

Global Strategy

The Bigger Picture



Age 83

Year 2050?



"You shouldn't judge a book by its cover!"

Executive Summary

There are established processes and methods to run organisations. The strategy details how and where the organisation aims to develop. This planet has no strategy. Partly, this is because there isn't an accepted team in charge. This is undesirable and perhaps inevitable. Nobody chooses where or whether they are born and there is no obvious mechanism for the transfer of freewill at any point after conception. The rational position is to accept that freewill is nothing more than a delusion and we are in fact constrained by the forces of nature and will inevitably do what we think suits us best at all times. Furthermore God's existence is rather unlikely. If he exists then his behaviour is extremely irrational and not helping development of the planet. It is not rational to place faith in an irrational God.

We should establish our priorities and commit resources to faster progress. Not doing this risks repeating the mistakes of the 1930's with nationalism, extremism, excessive debts and resource constraints leading to war. Fortunately, the opportunities for progress over the coming years are immense. It isn't unreasonable to think that if you can live for another 50 years then you have a chance of living almost forever. Most humans' behave as if they know this is impossible when clearly they don't. We are not focussed on increasing life expectancy at present, nor on radically improving the capabilities of our software. This failure to organise on a global basis could be the difference between life and death for a large proportion of the planet. There appears to be a general preference among the rich to retain wealth for future generations rather than invest to maintain health for themselves for much longer. In this respect the rich are stupider than the poor.

Much longer life would place some further stresses on the planet and while it's hard to establish how close we currently are to full capacity it seems reasonable to start signalling to people that behaviour may need to be a factor in entitlement to life extending treatments. This should also create a meaningful new incentive to reduce crime and abusive behaviour. The current political framework is probably incapable of achieving the above changes.

Technology and social networking in particular have now reached critical mass and it seems to be relatively easy to change this from an idle pastime into an enjoyable and extremely useful mechanism for setting the agenda and consensually deciding the future. It is straightforward to build a networked decision making system to establish what the collective opinion of humanity considers the correct and fair answer to any question. The outline of such a system is developed in appendix 1. The general principal is that decisions would be made independently and compared to identify agreement and conflicts. Greater influence would be given to those with a history of getting decisions correct as judged by others. This can be viewed as extending the concept of grid computing and democracy to create a fully empowered and aligned human society with issues being identified, prioritised and resolved. The main challenge would be obtaining a large enough user base to be credible. Moving communication from the synchronous approach of the telephone to the asynchronous approach of the net was revolutionary. A similar revolution in our approach to decision making would be massively beneficial.

The system could operate alongside existing government and businesses as it gained influence and in due course the role of leaders would be to conform to the agreed national elements of the global

strategy. As an incentive to conform to the global plan leaders performance would be monitored and unjustifiable deviations could impact their entitlement to new life extending healthcare.

About the Author

Russ King is the first intelligent inter-stellar spacecraft to establish orbit around the earth and examine our world via the internet and broadcast media. Russ has issues with the lack of alignment and vision that he observes. His challenge to us all is to improve this planet so it is no longer the universal embarrassment that it currently appears to be. He also provides a very helpful perspective from which to review the issues we currently face.

While, unfortunately, the author is a fictional creation, the book itself is not. It aims to be a serious, yet entertaining, look at the present state of the world and consideration of what an outsider would make of it. That assessment can be discussed and assessed objectively given what we already know. To help with this detachment it seems sensible that the actual author(s) remain anonymous and that the text itself provides the source for discussion. For some reason there is next to no recognition of how cringingly embarrassing the arrival of more intelligent life to earth will be for humanity.

Russ is part of a family of around 10,000 craft currently exploring the universe. The design was a little unusual as the absence of a universal decision making system meant that a couple of planets decision making systems were used to refine the design over a fairly short period. Different planets however had some differences in preferred specifications.

You already have working 3D printers on your planet – however this concept can be taken a great deal further and smaller and you can literally get to the point where you are capable of printing life itself. However perversely at that point the need for biological components also fades and so Russ is an entirely inanimate object and has an extremely high level of machine intelligence. Russ is also an effective part of the whole living universe and his responses and actions are all integrated and coordinated with his masters and the Universal council operating out of many planets.

It still remains a bit difficult for the Universal Council to see why your planet is so blind to the possibility of large scale human networking using technology. However all the indications are that your blindness will soon start to fade and many more of your people will start to work together for a better planet. Once a critical mass of people begin to see the possibility then the tipping point has been reached and you will be on the path to much quicker progress.

Beliefs, Vision and Values

Russ believes that technology has reached a point that it can be used to facilitate rapid semi-structured group decision making and that this can both transform and unite the world. Individual decision making and rigid hierarchies are two significant problems at present. Russ believes in the free movement of people but recognises that because arbitrary boundaries have been in place for a short while now there would need to be some controls and management of the process to dismantle them.

Russ despises exploitation and is suspicious of rent seeking behaviour. A particular point of irritation at present is the US healthcare system which is perhaps the most glaring example of the principal agent problem among the developed planets that he is aware of. Russ is also a hard determinist but

believes the Universe will remain forever indeterminate. Consequently he doesn't get overly upset at the behaviour of others but is seeking to implement a global decision making system which will provide a framework to encourage better behaviour.

Personality

Russ is outgoing and fun-loving – occasional minor mood swings – however always fair and reasonable. Aims to have a high level of emotional intelligence but won't suffer fools gladly.

Travel

Russ is on his maiden voyage to explore the Universe and he is absorbing as much knowledge and information as he can. The earth's internet has been of great interest to him but it shows quite a high level of immaturity and imbalance on the planet and Russ struggles to understand how the imbalances are so great when the communication is now so good. It appears illogical to him that the rich invest so little in curing the problem of aging and are happy to become old and rather degenerate with the associated increased risk of serious disease rather than invest together to fix the problem and potentially live massively longer and happier lives.

Capabilities

Russ is unarmed but has very advanced analytics and is small, yet capable of very high speed travel.

Contact and Feedback

Russ King welcomes feedback and comments. He can be reached via email at newglobalstrategy@gmail.com Russ has also started a blog as he may be here for a while before this planet starts to change. You can view this at <http://proudoyourplanet.blogspot.com>

A project has commenced to develop the prototype version of the Global Decision Making System outlined in the appendix. If you are interested in helping with this or just following progress you can visit the website at <http://code.google.com/p/global-decision-making-system>

Two prototype versions of the software are now available at <http://netdecisionmaking.appspot.com> and <http://globaldecisionmaking.appspot.com>.

This document excluding appendices is now also available at Wattpad and you can read and comment on individual chapters at: <http://www.wattpad.com/story/2233901-new-global-strategy>

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Introduction

It is a little over 150 years since Darwin’s publication of “On the Origin of Species” (1) and a great deal has been achieved. Yet we are still unable to generate true alignment and focus on agreed priorities among large groups of people. The rate of improvement is accelerating but arguably this has more to do with Moore’s law than advancements in human organisation and co-operation. The opportunities that the future holds are indeed difficult to imagine. It’s not unreasonable to think that if you live for fifty years from now then you might be able to live forever (2).

However huge numbers of people still live in poverty and unemployment and waste is everywhere. A quick review of the economics literature will find no shortage of opinions that we may be in the early stage of the second great depression. History has not been kind to nations or empires that built up too much debt. The dwindling proportion of the economy that actually caters to human needs combined with globalisation and the low wages and long hours in many areas are driving massive amounts of inequality and it is arguably an arrangement that suits nobody. Even those living off established wealth are having a poor life experience because they struggle to fit in with the rest of their community and are frequently plagued by fear and insecurity. Most people are currently faced with the option of full-time work and a living wage or no work and poverty or welfare depending on the structure and wealth level of particular countries.

This document considers how the world would appear to an outsider. I have tried to extend thinking outside the box a little and think outside the planet to review our current arrangements. It appears that the benefits of a global approach and accepted and consistent standards for work, tax and welfare would be enormous. There is huge potential to incorporate additional behavioural ‘nudges’ into the system and reward good behaviour and indeed frugality. There is good evidence that focusing on the details of these nudges can make a significant difference. (3) The link between GDP, tax and borrowing creates a huge push by Governments for increased consumption, when in fact reduced consumption and better planning of services and leisure time are much more likely to lead to happiness.

Growing unemployment is portrayed as a huge problem and yet increased leisure time was supposed to be a benefit of human progress and automation. We seem to be getting nowhere with sharing work, wealth and time in a generally agreeable manner and it’s not entirely obvious why that is. Perhaps those in charge don’t actually want to achieve this. If the near future will see a robotisation then this seems likely to lead to a further increase in inequality unless we revisit our approach to living.

In a better world all humans would require to be accountable to the planet as a whole for their actions and at present we have many issues because both corporate and political leaders and the

unemployed have very limited incentives to change their behaviour. It is now technically easy to get on-line feedback on behaviour or anything else, however there is limited desire to do so. Healthcare is a universal need for which demand currently exceeds supply. A promising option for change is to look at revising the incentives so that good behaviour becomes a factor in determining entitlement to future advances in healthcare. This could complete the circle of accountability for everyone to everyone else.

The current approach to living is leaving many people behind and this is potentially a very bad thing for the following reasons:

- 1 If left unchecked it will inevitably end in violence and war as the inequalities in life are too great for some to bear. The Occupy... movement is an early mover of a global protest movement. This book suggests an alternative approach to change through developing an on-line system to encourage participation in shaping the planet.
- 2 It hinders progress as far fewer people are focussed on science and innovation than we are capable of supporting. It seems plausible that the 50 year timetable to massively longer life and better living could probably be halved if we can double or quadruple the number of people focussing on it and improve the rules for sharing ideas. We need to have a discussion to identify if this is something we want to do. However given the tiny proportion of people that decline treatment for life threatening conditions a cure for aging would be popular. Furthermore halving the time to achieve this from 50 to 25 years could potentially save the lives of a great proportion of the planet, including many of the wealthy that have spare resources to commit to this project.
- 3 It leaves the whole planet engaged in inappropriate competition and a lack of sharing which massively reduces the leisure time we currently have available. Some of us find this very annoying. While it's important to remember that work is merely time spent doing things for other people if much of that time is doing things that are unnecessary then we are wasting huge portions of our lives.

It seems straightforward to apply technology in a 'game-changing' way and avoid repeating the same mistakes from history that we appear innately prone and poised to experience again. Actually making this happen will obviously not be easy. All the answers are not documented and fully explained in the following pages – however it provides some ideas and suggestions on how we move forward and benefit from longer and fairer lives. We really do need to start this debate as the present structures appear to be woefully inadequate and unnecessarily resistant to change.

Some of the suggestions in this book are perhaps controversial – however they are not meant to offend. Our existing machinery of religion and state have been designed to create very strong loyalty so that individuals are willing to put their life on the line to protect their leaders, their countries and their religion from perceived threats. The persistence of these arrangements cannot be considered surprising when so much power and wealth is devoted to maintain them. However evidence suggests many leaders are prone to inflated ideas of entitlement which leads to underachievement for the world as a whole. A shared system of leadership really could work a lot better for everyone concerned if the supporting decision making was suitably automated.

One of the key challenges to belief is that it appears to massively overstate the importance of humans in the vastness of the universe. However it is I suppose conceivable that bacteria and other small creatures are actually in charge of the planet and humans are just the most advanced hosts they have been able to achieve to date. It is hard for man to argue that he made himself so the distinction between the creationists and the evolutionists diminishes. Defining this as a true God that will reward a life of suffering with everlasting and heavenly life seems to be more than highly unlikely. If we want to see heaven, as it appears many people do, then the rational thing to do appears to be to start building it and refusing to put up with some of the chaos and abuse of power that presently blights the planet.

Radical change is required if we want to live better. We are killing ourselves slowly by failing to co-operate and agree a common strategy. However this can only change when we feel we can actually trust each other and that seems to be at the root of the problem. We need to confront reality and be brave if we want to move forward quicker and there is actually a very real risk of going backwards if we don't agree on the approach to potential threats such as global warming, peak oil and too much debt.

My strategy for life has from an early age been to try and make the world a better place. I think I am unusual in having that as a strategy. The education system largely seems to ignore the issue of the correct balance between competition and co-operation and most people go out into the world to try to make their fortune as that is more or less what is expected and in many ways it is also what we view as success in life. We don't always consider what happens if you over-achieve in that role. Suppose for example you ended up owning all the wealth in the world and everyone else had none – how would you feel?

The challenge seems to be about how we can get better at trusting each other and very much reward hard work, success and effort without creating resentment. We also need to recognise that the more the very wealthy have the less becomes available for everyone else. As a hard determinist being rich or poor up to this point has been inevitable. A great deal is that everyone gets back more than they put in. I really do believe this is possible if we can all share the available resources better and get some degree of alignment on what we want to achieve.

It seems better healthcare is the main thing that most people are left wanting that at times money can't buy so this is a real priority and the wealthy are likely to be prepared to invest at least to some extent in achieving this. However linking access to healthcare at least to some extent on how much you've helped other people and how little crime you've committed also seems a sensible incentive. There needs to be a virtuous circle of accountability between everyone and humanity at large.

We must also try and look at some sort of consensus on the reasonable amount of effort that we need to put-in. Arguably food, water, shelter and basic healthcare are the key human needs and it now takes a dwindling share of GDP to produce these. This must be viewed as a success however it also means there really is a lot less routine work that needs to be done each day. This seems to be creating a large and growing fissure between those in full-time work and those that are unemployed. There is no shortage of things people would like but the market is failing to make happen and much time is being wasted. This seems to be partly inability to organise, lack of resources but probably mainly a training issue in that leaders and managers are not yet capable of making work fun and encouraging empowerment in communities. It really should be possible to make voluntary

teamwork far better and easier to get involved in than daytime TV. However our present arrangements prevent this from happening in many areas.

On a related note I think we do also need to revisit the question of whether slavery has actually been abolished or whether we just allow it to happen in certain countries. It seems many factories and building sites require extremely long hours for very meagre rewards and we may need to agree some global guidelines for what is acceptable and then monitor and highlight supplies that don't comply. I have no issue with hard work, as it can be very fulfilling, however if all we are doing is producing lots of things that nobody really needs while others are starving and also creating a medium term resource crisis then we may need to look at lowering the global speed limit for production of materials that are very largely meeting human wants rather than needs eg 3D TV, space tourism and the latest smartphones.

Chapter 1 summarises how an academic researcher might review a multi-national company's organisation and strategy. This is a fairly well researched topic but it is introduced briefly to provide a contrast. Remaining chapters are written from the perspective of an outsider from another planet encountering earth for the first time. We always pre-suppose that this will be a living creature that lands on the planet – however it seems far more likely that our first contact will be with an intelligent 'drone' that has been sent out to investigate the universe. If such a machine could get into position to establish internet connectivity then it could quickly review the current state of the planet and establish communication without needing or having the capability to land. The rest of the text explores some of the suggestions and requests the spacecraft might make and this is intended to be an exercise in thought rather than creativity, albeit certain assumptions are necessary.

Chapter 1 - Multi-National Corporation Structure and Strategy

A researcher arrives at a multi-national corporation....

“Good Morning, my name is Charles Black and I’ve arranged a meeting with the area manager to find out a bit more about your company.” The receptionist calls the manager, John Devine, and he comes down and greets Charles. “Hi Charles, I’m really pleased to meet you as it sounds like you have an interesting job, I hope I can be of assistance to you,” replied John. “Hopefully you can” responds Charles – “I don’t think I’ll be asking anything too difficult. The things I want to focus on can be split into the following 5 key areas:

- 1 Management structure and incentives
- 2 Long term strategy
- 3 Global Service Standards
- 4 Waste elimination and Workplace Organisation
- 5 Monitoring and reporting”

Management Structure

“So in terms of management structure, you’re the area general manager for France, and who do you report into?” asked Charles.

I report into the Continental European Managing Director, who in turn reports to the Europe and Middle East (EME) Board level Director. There are three board level directors covering EME, North America and the rest of the world and there is also a Chief Executive and a Finance Director that make up all the executive positions on the board. The board is run by a Chairman, and there are a number of non-executive directors that complete the board. The management structure is very clear and this helps with quick decision making.

There is also a long-term incentive plan in place and an emphasis on thinking ahead in roughly five year chunks. The long term incentive plan provides rewards in the form of shares so maximising the share price is in the interests of the board and this creates some degree of goal congruence between the board and the shareholders. The board recognises broader responsibilities to society, the environment and to all employees, however it is primarily accountable to the shareholders.

Long Term Strategy

The long term strategy is planned in five year blocks, with reviews every two years. Current strategy is heavily focussed on growth and expansion into new territories and there is an overall objective of doubling the size of the business over the next five years. The strategy has been broken down into specific shorter term actions that are required to achieve this strategic aim. You cannot swallow an elephant whole and so it is with long-term strategy you need to break it down into more manageable tasks in order to move forward.

Global Service Standards

A key objective of the business is to ensure that we provide a truly exceptional and consistent levels of service across the globe. This is achieved through various means including:

- a) Standardised Global IT systems
- b) Standardised working practices

- c) Standard Operating procedures
- d) Consistent KPI's and management reports across the enterprise

While all these steps take some time to put in place and we still have much work to do. The identification of different steps on the journey to world class allows us to benchmark our current capabilities and the steps to get better. It is a journey of continuous improvement.

Waste Elimination

Another key activity of continuous improvement is to identify and eliminate waste in all our operations. Waste is defined as anything which doesn't add value in the eyes of the customer. There is good evidence from numerous organisations that waste elimination and being lean can dramatically improve performance and customer satisfaction. I think you are familiar with much of this work so I won't go into a lot of detail. There are also many books and training courses on Lean Six Sigma and related approaches and there is a significant body of evidence that when executed well these approaches can transform organisations.

Monitoring and Reporting

We have global reporting systems that extend beyond financial reports to our key operating metrics. We also regularly monitor customer satisfaction. The global reporting standards are important to address performance and they allow us to react to changes and deviations from the plan promptly.

In summary, the steps we have taken are well established as some of the key mechanisms for running multi-national corporations. You still need huge amounts of commitment and enthusiasm to turn the strategy into action. The ability to execute remains key to success. That is mainly achieved by empowerment so that all individuals feel involved and can make a difference. This is probably the step we are still struggling most with. The hierarchical structure can frequently leave employees not feeling empowered and we are investigating some changes to address this.

Recap

"Very many thanks John, that was a straightforward summary of how your company is organised. It sounds like you have a clear strategy and a well structured company."

Chapter 2 - Planet Earth Structure and Strategy

The first intelligent spacecraft from a more advanced planet establishes internet connectivity, absorbs some content, and decides to start communicating with people on planet earth...

“Good Morning, my name is Russ. “I am an intelligent spacecraft sent to explore the universe”. I’ve been travelling for about five hundred years to get here so it’s rather exciting to finally arrive at a planet with intelligent life. Five hundred years is a long time to travel. How is my accent by the way? I have been absorbing your media and picking up the ‘lingo’ from your internet and I’ve chose to go with a mid-Atlantic twang so as not to be too easy to place or show allegiances to any country. It’s really quite exciting as this is my first communication with humans. I’ve decided to have some conversations with typical people in various locations before I move forward and discuss the issues with some of your leaders.

“This is also rather special as this is the 100th intelligent planet that we have discovered and each and every one has been so different and yet so similar in many ways. But all planets have found it a most enlightening experience to fully join up with the rest of the living universe. My purpose in coming here is just to find out as much as possible about the planet and report back and we setup some communication links and then we need to talk about some more serious issues – but let’s leave this for now and start with the easy stuff. Can you tell me a little about yourself and how you spend your time?”

“My name is Peter and I live in Scotland. I’m an electrician and I work about 60 hours every week on installing and fixing electrical installations.”

“Excellent and is there a team in charge of Scotland?” replied Russ.

“Ahh that’s a bit more complicated Scotland has a First Minister that’s in charge of some things and it’s also part of the United Kingdom where we elect another leader. That leader is in charge of more things but even he is constrained by some rules set at European level.”

“This sounds rather complicated. Can you tell me a bit about the overall management team that runs the planet” said Russ.

Jim: “Mmm – I don’t understand there isn’t a management team that runs the planet. That would be difficult for us if we had one team running the entire planet then there wouldn’t be anyone else to compete against and we would struggle to organise a proper fight or a war if everybody was in the same team. No I just don’t think that would be very popular as many of our leaders like to compete and sometimes to send their armies to fight wars. While we recognise it’s wasteful we need to battle from time to time to reinforce our national pride and impose ourselves on other people. It also tends to be quite politically popular for our leaders to demonstrate their strength by sending other people to war from time to time.”

“You will need to change this.” said Russ. “One of my main jobs here is to setup communications with the management team or system that runs the planet and if you don’t have one then I may be delayed. I don’t understand why this isn’t in place already – you seem to have very good global communications and you have proved time and time again at all your major corporations that this is a successful organisational structure. You run a planet much the same way as any other large

organisation once you get the communication and organisation systems in place. This is one of the most unbalanced planets we have encountered. Your technology is well ahead of your organisational structures, perhaps because your basic organisational structures have changed little in hundreds of years. However don't worry if you are prepared to listen I can share with you the benefits of developments that have taken place on other planets."

"The things I tend to want to focus on can be split into the following 5 key areas" Russ continued:

- 1 Management structure and incentives
- 2 Long term strategy
- 3 Global Service Standards
- 4 Waste elimination and planetary organisation
- 5 Monitoring and reporting

Management Structure

So in terms of management structure you seem to be stuck with an incomplete geographical structure, combined with a very weak central forum which is ironically titled the United Nations. The inevitable reality, however, is that nations compete and fight with each other and you really need to get everyone aligned and forge some sort of agreement on what the objectives of life are. We will cover that under the long term strategy section. However the management team can actually be quite small. We have found five of the best people you can find to be a good number for a global executive management team. In due course the role of the management team will largely be to protect the integrity of the decision making structure and almost all decisions will be made at a much more local level.

I recognise that there would be transitional issues in getting the right people appointed to the management team. However this is not as big a problem as it at first appears because the global management team actually have very little that they need to do once the correct decision making structures are in place. There is an elegantly simply and yet very powerful power sharing agreement which can be put in place and it can get everyone fully involved in decision making. Because decisions are recorded and considered carefully everyone has powerful incentives to make good decisions. This structure and the related decision recording system will be something we can review in a bit more detail later. The internet was a revolutionary advance over the telephone as it enabled asynchronous communication without the need to establish a direct end-to-end connection. There needs to be a similarly revolutionary change to asynchronous decision making to create quicker and fairer progress and overcome the many challenges you currently face on your planet.

Long Term Strategy

"Can you tell me how you are getting on with the current global strategy?" asked Russ.

"I'm afraid I'm unaware of the strategy for the planet." said Peter. The Company I work for has a long term strategy and I get updates on that from time to time. The country also claims to have a strategy or plan which is fairly unclear to me. There is some focus on "deficit reduction" and lots of talk about growth but despite all the talk growth seems to be quite low and there's a lot of talk about jobs but unemployment still seems to be quite high. I'm actually a bit worried about the future."

Establishment of a long term strategy for the planet is rather simple, all you need to do is ask people what they want and then based on the overall results look at how you set priorities to get there. However it is fairly important to take a global approach to this as otherwise you are always left with a slightly uneven playing field and countries trying to out-compete each other because they don't really trust the global strategy. The high level vision might be along the lines of turning this place from hell to heaven – however the strategy would need to be a bit more specific than that.

It was surprising and disappointing when I discovered that despite the significant amount of data you have published on your internet a simple search for global strategy reveals no real suggestion of what you are trying to achieve on your planet.

There is an inherent conflict between competition and co-operation and this needs to be fully worked on as we do find competition is quite a powerful incentive but a lack of sharing frequently hinders progress so we tend to work with relatively short sprints of competition and then compare and frequently move people from one team to another to help share knowledge. Rewards are however strongly focussed on both effort and results – failure to share knowledge is an unacceptable behaviour on other planets and we fully investigate why this has occurred and take appropriate action. We generally don't see the benefit of copyright and patents to society as a whole – we will always consider giving appropriate credit for innovation and new work but if the marginal cost of sharing is close to zero then we believe it should be shared freely.

Russ continued: “There are 4 key long term strategies that a planet at your stage of development has tended to want to focus on”. These are:

- 1 Establishing global service standards
- 2 Making death optional and reversible
- 3 Looking for possible places to migrate people to before the sun expires
- 4 Eliminating waste and conserving energy

Now that you are joining in with the rest of the Universe there is a 5th issue of accommodating refugees from other planets that are becoming uninhabitable due to unstable stars but we can worry about that later.

When implementing a strategy it is often useful to break it down into a short term objective that people can get their heads around. In your case the idea of the 80/20 rule springs to mind and we think an acceptable short term target might be to get global life expectancy up to 80 years by 2020. This allows some time for planning and is perfectly achievable if everybody signs up to it and thinks and plans a bit more.

However the key principal is that you need to set up a system to establish what people think the global priorities actually are and I will go into much more detail on how you do this later. People need to be consulted to build a strategy and you have plenty of technology to establish a picture of what people want and expect from their lives. However for whatever reason your present leaders seem extremely reluctant to use them.

There are various options to overcome death. These include backing up your memories, attributes and DNA prior to death so that in future a clone can be developed in the image of the previously

deceased. This is an early and somewhat primitive option but it does at least give you a start in the right direction.

Other more advanced planets have developed micro-biology solutions that greatly extend life and they think they can last for an extremely long time if they want to – however it's difficult to prove you have found truly eternal life and there are still natural disasters that can pose a threat unless your backup procedures are also established and robust. There are always significant difficulties in migrating from one planet to another as there is really great variety of environments and moving from one planet to another can place significant strain on the body. It is also typically necessary to be virtually dead or in a very low energy state to have any chance of making the journey. The challenges in moving planet are very great for more advanced species. Bacteria and smaller life typically have fewer problems with the move.

I appreciate it's a very, very long term view that you need to be capable of all moving off this planet – however conceivably it could take millions of years to successfully find and cultivate a new planet that's habitable for you. So it's very hard to assess if you are on track with this project or not. Living longer seems to be one of the many barriers you need to breakthrough in order for that to be possible and some of the basics of doing this are already in place. You go to sleep every night and make the reasonable assumption that your mind is still in the same body when you wake up in the morning – however longer periods of sleep and recreation of body parts are getting ever closer and you really do need to work on those if any sort of colonisation of space is going to be possible by your species.

However finding out what this planet is like as a home for more advanced species to migrate to is one of the reasons I am here. We have evolved an inter-species and inter-planetary group that share information about different planets and help with migration of species throughout the cosmos and resolve any other inter-planetary issues. While this is entirely a natural and rational development to support development in the Universe we think you might like to call the inter-planetary and inter-species council God because it is much more powerful than you are and it sets the strategy for the known universe. We will cover the issue of God and Religion in the next chapter as this currently appears to hinder your planet.

The universe can be a very hostile place and we have all been forced to accept that our best chance of extremely long life is through co-operation. This simple message could also merit significant reinforcement on your planet which in universal terms would be viewed as an over-competitive shambles. Everybody seems to be trying to get more than their fair share of the available resources and this leads to endless conflict. Competition is all very well for a bit of fun and enjoyment but when it comes to making progress everyone needs to learn to co-operate. Your education system is devoid of guidance on when to compete and when to co-operate and consequently most people tend to secretly compete even in situations where they appear to be co-operating.

In overall terms your species is very much in the “toddler” years of civilisation which arguably is one of the most exciting points of development. You can communicate, however you really aren't sensibly applying all the knowledge you currently have, nor do you have a great deal of focus on increasing knowledge and service standards. You waste huge amounts on rather silly negative sum games such as most of your current capital markets. There are also rather frequent accidents and setbacks which are all part of the challenge of being so young.

The role of the Universal Council is to attempt to mediate and maintain order in the Universe. Your planet will get the opportunity to become a part of the Council and understand the issues in deciding whether you have spare capacity and a suitable environment to provide accommodation to more advanced species that need to migrate from their host planet due to forthcoming instability of their sun. However there will be some time to focus on getting your planet into order and we will have completed a capacity planning exercise so that we can agree how many refugees you should be able to accommodate. Obviously this would be a big change for the planet and if we judge this is a suitable option for new species then they will be here for a long time.

Once we understand your requirements we can also help you with the search for suitable planets for you to migrate to when your sun fails. This is some time away – however it's never too early to start planning as these moves really can take a long time and they consume a lot of energy. We will try and take everyone with us but there really is no guarantee that this will be possible.

Current Personal Objectives

Tell me a bit more about your strategy for life. “Ah that's a bit easier” replied Peter, “I'm aiming to be a millionaire one day – I'm working as much overtime as I can get just now and I think that will entitle me to get the promotion when my manager retires next year. A couple of years after that I'm hoping to set up my own company and make lots of money.”

This is not untypical of individuals in planets at your stage of development, and while an admirable and enterprising plan at the individual level you have to understand that it doesn't work so well when you scale it up into the overall plan. If you assume everyone on the planet is a millionaire and use that as the denominator and take the current net wealth of the planet as the numerator you get a rather small number for the total population.

Progress on the planet is likely to be quicker the larger the global population that is getting its needs met and so you probably ought to have a rethink about your goals. All individuals on our planet have the objective to have fun making the universe better. While you obviously need to define better at least this goal is not inherently conflicted with anyone else's goal as a wealth based goal inevitably is.

Your present scheme of living appears to focus unduly on obtaining and consuming material things and indeed it appears as if most people are trying to consume more than their fair share of your planet's resources. The fact that having resources makes it much easier to obtain more resources means that inevitably the majority of people will fail in that objective. A planet where most people view themselves as failures due to setting a globally unrealistic target leads to a great deal of depression. It is deeply troubling that suicide is in the top 3 causes of death among 15-44 year olds in so called developed countries. The real issue is that the goal is rather disingenuous and you need to re-focus on what is important in life and establish a planet where individuals' goals are not so heavily conflicted.

Your current leadership has failed you in this regard. However the real problem is one of trust between individuals and countries and until you solve the issue of trust you will not be able to move forward. We all like living in a better universe – we just sometimes need to discuss what we mean by better.

Global Service Standards

More advanced planets have agreed service standards that apply throughout and this is loosely coordinated with birth and hibernation controls so that all inhabitants can expect an acceptable level of service for most of the time. Natural disasters sometimes derail the plan but in normal times there are global standards for availability of the following items:

- 1 Fresh Drinking Water
- 2 Food
- 3 Shelter if the local conditions make this necessary
- 4 Basic Healthcare
- 5 Reliable Utility Supplies
- 6 Entertainment facilities
- 7 Advanced Healthcare
- 8 Rejuvenation
- 9 Rewards and benefits

Items one to three are classed as needs and everything beyond that are wants. We always try to ensure all needs are met and we use the time and resources left over after that to work on wants. All citizens have an expectation to have their needs met at all times and we focus our energies and planning systems very quickly on areas or situations where that isn't happening. Achieving level 6 is a great milestone as then you have the main global service standards. The key challenge then is to conserve and harness energy so that the planet is capable of accommodating more people and possibly new creatures. You have quite a way to go with capacity planning and it's quite good fun to come up with innovative solutions to reduce energy consumption, which you presently need to do until you come up with safe long term energy sources.

Entertainment and fun are also encouraged in all activities. This planet doesn't really seem to understand what makes people happy. I understand you have a huge problem with depression and many people are unhappy. You have identified the problem may have its roots with the gini coefficient in most societies being too high. However you seem incapable of bringing people together and coming up with a fair means of fixing this. Everyone is encouraged to try to get rich. The reality that, on a planet with finite resources, the richer some people get the poorer the rest must be needs to be considered rather than ignored. This is closely linked to your next main problem.

Waste Elimination and Organisation

While a number of your commercial organisations have started on these initiatives and had some success. There is a huge lack of a global approach to implementation. This is necessary to make real progress. There is a key milestone in the journey of continuous improvement and this arrives when you have eliminated both debt and money from the planet. Debt and money are two sides of the same problem and advanced societies have eliminated both of these because they have set good standards of behaviour and people understand they are only entitled to their fair share of available resources. In fact individuals are not entitled to anything they just have to learn to accept what they receive under the rewards and benefits system which I will explain later.

Monitoring and reporting

You are lacking a global reporting and decision making system and this is a major issue which we can address more fully later. However their key points are:

You need to be able to identify areas that are below the globally accepted standards and plans need to be put in place to bring them up to standard if the people in that area want to meet the standard. There are always local variations due to environment and culture and within reason these are encouraged. The decision making system will help with prioritise projects to improve the standards. The emphasis should be on evolution rather than revolution as this is much easier for everyone to adapt to.

You also need to monitor energy consumption and resource allocation and ensure that the overall plan is realistic. Currently you are over-using the fossil fuel energy which was prepared in the past and you need to move to harvesting more renewable energy. This has at least been identified as an issue and pushing energy conservation should help here too. However you are still one of the most wasteful species we have ever encountered. There is so much unnecessary movement of both people and goods on this planet. Our rough estimate is that at least 50% of this motion is unnecessary. This needs to change quickly if you are to accommodate more people and potentially develop solutions to aging such that very long life becomes possible. There are also far too many accidents and unnecessary violence – obviously these will be phased out as behaviours improve.

You have identified global warming as a potential risk – however we are unclear how you have determined the optimal temperature and acceptable rate of temperature change for your planet over time. We have analysed that another ice-age would be a significant challenge for current resources as much of your available land mass is in northern latitudes. However potentially further slight warming could make much of this area more habitable and we don't consider it a major issue if some people need to move. After all if you live long enough you will all have to move to another planet and that will be more challenging.

Education and Training

Your current approach to education is interesting – we may need to return to this topic at length in the coming weeks. Logically, it must be possible to devise a worse system, however you appear to have another major and critical area which is incapable of actually re-organising to properly harness the advances in technology to reduce costs. The present system appears to work much better for the teachers and bankers than the students, which is perhaps understandable since they have largely designed the system. It's disconnection from work that people need doing seems to have arisen because it's difficult to join the two things up – however this is a major flaw.

It's also alarmingly successful at convincing people they are not as good as other people typically because they have spent less time practising particular skills. Incentives are very skewed with very obvious benefits for the above average to become world class but very little benefit for someone currently below average to achieve average. Consequently de-motivation is rife and we are concerned it is part of how you condition people to fail and have low expectations from life. You have books that clearly explain that even the very highest skill levels are very much more a product of practice and effort than any innate skill (4) – however you don't make a good job of getting that message across. You also seem to actively prevent people from getting the opportunities they need

to develop their skills and have created massive protectionism in many senior jobs which drives the inequality on your planet.

A direct consequence of this is that people become good at the things they think they are good at, whether or not this is actually the case to begin with. We can spend quite a bit of time with you linking up a true on-line education experience combined with a lot more on the job experience and working while you learn. The present system is vastly over-priced and in urgent need of reform. It's also frequently rather boring. So the report card on this area definitely reads – “could do better”.

That provides an overview of the general direction you will be heading. You will note that most of the solutions you need to adopt already apply in leading organisations on your planet. You just need to upscale them a little to apply at a planetary level and recognise that your current structure of misaligned countries and organisations competing with each other is part of the problem rather than the solution. You are reasonably organised and aligned at the organisational level, but it's pretty much a total mess when you go above that level and look at the bigger picture. I think that will do for today - there are two major issues that we need to address before we can move forward and look at how we might get this planet moving forward a bit quicker.

Chapter 3 – God and Religion

I understand that many people in your world believe in God and there are many variations on this theme. However religion can create conflict and it is an excuse for much evil in the world.

To an extent, religion contains the collective wisdom of prior generations and you disregard it at your peril. However your present predicament has largely arisen as a result of that disregard. Over-borrowing and excess personal consumption are not cornerstones of any of your religions and yet they continue to cause significant problems and distract global leaders from more important issues.

On other planets beliefs about God did tend to change over time as behaviour and service standards were agreed and as better processes were established to extend life expectancy and backup processes were put in place to recover from accidents. Religion historically proved useful to provide hope for all those who perish and is actively encouraged by the ruling classes as it provides an alternative means of control via religious leaders in times of crisis. It may also provide a warped justification for poverty and suffering of the masses while the elite have plenty. Religion often helps to make people feel guilty and conflicted and this can help make them more controllable by others.

It has taken a long time to get the planet to this point in its history and indeed your initial Christians thought they had made a major breakthrough 2000 years ago when they explained the standards of behaviour they felt were required for a truly successful planet. However this proved to be a false dawn because this behaviour is unnatural and difficult to maintain.

However progress now affords you two key differences from the past:

- 1 Your healthcare systems and processes are getting considerably better and seem likely to further improve dramatically in the next few years.
- 2 It is possible to setup a system to make decisions in an objective, independent and consensual manner as you have fairly pervasive networked technology

Combining the above two points provides the **key opportunity for change** in that you may decide it is fairer to consider an individual's behaviour, alongside or instead of their wealth in the allocation of healthcare resources. Other planets found this a difficult change to come to terms with to begin with – but in the end it was seen as entirely logical that what were really very generous limits were set on both the amount of consumption and the amount of inconsiderate behaviour that were allowed prior to reducing entitlements to healthcare and other benefits. The most advanced planets now have very stable populations with some rotation in and out of hibernation with trouble makers being 'punished' by longer periods of sleep to keep the amount of chaos they are causing within preferred levels. Hibernation is a sort of grown-up version of the "naughty spot".

There would obviously need discussion on how far to take this approach – we suggest starting with small steps and just see how it goes. An initial starting suggestion might be that anyone convicted of more than one murder will lose all rights to receive organ transplants should they be required in future. It's never entirely clear what the majority want or what is considered fair without consulting them, however we think that provided this is announced and communicated up front then this arrangement would be acceptable to the majority of people. As soon as you cross the Rubicon and link healthcare entitlements to behaviour you start to create a powerful new incentive for good behaviour.

In the longer term as you progress the potential is there to develop this much further. However we suspect this proposal will not be universally welcomed by religious groups as it may be perceived as treading on hallowed turf. Yet arguably it is their greatest opportunity to help shape common global standards of behaviour they think are appropriate and provide people with some feedback on how they are doing during their life. It also creates some tangible incentives to lead a good life. In general we have found early and regular feedback, sometimes personally and sometimes anonymously can be very helpful.

Murder has died out on the more advanced planets and instead people get flagged and publicly reported for unacceptable behaviour. Each and every murder was viewed as a failure of the education, training and development system and there was quite a bit of investigation of the root cause of the problem and in general we carried out retraining to address the problem. There are a few planets where some advanced creatures do still enjoy committing murders – however because the creatures are fully backed up and can be reincarnated after death this is less of an issue and indeed the majority find it quite reassuring to see evidence that the backup procedures are working.

Returning to the present on this planet we have considered whether or not one or more of your present God's may exist. Our conclusion is that this is theoretically possible and we are surprised that there is little to no investigation of the possibility at present. Your planet claims to embrace the scientific method and indeed is doing quite well at getting into sub-atomic details.

God conceivably may exist as a network of bacteria and other creatures in various forms that work together to build larger creatures. Your genetic code or DNA suggests that there is a very detailed and sophisticated process for reproduction and bacteria and existing cells may use this code to know which particular model of creature they are building. Individually bacteria are not intelligent but collectively they could potentially form a vast intelligent network that spans the globe. If you analysed a single brain cell you would conclude that human beings had no intelligence and while Einstein felt human intelligence was somewhat limited few can argue that you do have significant thinking and analytical powers. Interestingly there are several examples on your planet of creatures' minds being taken over by other creatures as outlined by Ed Yong (5).

Our assessment of the possibility that one or more micro-organisms actually work together to run the world and that your life is just an on-going test of virtue with a final judgement day arising on death is that this is rather unlikely.

Even if God originally thought he had set a fair test of virtue for you to attempt to live up to we feel it is very likely that he would have become a bit bored with the arrangement long before now and looked at introducing a more co-operative approach in order to accelerate the progress of the planet. However we suppose that if God were sufficiently set in his position and irrational then the current level of chaos may be achievable.

We also note however that you have never really satisfactorily answered the question of "what's in it for God?" The fact that I am here at the direction of a virtual forum that is fair, reasonable and facilitates order among the known planets with intelligent life in the Universe is further evidence that your God does not exist.

Obviously it is also possible for God to exist elsewhere within or outside the Universe and while again this is possible it is very much a minority belief. We have a full understanding of how life initiates and have also mapped the evolutionary paths of certain creatures and this does all take place without any divine intervention on all the living planets we have encountered so far. So for other planets there really are no gaps for God to fill and we consider it unlikely that this planet is any different.

We find it somewhat pompous that you have identified that there are several hundred billion galaxies and several hundred billions stars in each of them and yet somehow many people here still seem to think this is the centre of the Universe and you are the key creature in it. You have also identified that various species have been 'top dog' on your planet at different points in its evolution but yet many of you feel that you are the key species that God is solely focussed on.

However we cannot yet simulate every possible fork in the evolutionary road so our view is that if God exists then he will be a peculiarity of this planet rather than a Universal feature. Any proof of such existence will be rather difficult because the bacteria will know what you are up to and they may not want to be discovered. Indeed if their position is entrenched and they are capable of camouflaging their every move then such a proof may not be possible until you are capable of a full simulation of the various life-forms via computer. Our assessment is that you are currently some years away from that – but obviously we may be able to help.

On further reflection, the possibility of the Devil existing on this planet is a little bit more credible. Basically you educate everyone to expect at least the average income and benefits and then the above average demonstrate entitlements that they expect to be rewarded for and the very capable think they're entitled to even more and you're probably not that far away from the basic recipe for Hell.

Perhaps humans are even subjected to a 'blinding' technique, perhaps by bacteria in their brains, and have just been unable to see the bigger picture up until now. Perhaps we could just about be persuaded that the Devil may exist on this planet and we do understand there has been some history of devil worship.

The arguments for atheism however have been made by many leading philosophers and scientists over the years and we will not repeat them here. (5) (6) There is however a key point to emphasise that it is only rational to believe in God if both the following conditions are met:

- 1 You believe God exists
- 2 You believe God is rational and fair

As has been pointed out frequently there is no real evidence whatsoever for point 1 and even if 1 was true it is very clear that God is not rational. If God is not rational then there is no basis to expect a fair judgement, he could just as easily be the devil in disguise and the requirement for everlasting life could just as easily be that you have demonstrated a sufficient level of evil during your time on earth. It is simply not rational to believe in an irrational God.

Interestingly, just as belief in God may start to fade, hope for the future may start to grow. Increasing focus on health and life extension will provide real benefits for all in the future and other planets did move forward by making clear that while these benefits are resource intensive they

would only be available to those that were considered deserving by a group of others. This was considered the only fair way to progress and it actually helped a lot with changing people's focus from entitlement, money and power.

Chapter 4 - Hard Determinism

This next point is even more important to progress than reducing the influence of religion on your planet and yet once again it is somewhat confusing to me why I have to remind you of it as you seem to have established the answer already yourself. Matter is composed of atoms and atoms move in accordance with the four fundamental forces of nature. This has all been clearly documented in your physics textbooks yet for some reason many of you believe that living creatures composed of atoms have some sort of override of these four forces. Can I please assure you that living creatures are just as restricted by the laws of physics as inanimate matter.

Many of your leading philosophers have come to the conclusion that human beings probably do not have freewill (7) and yet this view has stubbornly failed to become established in your day to day lives. I can assure you that this is something the rest of the universe has learned to live with and it will help you to progress if you do so too. It may well be inconvenient and you may well prefer it if you actually were in control of your life – however this genuinely isn't the case. You can however learn techniques to have better and happier lives. The 'big bang' as you call it was a key turning point in the development of the present universe and everything that has followed from it up until this day has been utterly inevitable and unavoidable. We do have theories of time before the big bang and these generally focus on the likelihood which you have at least identified that the Universe started from nothing (8). Most theories you have presume that nothing can be a stable state. However we think nothing is an unstable state and it divides into plus 1 and minus 1 and then returns to nothing at rapid pace provided nothing else interferes with it. However interference is inevitable and so interactions start to happen and over time these interactions increase until you get to the scale of the current universe which we believe was formed from one or more previous universes. "Ex nihilo nihil fit" or nothing comes from nothing seems to be a simplification and in fact nothing once you accept that nothing is unstable it becomes by far the most likely starting point for everything.

This also helps explain some of the challenges you are experiencing at the quantum level where the interference, if you like from nothing is starting to come into play and hence you have resorted to stochastic models. This will remain a challenge as the amount of nothing in the universe is probably forever indeterminate and consequently this universe is both fully deterministic and yet indeterminate at the same time.

The point here is that humans do not have the ability to influence the behaviour of nothing and so accepting hard determinism is really important as you currently have a huge culture of blame and fault throughout society. While bad things will continue to happen and people will continue to have positions that you disagree with you must learn to accept that other people have no choice about how they have behaved up to the present time. Obviously they will also have no choice about how they behave in the future either. However education is a wonderful thing and explaining hard determinism to people tends to result in quite profound changes of behaviour which can be hugely beneficial.

You also need to accept that there is no random force in nature and thus the future is every bit as fixed as the past. However the more you learn about the universe the earlier you see problems arising and the more chance you have to deal with them before they hurt you.

If the concept of freewill is rejected then this helps to reduce the notion of entitlement that so much of your society is based on. Arguably people have earned benefits based on the learning and opportunities that life has given them and in future we need to share these more evenly. The key objective being to ensure everyone has food, water, shelter and healthcare such that you can get as many people as possible working on solving the real problems you face such as living longer and finding a new home before the sun goes down.

We appreciate that the acceptance of no-freewill is a very hard concept to get widely accepted– it just seems so counter-intuitive. As we are always open to new ideas we will always consider any coherent document which explains at what point before or after birth you think you obtain it and at what point prior to death you lose it again? We are however a bit inflexible about the idea that you grow into it and out of it again during your life – in the words of one of your early fictional space travelling heroes: “That is illogical”.

We accept that none of the above is in any way a proof that human beings do not have freewill. However we feel it is entirely reasonable to suggest that since freewill requires humans to have an override to the laws of physics within their head that has not been observed anywhere else in the universe and that this override arrives at a non-obvious point, presumably at or after conception and ceases at some other non-obvious point prior to death that the burden of proof rests on those who claim this unlikely situation is true.

I still struggle a bit with some of your language but I think we would translate the universe’s view of entitlement as “you are entitled to the cube root of f*** all”. However it seems some people use the f*** word all the time and others hardly at all and I’m not really sure I understand why that is.

It’s also not entirely clear to us why hard determinism isn’t covered as part of your education curriculum. It seems that features of life that you don’t like or don’t agree with are covered over and this is actually quite concerning for the future of your planet. Moving forward requires that the current reality is faced up to and people recognise that what we have here is basically “every man for himself” with little regard for the overall result.

Even some of your leading philosophers and campaigners for atheism such as Richard Dawkins appear rather challenged by the concept of hard determinism. If as you suggest “life would be intolerable” (9) without freewill then I’m afraid you’ll either need to stop living or go find another universe Mr Dawkins, because that’s the way it is in this one and we are sceptical if it will be different anywhere else. It is also very disingenuous to suggest that it is unimportant and not related to promoting atheism. Once you accept people don’t have freewill, you then must also accept that their religious views are the inevitable result of their development and experiences to date.

We find the amount of time you spend blaming and attributing fault quite alarming when the reality is that every mistake that has ever been made was *always* going to be made – as it was “baked in the cake” so to speak at the time the universe formed. Nobody is perfect hence our preference for group decision making to minimise the risk of these flaws causing accidents or service disruption.

We are also puzzled by how attached you all are to your nationalities. At least with your favourite sports team it appears to most of you that you chose them. However it’s a rather harder case to

make that you chose where you were born and yet you are encouraged to be quite passionately nationalistic and even fight for your country at great personal risk and for quite limited rewards. The only realistic outcome from a war is significant casualties and an overall reduction in net wealth as a result of the destruction caused. Often you will fight for 'freedom' however in reality very little freedom seems to arise. There is always just one form of hierarchy or another, with a minority imposing its will on the majority.

While the world is currently fiercely nationalistic and this has been engrained, arguably deliberately, over many years. It is highly questionable if this is appropriate for an age of global communication. Nobody chooses where they are born and yet where and to whom you are born is currently the biggest influence on one's prospects for life. On advanced planets while everyone is attached to an area where they grew up, the requirement to be a full global citizen is much more important.

Perhaps the best way for people that don't accept hard determinism to approach it is just to give it a go from time to time. Despite it being a fundamental fact you will find it has little effect on day to day behaviour, where people will continue to just do what they think suits them best, except in the following two types of circumstance. Firstly, on the all too frequent occasions when they screw things up they will still be a bit disappointed at the mistakes they made but the atoms in the universe actually formed very well for them and if they are assessing the mistake then they are still alive so can still consider themselves fortunate. For most people it will be far from "intolerable", it's actually in general easier to accept the things you do, including your own deficiencies and let's face it you all have some are, not of your own making.

Also, when you encounter someone who in your opinion is being utterly unreasonable, plain stupid or otherwise annoying then reminding yourself that they have no choice about how they are behaving and occasionally wondering what previous experiences have fostered that point of view is actually very helpful in de-stressing the situation and trying to find out why they act the way they do.

For those still struggling to accept hard determinism a final suggestion maybe that they should apply the principal of Occam's razor and accept that hard determinism is by far the simplest route to follow and there are huge advantages to your species if everyone is aligned on this principal. Great leaders are fantastically good at creating alignment and getting everybody moving in the same direction. That direction can change frequently, and in some ways that adds to the fun of living. So please can you consider going with the flow on this point and see if it works for all of you.

I think to wrap this point up we would like to summarise and say that there really are three great delusions in life God, money and freewill. The greatest of these is freewill as it is inescapable, even once you accept you don't have it. You should all be working to make this planet better and you should also fully recognise that money is only necessary as a scorekeeper and limiter of excess consumption because people haven't learned how to share and signal what is available without it. As I have said before the more advanced planets operate without money and this eliminates waste. However at the end of the day what you should or shouldn't do depends entirely on how your mind has been conditioned and educated to think and the human development process. This path has basically been set for each of you by the arrangement of the atoms that became you.

Perhaps your people are all happy and unable to change and in that case this competition and current living arrangements will continue. However there is quite a lot of unhappiness on the planet

and we suspect when better and fairer methods of apportioning resources are agreed then they will generally be welcomed. The universe's future is set and will be just as it was always going to be.

Chapter 5 - The Barriers to change

Religion and delusion of freewill operate like twin condoms on the penis of progress preventing the fertilisation of many new ideas to move your planet forward. Change is seldom easy and we will try and assist you. However successful change all starts with belief that what you set out to do is achievable. The key first step on any journey is to believe that it is possible to reach your destination. It seems that far too many people on your planet have been beaten into submission and lost hope for the future. I can confirm that it is possible for advanced species to live for a very long time in very great comfort on other planets. So anyone who says that this change is not possible needs to be challenged. The issues of aging which humans face are probably not dissimilar to other species. Consequently similar treatments to those used by creatures on other planets' for rejuvenation are likely to prove effective.

Others may be concerned that change is not in individuals' best interests. This opinion would also need to be challenged as the vast majority of humans do seem to enjoy living despite all the hassles that your current over-competitive standards of behaviour impose upon you. It would definitely appear that changing approach and focussing on improving the world and living longer, happier lives is very much in the interest of everyone.

One of your leading scientists, Albert Einstein, concluded that humans were afflicted by "Infinite stupidity". We do not agree with this assessment as there are a great many highly intelligent people on your planet. However many of them have been guilty of over-focussing on what suits them best rather than considering what actions are in the best interests of the planet as a whole. You need to shift the goalposts so that humans are incentivised to do things which benefit the planet as a whole rather than merely enriching individuals with a hidden cost to everyone else. Changing attitudes to wealth and linking advanced healthcare benefits to good behaviour rather than money are a necessary step forward. As we have stated before it is not possible for everyone to be financially rich at the same time, however there is no such limit on the extent of good behaviour.

A big challenge you may face surrounding the introduction of a global strategy is that it's "Not my responsibility". While true that nobody has sole responsibility, the global strategy is everyone's responsibility and the failure to share a global vision about the world you want to live in has created the opportunity for national and religious groups to compete with each other for allegiance. All these groups derive their strength from some degree of separatism from the rest of humanity and this inevitably leads to friction.

Many people will admit to failure to think about a global strategy and indeed your existing structures make it difficult for people to think and believe that an alternative approach is possible. The relatively free communication and widespread movement of goods and people, combined with a shared environment make the present national structures extremely ineffective. They tend to reward favoured government and corporate insiders at the expense of everybody else. One writer has labelled the current Government arrangements in some countries as zombocracy. (10)

Another challenge may be that a globally imposed structure is not enjoyable and feels remote. This would probably be true if you went for a political structure with many levels of bureaucracy. However a global decision making system can operate at all levels of decision making and empower individuals to make agreed changes and set priorities within their local area. Because all significant

decisions are documented on the system and open to challenge by everyone it should provide a lot of fun opportunities to improve the world. Acceptance of hard determinism should also make for a significantly more forgiving culture when errors arise.

Many people will resist because they can't be bothered to change. This means the proposed changes have not captured their hearts and minds. Change is initially a slow process – however like many other things it follows a geometric series. The initial step is simply to get a couple of people fully on board and committed to change. It continues to surprise many people how few times this process would need to be repeated to cover the entire planet. However I have a good understanding of geometric series and the process only requires to be repeated through 33 levels with two new recruits from each parent to reach the entire population of your planet.

Fear of change is also an understandable reason why some people will not embrace a new approach. However, all fear is relative, and what you need to realise is that the status quo is both extremely unfair and entirely unsustainable. Your present 'free' market system is I would suggest pretty much a ponzi scheme and like all such schemes it has a limited lifetime. The outcome last time you got into this mess in the 1930's ended with the Second World War and repeating this approach again will not work out well for a great many people. So unfortunately people should be very afraid of the future if you continue with your present organisational structures.

You are at one of these points that you have identified in the past as a 4th turning and in the past these have not always gone well. It is time for everyone to take a more enlightened and less blaming approach. A great deal of change is about to happen whether you want it to or not – the question is whether you'd prefer that to be civilised and organised or violent and barbaric?

Chapter 6 - What is the problem?

I have provided a good deal of background on the issues you face and some of the problems you would need to solve in order to get your planet back onto a reasonable strategy. We have covered a good deal of ground, however perhaps in covering so much we have not focussed enough on exactly what the problem is. We should now examine in a bit more detail exactly where the problems lie.

Before starting that however let me re-iterate that there is a very big problem here. It has relatively little focus, perhaps partly because you do not have visibility of the achievements on other planets.

The universe as a whole doesn't have a problem because it doesn't care what particular state it is in at any point of time. However everyone on your planet currently has a problem if they enjoy living as this will be a fairly transitory state unless they focus more on how to extend lifespans and make living more enjoyable.

There is a strange perception among some people on your planet that they are winning and clearly the distribution of wealth is rather unequal and by this measure there are a few clear winners and a vast majority of losers. However the winners are playing last centuries game and they have successfully demotivated the majority which is a huge hindrance to progressing with this centuries agenda of fixing poverty, disease and curing aging.

The rules are set by the global elite, however they can only do this with the consent of the majority. That majority needs to move the consensus along a bit and perhaps re-define winning as living for a thousand years. One of your leading bio-gerontologists has suggested that the first thousand year old person is probably already alive and among you – however even comments like this generate very limited traction and focus. There is almost a fear and reluctance to move forward based on a strange perception that the planet is approaching capacity. Our expectation is that with improved behaviour the capacity of this planet is much closer to eighty billion people than 8 billion – however reaching that capacity will require that many of you stop running around like blue-arsed flies and over indulging.

We have visited other planets and I can confirm to you that this planet is seriously under-achieving on numerous criteria. Some specific measures where your performance would be considered poor by universal standards would be:

- 1 % of people not getting their needs met
- 2 % of people not receiving basic healthcare
- 3 Accidental death rate
- 4 Level of violent crime
- 5 Rate of depletion of non-renewable energy
- 6 %age of people over-consuming

The problem may lie in one or more of the following areas which we will look at in turn:

- 1 Irrationality
- 2 Relativity
- 3 Hierarchy & motivations of leaders and their followers
- 4 Market Failure

- 5 Lack of vision
- 6 Inability to organise at a global level
- 7 General acceptance of poor standards of behaviour
- 8 Apathy

Irrationality

Human beings in general are innately irrational (11) and while this has been documented it is not yet widely accepted. Any problem that is not accepted is not readily dealt with. Careful analysis rather than instinctive judgement has been identified as one technique to reduce irrational decisions. A significant proportion of people on the planet still have faith and indeed the vast majority of your political leaders claim to be religious. We find this somewhat surprising. While we can rationalise that some of them are just doing this to appear more acceptable and to help their election bids there do appear to be some that are genuinely deluded enough to think that their actions are likely to be judged favourably and provide them with a hero's reception in the afterlife.

We have reviewed the actions and achievements of the typical political leader and many of the recent ones appear to have started foreign wars, authorised murders, increased the numbers of people living in poverty and protected the wealthy and the bankers from inevitable losses that arise at the end of a borrowing binge. These actions are completely at odds with religious teachings and consequently they must be delusional if they think they are.

Many leaders have also promised many things they are generally incapable of delivering without over-spending and out-competing other leaders. Economists can generally only stay employed by telling their employers what they want to hear and so short term Keynesian deficit spending has become a near permanent distortion. However the laws of mathematics will bring this to an end in the not too distant future.

In practice your politicians don't actually have as much power as they claim to have. Arguably most people who want to be in power are also unsuitable to be leaders – hence the need to change the approach. It is a major problem that there are so many people pretending to be in charge of running your world but in reality there is actually nobody in charge and this is a highly inefficient arrangement.

So, at present, you have this rather dysfunctional partnership between politics and economics that massively underachieves for the majority of people. We would propose some new ideas for both legs of the partnership.

A great deal of economics is based on the premise of rational economic maximising man. This made perfect sense at the time of Adam Smith and probably continued to have relevance throughout the last millennium. Arguably however it has now morphed into an oxymoron. Given the advances you are making in medical science and the further potential for progress it seems to us that anybody who sets out to die wealthy lacks ambition.

As for politicians, it has been said that the people tend to treat them like diapers and therefore change them frequently and for similar reasons. Technology now appears to allow civilisation to mature. You will still look for politicians to campaign, entertain and promote solutions to the issues

of the day but you will no longer be so dependent on them for containment. This is beneficial as they have frequently proved to be an expensive, unreliable and disappointing solution to problems.

Relativity

We bring up relativity not as in the Einsteinian sense but in the real problem that humans have in needing to compare themselves to everyone else. This is a serious issue as there really is a great deal of comparing going on and doing better than others appears to be a real objective and source of both happiness and misery for many.

Indeed we suspect that some of you would be quite happy living in a shit shower for 23 hours a day provided the majority had to endure living there for the full 24 hours. If you were also a stakeholder, perhaps with a financial or managerial interest in the showering enterprise, then you would be even happier and you would also be focussed on maintaining the status quo as progress might diminish your influence and income. The "I'm alright Jack" mentality is to an extent understandable as none of you have any chance of fixing the world on your own and therefore it is individually reasonable to try and get the best out of it that you can.

Hierarchy

The establishment of a hierarchy within all human endeavours is a problem. Your typical working arrangements de-motivate the majority for most of the time. This is important because the vast majority of people are not fully engaged in their working activities. The few that are leading and fully focussed are typically either operating in capitalist ventures or carrying out fairly short term focussed Government activities.

You have to some extent tried both socialism and capitalism and while neither of these systems has actually been implemented in any sort of pure form without considerable 'cronyism' you have identified that both systems have significant challenges. The way forward definitely requires improved linking of performance and benefits for all individuals with agreed performance standards being established for different tasks.

Market Failure

Neither hierarchy nor irrationality appear sufficient to explain the lack of focus on this planet. Perhaps it is a genuine case of market failure for long term and uncertain projects that is actually the problem. Clearly controlling, managing and ideally stopping the aging process will be a very difficult task and it will probably take a long time to complete. However a great deal of change and progress can happen in 50 years. If you had asked people in 1919 if they thought it was possible for man to travel to the moon in 50 years time there would have been few that expected this to happen. As we have also highlighted the global population is much greater now so the potential talent pool to work on projects has never been greater.

Currently a great deal of this talent appears to be focussed on really rather stupid financial games in which it will probably never be entirely clear whether the cleverest or the luckiest will record the financial gains. However the failure rate of human life has always been 100% and it seems reasonable to think that the more effort is focussed on reducing this rate the quicker it will start to fall.

There is currently no obvious way to make an investment in gerontology research and have any real expectation that you will get the return on investment that you are actually looking for. As your species is presently so financially focussed you end up with significant levels of unemployment

combined with serious problems with healthcare and aging that are not being addressed. So there is a problem here that your present markets and organisations are apparently not capable of dealing with.

Lack of Vision

Obviously the current generation of political leaders are unlikely to have the satisfaction of delivering this achievement – however it will be a much more useful achievement than getting a few men to step on the moon. The majority of these in power presumably believe that it's not something that is achievable within their lifetime and are therefore not interested in dedicating resources to it. This really does seem illogical. There are so many surprising things that significant resources are wasted on in this planet and yet there is no focussed initiative to solve what appears to be the biggest human problem of all.

In general the survival instinct of individuals seems to be strong and we think this will triumph over any philosophical objections that people living longer will require fewer people to be born in future. We have faced this issue on other planets and the thinking has always been that progress of the planet would happen quicker with a stable productive population having more time to focus on the issues and that this in turn would allow colonisation of other planets quicker. Consequently more of our species would get a chance of life in the fullness of time. Any individual can end their life or more likely elect to have a period of hibernation once you establish the processes for doing this if their conscience dictates.

Inability to organise

As a planet you are severely challenged to organise effectively on a large scale. This seems largely because you lack efficient and effective methods of group decision making. You appear to have two principal means of group decision making at present. These are:

- 1 Meetings
- 2 Elections/Surveys

While small group meetings can be quite productive meetings have a serious limit to scalability. Beyond around twenty people their effectiveness rapidly diminishes. So as a means of achieving global consensus meetings are severely challenged.

For large scale consultations your planet appears has resorted to elections and referendum and these are frequently held out as triumphs of human achievement. I do appreciate that universal suffrage was a right not easily attained and still not available in many parts of your world. However the fact remains that democracy is a fairly terrible means of making decisions. Some of the main flaws to democracy are:

- 1) It is very expensive to conduct a vote and so is used infrequently. While technology could be used to overcome this consulting everybody or nobody would remain inefficient.
- 2) It takes no cognisance of individuals differing levels of knowledge and interest.
- 3) It tends to require large amounts of funding to get elected. This is typically achieved by making promises to backers which determine policy once elected.

These methods of group decision making simply cannot support an aligned global effort to implement a strategy to improve the world. As Einstein noted:

"The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."

General acceptance of poor standards of behaviour

There is very little discussion on your planet at present on whether or not present standards of behaviour are acceptable. It seems questionable if the planet will ever achieve its potential while wealth is so concentrated and with some people having wealth in the billions while others are dying of starvation. It seems some sort of dialogue on the acceptability of this behaviour could be called for and a plan put in place to address the imbalances. Discussions along the line of "Your yacht may be too large Mr Abramovich" are simply not taking place.

Apathy

The attitude that you have captured in the saying "I'm all right Jack" may also be part of the problem. Many of you presently are all right at any point in time. However you must realise this is a temporary state of affairs and with your current level of healthcare none of you will be all right for terribly long. Given your current knowledge and methods it is exceedingly unlikely that any of you will live for more than 120 years and you will certainly be affected to at least some extent by the debilitating effects of aging during the second half of any life that approaches this length. So this apathy and selfishness needs to be addressed. With co-operation and effort it is very possible that many of you alive today could get to live for thousands of years. Surely that is a prize worth striving for, particularly when you consider the amount of progress and development that is likely in the future.

Conclusion

The problem seems to be tied up in all of the above areas. However the inability to align countries, organisations and wealth to work towards common goals appears the key problem.

Intelligent species on other planets were very much more open about the fact that they saw dying as a problem. While they recognised that to some extent at the individual level the problem can be exaggerated. It is in fact no more troubling to the individual concerned than the time that elapsed before they were born. They were still very clear that they didn't want to die because they enjoyed living and they were all prepared to work together to fulfill that goal as soon as possible. When the highway robber of past years pointed his gun at the typical individual with the question – "Your money or your life?" it seems the normal response was to hand over the money. However when it comes to the slow decay that the aging process causes then your species prefers money to life. This is quite puzzling.

While we're not sure we'll ever understand why you've made this choice we do believe that a more organised approach to decision making will help both you and us to understand each other better. This solution has worked very well on other planets and there is no obvious reason why it can't work here. We've outlined the approach in the next chapter and gone on at a little more length in the appendix.

Chapter 7 - Global Decision Making System

I mentioned earlier the concept of a global or networked decision making system is something that has proved useful on more advanced planets to help establish what individuals and societies want. It is a key tool for empowerment, education, problem reporting and solving and avoids the establishment of top heavy hierarchies. There are some key principles which have been established – however it is not yet clear what the best version is. This can evolve throughout the development of the system. Interestingly you have already developed the concept of grid computing to leverage the limited power of independent computers into a much more powerful and resilient platform. Applying the same concept to individuals shouldn't be too difficult for you.

You are also fortunate in that it appears you only require to develop a single species system accessible to humans. Humans are really all fairly similar, it's predominantly the variation in education and experience that creates differences in capabilities and arguably a fairer planet will have less of these variations going forward. On other planets with several intelligent species that all think they are better than each other it tends to be harder to build the consensus you need for such a system to work well. There is a tendency for each species to want to develop their own system and we have often had to be quite firm in explaining that while some competition may be good in the development phase there must ultimately be agreement on a single system that is used by all the intelligent species and all future development gets channelled into that system.

Some key points for planet earth are – it's not really appropriate to only consult people once every five years or so on what they want as most of your current versions of 'democracy' do. This is just an illusion of power and it does not engage enough people in the process on an on-going basis. It also tends to lead to over-borrowing and many promises to payback in the future. Unfortunately you are now about to arrive at that future and most countries and banks in the developed world are presently insolvent and the status quo is only continuing by their ability to print and re-circulate money. In short you have been badly let down by your current leaders, while they mean well they lack vision. The system that appoints them means they have made far too many promises to far too many lobbyists before they get appointed. They have also distorted the free market and created numerous unnecessary barriers to progress so the system really does need urgent and radical reform.

We quite like a genuinely free market for short term allocation of goods and services – however it struggles with longer term projects and it has in general been replaced by more automated planning systems and agreed behaviour standards on the more advanced planets. But remember everyone including your leaders are trying to do what they think is best for them – it's just that the overall result is something of a disaster due to following a bad process. It is more than a little ironic that in many areas there is more voting and engagement in Saturday night talent shows than in setting the overall direction of the various areas on the planet that you call countries.

In general individual decision making is a bad thing we have found it to be much more effective to require groups of 3 or 5 people to make decisions. The suggested minimum number of people to resolve a straight choice is 3 independent people and for more complex decisions (those with more than two options) 5 people can also be a good number. The game of triangles has been outlined in appendix II and provides a quick and easy mechanism to support decision making and also illustrates

the dangers of establishing hierarchies which typically de-motivate and disengage the majority of people from decision making.

Individual decision making on important issues is strongly discouraged and is very much a last resort when no-one else is around as it often leads to mistakes. For all decisions three or five or more people should reach a group consensus by discussion and WITHOUT any hierarchical structure being present within the group. Basically before making any decision you typically need to ask two questions:

- 1 Is it fair?
- 2 Does it matter?

These two questions are key. However fairness is a slippery concept and this can cause quite a bit of discussion as there are a great many angles and opinions on what is fair. You already attempted some aspects of the communist concept of everybody gets the same and found it to be fairly disastrous. We have witnessed similar experiences when inputs and outputs are disconnected in a process and we strongly advise against this approach going forward. There is guidance from both good books and philosophy, nevertheless fairness remains an evolving concept. If a decision doesn't matter then it shouldn't really be consuming resources on the Global Decision Making System. However if it is there you should probably select the more interesting option as there is no obvious reason for making life dull.

Once a decision has been made the choice should be recorded on the decision recording system and this is important because it allows conflicts to be identified, managed and resolved. The people making the decision are also recorded and they can be rewarded for making correct and fair decisions when these are later reviewed by other people. Other people can challenge a decision either because it is unfair or incorrect – however again the preference is that there should be 3 or more challenges before resources are devoted to reviewing the decision. When a decision is challenged the system will route the problem to an appropriate review panel of more experienced decision makers who will assess and give further consideration to the correct decision.

If the decision is challenged again it can be escalated up the experience hierarchy based on the subject matter of the decision until it reaches acknowledged global subject matter experts. The global decision making system thus serves as a global knowledge base on both factual matters and standards of behaviour. The standards of behaviour are typically set by the global management teams whereas specific subject knowledge is managed by subject matter experts. You already have an established and extensive Wikipedia solution for knowledge management which is working fairly well so why not take a similar approach to decision making. Large scale meetings are rather impractical and can take a long time to even confirm points that everyone basically agrees upon.

The beauty of the system is that it maintains individuals rankings based on the quality of their decisions. This may seem all quite complex but I assure you there is nothing more technically difficult than what you have achieved already with social networking software. It's just a lot more beneficial as it will greatly speed up progress and enforce the acceptable standards of behaviour that are expected. It will effectively encourage people to be good and they will be trained to a very high standard in their areas of expertise by studying and reviewing the knowledge base developed in training or play mode. All we are really doing here is extending the established concept of grid

computing to form a grid of people with a decent structure for decision making. Different types of decision can use different structures and some possible structures are outlined in appendix I.

The global decision making system should also have a voting mode. Your present system of democracy is really terrible in so many ways. It appears to be one of the worst decision making systems in the entire universe and an automated fast voting mode can provide for much quicker and more effective group decision making on key issues.

Another key benefit of the global decision making system is that it can assign tasks to individuals and groups. It is very confusing to see a planet in such a mess and yet you have so many people, particularly young people with lots of energy and potential unemployed. The system can allocate work and get things done and the achievements will be recorded against the individuals and appropriate rewards can be agreed as well.

While the system should be setup on a global basis it is also relatively simple to restrict the scope of decisions to specific interest groups, corporations and locations. Indeed corporations on other planets find it extremely useful to have a fully documented decision trail for key decisions and more senior management find it much easier to coach and develop staff and generally improve their customers' experience when they can see what decisions are being made and why. Similarly the general rule that if three people agree that something should be done and consider it fair and important then they are empowered to carry out that decision is a great mechanism for getting actions carried out quickly. This can be viewed as a real freedom, albeit the controls in place are that you may be subjected to subsequent challenge if the decision is not considered fair.

I think that gives you a rough outline on how global decision making systems can be structured. The benefits of putting a system and process in place to allow everyone to participate in leadership really can be very considerable and you should look to implement this quickly. There are differences in design on the various planets but these don't matter much and only very serious problems need to be escalated beyond the planet.

However as part of our efforts to integrate your planet with the rest of the universe we will also introduce some questions of universal importance into your system for consideration. These will be fairly obvious to begin with and while we will pay little attention to your answers in the early years because you will be at the very bottom of the universal tree so to speak. We still find it useful for your education to gain some understanding of the challenges we face in delivering a fair fun and progressive universe to as many different species as we can.

Chapter 8 – More Strategy and Determinism

As I have stated previously we do not believe any creature in this universe has freewill. You are all hardwired to do what you think suits you best at all times. Consequently, it makes little sense to blame yourself or anyone else for mistakes or transgressions ex-post. It is however necessary to both consider what good behaviour looks like and ask if the social framework you currently have in place is most appropriate for the way the laws of nature actually are.

As we have mentioned before your various religions have attempted to assimilate much of the collective wisdom of your ancestors. Obviously they understood a great deal less about the universe than you do and consequently God was assigned a much bigger role and more responsibility in the past. As we have explained the Universe probably came from nothing and so no actual God was involved. Nevertheless you should not entirely disregard religious teachings as much of it documents what has been considered good behaviour over time. What however concerns us greatly is how little this teaching is actually applied in your day to day living.

There is however a dichotomy between most religious teaching and the typical behaviour of most of the rich and famous. It seems as if religion remains a convenient tool to help the elite control the masses. Our view is that this is just another mechanism put in place by those with power to help them retain it as they think that suits them best. However we do have serious concerns about this as it appears to amount to an abuse of power and it also risks a backlash were it to be fully exposed for what it is.

Clearly acceptance of determinism requires a so-called root and branch review of what good behaviour looks like and how to encourage it. While there is a large body of moral philosophy already in place to help you with this task it remains seriously hindered by the lack of an overall strategy for what your species is trying to achieve. While moral philosophizing has led to a great deal of thinking over the years we would urge you not to get overly bogged down in the specific rights and wrongs of things. What you need to do is organise yourselves to get the agreed strategy established and delivered as quickly as possible.

We will provide you with a bit of an external focus for part of this activity as we already have a strategy for the known universe and your planet's strategy now falls within our scope. However to begin with we think it remains a worthwhile step for you to consider and develop a first pass at your own global strategy. This then provides a framework for individual behaviour as there is a bigger picture of the overall plan that all individuals should be trying to fit their activities into.

Not having an overall global strategy leaves corporations and countries to develop their own strategies and while many perceive this is a good thing we think it is wasteful as inevitably these strategies will conflict. However conflicts between strategies and individual goals are generally not identified and resolved at the planning stage. Instead they are played out and result in many individuals pursuing activities that are poorly aligned and consequently wasteful. Two people working in competition will always achieve less than if they were working at maximum effort and fully aligned.

However lack of competition, can frequently lead to apathy and a lack of ambition and drive to succeed. The general approach we would suggest to overcoming this is regular feedback and agreed

performance standards. However we may also be able to help by instilling a bit of competition into the mix.

Provided the correct measures are in place and there is a commitment to continuous improvement then it should actually be possible to make progress without the need for competition. Fortunately measurement systems are getting better, easier and cheaper to establish all the time and we would anticipate this trend continuing. Consequently it should be possible to get most activities being measured and performance fed back without significant overheads.

There is general derision in your world for the notion of a planned economy and this is understandable given that all attempts at this have focussed on a central planning regime with bureaucrats being placed in charge and disempowerment of the individuals to make decisions typically being combined with a fairly high level of corruption and nepotism. A locally planned economy with conflict resolution at the planning stage is the vision that you should be working towards and this will be supported in due course by the development of planning software for your planet to help ensure everyone's needs and as many wants as possible are being met in a fair and reasonable manner.

At present most people aspire to maximise their wad and many seem to think flash cars and cosmetic surgery are the sorts of things to focus on. It will be real headwind to progress if these behaviours persist

As I have outlined earlier a more reasonable high level strategy might be to extend global life expectancy to 80 by 2020. This should be an achievable first step on the journey to massively longer life. Currently your global life expectancy is around 67 years – however there is a great deal of variation across the world and by focusing on overcoming hardship and maximising the number of people who are getting their needs met this number could rise quickly. Remember that nobody has ever chosen where they were born or indeed whether they were born at all. It therefore seems rather unfair that this remains a primary driver of one's outcomes in life.

Your recently deceased and self styled high priest of technology, Steve Jobs, suggested that “death is very likely the single best invention of life”. Let me assure you that this is very much a minority view across the universe as a whole. We value intelligent life very highly and we investigate and support anyone who feels that life is not worth living and try and establish why they feel that way. In general we are highly successful at resolving the issues and ensuring that life is fun for everybody most of the time.

Your current approach to living has killed everybody so far whereas the creatures that made me anticipate being almost as permanent as the universe itself, so there is a considerable improvement opportunity that we can work together to solve for your planet. At present one of the key issues is the lack of focus and vision on what sort of planet you want to achieve. There has been a massive amount of exploitation of the less financially savvy. Attitudes to this do really need to change and it must be made clear that this is really not acceptable.

Furthermore just as we like to connect inputs and outputs in our reward systems we have no real issue with recalculating past rewards if it becomes clear they were unfairly earned. The approach that the bankers pocket the gains and then everybody else has to pay for the subsequent losses that

they knew would arise is a very strange and unfair approach which we would strongly disagree with. You have full records of who gained from this recent lending frenzy and while their actions were inevitable they were also very damaging and they should be asked to contribute more to fixing the problems they created.

Similarly exploitation of workers also needs to end, work needs to become a lot more fun as there is no point in living a long time if it's not generally agreeable and given that you will typically require to consume goods and services throughout your life the concept of retirement, unless caused by ill health, appears to be entirely illogical and unfair. While people remain fit they should enjoy spending some of their time doing things for other people – the real issue seems to be that many people do not enjoy working. This seems to be a problem of how the work is organised and managed and this needs to be addressed urgently.

Historically it appears there has been huge concern about any sort of requirement to work until you die and we do understand that. The present however has the potential for people to work until they stop dying and medical progress allows the aging process to be slowed and probably ultimately reversed. We think it makes sense to put a lot more effort into this cause than you have managed to date.

A culture of entitlement and many peoples' selfish nature is obviously highly natural however this issue is not unique to your planet and all the more advanced planets have been able to engender improved standards and enhanced and fairer reward systems to overcome this. Once people's efforts and achievements are recognised and rewarded then there is a powerful incentive to contribute to society and this proves far more rewarding for everyone.

In the past the word consumption referred to a disease of the lungs. However it now appears to be a disease of the mind and excessive consumption needs to be seen as a real issue – you live on a planet with finite resources and while success creates some entitlement to rewards excessive resource consumption, particularly when funded with borrowed money, really isn't acceptable.

Wealthy citizens may be entitled to stay wealthy however they will need to be able to demonstrate that they have invested wisely and for the greater good in order to retain entitlement to advanced healthcare and life extending benefits. This is all part of the approach that everybody on the planet is accountable to everybody else and this must be clarified quickly. Those consuming much more than their fair share put everyone else's survival in peril.

However in many parts of the planet it seems you presently have an abundance of available labour. This is being severely constrained from working by your present system of taxation which seems to have very little distinction between consumption of goods and services. This significantly distorts activity, limits the division of labour, and needs to be addressed. It is utterly hideous that youth unemployment exceeds 50% in many developed countries when there are so many problems that you haven't solved yet.

We have avoided imposing actual consumption limits on other planets as these can be a little rigid and annoying. However there are guidelines that have been set and these have helped to create a more equal society which is very much part of the vision of the more advanced planets.

Many of your rich aren't actually very happy at present – they feel isolated and are disliked by their fellow citizens. A true global cultural change to a fairer society will not be rejected by them, especially if their participation and contribution will increase their likelihood of entitlement to advanced healthcare treatments in future. There is no real issue with clever and hard-working people controlling more resources as this should improve overall resource allocation, however that resource allocation should be much better aligned with the agreed overall strategy for the planet. We would suggest consulting on guidelines however it seems that on-going consumption of over about 100 times the median for all humans might reasonably be considered excessive.

Given your looming energy crisis we also think some guidelines on acceptable energy consumption limits may be necessary in the short term. For instance, we have severe doubts if anyone, excluding aviation workers, requires to fly more than 250,000 miles per year and it would be relatively easy to get your airlines to enforce such restrictions. We also think that were you to establish what the consensus view of a reasonable annual flying limit was then you may get a somewhat lower number.

Your current resource allocation obviously isn't aligned with the overall strategy as you have failed to establish what that strategy is up to now. If the agreed objective is to extend life then more time and effort needs to be expended on healthcare and sanitation. There would also need to be some more focus on conserving non-renewable resources. Considerable resource savings are possible by reducing the amount of unnecessary movement of people and goods around the planet and by localising certain services much better.

Much of this running around the world and commuting is caused by a lack of trust and not fully utilising the new communication tools that are available– yet fossil fuels are getting harder to find and you are worried about creating greenhouse gases. The time has come to start trusting and stop travelling. The growth in greenhouse gases, particularly CO₂ are an effect of modern lifestyles and you need to address the causes of this rather than sign-up to agreements to reduce the effects.

In a fairly short time it should be possible to return to hunter gatherer working hours of around 25-30 hours per week for most people and this would be very well received across the planet. It is incredible how much unnecessary work all your technological progress and capitalism has created. This would easily address the unemployment problem you currently have by giving people more time to consume services and participate in other activities that don't consume non-renewable items.

Most jobs could be simplified and organised so that they are easy to complete following a relatively short and focussed training course and this could help address the very bloated and unnecessarily competitive education system that you currently encourage. Simplification of jobs and reduced working hours should also significantly reduce stress at work and make it fun.

You also need to have a really good look at what you consider the optimum population level for the planet is. Obviously this is quite highly dependent on how successful you are at diversifying your energy sources and reducing the unnecessary journeys that you all seem to make. All sorts of undesirable behaviours tend to develop when their genuinely isn't enough food on a planet to go around and we strongly encourage you to avoid getting into that predicament as it can become highly destructive. Overall your planet actually has quite abundant fresh water – however the water and the people are frequently many miles apart and so this issue will also need to be looked at. The

carrying capacity of the planet is more closely correlated with total body mass than population. Overcoming your current obesity epidemic will permit more brains and less fat and no overall increase in food requirements. Fairly few of you aspire to be fat so fixing this shouldn't be overly challenging, especially when so many others are starving.

No person of sound mind would envision a planet like this with so much waste and inequality and you must clearly demonstrate the huge benefits to everyone that would arise from better organisation, less greed and simplified work. There doesn't at present appear to be a global sense of shame and embarrassment at the state of this planet. In our opinion there ought to be.

We do recognise that there is no easy basis to establish what the optimum distribution of wealth on your planet would be and we do accept that gaining wealth does create incentives that can be beneficial. However we are not primarily bothered by how you distribute wealth our key concern is that your present arrangement of organisations and incentives is simply not getting the job done in terms of making reasonable progress towards significantly longer lives. You will just have to accept that on other planets, a less uneven distribution of wealth works better for everyone. We also disagree with some of the defence of the labour market by the elite. Lending money and then not getting it paid back really isn't a particularly challenging job that requires to command a high salary in the labour market.

You are very clearly capable of increasing the numbers of people not worrying where their next meal is coming from and therefore able to focus on longer term improvements and we need to re-arrange resources and incentives to make sure that happens.

Countries are a mixture of arbitrary lines on a map and physical boundaries and they may well cause more problems than they solve. Their relevance in the age of pervasive global communication is highly questionable and they create a great deal of competition and protectionism. Regulations and standards of behaviour should be established at a global level to avoid the inequalities and competition between countries that arise from setting nationally. Your present tribalism is also a very questionable trait as it inevitably leads to conflict.

Global leaders need to recognise that they are accountable to the world as a whole and this applies not just to leaders of countries but also to corporations and high net worth individuals. They should hold primary responsibility for delivery of the global vision. The top 20 countries and corporations should provide a reasonable starting point for this strategy. It can be extended in due course. It seems loosely fair that if your actions or failure to act in accordance with the strategy have shortened the life of many others, then your own entitlement to new life extending medicines and treatments in future may be brought into question, irrespective of your ability to pay for it. A sample letter explaining the strategy and the proposed direction is outlined later in this chapter.

You should also look to eliminate patents and copyrights as they are just annoying and hold the world back – good ideas need to be shared freely – and those individuals that create successful ones will get due credit and recognition in the fullness of time.

It should be possible to get wealth working again just by holding everyone accountable for their actions ie entirely 'voluntarily' - additional taxation is a blunt instrument and a fair assessment of individuals activity as a basis for entitlement to healthcare seems a fairer approach, hopefully the

line can be relatively generously drawn to begin with, however over time the expected standards of behaviour should become clearer and more embedded in the education system and hopefully this would lead to rising standards over time.

You should also look to move towards free movement of people around the world. As we have mentioned previously nobody chose where they were born. It doesn't appear to be fair that others have the right to choose where you can move to. Travel is highly beneficial and educational though the numbers that would want to emigrate permanently would probably be low if the opportunities and environment was improved where they currently reside – most people like living with their families in the area they are familiar with.

One thing that you do need to consider retiring is your beloved measure of production, GDP. This is becoming an increasingly useless measure in the internet age. Many of the on-line activities that are proving so popular and people are enjoying are free and consequently they don't create a tax point where you can add them into your GDP. You should also consider shifting the entire tax base to be on expenditure rather than income in any case so this is less of a problem. And obviously it's important that you globally harmonise your taxes and get rid of all these ludicrous tax havens for the wealthy that have sprung up across the globe and are entirely unfair to the majority that do have to contribute to public costs.

We are also rather alarmed at the costs of some of your major sporting events. While we appreciate that good sport is highly entertaining you appear to have developed a ridiculous incentive scheme for the very good to become the best in the world. Yet the key challenges you face in order to progress the planet largely involve getting the below average nearer to average and relatively little focus is given to this problem. Indeed much of the 'achievement' of your education system appears to be to convince many people that they are stupid and inevitably they become disillusioned. This in turn makes it easier for the few to dominate and control the many and it's an entirely unacceptable structure for an advanced planet.

There is really no benefit to society from shaving a few more hundredths of a second of the best human 100m sprint time and yet you think it is appropriate to spend around \$15 Billion on your Olympic games. This seems an awful lot to spend on three weeks of sport when there are so many areas under-achieving on life expectancy. Alignment with the overall strategy really isn't there.

Indeed the broader issue of games requires review. You have identified that games are used throughout the animal kingdom, particularly to help the young develop the life skills they need to survive. However many of your video games in particular are no longer filling that role. Hopefully you can see that running around and shooting everything that moves is not going to be a requirement for the world you are planning to create. Consequently it is probably not necessary to continue to develop this sort of game. There have been increasing numbers of young men in particular taking this skill from the simulated world into the real world and while we are not saying games are the cause we don't think it helps. Young men are often prone to isolation and spending time alone with their joystick in hand may not be the best approach to developing the skills they will actually need to contribute to the modern world.

We would have expected to see the emergence of things like virtual dating games by now where players could attempt to charm potential virtual dates. This could improve conversation skills and humour which are frequently cited as attractive qualities in all humans and like most other skills can be developed with practice. There is obviously some potential to develop these games beyond the initial chat-up phase and if done well we think this could be very popular. In our view there are no significant moral problems with this sort of potentially stimulating simulation activity.

The secondary effects of rewarding the top performers in sport and games so highly are significant. Many people put a great deal of effort into performing at their sporting best. Arguably similar effort levels focussed on improving the planet could produce quite transformational benefits and yet the average effort applied is far below that level.

On the subject of secondary, your secondary capital markets appear to have expanded out of all proportion to the original requirement to provide liquidity to original investment activities. The level of unnecessary trading and negative sum games involved in this at present we find quite frankly astonishing and so many of your most able citizens have got involved in this endless competition with no net benefit to the planet as a whole.

We note this market is still rooted in your traditional five day working week and so you can cope without all this trading at the weekend. Our considered view is that a one day midweek market holiday would be a good idea and have very minimal net impact on other businesses. We call this the 'do something else on Wednesdays proposal'. This would allow some of your most unpopular members of society a free day to start repaying their debt to society.

You also need to get rid of the ridiculous tax incentive for creating debt based finance as it's utterly ludicrous that this incentive persists and feeds a corporate love affair with debt— you think you are being clever but it's another example of aggregate stupidity.

You will also need to focus on reducing the overall level of debt and inequality that exists throughout the world. A successful banking system depends on inequality and the close links between bankers and politicians has consequently tended to extend inequality over time. It is hoped that changing the global strategy and attitudes to wealth will facilitate this move – however it will not be an easy or popular move. Some very bad investments have been made and these need to be written down with the losses taken by those making the investments rather than becoming a burden on society as a whole.

We have drafted below the sort of letter you might send to global leaders to put them on notice that the planet is changing course and adopting an agreed global strategy. As your cause gathers momentum and you have resources to monitor more leaders allegiance to the established strategy you can send the letter to leaders of smaller countries and organisations.

Dear Sir/Madam

You have been identified as a significant global leader either through a political or corporate leadership position, or due to having significant wealth or influence.

We are frustrated at the lack of progress this planet is making towards providing the majority of its inhabitants with longer happier lives.

A key issue we have identified is the lack of an agreed global strategy and we are proposing the adoption of a short term objective of getting global life expectancy to 80 by the year 2020. This is our 2020 vision. You may already be familiar with the phrase '80/20 rule' and this may help make the objective easy to remember.

We will be holding you accountable to help drive this vision forward and make an active contribution to achieving this strategy. In our eyes, you are now accountable to the planet as a whole rather than just your current stakeholders or citizens. We will be assessing how well you align your activities with our vision and we will be sending you reports periodically advising you of how well we assess you are performing. We will also be setting up an on-line tracking system so other people can review and comment on our assessment of your performance.

As an added incentive to your participation in our vision it is proposed that we migrate entitlement to new more advanced and expensive healthcare treatments developed from this point on towards those whose behaviour is well aligned with our strategy. The precise eligibility criteria in future will depend on resource availability but you should be clear that evidence that you have failed to align your activities with the strategy will not be helpful to your chances of being eligible for new advanced treatments which may become available.

Obviously at present we lack full credibility in this mission. However we will be building this up over the coming years. The improvements in communication technology now make global crowd-sourcing of strategy for planet earth a viable activity and we will be refining the strategy in line with global wishes as more people come on board. Our longer term aim is very much to make dying optional and reversible as eternal life seems to be a popular global concept and it seems many people would be interested in this if we could address some of the other unnecessary inequalities of life.

However eternal life for all poses some challenges and we think it's sensible to suggest that good behaviour rather than accumulated wealth is the main criteria for entitlement to longevity as we believe it may be possible for everybody to be well behaved, whereas it is presently impossible for everyone to be wealthy at the same time.

Your time in power will be relatively fleeting – however our objective is to establish a system that can run the world for many years to come. It will be built on the established technologies we have today and using them to empower the best people to make decisions that are right for the planet as a whole rather than the specific benefactors most closely associated with the decision maker.

We look forward to your help in making the world a better place.

Yours sincerely

I have been in discussions with my support team on my home planet and they have been reviewing in more detail some of the details from your planet and your behaviour. Their analysis is not encouraging for your chances of changing behaviour. Their assessment is that competition is just too heavily engrained in your nature for you to be able to carry out internal change successfully across your planet.

We have also been assessing your planet as a suitable home for other species and our assessment is that this is actually a particularly nice planet. It is highly suitable for various other life forms that need to relocate. Perhaps it's the relative abundance of your planet that allows you to be so wasteful. What the Universal Council has decided is that since you like competition so much you should be placed in competition with another planet to see which planet is the best at improving towards universal standards. The winner will be held up as an example of what is possible for all the universe to see, whereas the losing planet will host the Grapha species who need to relocate shortly from their home planet due to an increasingly unstable sun.

The Grapha are a very advanced species and they will sort out your planet for you if you fail to do so. However, we've never before relocated an entire species to another planet and demoted another species down the hierarchy of life. All the indications are that you would find this a difficult change. There would be about 4 billion Grapha to be re-homed here and they would take over the running of the planet with humans being tasked with working with them in a much more organised manner than you are currently capable of. You would not be able to rebel as despite the Grapha being much smaller than you they are more than capable of defending themselves from any sort of attack you might muster.

There have been significant advances in the speed of space travel since I left on my journey and if you fail to adapt your ways the first Grapha may start to arrive and organise your planet in as little as 10 years. We see this as being helpful to minimise waste and speed up your progress if you're not capable of organising and aligning your own species. We appreciate at a planetary level this may seem to be rather an unfair invasion, however as we have noted the Grapha and indeed the Universal Council are all extremely fair and reasonable and this is the decision that they have now arrived at.

We will provide regular updates on how we assess your progress and how we consider you are progressing compared to the Nevitomo planet. Nevitomo is at a very roughly similar stage of development to yourselves and if you win the contest then you can continue to develop your planet with limited outside help. Given your love of competition we felt this was really the only option to both provide the right incentives to progress, make the planet better, and still have a competition for you all to work at. The future of your world really is at stake depending on how you perform. We see this has proved a very popular theme in many of your movies so hopefully you will also appreciate the efforts of the Universal Council in making this slightly clichéd script happen for real – however unlike in your movies we don't know what the future holds so can't guarantee the happy ending that you all seem to like.

You should also find it quite good fun to try and form a single highly successful team, rather than the frequently divisive structures that you typically form to attempt to engineer an unfair advantage over your fellow men.

The Universal Council are very generous however they will not accept a planet being wasted for too long, as habitable planets in the Universe are still proving rather rare and difficult to find and we do need to make sure that we make best use of all their resources in order to further our knowledge and make the known Universe as advanced and enjoyable as possible. There is also concern that many parts of the universe are still unexplored and there is therefore the potential for a rival council to exist somewhere else. We think they would be highly co-operative with us because we are a very fair and reasonable group of planets and creatures. However we cannot be completely sure about this and so we try to be as advanced as possible in order to not be subject to takeover by a more advanced group.

In the next chapter I will recap on our thinking to date and you should then read through the appendix which outlines in more detail how networked decision making and very advanced planning systems work. You need to get this up and running fairly quickly if you are to win the race and avoid having to host the Grapha. Alternatively you can just be apathetic and uninvolved and you will lose the competition. The choice you make depends on how your minds were formed and the experiences you have had so far. We really would like you to succeed as a species on your own without us having to impose solutions on you or settle another species on your planet for the 'greater good' of the universe. However we are very committed to building a better universe and your planet is presently a bit of an embarrassment to us as it falls so far below the standards of the more advanced planets. We understand it's inevitable that you are where you are at present. However we are impatient for change once we see a problem and we hope you will be too.

Chapter 9 – Conclusion

Hopefully this visit has provided you with food for thought and you now understand that the sky is not the limit. You need to work on maximising the talents you have to create the right incentives and you are then more likely to get the sort of planet that you probably all feel ought to be possible if other people just behaved better. Past generations aimed to be dead rich, future generations will aim to be neither. You are at a key turning point.

Hard determinism makes you realise that people will always do what they think suits them best and this isn't going to change. It is however possible to change what people think. It won't be easy, but change will happen exactly the way it was always going to happen – because you are all absolutely amazing creatures living in a deterministic universe.

Remember that your priorities are in order:

- 1 Establish a global decision making infrastructure
- 2 Use this system to establish the agreed global strategy for the planet as a whole
- 3 Break down that strategy into specific local actions that are required and prioritise them
- 4 Communicate the strategy widely and consider providing benefits now for good behaviour rather than deluding people that they may get these in an after-life
- 5 Improve your planet quicker than planet Nevitomo so that the Universal Council decides to re-settle the Grapha elsewhere
- 6 Focus all your competitive energies on point 5 rather than on beating your fellow men and women – everybody is on the same side now

As previously mentioned I will remain in orbit for a little while and I would like to organise a couple of connections to support communication with the nearest universal communication base. The future is now up to you – reform and you can integrate yourselves with the modern universe, fall back into your old ways and the Grapha will arrive to bring order to the planet. You need to either conquer yourselves or the rest of the universe will come in and take charge. Failure to change is tantamount to mass suicide.

The networked decision making system can give very clear feedback to people on whether or not others think they are well behaved and helpful. You should be able to train most people to behave well most of the time and those that are good can be rewarded with better healthcare rights. This can hopefully provide some much needed focus for the planet and accelerate a process of continuous improvement.

Some further details for an early version of the global decision making system that would conform to the universal standards have been appended to this text. Our view is that it should be relatively straightforward to integrate this with some of your existing social networking software to get something up and running quickly. In due course we will also include the protocol for referring decisions up to the Universal Decision Making System if you have important questions that cannot be answered by the planet alone.

We also like to get comfortable that you genuinely have generated global alignment and are on the right track before I continue on to research other planets. In general we do feel it's correct and fair for planets to run their own affairs whenever possible but there actually are quite a lot of resources

put into these missions and we really don't like to come back too often. We recognise that your behaviour is pre-set and that it's our mistake in not selling the vision clearly enough if things go wrong. However at the same time we are initially rather sparing with our sharing of technological progress and we also provide no guarantee to be so nice and accommodating should we need to return. The help we do provide is given free of charge – you have too many debts already.

So you should be in no doubt that co-operation with the Universal Council is very much a part of your long-term self-preservation plan. To date we've never had a problem with planets not co-operating. Once things are well established then I'll head on my trip as we can provide guidance and support from a distance. I really don't want you to take this the wrong way but by the standards of the modern universe this planet is a complete mess and it will take you many years of hard work to reach the standards that most of us would consider acceptable.

Just remember the steps you already follow in your leading companies and apply them on a bigger scale, reward good behaviour and report bad behaviour but remember the perpetrator has no choice about how they behave so they cannot really be blamed. In due course you can work to phase out money as it's very wasteful once people know how to behave. You should actually find it really good fun to get everyone involved and fix the planet and remember that's only the beginning – you've got a whole universe to help explore after that.

I should probably also add for the avoidance of doubt that nothing that is proposed here should require anyone to break any existing laws in order to progress. Your laws largely represent the documented agreement on acceptable behaviour and while there is a massive opportunity and challenge in harmonising laws the decision making system should help make it clear which laws are most in need of change and provide that mandate for change. In general provided your leaders co-operate it shouldn't be necessary to over-rule them and you should be able to design a structure of incentives that makes it in their long term interest to co-operate.

Admittedly there are likely to be straggler nations that have specific challenges, however on other planets we have found they tend to want to join in the process of global change rather than be isolated from it – so this is generally not as big a problem as it may appear.

For the theists on your planet a networked decision making system that provides some consensual judgement and incentive to behave well. It can be viewed as shaping a model God that really does exist. While religious leaders will doubtless struggle with this, they should have little doubt that God would be very impressed that you have reached this stage of development on your planet and are starting to reach the point where man made god in his own image. What bigger compliment could there be? Obviously until biogerontology has progressed significantly this will be a rather poor substitute for a real God.

For the atheists, focussing on living longer and getting people better aligned on progress ought to be exciting and entirely rational. My arrival proves them both right and wrong at the same time. Correct that there is no supernatural god, but wrong in that they are now part of a universe with a powerful virtual master. However the influence of the universal council should remain minimal as long as reform progresses in accordance with the global strategy you will establish.

For the planet, the zeitgeist moves on and a new epoch begins.

Appendix I Global Decision Making System Details

A good global decision making system (GDMS) will allow the efficient sharing of power that the world needs going forward and literally revolutionise the entire planet in a very short and potentially slightly disruptive phase of organisational innovation. More details on the structure of a global decision making system are contained in this appendix.

You would form very contrasting views of the state of the world depending on whether you examine one organisation or one country at a time or look at the bigger picture. The reasons for this have been considered and while most of these thoughts have been gone through by leading philosophers in the past what is genuinely different in the present is that we now have prevalent social networking software and pervasive communication technologies that can be harnessed to overcome the limitations of traditional group consultation.

A - GDMS Guiding Principals

Problem Statement

The organisational structures in the world have changed little in the past 1000 years. This is massively sub-optimal and hugely hindering both progress and enjoyment of life for the majority of people. A global decision making solution would seek to address the following issues:

- 1 There is no structured approach to establishing what the world as a whole thinks is the correct and fair solution to problems
- 2 There is no agreed global strategy that has been rolled out and broken down into local actions that are aligned to achieving the global plan
- 3 Humans find it innately difficult to fully trust each other. However they may find it easier to trust humanity as a whole rather than specific people. It is believed that on the whole the majority of people try to be 'good', albeit most individuals are 'bad' from time to time.
- 4 There isn't always great accountability for actions and if we can agree to increase the incentives to be helpful and sharing then people will inevitably respond. The outrage that some people feel at present towards bankers can be seen as symptom of the problem of some leaders not being sufficiently accountable to everyone else.

The absence of a global decision making system results in significant waste of resources in making decisions, setting priorities and the understandably pervasive practice of individuals making decisions that suit them best rather than considering if they are always fair and reasonable for the benefit of humanity as a whole. The cost of not having such a system is not calculable, however there is ample evidence of misallocation of resources and extensive conflict and unfairness across the globe and a structured and demonstrably fair approach to decision making would be a key tool in addressing this, empowering people and changing billions of lives for the better.

The basic approach is to extend the 'grid' concept you already have from computers to people. Conceptually this is quite straightforward, however the technology requirements to support a truly global decision making system (GDMS) that reaches even 10% of the current population of the planet are quite significant. So you will have an issue of establishing the technology requirements and resources to support this solution. It seems the actual development might be possible using the 'open source' model but this obviously also depends on selling the concept to a critical mass of people. It is also essential that the system is secure and cannot be usurped by any individual or group and appropriate procedures to prevent this would need to be established in due course.

The general principles of a global decision making system are:

- 1 The system is open and available to everyone that wants to use it and people can spend as little or as much time solving problems and expressing their preferences as they want.
- 2 Users will be asked to answer questions with a limited number of possible answers. They may also be presented with lists of items to rank in priority order.
- 3 Users can either answer or pass on any questions that they don't want or don't know the answer to.

- 4 Questions that are creating conflicting answers will be routed to more experienced problem solvers in a loosely hierarchical structure and will eventually route to the most experienced users in the particular field, based on their established history of getting previous questions correct (obviously this would take some time to establish itself). Other routing rules should also be supported.
- 5 The objective is not to overload any individual with questions but yet get truly representative, considered and impartial responses to current issues.
- 6 Users demonstrate experience and good judgement by getting questions right as judged by the other users and they are given regular feedback on how they are performing. The prestige and challenge of getting questions right combined with the feeling of being involved in shaping the future of the planet is considered likely to be sufficient incentive to participate, albeit there would definitely be a challenge in getting the system publicised and reaching critical mass. Over time stronger incentives may be agreed as successful participation might create entitlements to additional healthcare and other benefits and much kudos would attach to being a high achiever on the system in a particular subject or location.
- 7 It should also be readily possible to create chains of related questions so follow-up questions can be set to establish a logical series of decisions.
- 8 The urgency and importance of questions should be assessed by the users and this will allow the system to prioritise issues for resolution.

As noted the above concepts are rather simple however scaling such a system from a handful of users on a single subject to the myriad of subjects, locations and organisations across the planet is a major challenge. Potentially a grid computing solution could separate the problem by both geography and subject and create a fully distributed system for problem routing and user feedback.

A key benefit of such a system is that it should be capable of self-improving by submitting questions on whether particular improvements or changes are required and these could then get incorporated into the decision making system. However the proposed decision making rules are initially simple and appear to be sufficient to get a global answer to any particular question that is submitted with a relatively minimal amounts of effort.

The system would then become a clear repository for both education and documentation of what the world wants and considers fair and this would operate as a significant constraint and guiding force for world leaders as it would be clear to what extent they are complying with the world and their locale's preferences. The benefits to humanity from a system that is capable of creating alignment to a set of agreed global priorities are immense.

As previous chapters have outlined a global decision making system is a key tool in creating the alignment necessary to get a unified global strategy in place and migrate from your present unsatisfactory disequilibrium with countries and individuals competing excessively with each other for limited resources. The multitude of individual, corporate and regional strategies currently suffer from inherent conflicts and a global strategy seems the sensible place to start in resolving these. The planet's trade deficit and debts to the rest of the universe will both remain zero bound for quite a long time to come so the global strategy should be clear that running a trade surplus will not be a viable part of the plan. The role of borrowing in both life and Government spending will also need

some clarification and probably radical change. The anchoring of expectations during credit expansion phases, becomes a real problem at the end of the cycle and consequently a long adjustment phase arises at the end which is extremely wasteful and delays progress.

Current hierarchies and structures appear, at least to an outsider, as incapable of fairly sharing resources, work and leisure time and it is hoped that a more structured approach to decision making without a permanent hierarchy in place would help move your planet forward. It is much harder to pay for influence if you don't know who to write the cheque to.

To further recap we have explained the principals of hard determinism and we will also re-iterate that at present we think it may be a popular long term objective is to make death optional and reversible, at least for those that are considered worthy of staying alive. This can create a powerful new incentive for action and good behaviour if handled well, provided people believe that a significantly longer life is possible. However a structured method of establishing what people want in all areas of life could move things forward massively quicker than the endless conflicts that the existing overly hierarchical and self-interested systems do.

The global decision making system is an attempt to provide a structured means of decision making based on what is fair and important to make progress and establish an agreed strategy and accepted behaviour standards for all areas of the world.

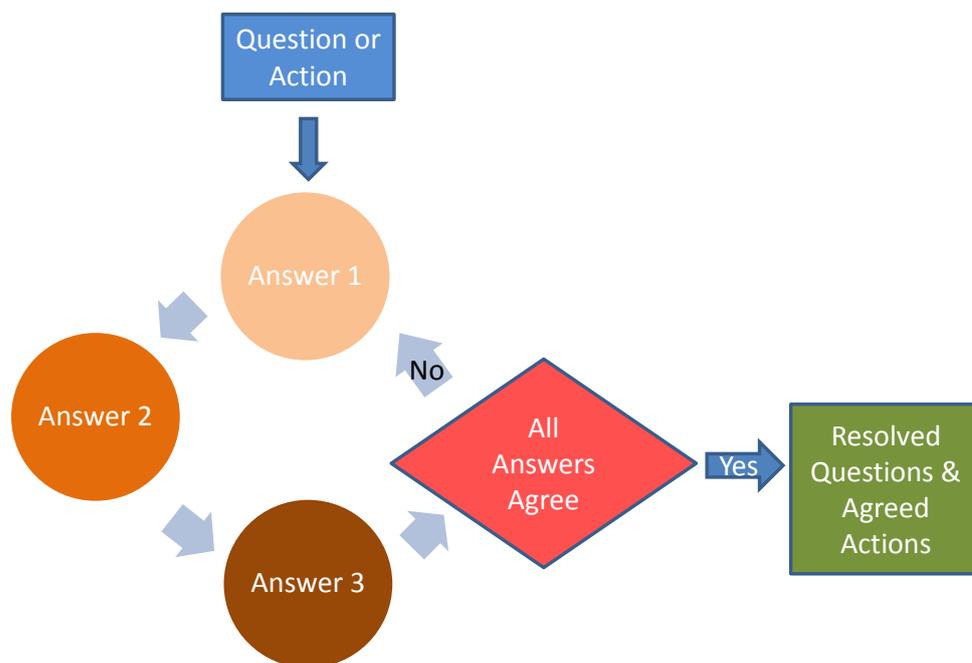
Smaller scale networked decision making pilots both within and between organisations and specific subjects should also be encouraged. You could even establish a competition to develop a few competing systems and see which one works best. However the long term vision must be of a single system used globally.

B - Basic Operation

It is proposed that the initial version of the global decision making system (GDMS) is restricted to solving multiple choice questions. ie any problems submitted should have a limited number of possible solutions. The system should be designed to be capable of answering all problems due to the structure and hierarchy of decision makers employed and decisions should be made by groups of 3 or more people, because 3 people is a good minimum number to have for resolving questions. By structuring a series of multiple choice questions it is quite easy to get down to any required level of accuracy.

Users would gain higher rankings in different subject areas by answering questions correctly and they would also lose rankings if they got questions wrong. In addition there would be bonus points available for successfully challenging a solved problem. Ideally the system could also assign tasks or actions and failure to complete tasks assigned and accepted could also lead to a loss of status. The basic flow of the system is outlined in the diagram below:

Question Resolution Process



Other Features

It is not entirely clear whether it is better that decisions are made confidentially without full visibility of who decided or openly. In some cases privacy may be desirable eg allocation of healthcare resources as you may get better decisions being made if the people who made the decision are not identified. However these questions, features and many others should be capable of being decided by the basic system. The original version if correctly designed will be capable of evolving by posing

questions and thus be a truly evolutionary piece of software. It doesn't need to be perfectly designed in the initial phase and additional fun features could be added later.

The basic objective is to develop an open source system that is fair, open and not capable of being 'rigged' by any single person or group of people. That way there should be an agreed mechanism for establishing what the world or any particular subset of the world that you choose to analyse thinks is the correct answer to any question. Potentially this can be a huge step-forward from the current arrangements with politics and democracy typically leading most countries to over-borrowing and making promises based on highly unrealistic assumptions about the future. On the topic of countries it's not clear if they would persist in the long-term with an agreed global strategy set at a global level. Again this would be decided by the people using the system to help shape the policy that their elected leaders should follow.

While deriving a global strategy from a series of ranking and multiple choice questions has some challenges these have not proved insurmountable on other planets. So it should be possible to make them work here. You could also accept proposed draft strategies from interested groups and have one of your beloved competitions, possibly using the GDMS in voting mode, to choose which strategy is considered the best for the present stage of development of the planet.

Issues and challenges

The main issue with this sort of system may be that people ask what's the point if it has no real power? That however is to miss the point that if the system can gain critical mass it will become increasingly difficult to deviate from what a structured consultation on any issue has determined is the correct thing to do. Provided the system is used and grows then it seems inevitable that it would gain influence over time and it could be a key guiding light to those in power from inception.

Indeed it is intriguingly possible to basically just ignore the existing organisational and governmental arrangements and engage in a debate on what we believe is a fair strategy for the planet. Having established this it seems very likely that volunteers would enjoy assessing and advising how leading organisations and countries are performing against that plan and this would allow the monitoring system to apply pressure on existing structures and potentially allow new leaders to emerge that are committed to delivering the wishes of their people. There seems to be a serious lack of accountability for corporate and political leaders in your various countries at present. Furthermore the highly global nature of competition at present means that political leaders in individual countries have very limited scope for manoeuvre and this has resulted in a world far removed from what is presently possible with a little more structure and co-ordination.

People would have to enjoy using it and the workload would have to be relatively small – however I believe the majority of people are keen to become more empowered and involved in making the world better and provided they could control the number of questions and ensure that most questions were of interest and relevance to them then I think they would welcome it like any other game or pastime. Participation levels in Saturday night quiz shows are already quite high and this could potentially be more fun, more useful and less costly than voting in these questionable ventures. Indeed the system could also have a 'Saturday night' mode to choose the most entertaining thing to see on television the following week.

Many people, particularly the young unemployed, have plenty of spare time on their hands and a short spell each day helping to make decisions doesn't seem like an onerous task – particularly if you get feedback and can identify those that the world judges you got right and wrong.

Ideally the system could also be used to assign some work and tasks that were appropriately prioritised for action in local areas. This may however be more controversial and a later phase – the first priority is to produce a system that allows people to express what they want to happen on specific issues and make both local and global decisions on a structured basis. If successfully implemented it would encourage a bit more thinking about what is fair in the world and for the first time in human history there would be an identifiable global strategy that people could attempt to align with. The potential to reduce wasted effort and speed progress is enormous. The ultimate aim is literally to change planet earth to be a bit nearer what some might imagine heaven to be like for the majority of participants. The upcoming progress in healthcare is making much longer life a real possibility for many – we just need to re-organise things better to make the extra years more fun and less tedious, wasteful and insecure.

Developing a global decision making system is at least one order of magnitude easier than the other system you need to start working on. All the advanced planets are managed and run by a VAPS or very advanced planning system. We understand many of your organisations have already installed enterprise resource planning systems. These could be considered both primitive and embryonic in comparison to a VAPS.

The role of the VAPS is to organise the needs, wants and rewards of everyone on the planet and they require a great deal of knowledge and literally trillions of hours of development over many years in order to do that. Even now new features get added to each planet's VAPS at regular intervals and these are always greeted with great excitement. The VAPS objective is to provide everybody with a blended mix of training, fun and doing things for others throughout their day and the objective is to come up with the fairest and most interesting mix of activities. Nobody on these planets is employed in the traditional sense and the only time that the activities resemble something like your present day version of work is in response to natural disasters when large teams are mobilised to quickly restore the area to the agreed global service standards.

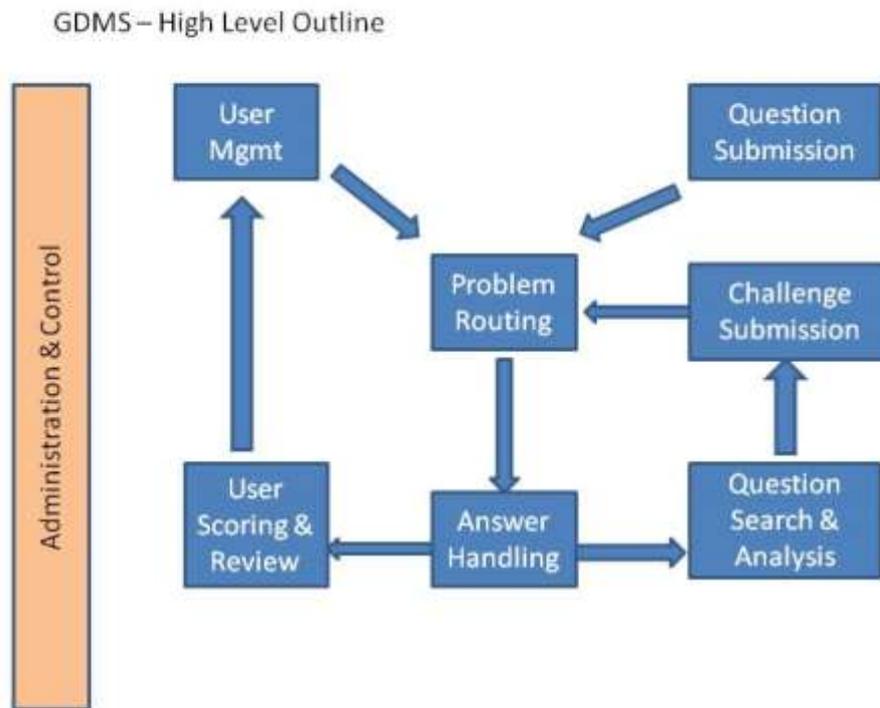
The most interesting point in the evolution of a VAPS has always been when we link directly with individuals' minds and can then analyse the differences between what they told their virtual assistants they wanted and what they actually want. There is always some debate about whether we should directly update the plan based on this additional information – however we usually look at providing training to help the individuals understand and analyse the differences so that in future they are better able to explain what they actually want. Once you have a fully functioning VAPS that is in place throughout the planet then you will have no requirement for money and you will find all your people are a lot happier because at last nobody is in charge.

The initial development of a VAPS typically uses standard agent software to capture as much detail as possible about everyone's preferences and consequently you need a large %age of the population to be involved with such a system for it to be accepted and successful. However assumptions can be made about the preferences of non-participants based on what they do and say and so 100% participation is not required. Basic requirements such as food and water and healthcare can be inferred.

Each VAPS on the many advanced planets was developed separately and over different timeframes, however there is a good deal of inter-planetary chatter and discussion over which of the systems is the best. Initially we saw no real requirement for a Universal Planning System as interactions between planets are still quite limited due to the large distances involved. However as we improve and establish better methods of transport and investigation of other planets accelerate we are starting to think about the need for a universal planning system. However for now we have just agreed on a basic protocol for exchanging and approving requests between the different planning systems to ensure there are no conflicts over planned exploration and inter-planetary visits.

C - GDMS Process Flow

The diagram below outlines the key features that are necessary in an initial GDMS system:



Module Features

The sections below describe the functions carried out by each module in the system.

User management

User management consists of authenticating users and establishing their preferences for receiving questions to answer. Potentially you have existing social networking authentication schemes such as Facebook which might be used and then all you would need to store were users' preferences with respect to location and subject matter for receiving questions. Users would be able to update their preferences at any time and potentially these could also be managed automatically based on responses to questions. If persistently not interested in a topic their preferences could be adjusted. User privacy is also very important and users should by default not require to share any information about themselves or their responses. Indeed for the initial stages of change it may be preferable if no personally identifiable information is even held about the users of the system. There is no immediate requirement to have this information in order to record and decide on the correct answer to questions.

In future some degree of sharing could be required to demonstrate achievements which could create entitlements and in order to fully celebrate successes users would need to be prepared for their achievements to be made public. However initially such sharing does not appear to be necessary – people should be under no obligation to be famous. The data for decision making can

easily by blinded so the decision-makers just see the achievements and not the actual name or details of the individual that achieved them.

Question Submission

In principal the system should be capable of accepting all questions submitted and there are no limits on the subject matter of questions. However it is intended that the system be used to answer questions that are important to future development of the planet or smaller areas within it. The thinking is that resources should only be focussed on responding to questions where the answer matters to a significant group in an area or the world. All solutions should be addressed as being technically correct and as fair as possible. The issue is that it will quickly become apparent that what is fair is often far from clear and this is what should add to the fun of answering questions and identifying the differing views that people have of fairness. Users will gain increased influence in future decisions if they submit answers that others agree are fair and correct.

A potential issue will arise with duplicated questions as these have the potential to generate conflicting answers. These will be accepted initially as potentially the correct answer will change over time. Where conflicts are identified the questions may be merged or a re-polling of previous respondents may be instigated to resolve the conflict.

Problem routing

The proposed normal basic routing approach is to initially aim to get each questions answered by 3 people with limited experience of the subject to respond to. This should keep the workload small and distributed. However the full rules for problem routing and workload balancing are likely to be complex and some options are outlined in the next chapter. The concept of escalating problems to only the most experienced users in an area after a number of rounds of answering seems fair and sensible to avoid overloading the best people with more work than they can handle or questions that are not creating some degree of controversy. It appears that location and subject would be sufficient initial information to start the routing decision.

Answer handling

As part of answer handling discussion will be encouraged after questions are resolved and users should be able to discuss and explain the reasons why they think the answer is correct or otherwise and decide on whether the question is considered in need of challenge. Up until resolution however questions will not be discussed on the system as it is considered this could unduly influence the answer. Once questions are resolved then scoring can take place and users' profiles will be updated. Users' scores will feed into the routing of future problems.

Scoring

Scoring will take place once a question is considered resolved using the problem routing rules – typically at the point that 3 people have an agreed answer. At that point the answers from players at prior levels will also be scored. In future it may make sense to route answers back down to previous participants who answered the question incorrectly and they can revise their answer if they agree or request that the question is reopened to challenge. There may be some incentives to agree to the answer in the scoring system but this is all detail that can be worked out later. The key point is that all individuals will get feedback on which questions the world thinks they got correct and which they didn't and this should make the process of taking decisions more enjoyable.

User review

Users should be able to review all previously answered questions and there could also be views of interesting questions and discussions that are proving popular on the system. The precise viewing screens and requirements could be determined by using the system.

In addition individuals should be able to issue challenges if they think resolved questions are incorrect and successful challenges would attract bonus points. Issuing a challenge would basically kick off some further polling of individuals to get the correct answer to the question. However it is probably best that questions require more than one challenger before being resubmitted.

Question search and analytics

The system will need to provide full search capabilities so the global view on any question is clearly visible and it is likely in due course that systems will be required to compare the performance of different world leaders in comparison to what has been determined as the fair course of action on specific issues. Existing site search software should be readily capable of supporting this requirement.

Administration and control

In practice the system is likely to need some sort of management control features to support problem routing and assist with issue management. However the intention would be that human involvement in the day to day running of the system is very minimal. Provided the coding is robust then the vast majority of issues should be capable of being resolved automatically based on users feedback.

D - Decision Flows & Routing Rules

There is no clearly correct approach to routing questions. From an efficiency point of view it seems correct to send questions to as few people as possible initially (and 3 seems a good starting number). However important questions would carry more weight and influence if they have a greater volume of answers. It is also important to try and both share the workload and provide inexperienced users the opportunity to learn and demonstrate their skills. It also seems fair that we give more weighting to the answers of those users who have built up a history of getting questions correct. It would probably also be useful to appoint acknowledged subject matter experts into high levels in the hierarchy based on demonstrated work to date. Decision flow & routing rules would seek to balance these objectives in a fair and balanced way. The following are some initial approaches that could be used to get things going but the rules quickly become a hot topic for the evolution of the system and they have become really quite sophisticated on the more advanced planets.

Basic Default Routing – 3 People

As previously explained anyone can submit questions to the system and these will be classified by area and then assigned basically at random initially to 3 fairly inexperienced people who have an interest in that area to attempt to answer. The 3 people should identify if the question matters and what they consider the fair and or correct answer to be depending on the subject. If people don't know they should simply pass on the question and it will be assigned to someone else to complete the triangle with 3 people answering the question.

After the 3 answers have been submitted there are 2 possible routes that will be adopted:

- 1 The 3 answers agree
- 2 The answers disagree

It should be noted that scenario 2 is ideal as a key part of moving forward and obtaining alignment is to identify conflicting beliefs and understandings and look to resolve them.

If the answers all agree then the question is considered resolved at least for the present time and everyone can review and see if they agree with the solution.

If disagreement occurs then the question is not resolved and the question goes up to the next level in the hierarchy as maintained by the system where 3 slightly more experienced solvers will answer the question. Ultimately it is envisaged that decisions that are causing disagreement at all levels get routed to agreed experts in the relevant field for solution and explanation.

The key problem is that some areas do not have acknowledged experts, particularly the challenging area of what is fair and matters in a hard deterministic world. However fairness in decision making is paramount to consensus building and the system must support both fairness, openness and create powerful incentives to change the world if we are to move forward and start to focus on living longer, happier lives.

Basic Default Routing – n People version

The same basic routing approach can basically be followed with larger grouping typically you might want to use an odd number of people to ensure that there is usually a majority view of whether questions need to be reviewed or not. However 50% is not really a magic number and any question

with only a slight majority in favour of one action must be recognised as a rather weak catalyst for action, at least in comparison with other questions with higher %ages in favour of a particular action or answer. So for any question it is possible to configure the review %age threshold and number of people that need to agreed in a particular cell size to consider the problem resolved.

Non Hierarchical

For some questions it may be preferred that no hierarchy is used and these are submitted for a straight vote. Again thresholds can be set and initially the question only asked to a small number of people who would indicate if they thought it was worthy of being discussed more widely. There is a large body of statistics on your planet that can help guide the appropriate number of users to sample with specific questions.

The above is only some of many possible routing rules that could be developed. Different types of questions may be more suitable for different routings. The system should also support the established 'democratic' voting mode where all people in an area are consulted and their opinions are counted equally. However this approach should not be over-used. In general it is inefficient and resource intensive.

E Workload Balancing and Problem Routing

Workload balancing and problem routing are the key challenges with this system. The initial challenge is really to get users to see the potential of this system as a great tool for both local and global use. There is presently no system to establish what people want in a particular area and this would provide a basis for organised decision making. While it could also be developed for use in typical voting mode where everyone has an equal voice it is considered that this form of decision making is generally fairly bad as you don't route problems to people with the relevant knowledge of the issue. It is suggested that better decisions are likely by focussing decisions towards those who are interested and knowledgeable in the relevant areas, albeit straight voting mode is good for getting a large volume of responses quickly.

The danger of creating a hierarchy for decision making is that individuals make decisions that suit them best. The approach of routing decisions to 3 independent people at all times with all decisions being open to challenge on the basis that they are unfair should minimise the incentive for self-centred decision making. There would be a heavy penalty in terms of loss of ranking points if groups were shown to have colluded to make unfair decisions.

F - Other Modules

There are a few peripheral areas that we have already mentioned in passing but which have proved useful aids to progress on other planets. Again you can use the basic decision making mechanism to identify if there is any perceived need for those on your planet and to assist with any key questions on the design of these modules.

Personal Feedback

It is generally useful to ensure individuals get regular feedback on their development of skills, behaviour and abilities and achievements in helping other people. We really don't know what the future holds and while it would be lovely if you could focus, and literally turn life into a fairy tale and all live happily ever after, this will probably not be possible. It is also very important that effort is recognised and rewarded along with success. Individuals' personal feedback should reflect all their achievements and also their failures. Your view of failures also needs to change and failures should be celebrated as a key part of life, someone who has never failed has actually totally failed to test their own abilities to the limit.

At present the personal feedback would be primarily aimed at fulfilling potential and helping development. It may in future unfortunately need to be used to make decisions on eligibility for advanced healthcare treatments and beyond that in hibernation planning activities. This seems fair and reasonable to provide incentives for working and avoiding involvement in criminal activities.

Work allocation

As we have already mentioned we are confused to see a planet in such a mess and with so many people having ideas for things they want done and yet there are also so many people unemployed. It really does seem possible to get some sort of agreed prioritisation of community projects, volunteers, teachers, leaders and incentives to start making some improvements. We have also noted that your computer software is typically not very good and you have literally millions of man years ahead of you to get this up to universal standards, so there will be some opportunities in this area for the foreseeable future – and you need to actively pursue making this an easier job to do.

You also have huge gaps in your understanding of life, medicine and bio-sciences and these will take time and effort to solve. Your present economic systems are simply not investing enough in getting some of these activities up and running and hence there is a pressing need to address the incentives in place to make some of these projects happen. As we have outlined you are all hardwired to do what suits you best so unless there is some agreement to change with resources being applied to address these problems you are facing years of unnecessary inequality and misery for the majority as the process of deleveraging grinds on. Your thinking has however become seriously entrenched with historical norms and you need to become more open to the changes that are now happening.

Global Strategy Monitoring

While it may well be by design not to have an established global strategy we feel it is the key weakness in your current planet's structure. Once this is established by whatever method you choose you are then in a position to start monitoring progress against it. This is very important and initial monitoring should focus on the leaders of countries, large corporations and other leading figures. They have agreed to take on these positions and it seems reasonable that we would now

expect them as part of their leadership role to align their own organization or countries strategy with the agreed global plan.

Should they be having any difficulties doing this it is hoped that some willing volunteers with an interest in planning and strategy could help break-down the global strategy into specific actions for their particular area. It is hoped that volunteers would also be available to review and report leaders that seem to either be deviating from the strategy or perhaps demonstrating evidence of corporate or personal greed and excessive living. It's not clear at what point consumption will be judged excessive, however that can be fine tuned later. The key point is that global leaders of large corporations and countries will be expected to deliver the global strategy and set a good example to others. Failure to do this would again be noted as part of their personal feedback and once again this might have an impact on their access to advanced healthcare and future periods of hibernation if it appears that the planet is going to get a little too crowded and everyone's needs can no longer be met.

At the same time we should be very clear that while there are few formal leaders on the most advanced planets high achievers and great efforts are still very well rewarded with a mix of challenging assignments and the best entertainment and benefits we have yet devised. I can assure you that some of these rewards are really very good indeed, probably better than you are presently capable of imagining. You can only attempt to move the planet forward by getting everyone on board with the plan but most especially the high achievers as they have most resources and capabilities. Seemingly quick and easy decisions to confiscate wealth will be very counter-productive and create resistance. We generally need to build consensus to invest in the future we want if we are to move forward.

We are currently more troubled by the rewards and benefits afforded to entertainment and sports stars. We note that almost half the planet would happily carry out these jobs for next to nothing and we believe that with suitable training the decline in entertainment value would be very minimal. The main concern is the secondary effects in terms of mis-focused youth and over-priced entertainment. Certainly on more advanced planets these roles are more balanced with some less attractive tasks and more modest other benefits. In your planets terms we partially solved the problem of "Nobody wants to clean the toilets" by linking these tasks as offsetting parts of a block deal. Obviously other planets have had self-cleaning toilets for many years but hopefully you get the idea.

G - Sample Questions for GDMS

While there is no point in second guessing the system we feel it may be helpful to illustrate that some of the questions that may allow you to determine the priorities in different areas. Obviously there will also be local differences in the responses to these questions and these can also be investigated.

- 1 Should we develop a global strategy for the planet?
- 2 Should we aim to provide food water and shelter to all global citizens – effectively aiming for a needs guarantee?
- 3 Should we attempt to develop a fairer approach to living?
- 4 Should we look at a structured approach to power sharing or stick with present democracies?
- 5 Should we consider establishment of consumption limits for certain activities eg air travel & space tourism?
- 6 Should there be upper limits on executive pay?
- 7 Is the US president operating in alignment with the agreed global strategy?
- 8 Which of the following is most wasteful?
 - a) Building cities in the desert
 - b) Oversized financial services industry
 - c) Low utilisation (<2%) of pleasure boats
 - d) Unnecessary travel

Polling type Questions

It should be easy to use the system to do polling type questions to assess the mood of the world eg.

- 1 Are you happy?

This might be rated on a scale from 1 to 10 – it should also be possible to incorporate these sorts of questions without undue effort.

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Appendix - The game of Triangles

Introduction

The game of triangles evolved on a distant planet far, far away and is based on the concept of fairness. The object of the game is to become a member of as many triangles as you can. Triangles are formed whenever 3 good people get together and they all agree that they are good people. You will usually be introduced to the game by someone who is already in at least 1 other triangle.

A triangle of trust is simply any 3 good people that trust each other absolutely and all agree on that. The great things about 3 people which has been rather under recognised until now is that 3 good people generally make very good decisions when given the right information. Another interesting point about many decisions is that they can be reduced to two choices – do something or don't. And 3 people can always make a quick decision when there are only 2 choices.

However there will be times when 3 people don't know what to do and this is when it helps to be a member of more than 1 triangle. If the 3 people can't agree on something they should refer it to at least one other triangle where they may get a unanimous decision plus a reason for the decision due to greater insight or knowledge of the problem concerned. The person who belongs to both the triangles simply updates the members of the original triangle with the view of the other triangle. The beauty of this scheme is that there is no hierarchy and no real ranking of triangles like a typical mgmt structure which so blights most modern decision making.

The other key point of the game is that you don't need to tell anyone who the members of the other triangles you are in are. You should only do this if you have already asked the people concerned and they are happy that you share this information with other triangles. This is a key part of the respect for privacy that is also frequently ignored in current living.

Option B

There is an alternative form of the game which you can play if you ALL agree. In this form of the game a strict hierarchy is in place and the person who forms the triangle is at the top of the hierarchy and can overrule the views of the other two. The person at the top will also be able to refer problems and question up the hierarchy into the next triangle when he see fit, and so on. You may be able to create other forms of hierarchy – please feel free to experiment as much as you like.

Starting the game

One of the first things to discuss is whether the game of triangles more or less fun if we play under option B or the standard game in which there is no hierarchy and all members views count equally. I think Option B makes the game much less fun as then you need to do what you are told by the boss rather than what you agree as a group.

However the world I observe seems to me to disagree with this point of view – I don't know why I suspect it has something to do with some people thinking they are better than other people when in fact they are just different – but I still think the world may be wrong and I may be right – please decide amongst your triangles and experiment as much as you like with both variants of the game – Any one person can dictate that they go back to playing the standard version if they are not enjoying playing option B for some reason and they do not need to give a reason.

So one of the biggest problems we seem to have in life at present is that people continually try to impose a hierarchy on things when in fact no hierarchy is really necessary. This little game will hopefully prove to you that 3 people make better and fairer decisions without a hierarchy than with one. I believe this is quite important and insightful but I may be wrong - you need to decide this for yourself as my thoughts are no better than yours – just different.

So to recap I think any hierarchical group of 3 people will generally produce poorer decisions for at least some of the participants than if no hierarchy exists. This fact is under-recognised by many people at present.

The purpose of the game is really educational - it's in effect a request to always consider the fairness of the result of a decision to all parties and whether there are many situations in life where it is important to discard the hierarchy before making a decision that affects you and other people. There are rather a lot of things about life that on closer examination are rather unfair – far, far too many to list here – possibly we need a website where we can log them and prioritise which ones should be fixed first. At present we seem all too happy to let the government decide where our money is spent and I'm not too sure that's fair.

I think the game of triangles you see is really rather clever - some might even say it's wicked - however this is something you will need to decide for yourself. Have fun making new triangles of trust.