

A List of Ten Critical Challenges

[More supporting evidence—and source references—in the documents [“Invitation Package for Possible Board of Advisors \(at cpccsc.info\)”](#) (589 pages; Nov., 2013); [“Many Danger Signs Flashing Red”](#) (62 pages) (Nov., 2012)]; and [“IPCR Critical Challenges Assessment 2011-2012: Summary Report”](#) (444 pages; Jan., 2012)]

- 1. Global warming and reducing carbon emissions**--a) “...the energy industry’s ability to boost production of oil, coal, and natural gas in North America is feeding a global surge in demand for these commodities, ensuring ever higher levels of carbon emissions.....” b) “Scientists agree that countries’ current United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change emission pledges and commitments would most likely result in 3.5 to 4°C warming. And the longer those pledges remain unmet, the more likely a 4°C (7.2°F) world becomes.” (Dr. Jim Yung Kim—President, World Bank)
- 2. “Cultures” of violence, greed, corruption, and overindulgence**—which have become so common that many of us accept such as inevitable; which are a significant part of the current crises of confidence in financial markets; *and which are in many ways slowing the restructuring of investment priorities needed to respond to an increasing number of other critical challenges*
- 3. The end of the era of “cheap energy”**—“Our industrial societies and our financial systems were built on the assumption of continual growth –growth based on ever more readily available cheap fossil fuels”. Unfortunately, due to the threat of global warming, long term plans for intensive use of fossil fuels cannot be considered “cheap” at any price. And yet: lifestyles and habitats are still becoming more and more dependent on high fossil fuel input infrastructures and machinery; still becoming more and more dependent on fossil fuel intensive transportation; and still running greater and greater “ecological deficits” (“resource consumption and waste discharge...in excess of locally/regionally sustainable natural production and assimilative capacity”)
- 4. The increasing world population and its implications relating to widespread resource depletion**—a) with special focus on the increasing number of people who are consuming material goods and ecological resources *indiscriminately* b) “More than half the world’s people live in countries where water tables are falling as aquifers are being depleted....”
- 5. Current trends indicate that we are creating more and more “urban agglomerations”**—(cities with a population of more than 1 million people—more than 400), which require more and more complex and energy intensive infrastructures, where it is more and more difficult to trace the consequences of our individual investments of time, energy, and money—and which are the least appropriate models when it comes to implementing resolutions to many of the other challenges in this ten point assessment
- 6. Mitigating the other challenges cited in this list will almost certainly make it impossible for the U.S., and many other countries, to resolve unprecedented public debt**—a) “The world is on the brink of the ‘largest bubble ever’ in finance, because of the undisclosed value of high-carbon assets on companies’ balance sheets...” b) Unfortunately, the kind of “economic growth” which is most often being referred to (as needed to resolve the sovereign debt crises)... requires the continued exploitation of flaws and weaknesses in human nature, fragile ecosystems, and already significantly depleted natural resources—and as such, is much of the reason why cultures of violence, greed, and corruption have become so common that most people believe they are inevitable c) “Some might assume that bond markets are shielded from the effects of climate change, ecosystem degradation, and water scarcity. With more than \$40 trillion of sovereign debt in global markets at any given time, that is a very high-risk game.”
- 7. A marginalization of the treasured wisdom associated with religious, spiritual, and moral traditions**—treasured wisdom which includes many teachings relating to sacrificing personal desires for the greater good of the whole, and finding contentment and quality of life while consuming less material goods and ecological services
- 8. Global inequities and the tragic cycles of malnutrition, disease, and death**
- 9. Shortages of goodwill in times of unprecedented transition could tilt already precarious systems into further disarray**—and thus erode established systems in even the most stable communities and regions
- 10. Sorting out what are real challenges and what are sound and practical solutions is becoming more and more difficult**—as there are now, in most communities of the world, *a multitude of ideas of all kinds coming to the fore in personal, family, community, and cultural life—all at the same time. Thus, even analysis supported by much credible evidence—that there are many danger signs flashing now (involving significant threats to ecological stability and social cohesion)—can be easily lost amidst a swirl of misinformation, other more trivial information, and the “siren song” of multiple entertainment venues.*