global collapse.

However, by paying attention to all the factors on which we can act, population raise included, at a social and psychological level, and with some technologies development, the article shows that there is still hope to avoid such a collapse or at least to be well prepared to face it. Politics, institutions collaborations and change towards sustainability are necessary to convince people and to create a foresight intelligence rethinking the society processes, and kill the infinite growth myth.

Modern societies are able to take into account several parameters and to adapt themselves on a long-term sight, but people are not yet aware of the risks and signs of future collapse (which are everywhere). It is still worth it to do so, for future generations to know the global civilization as we know it.