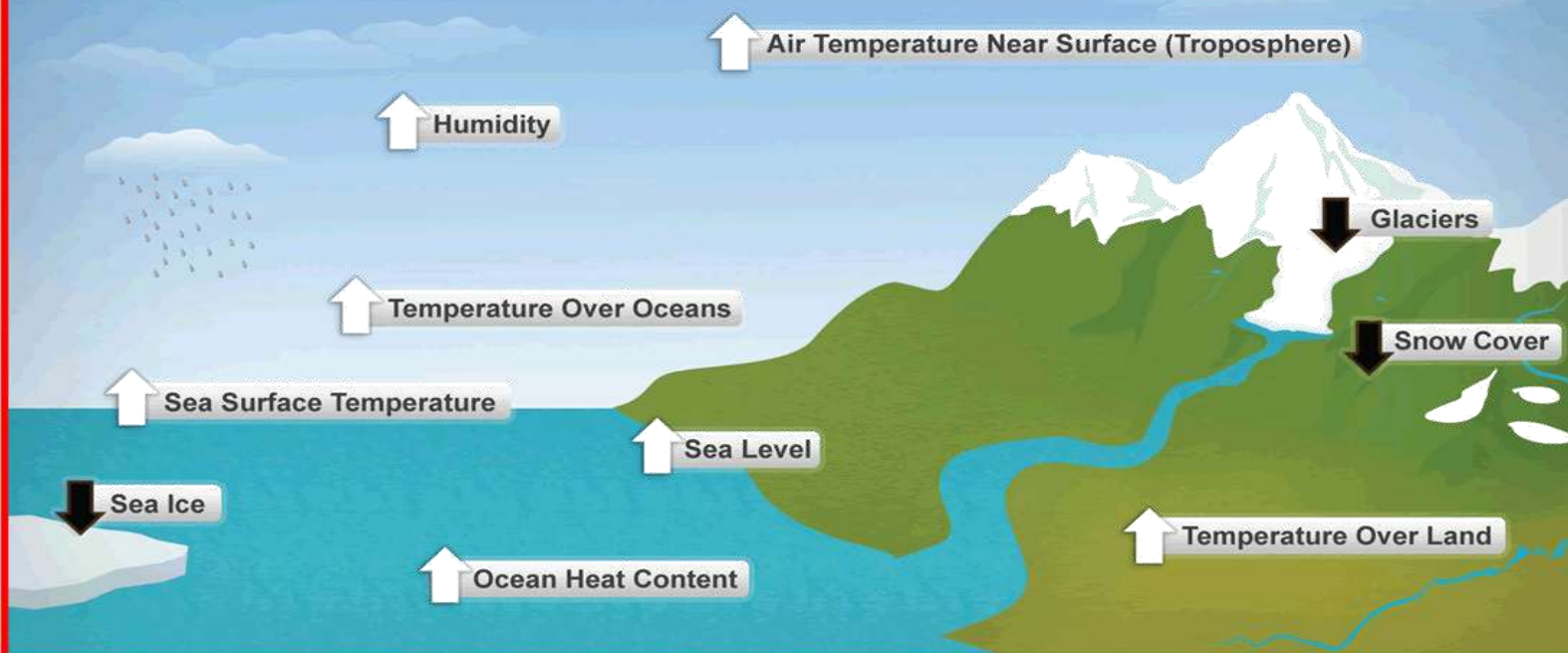


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Ten Indicators of a Warming World



**Eco-climatic crisis: The survival of African approaches
and the paradox of polluters' pay**

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: This paper does a phenomenology of global eco-climatic crisis, traces the route to the crisis, scans the industrialized-nations' neglect of this crisis in favour of "business as usual" and the survival of African approaches to this crisis faced with giant polluters.

Methodology: With the help of the evolutionary approach, the paper sees eco-climatic crisis as a direct result of western civilization.

Findings: Eco-climatic crisis whistle blowers like: James Lovelock, Edgar Morin and Michel Serres gave a deep insight of the crisis situation and in the same showcased two camps involved in climate debates: skeptics and crisologists. Finally, the survival of African approaches is faced with giant polluters.

Unique Contribution to theory, practice and Policy: The paper encourages the African traditional eco-climatic policy of "sacred forests" as they act as ecological and climatic lungs and questions the ecological and climate foundation of "Ecotax" (polluter and pay). The contribution of this paper to policy is at the level of globalization of African approaches in eco-climatic crisis thanks to its climate and ecology-friendly character.

Keywords: *eco-climatic crisis, African approaches, "polluters' pay", whistle-blowers, "seat of the gods"*

Introduction

The normal body temperature of a human being is at 37°C and temperature below or above this is considered a pathology. In a situation of high temperature, mechanisms which are either internal or external to the body are used to bring the temperature to normal if not the organism convulses and dies off. If the temperature is below normal, warming mechanism are put in place to prevent heat loss or external warming is done if not the organism congeals and dies. Taking the earth like a living organism (Gaia) according some ecoethicists like James Ephraim Lovelock, Michel Serres and Edgar Morin, the temperature of Gaia (our mother Earth) is steadily going far above normal, the acuity of the non-evolutionary extinction of certain flora and fauna species places her in a crisis situation. This is what this paper calls ecological and climatic crisis. Using the evolutionary approach, this paper take us memory lane to ecological and climate history, paints odyssey vis a vis human action on Gaia and finally the African approaches to this crisis.

1.1 The route to eco-climatic crisis awareness: whistle-blowers.

The whistle-blowers of eco-climatic crisis can be traced back to the mid twentieth century. According to Lovelock, global heating was lightly discussed by several authors in the mid twentieth century, the great climatologist Hubert Lamb, in his 1972 book *Climate: Present, Past and Future*¹, had only one page on the greenhouse effect in a work covering 600 pages. The subject did not go public until about 1988, as most atmospheric scientists were so absorbed by the intriguing science of stratospheric ozone depletion and had little time for other environmental problems. He narrates how he came across some pioneer climatologists and their take already on climate crisis in the 20th century. Lovelock first met Schneider in the late 1970s during a visit to the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR), an entrancing place of science perched on a mountainside at Boulder in Colorado, and their collaboration in science has been fruitful. In his book with Randi Londer, *The Coevolution of Climate and Life*², published in 1984, he warned of the probable consequences of continuing to burn fossil fuels and recommended the need for a strategic control of emissions, not the business as usual of market forces.

James Edward Hansen³ of the NASA Goddard Institute of Space Studies was equally strong in his warnings, and on 23 June 1988 he told the United States Senate that the Earth was now warmer than at any time in the history of instrumental measurements. The present climate situation contradicts in that, in the era of Wordsworth, Ruskin, Rousseau, Humboldt and Thoreau who are environmentally friendly philosophers. Greater on how climate change started and how it became a topic of debate in powerful political meetings is well summarized as Lovelock indicates:

The best and most complete histories of this period are in John Gribbin's book *Hothouse Earth*, published in 1990, Schneider's 1989 book, *Global Warming*, and Fred Pearce's *Turning up the Heat*, also published in 1989. Schneider's and Hansen's words were amplified by politicians as far apart as Al Gore and Margaret Thatcher, and I suspect that credit for their

¹ Hubert Lamb, *Climate: Present, Past and Future*, London, Routledge, 1972.

² Stephen Schneider & Randi Londer, *The Coevolution of Climate and Life*, New York, Sierra Club Books, 1984.

³ (1941), American climate specialist and crusader for the mitigation of climate crisis.

transformation into practical action should go to the diplomat climatologist Sir Crispin Tickell⁴

These considerable efforts led to the formation in 1989 by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) under the chairmanship of Professor Bert Bolin, of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC). It soon started the long process of data gathering and model building that was the basis for forecasts of future climates. But somehow the sense of urgency about global heating faded in the 1990s and the pioneering bravery of the whistle blowers received little support from the science. Added to Lovelock, another whistle blower is Edgar Morin. To him, *krisis* in Greek signifies “decision”, critical moment of a disease. The author focuses of the modern meaning of crisis which mean “manqué”, “béance”. His conception of crisis is that of a moment of rupture from a stable or normal period. Crises are defined in relation to periods of relative stability. Crisis situation is a means to understand complexity of ecosystems organization. Using thermodynamic principles according to which each system carries in itself elements of its potential disintegration, that is to say its crisis. Crisis is therefore a rupture but a normal one thermodynamically foreseen. This crisis situation reflects what the western world is going through now. Ecological crisis is as result of polycrisis context caused by social inequalities all over the world and this is caused by three heavy causes: globalization, westernization and development, all these causes have fatally degraded the biosphere.

Jacques Chatué and Casimir Egoue in a 2015 article describe Morin’s ecological crisis in the following words: «Le cri d’alarme écologique deviant planétaire dès la période allant de 1969 à 1972. L’écologie devient alors une question fondamentale pour l’humanité en tant qu’elle questionne le devenir planétaire, située à un niveau méta-national, la crise écologique est une crise sans frontières qui surpasse les politiques locales et prend place dans la problématique globale »⁵ *La Methode*⁶ which depicts the approach of solving complexity begins with an extensive discussion of the relationship between order and disorder, the key role of emergence, unpredictability, and uncertainty in his approach to complexity, and the importance of the prefix *re-*, as in reorganization, rethinking, and so on, suggesting ongoing process and change.

Taking about the management of ecological crisis he proposes rethought of our relationship with nature: “suivre la nature”⁷ To him, the more we control nature, the more we control ourselves: «Ce nouveau mariage entre la nature et humanité nécessitera sans doute, comme on vient de le dire, un dépassement de la technique actuelle, qui elle-meme nécessite un dépassement du mode de penser actuel, y compris scientifique»⁸

Michel Serres’ eco-climatic crisis. He continues from Lovelock and Morin as a whistle blower. In his: Serres’ « La non-invité de Copenhague »⁹. Serres starts by indicating our old way of political

⁴James Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth’s Climate in Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, U.K, Penguin Books, 2006, p. 6.

⁵ CHATUE, Jacques & EGOUE, Casimir, Edgar Morin et le traitement de la question écologique: une originalité aporétique?, in *Nkà’ Lumière, Revue interdisciplinaire de la faculté des lettres et sciences humaines*, N° 18, 2nd Semestre, 2005, P.89.

⁶ Edgar Morin, *La Methode2, La Vie de la vie*, Paris, Seuil, 2001.

⁷ Edgar Morin, *La Methode, 2, op. cit.*, p.96.

⁸ *Idem.*

⁹ Michel Serres, *Temps des crises*, Le Pommier, 2009, p.47.

interaction which characterized by city dwellers dealing with one another and those in the countryside dealing with one another. This political dealing amongst humans is facilitated by language during their come together but to Serres in this environmental crisis situation emerges a new partner which the earth:

Or, se lève aujourd'hui un tout nouveau partenaire qui jamais ne siégea dans aucune séance: cette terre, composée d'air, de feu, d'eau et de vivants, dont la subsistance et l'évolution conditionnent, déterminent même la survie des humains et des villes. Qui dans ces réunions, va représenter ce pays, ancestral et nouveau, que j'appelle la Biogée pour dire en un titre la terre et la vie? Qui va défendre ses intérêts? Désignera-t-elle des ambassadeurs? Quelle langue, dans ce cas, parleront-ils?¹⁰

He announces the arrival of a new an inevitable partner in our meetings, parliament and conferences. This new partner he calls Biogée (earth-life) speaks to us, we need to learn how to interpret her signs and symbols. The absence of this third new partner from the Copenhagen royal and absolute summit creates panic as the paramount new partner may revenge: « Absent de Copenhague, ce sommet absolu, loyal et inconditionnel, n'est encore invité à aucun de nos sommets. Je crains qu'il ne se venge vite de cette méprise et de notre mépris »¹¹. This third membership to the human species gatherings (Biogée) metaphorically means that climate change and the health of the planet should always be top on the agenda in our daily activities as the planet is under threat.

1.2 The impact of whistling blowing

Lovelock writes in *The Vanishing face of Gaia, the Final Warming*, on an agonizing living earth according to which it does matter, and it matters more than any other thing, we have to see it as it really is because our lives are solely dependent upon the living Earth. We could not survive for an instant on a dead planet like Mars and we need to understand the differences. If we fail to take our planet seriously we will be like children who take their homes for granted and never doubt that breakfast starts the day we will not notice as we enjoy our daily lives that the cost of our neglect could soon cause the greatest tragedy in the memory of humankind. The Earth, in its interest but not our interests may be forced to move to a hot epoch, one where it can survive, although in a diminished and less habitable state. If, as is likely, this happens, we will have been the cause:

But however unlikely it sometimes seems, change really is happening, and the Earth grows warmer year by year. It is ever more at risk of changing to a barren state in which few of us can survive. Scientists, especially Steve Schneider and Jim Hansen, recognized in the 1980s the possibility of dangerous climate change as a result of our pollution of the air with excessive carbon dioxide¹²

This led the eminent Swedish climatologist Bert Bolin to persuade the United Nations (UN) to form the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) with Sir John Houghton and Gylvan Meiro Filho as its first co-chairs. The panel began gathering evidence about the changing chemistry and physics of the atmosphere in 1990 and has issued reports in 1991, 1995, 2001, and 2007. Through the efforts of these, more than one-thousand-strong panel of scientists of many different

¹⁰*Ibid.*, p.49.

¹¹*Ibid.*,p.52.

¹²*Ibid.*, p.4.

nations, we now know enough about the Earth's atmosphere to make intelligent guesses about future climates: "But so far these guesses have been unable to match the observed changes in climate closely enough for us to be confident about IPCC forecasts decades into the future"¹³.

Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*¹⁴ had identified the relationship between our industrial products and the environment. To Rachel Carson says Lovelock, It is usual for people everywhere to have a love-hate relationship with their natural environment. Humans want to enjoy the products of industry and also enjoy the natural environment but ignore the unfortunate consequences of our invisible and insensible emission of greenhouse gases. Rachel Carson, through her book *Silent Spring* published in 1962, was the first to link harm to wild birds with harm to urban humans, by singling out the malign effects of the excessive application of chemical pesticides. She was the first to make us fully aware that the products of our industries were reaching an apparent abundance that threatened life on a global scale. After exhausting the whistle-blowers of climate change before its explosion in the last half of the 20th and 21st century, it is necessary to expose Lovelock's proofs of change and there after the skeptics of climate change.

1.3 Trends/currents in eco-climatic crisis

To facilitate the understanding of eco-climatic skeptics, it necessary to say a word on why climate issues are not taken seriously at national and international instances. It is due to the manipulation of scientific data to the benefit of politicians and economists. We can therefore easily understand why some climatologists believe that the earth is inert and cannot respond to climate change.

Nigel Lawson's *An Appeal to Reason*¹⁵. Nigel Lawson's skepticism on global warming is based on the argument that it has warmed for the past decades or so, provokes the debate between climate change skeptics and proponents of climate change. In what he calls trends or camps in climate change, there exist another middle class of climatologists call conservatives who sees climate change as possible but don't see it being severe. For the skeptics of climate change we can add to Nigel Lawson the Danish statistician Bjorn Lomborg, the American scientist Richard Lindzen and to add to it, the French former statesman and philosopher Claude Allègre and Jean de Kervasdoué.

Of those Lovelock calls conservatives, we can cite Tom Wigley and G.A Meehl. The 2005 articles written by conservatives is a clear indication of increase in sea level: "These are good and thoughtful papers that forecast a world that will slowly heat by about 2°C and in which sea levels will rise between 10 and 30 centimeters by 2 I 00, and assume rather drastic reductions in emissions. I surely hope that they are right, but I persist in my gloomier view of the future."¹⁶ It is paramount to investigate into the arguments of the skeptics of climate change, conservatists' arguments and finally reiterate on Lovelock's view as a fervent proponent of global warming.

Skeptics of global warming argue that what proponents of climate change call global heating which is fatal to humankind and his environment is false alarm. Claude Allègre titles one of his books: *L'imposture climatique ou la fausse écologie*¹⁷ in this respect. To better understand the debate, we shall take an author each from the camp of skeptics, conservatists and proponents of global

¹³Idem.

¹⁴ Rachel Carson, *Silent Spring*, Boston, 1962.

¹⁵ Nigel Lawson, *An Appeal to Reason: A Cool Look at Global Warming*, Gerald Duckworth & Co Ltd, 2009.

¹⁶*Ibid.*, p.78.

¹⁷ Claude Allègre & Dominique de Montvalon, *L'imposture Climatique ou Fausse écologie*, Plon, 2010, 293p.

warming. Skeptics of global warming amongst which Claude Allègre argue that, we should protect the environment, but he is against fear of imminent climate crisis. In criticizing the Copenhagen accords on CO₂ emissions, he rejects the idea that CO₂ wasn't influencing climate in any way and that it wasn't proven. He calls such views imposture. In a conversation with Dominique de Montvalon, both authors of the above texts, they see the Copenhagen summit failure:

Pas le moins du monde, détrompez-vous! ... Certes, j'avais prévu et écrit que Copenhague serait un échec, mais cet échec, je ne le souhaitais pas pour autant. Outre qu'aucun homme responsable ne peut applaudir- même s'il a tout fait pour mettre en garde, et l'éviter - l'échec d'un sommet planétaire, les dégagements de CO₂ qui acidifient l'océan, et pourraient à terme perturber le climat, me préoccupent. Cela dit, je crois, en l'état, que, aux teneurs actuelles, l'influence majeure du CO₂ sur le climat n'est pas démontrée, et qu'elle est même douteuse. Je crois surtout qu'outre la préservation de l'océan, le fait de réduire l'usage des combustibles fossiles - surtout le pétrole - pour ne pas épuiser trop vite nos réserves mondiales, c'est la bonne stratégie. Mais on s'y est mal pris, et non sans arrière-pensées ¹⁸

In his «La chronique de Claude Allègre » subtitled « Climat: la prévention, oui, la peur, non », he starts by rejecting three climatic prejudices: first, that the increase of the earth's temperature from 1°C to 2°C and the increase of the sea by 25 centimeters don't call for any alarm, secondly, CO₂ produced by man does not affect the climate and third, it is impossible to forecast climate change as claims certain climatologists. Talking about the first point concerning the increase of the earth's climate, he argues that they absolutely don't recognize global warming and that even if it exist, it is a minimal phenomenon and not essential. If the sea levels increase as indicated above and the CO₂ emission, it doesn't appear catastrophic. Inundations, droughts, tornados etc are simply extreme cases that cannot make a law. Concerning the point on emission of human CO₂ and effect on the earth's climate, he confirms that man pollutes the atmosphere with toxic gases but fails to see the exact role of such gases on the climate. Looking into the third point of disaccord, he argues that the impossibility of forecasting climate change is because climate crisis deals with chaotic events. He ends with the denunciation of the role of colloquiums and conferences to debate global warming. For, to him, organizers of conferences fall under « l'écologie dénonciatrice »¹⁹ because they don't focus treating the danger but focus on the role of humans in the climate change. He confirms that he falls under the category of ecologists he calls « je me situe clairement dans l'écologie réparatrice»²⁰.

After the denonciations of prejudices relationg to the treatment of climate issues, Claude Allègre concludes as follows: “En réponse à mes détracteurs, je me dois de mettre les points sur les i: je ne nie nullement le changement climatique, mais je considère que le réchauffement global n'est pas le phénomène essentiel»²¹ Claude Allègre had earlier in his *Ma vérité sur la planète* developed the main objective in ecological issues which was to combat what he calls « la peur »²², in other words, « un éco-intégrisme »²³. He acknowledges not being guilty of neglecting the harm man causes to the environment, but combats the way those involved in economic debacles want to take

¹⁸*Ibid.*, pp. 11-12.

¹⁹*Ibid.*, p. 292.

²⁰*Idem.*

²¹*Idem*

²² Claude Allègre, *Ma vérité sur la planète*, Plon-Fayard, 2007, p.4.

²³*Idem.*

advantage of the situation to further exploit countries that are struggling to develop especially with petrol prices. It doesn't call for any alarm since the ecological problems have already been detected and science is providing appropriate solutions:

L'homme menace sa planète. Il pollue, l'eau, l'air, les sols, les produits qu'il consomme. Il exploite les ressources naturelles et énergétiques comme si elles étaient inépuisables. Il détruit les forêts équatoriales. Il élimine des milliers d'espèces vivantes d'animaux ou de plantes. Et l'on nous dit à présent qu'il menace le climat et que ce dernier deviendra invivable dans le prochain siècle. Pour couronner le tout, on nous annonce une croissance démographique exponentielle! Face à ces dégradations, dont certaines sont irréversibles et que j'ai moi-même dénoncées en 1990, que faut-il faire pour éviter à nos enfants une situation tragique et ingérable ? La tonalité du discours que l'on entend ces temps-ci, c'est d'une part le catastrophisme et d'autre part la recommandation d'un retour en arrière, d'un arrêt de la croissance économique, du non-développement du tiers-monde, bref, c'est l'arrêt du progrès. C'est l'avènement d'un monde de la frugalité. Pour défendre cette manière de voir, on n'hésite pas à tout mélanger, à tout exagérer, afin d'inoculer aux populations traumatisées le pire des virus : celui de la peur. Loin de nier les dommages que l'homme fait subir à la planète, loin de nier les défis considérables que cela pose à nos sociétés, nous pensons à l'inverse qu'il ne faut pas tout mélanger : la débâcle de la banquise, la disparition du tigre du Bengale, la hausse du prix du pétrole, l'assèchement de la mer d'Aral, la disparition des thons en Méditerranée et la pollution des nappes phréatiques sont autant de problèmes distincts. Il faut raison garder. La science a identifié ces menaces, la science est capable d'y apporter des solutions. Loin de rejeter le progrès et de promettre à nos héritiers des conditions de vie spartiates imposées par la contrainte, nous voulons démontrer que la stratégie doit être inversée.²⁴

Jean de Kervasdoué, one of those who take global warming as a reality but not at the angle proponents look at it argues for «prudence» or «précaution» in ecological and climatic matters. In his book titled *La peur est au-dessus de nos moyens pour en finir avec le principe de précaution*, he presents the state of affairs of ecological and climatic issues. He admits the view that in the years gone by, some species of fauna and flora have been extinct, the case of the dinosaur is clear. But he signals that humanity cannot live and cohabit with certain species and that the disappearance of certain species doesn't put human life in danger as claimed pessimists of ecological crisis. If the existence of certain species were indispensable to human life, certain species like the mosquito and venomous creatures will be reintroduce in areas of nuisance. It is for this reason that he opts for the principle of prudence and precaution faced with the exploitation of certain species. The danger is the introduction of species where they are not supposed to be. This creates disequilibrium in the ecosystem and consequently ecological and climatic crisis:

Sans ironie cette fois, de ces quelques pages on peut déduire un principe de prudence, sinon de précaution. Il semble que le plus grand danger immédiat de tout écosystème est l'introduction dans un milieu donné de plantes et d'animaux qui lui sont étrangers. On connaît les ravages des lapins et des renards en Australie et de la myxomatose en Europe. Nous avons parlé des grenouilles sud-africaines et évoqué le cas des abeilles qui traversent les États-Unis et, vraisemblablement, ainsi récoltent les parasites de chacune des régions où

²⁴*Ibid.*, p.5.

elles passent. Par ailleurs, dès que l'homme intervient dans un milieu pour protéger insectes, sangliers ou chevreuils, il déséquilibre l'écosystème et se doit de continuer d'intervenir sinon, pourquoi, au nom de l'écologie, ne réintroduirait-on pas la malaria dans les Dombes ou en Sologne ? Elle y était «naturelle».²⁵

2. Polluters alibi in eco-climatic crisis and survival of African approaches

Doing a phenomenology of solutions to eco climatic crisis, it is observed that these mitigation attempts are tele-guided by the same nations responsible for the pathology in their industrialization moves. A shocking observation is made, the division of humans into two camps: those who pollute the environment and treat climate warming as an attempt to block their business and those who are collateral victims of this hyperindustrialization. The environment and less industrialized nations are the prey.

2.1 Alibi of polluters and promotion of “business as usual”

The energies we use for industrialization and our policies of exploiting fauna and flora are absolutely unfavourable for their sustainability. The ideology behind this is the cult of profit or gain at all cost. The network of polluters penetrate global economy and eco-climatic policies and their gangster activities and advocacy is backed by the zeal for profit. The ozone depletion reality to them is an invention to impede their businesses.

The camp of polluters or ecological gangsters, their alibi and business as usual. What interest polluters here is profit and gain, they care less about the health of the environment. The recent example is that of the USA to sign the COP agreement to reduce its greenhouse gases emission. To this polluter what really interests it is the fight against terrorism and the perennization of what they call world power and good living. Who doubts today that the USA and Europe's way of living still remain the dream of most less-developed and developing countries. Added to the USA who are these polluters? Lovelock starts by presenting globally who these polluters are: “The irony of it all is that we in the developed world are the prime polluters, the most destructive of people on the planet, yet although we have the money and the means to prevent the Earth crossing the deadly threshold that will make global change irreversible, we are hampered by fear.”²⁶

The United States of America and global heating. The American use of fossil fuel which damages immensely the planet is ranked first in the world. The long history and experience of America in science, technology, astronomy, security affairs and sensitivity in global threats was supposed to put him at the forefront of the fight against climate heating. Paradoxically, America remains mute to this global threat. The author makes this observation with indignation and accuses the USA of being passive if not the brain behind pollution and global heating. He redirects the accusation to the American scientists who are still to see the earth as “the earth as a live planet that regulates itself”²⁷. It is in this perspective that the author points an accusing finger to USA as a whole and its scientists in particular of being responsible for highest fossil fuel users that damages the earth and their failure to see the earth as living: “I make this paean of praise to the United States of America because I am puzzled that, despite its scientific excellence, this of all nations was among

²⁵ Jean de Kervasdoué, *La peur est au-dessus de nos moyens pour en finir avec le principe de précaution*, Plon, 2011, p.49.

²⁶ James Lovelock, *The Revenge of Gaia: Earth's Climate in Crisis and the Fate of Humanity*, op. cit, p. 126.

²⁷ James Lovelock, *The Vanishing Face of Gaia a Final warning*, U.K, Penguin Books, 2009, p. 21.

the slowest to perceive the threat of global heating. I doubt that this unexpected ignorance is connected with the fact that the per capita American use of fossil fuel one source of climate damage is greater than anywhere else²⁸. Lovelock sees this ignorance as more the consequence of most American scientists, in their straightforward successful and reductionist way, seeing the Earth as something that they could improve or manage; they seemed to see it as no more than a ball of rock moistened by the oceans and sitting within a tenuous sphere of air. They even seemed to see Mars as a planet to be developed when the Earth is no longer habitable: “They do not yet see the Earth as a live planet that regulates itself”²⁹

The concept of Gaia as living planet is the essential basis of a coherent and practical environmentalism; it counters the persistent belief that the Earth is a property, an estate, there to be exploited for the benefit of humankind. This false belief that we own the Earth or are its stewards allows us to pay lip service to environmental policies and programs but to continue with “business as usual”. A glance at any financial newspaper confirms that our aim is still growth and development. We cheer at any new discovery of gas or oil deposits and regard the current rise in petroleum prices as a potential disaster, not a welcome curb on pollution. Few, even among climate scientists and ecologists seem yet to realize fully the potential severity or the imminence of catastrophic global disaster; understanding is still in the conscious mind alone and not yet the visceral reaction of fear. We as humans lack an intuitive sense an instinct that tells us when Gaia is in danger.

Most of all, we are pessimistic because business and governments both appear to be accepting uncritically a belief that climate change is easily and profitably reversible. To him, it seemed that there was little understanding of the great dangers we face. The recipients of the climate forecasts, the news media, government departments, the financial market normally as skittish as blushing teenagers and the insurance companies all seem relatively unperturbed about climate change and continued with business as usual until their world, the global economy, almost collapsed. Indeed the only noticeable change to normal life is the ever growing urge to appear green, made more difficult by the straitened circumstances brought on by an incipient recession. Finally, relating to alibi of polluters and business as usual:

Business as usual is unfortunately how most of science is done, even though we know that it has no place in science’s probabilistic world. For practical and administrative reasons we cannot suddenly change the direction of research of a large and expensive laboratory built around a costly assembly of instruments, computers, and specialized staff; this may be part of the reason why our forecasts do not agree well with expectations drawn from the history of the Earth³⁰

2.2 The survival of African approaches faced with giant polluters

Global concerns about the current environmental crisis have culminated into some environmental ethical theories, that is, normative environmental ethics, biocentric ethics, ecocentric ethics and eco-feminist ethics. One of the fundamental underlying features connecting these environmental ethical theories is their grounding in Western perspectives and cultural experiences. Given that

²⁸*Idem.*

²⁹*Ibid.*,p.23.

³⁰James Lovelock, *The Vanishing Face of Gaia a Final warning, op. cit.*, p.67.

environmental concerns are global concerns, and that the imperative of environmental ethics is challenging those life-threatening concerns, critical explorations of environmental ethics need to go beyond the Western horizon. With respect to the African perspective to environmental ethics and the people's cultural understanding of the environmental crisis, can the African indigenous/cultural treating of these crisis survive the all power western-shaped and sponsored approaches? Segun Ogungbemi³¹, Pierre Rahb³² and Godfrey Tangwa³³ have pioneered philosophical discussions on environmental ethics from an African vantage point.

First, in a 2011 article, Ojomo P. A, paints a picture of African environmental ethics. To him, talking about Ogungbemi defends what he calls "ethics of nature-relatedness,": "The ethics of nature-relatedness can be succinctly stated as an ethics that leads human beings to seek to co-exist peacefully with nature and treat it with some reasonable concern for its worth, survival and sustainability"³⁴. He equally baptizes it "ethics of cares": "By ethics of care, Ogungbemi meant an orientation in which one is not taking more than one's needs from nature"³⁵ However, Ogungbemi is quick to note that this moral code is not unique to African societies as it has a universal appeal and applications, and that there are some interlocking questions that may obliterate its sensibility and justification and adoption in contemporary African order. Pertinent among these questions are: How do we know how much we need, given the nature of human greed and insatiability? Who judges whether we have been taking more or less than we need from the natural resources? If we have been taking more than we need, what are the penalties and how fair are they? The fundamental questions raised by Ogungbemi are quite strong and as a consequence, he attempted a reformulation of the traditional environmental practice of "ethics of care" in order to make it applicable to contemporary African situation.

Further commenting Ogungbemi, he argues that the way in which natural resources such as land, water and air are being used, goes contrary to the traditional practice of environmental conservation. With respect to land for instance, the drive to develop has led to increased deforestation with its incalculable effects on turbidity, erosion, flood and desertification. In another instance: "In its bid to catch up with developed nations, modern Africa has exploited some of its essential minerals, namely: gold, copper, oil, diamonds, coal, uranium, etc., thereby creating ecological imbalance and environmental problems"³⁶. Water is another essential natural resource that has been adversely affected in modern Africa through human activities. The deposition and dumping of toxic waste on the African coasts and inland by industries, both within and outside the continent, pollution of water through oil exploration and spillage, and through bacteriological and chemical agents like fertilizers have made our waters unsafe not only for humans but also other species in our waters.

Ogungbemi further pointed out how air, which is an essential natural resource for living, has been threatened by human techno-scientific activities. Most fundamental in this regard is the

³¹ (1946-), Nigerian philosopher (ecoethicist).

³² (1938-2021), Algerian ecoethicist.

³³ Cameroonian bioethician and ecoethicist

³⁴ Ojomo P.A "Environmental Ethics: An African Understanding", in *African Journal of Environmental Science and Technology*, Lagos, 2011, p.575.

³⁵ Ojomo P.A, "Environmental Ethics: An African Understanding", in *African Journal of Environmental Science and Technology*, op. cit. idem.

³⁶ *Ibid.*,p.574.

uncontrolled nature of the emission coming out from automobiles, industrial machines, artillery air raids and such likes. In addition to the causes of pollution of the air, land and water in Africa, Ogungbemi equally identified the unprecedented population growth in contemporary Africa as another factor that has continued to aggravate the destruction of the environment in Africa: “The logic here is that, the more the population, the more the stress on the natural resources and consumption ipso facto increases. More consumption results in more disposal of waste and where waste is carelessly managed as it is the case in many African states, the more the hazard the environment is prone to”³⁷. It needs be stated that however, Ogungbemi says that it is not clear whether population, by itself, is the key problem. Rather, it is inequitable distribution of global wealth. Granted that many African traditional folks as well as their contemporary counterparts have in some ways contributed to the general environmental problems of the world today, Ogungbemi equally underscores how traditional Africans have loved nature with respect and awe. He writes on traditional environmental management. “In our traditional relationship with nature, man and women recognize the importance of water, land and air management. To our traditional communities the ethics of not taking more than you need from nature is a moral code”³⁸. Perhaps this explains why earth, forests, rivers and wind and other natural objects are traditionally believed to be both natural and divine.

Secondly, to Ojomo, Tangwa proposes “ecobio- communitarianism”³⁹ as a definitive theory of an African orientation to environmental ethics. To Tangwa writes Ojomo, in his paper: “Some African Reflections on Biomedical and Environmental Ethics,” Tangwa bases his conception of an African orientation in environmental ethics on the metaphysical outlook of pre-colonial traditional African societies, which he called “eco-bio-communitarianism.”: “This metaphysical worldview involves the “recognition and acceptance of inter-dependence and peaceful coexistence between earth, plants, animals and humans”⁴⁰

This metaphysical outlook underpinned the ways, manners and cosmically relations between human and his fellow humans. It is also responsible for why traditional Africans were more cautious in their attitude to plants, animal and inanimate things and the various invisible forces of the world Tangwa noted that traditional Africans were more disposed towards the attitude of “live and let live”⁴¹. He emphasized further that within the traditional African metaphysical worldview, the dichotomy between “plants, animals, and inanimate things between the sacred and the profane, matter and spirit, the communal and the individual, is a slim and flexible one” It is in line with this metaphysical framework that one can consistently and coherently situate the people’s belief in transmigration of the soul into animals, plants or into forces such as the wind. On the basis of this metaphysical understanding of nature and the nature of man, Tangwa says such a mindset has very significant implications for the way nature is approached and treated by traditional Africans. Illustrating his positions on the conciliating relation between humans and the environment in traditional African culture, Tangwa cited the instance of his own culture, the Nso in Cameroon.

³⁷ Ojomo P.A, “Environmental Ethics: An African Understanding”, in *African Journal of Environmental Science and Technology*, *op.cit*, p.574.

³⁸ Ogungbemi Segun, “An African Perspective on the Environmental Crisis.” In *Pojman, Louis J., ed. Environmental Ethics: Readings in Theory and Application*, Belmont, 1997, p.38.

³⁹ *Ibid.*,

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*,p.576

⁴¹ *Idem.*

According to him, the “Nso” attitude toward nature and the rest of creation is that of respectful co-existence, conciliation, and containment, there are frequent offerings of sacrifices to God, to the divine spirits, both benevolent and malevolent, to the departed ancestors and to the sundry invisible and inscrutable forces of nature”⁴²

As concerns Africa’s treatment of ecoethics and civilization technology glories, appears Pierre Rabhi of Algerian origin who holds an ecocentric view of the relationship between man and nature. Talking about Pierre Rabhi’s ecoethics, he is noted for their movement “Mouvement Colibris” and his agro-ecology concepts. This movement and concept is noted for their treatment of nature as a vital part of man that needs to be cared for. This movement was founded in 2007 together with Cyril Dion and was a citizens’ action whose aim was the promotion of grassroots actions that permits the emergence of an ecological and solidarity society. He develops his ecocentric ecoethics in *La Part du Colibri*⁴³. Keith Moser in a 2016 article: “The Decentered, Ecocentric Humanism of Pierre Rabhi in *La Part du Colibri*”⁴⁴ traces the ecocentric character of Pierre Rabhi’s thought. Rabhi underscores the gravity of the present ecological calamity of epic proportions which threatens to destroy the delicate balance which sustains all life including *homo sapiens*. Due to the alarming warning signs all around us, Rabhi affirms that embracing and implementing a new way of being in the world has become an absolute necessity if we are to save the imperiled planet and ourselves in the process. He maintains that the same ecological laws which govern the existence of every sentient and non-sentient being that has ever roamed this planet are also applicable to human beings. In an interconnected and interdependent universe that arbitrarily recycles material particles to regenerate new life, our species has the same intrinsic right to exist as anything else: «Ainsi sommes-nous inclus dans un ordre où la terre, le végétal, l’animal, et l’humain sont reliés et liés aux autres éléments que sont l’eau, l’air, la chaleur, la lumière. C’est dans cet ordre vital que nous sommes inclus»⁴⁵

To Keith, Rabhi’s main problem with traditional humanism is that these anthropocentric thought systems often reinforce the scientifically erroneous notion that humans are the center of the universe or the great miracle of existence. Given that our continued existence depends upon the health of the biosphere that literally provides sustenance to all organisms, Rabhi posits that these enticing ontological delusions of grandeur must be exposed as an ideological product of the fragmented human imagination. Even though *homo sapiens* are merely one of the estimated 5,416 mammals that exist on earth united by common evolutionary ties: “Rabhi notes in a short text published by *Kaizen* magazine that “dans le genre des mammifères. Nous nous sommes autoproclamés les meilleurs”⁴⁶.

It is observed that Segun Ogungbemi, Godfrey Tangwa and Pierre Rabhi have ecoethics ranging from “nature-relatedness, to ecobiocommunitarianism and ecocentrism, having a common denominator: nature-human relatedness as a panacea to eco-climate crisis as seen in African

⁴² Godfrey Tangwa, “Some African Reflections on Biomedical and Environmental Ethics,” in *A Companion to African Philosophy*, Oxford, 2005, p.25.

⁴³ Pierre Rabhi, *La Part du colibri, l’espèce humaine face à son avenir*, rue Amédée Giniès, 2009.

⁴⁴ Roser Keith, “The Decentered, Ecocentric Humanism of Pierre Rabhi in *La Part du Colibri*”, in *Rocky Mountain Review*, Mississippi, 2016.

⁴⁵ Pierre Rabhi, *La Part du colibri, l’espèce humaine face à son avenir*, op.cit. p.42.

⁴⁶ Roser Keith, “The Decentered, Ecocentric Humanism of Pierre Rabhi in *La Part du Colibri*”, *Rocky Mountain Review*, op. cit., p.3.

ecological and climate friendly practices like the protected forests “the seat of the gods” where firewood fetching and hunting is absolutely prohibited and acting as sanctuaries for our biomass and ecological lungs, the protection of huge forests (ecological lungs). Is it ecologically healthy to destroy and pay?

2.3 The paradox of polluters pay.

The “polluter pays” principle is the commonly accepted practice that those who produce pollution should bear the costs of managing it to prevent damage to human health or the environment. For instance, a factory that produces a potentially poisonous substance as a by-product of its activities is usually held responsible for its safe disposal. The polluter pays principle is part of a set of broader principles to guide sustainable development worldwide. It is a Rio de Janeiro-born declaration of 1992 on Sustainable Development. In its principle XIII: “States shall develop national law regarding liability and compensation for the victims of pollution and other environmental damage. States shall also cooperate in an expeditious and more deterrent manner to develop further international Law regulating liability and compensation for adverse effects of environmental damage caused by activities within their jurisdiction or control to areas beyond their jurisdiction”⁴⁷ This principle underpins most of the regulation of pollution affecting land, water and air. This principle in most countries through a carbon tax or emissions trading system. Can pollute and pay solve the eco-climatic crisis. “Paying to pollute” The implication of that phrase is that the company has simply bought its way out of bad behaviour, and the image evoked is one of spending a paltry sum to make up for an action with a much higher cost to society, remorseless in so doing and lacking in true motivation to change one’s behavior. From all indications, this is poor eco-climatic policy voted by polluters to continue suffocating the planet, the ecotax or polluter pays is an ecological hoax.

Conclusion

Investigation into Eco-climatic crisis, the survival of African approaches and the paradox of pollute and pay (ecotax), used the evolutionary approach of investigation. It first showcased the route to climate crisis, the different whistle-blowers, the impact of their whistling blowing to eco-climate crisis, trends/currents in eco-climate crisis. Secondly, the alibi of polluters and the survival of African approaches faced with giant polluters, the promotion of “business as usual”, It is observed that Segun Ogungbemi, Godfrey Tangwa and Pierre Rabhi have ecoethics ranging from “nature-relatedness, to ecobiocommunitarianism and ecocentrism, having a common denominator: nature-human relatedness as a panacea to eco-climate crisis as seen in African ecological and climate friendly practices like the protected forests “the seat of the gods” where firewood fetching and hunting is absolutely prohibited and acting as sanctuaries for our biomass and ecological lungs, the protection of huge forests (ecological lungs). But does Africa reconcile the preservation of its ecological lungs faced with global pollution? How efficient is the notion of ecotax? Is it ecologically healthy to destroy and pay? Here, it is clear that the notion of ecotax (pollute and pay) plays negative in solving eco-climate crisis, what a paradox to kill and pay!

⁴⁷Rio Declaration on Environment and Development, 3-14 June, 1992

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