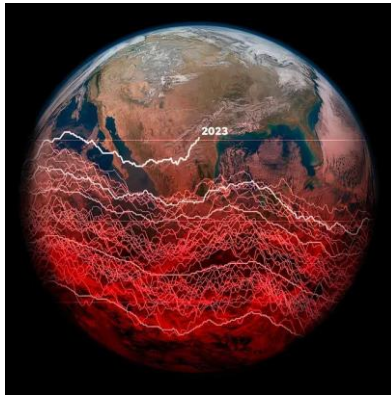


Bart Flos

OUR INNER LIMITS



Addendum XI

The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience



The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience

Our Inner Limits - ADDENDUM XI

The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience

Bart Flos

**OUR
INNER
LIMITS**

ADDENDUM XI

***The Tough Choice:
Collapse Resilience***



Previously published by Bart Flos:

*Het anti-klaagboek – Het anti-sleurboek – Het perfecte project
De kenniskermis – Vooruitkijken voor gevorderden*

De mens als grens ('Our Inner Limits')

The Anti-Complain Book – The Perfect Project

De hoogvolwassen organisatie – De klimaatconfrontatie

De zelfmoordsoort – The Suicide Kind

As addenda to 'De mens als grens':

*Addendum I – Het begin van het einde: onwetendheid
Addendum II – De frontale confrontatie: klimaatverandering
Addendum III – Het grote probleem: overconsumptie
Addendum IV – Het laatste taboe: ineenstorting*

As addenda to 'Our Inner Limits':

*Addendum V – The Beginning of The End: Ignorance
Addendum VI – De Frontal Confrontation: Climate Change
Addendum VII – The Big Problem: Overconsumption
Addendum VIII – The Final Taboo: Collapse
Addendum IX – The Next Step: Collapse Awareness
Addendum X – The Last Resort: Collapse Acceptance
Addendum XI – The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience*

The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience

Self-knowledge is the first step to adulthood.

Jane Austen

*Civilization begins with order, grows with freedom, and dies
with chaos.*

Will Durant

*We are only allowed to live on this planet as long as we treat
all of nature with compassion and intelligence.*

Aldous Huxley

Second edition December 2024 (V_9)

Publisher BlijvendBeklijven Boeken

Broederwal 81

5708 ZT Helmond

www.blijvendbeklijven.nl

info@blijvendbeklijven.nl

www.demensalsgrens.nl

Author, final editing, correction, interior work and cover: Bart Flos

Logistics and administration: BlijvendBeklijven Boeken (www.blijvendbeklijven.nl)

ISBN: 9789083207742

NUR 600, 900, 130

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Table of contents

Introduction	9
About this book	13
1. Looking down from above	17
2. The frontal confrontation	41
3. About climate stupidity	75
4. Science, truth and reality	105
5. The climate collision	147
6. The collapse	175
Epilogue	225
Appendix I Blurb of ‘Our Inner Limits’	227
Appendix II ‘What is your book about?’	229
Appendix III The scientific method	233
Appendix IV The concept of overconsumption	235
Appendix V Useful links	237
Blurb	242

Introduction

In 2015 I published my fifth book, *Vooruitkijken voor gevorderden – Hoop voor de toekomst van mensaap en moederplaneet* ('Futurology for Fanatics – Hope for the Future of Man Ape and Mother Planet'). It is an easy-to-read book with the same design as its predecessor *De kenniskermis – Overleven in een zee van informatie* ('The Knowledge Fair – How to Survive in an Ocean of Information'). Short chapters of approximately 800 words, provided with QR codes and TED(x) talks, nice pictures and numerous references to other interesting books.

In *Futurology for Fanatics*, I not only discuss humanity's major problems, but I also provide hopeful solutions. By (daring to) look ahead 100, 1.000 and even 10.000 years, I paint a picture of the limitless possibilities that Homo sapiens has to shape its own future. The final goal? Preserving our planet to prepare it as a home base for the exploration of the cosmos.

I still remember someone calling me a 'naive idealist' then. I defended this fiercely at the time and replied that I preferred to call myself an 'incurable optimist'. "Yeah, yeah," was the response, "Dream on." But it really was true, I was sitting on a comfortable pink cloud and I was looking through rose-colored glasses, which turned out to be a cold, metal telephoto lens and microscope. It wasn't until I got into my helicopter, flew as high as I could and started looking down that the scales fell from my eyes.

Fast forward to 2022

Since the publication of *Futurology for Fanatics* more than half a billion people have been added to the population, we have emitted another 285 gigatons of CO₂ and the atmospheric CO₂-level has risen from 400 to 418 ppm. That has categorically transformed me from an incorrigible optimist to a 'confrontealst', someone who confronts those around him head-on with hard science, with observation, research, facts and evidence.

My own research over the past two years has led me to write my sixth book, my Magnus Opus, which brings together all my previous work. *De mens als grens – Over de onbuigzame barrières van ons bestaan* ('Our Inner Limits – On the Unbending Barriers of Being') is much less hopeful as a plea, unfortunately, but it still contains solutions. These are now the last solutions we have left.

I'm sorry that this time I don't share hopeful dreams about the human species, which first preserves its planet and then seeks refuge among the stars. But it is time that we recognize, acknowledge and confess what we are: social group primates and hunter-gatherers, who are extremely proficient at surviving and reproducing. At the expense of everything and everyone. It's the nature of the beast.

Fast forward to 2024

When I delivered the final manuscript of *Our Inner Limits* to my publisher in October 2022, I could not have imagined how quickly things would get so much worse. The year 2023 is the year that we passed the 'elbow' of the exponential curve. This means that from now on, events affecting the environment,

biodiversity and climate will no longer follow a relatively linear path, but a chaotic, completely unpredictable one.

Since the publication of my sixth book, I have written almost 1.000 posts on *LinkedIn*, about 60 per month, 2 every day. In order not to let them go to waste in the endless timelines, I have included them in eleven addenda to *Our Inner Limits*: four in Dutch and seven in English. In these addenda I'm taking you on that accelerating path of decline as we embark on a journey from ignorance to climate change to overconsumption and collapse.

I would have liked to tell you something different, but it's not 2015 anymore. It is no longer 1970 either, when we could still do something. Or 1990, pretty much humanity's last chance to avoid collapse. I was forced to give up the 'hopeful future of man ape and mother planet'. In turn, I hope you'll stick with it to work your way through the addenda, because it's a story that needs to be told. Science, truth and reality now tell us that we have actually waited too long. It is too late. Collapse is now locked into the system.

With these eleven addenda, I hope to arm you not only with facts and evidence and the latest insights from the scientific community. I especially hope that it will make you and your loved ones more collapse aware and resilient to what is coming. Because our future is no longer a few hundred years away, or in the next century, or at the end of this century, or in 2070 or 2050. Our future takes place in the next ten years.

To conclude, I don't think it would be prudent to wish you 'much reading pleasure'. I wish you lots of wisdom and strength instead.

The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience

About this book

The great thing about writing a post on *LinkedIn* is that, even more so than on Twitter and unlike Facebook, you are forced to limit your message to about 500 words (3.000 characters) for a post and about 200 words (1.250 characters) for a comment. *Schrijven is schrappen* ('To write is to delete' – thank you Simon Carmiggelt) is, as it were, enforced here, accurate to the very punctuation mark and that is good. Because it forces authors to shorten the message to a length that should be manageable even for the hurried, overloaded, *I'm-very-busy*-reader, without losing sight of the core message.

This book is an addendum, a supplement to my sixth book *Our Inner Limits*. There are a total of eleven addenda, four in Dutch and seven in English. The English addenda are not direct translations of the Dutch addenda. On *LinkedIn* I often respond to English posts in English. Sometimes I translate them into Dutch, but they also stand alone. The same applies the other way around: sometimes I translate a Dutch post into English, sometimes I do not. So, if you speak the English language – and who doesn't in the Netherlands? – and if you want to be completely informed, read all eleven. (If you don't master the Dutch language, I'm glad I am able to offer you seven English addenda. The gist of my message is just the same).

At an average reading speed of about 250 words per minute, each subchapter in this book will only take you a few minutes. So, I would like to say: do you have a little less time now? Then choose a few chapter titles that appeal to you and spend ten or fifteen minutes on them. Each post stands alone and all I did was put them into a book template and made sure that the information I referenced and responded to was not lost. So, you can pick up the addenda and

put them away whenever you want. In any case, it is best to take in the information in steps. I wouldn't want you to be overwhelmed.

Because the addenda are published as PDF books, the website links remain active. So, you can step out and take a trip to related information elsewhere and look for further depth there. In addition, you can find more links and information that apply generically in the appendices.

Each of the eleven addenda is the size of an average management book, between 30.000 and 40.000 words. The layout is like a complete book, so if you prefer to read on paper, you can easily submit the PDF as a print file to a print shop and voilà, you have a physical book in your hands, *easy peasy*.

The almost thousand posts were written from October 2022 through March 2024. All posts are presented in more or less chronological order and even though I present them in the form of a book, it is still a relatively loose collection of stories, insights and reflections. So don't be surprised by repetition and progressive insight. For a more structured foundation of my view on the coexistence and collaborating of the human species, I recommend that you read my book first or check out the website, which acts as a management summary to my book.

Each addendum is classified into 11 fixed chapters:

1. *The frontal confrontation*
2. *The collapse*
3. *Economy versus ecology*
4. *The Almighty Algorithm*
5. *Distraction, deception, doubt and deceit.*

6. *The climate collision*
7. *About climate stupidity*
8. *Looking down from above*
9. *Pollution, waste and destruction*
10. *Global consultation doesn't work*
11. *Science, truth and reality*

Please note: not all chapters appear equally in all addenda.

If you've worked your way through all eleven books, you'll have taken a journey from ignorance to climate change to overconsumption, collapse and acceptance. Not all journeys are equally enjoyable to make and this journey is one of the beginnings of the end, of frontal confrontation, major existential problems and the very last, ultimate taboo: the collapse of human civilization as we know it today. That, by the way, does not necessarily mean 'the end of the world': the extinction of the human species. But it has now become a serious option indeed.

Finally: while in my book *Our Inner Limits* I leave it to the dear reader to draw their own conclusions about where the human species is going, I am much more explicit in these eleven addenda, more 'right to your face' and perhaps a bit blunt here and there. Because as a self-proclaimed *confrontealist*, I passionately believe that only a frontal confrontation with truth and reality can, perhaps, open our eyes to what is coming our way.

Good luck and success!

Bart Flos, Helmond | February 2025

Our Inner Limits - ADDENDUM XI

The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience

Chapter 1

Looking down from above

1.1

SM849

What makes us humans tick

Somebody referred to an article that discussed the wickedness of the fossil fuel industry, hiding in dark corners to do their evil deeds, destroying our living environment to the point of collapse.

This was my response:

“Excellent post! Professionally written. Concise, succinct, informative. But it won’t make the slightest difference. If you were a fly at the wall of a bus full of fossil fuel executives, you wouldn’t see evil monsters rubbing their hands together in glee, greed and mischief. You wouldn’t see a group of human beings completely self-aware of the ‘evil’ they do or the boundless greed they display. You wouldn’t see a group of people deliberately trying to destroy the world and drag everybody down with them.

What you would observe is a group of highly intelligent, maybe even sympathetic executives that run their businesses as they see fit. Because the laws of the land allow it, even encourage it.

You would observe a group of people that:

- *Have found a way to make a solid buck out of a highly profitable business model, without too much effort or concern about others.*
- *Conform to each other, compare each other's wealth and aiming for more than the other.*
- *Think they do good. Good for the economy, for the prosperity and wellbeing of others and for the happiness of all.*

If we don't understand what makes us humans tick, we will never rise above ourselves.”

1.2

SM854

When a problem accelerates beyond our control, we must outpace the acceleration

The Guardian published an article with the following title:

“Global sea surface temperatures are in uncharted territories”.

I quoted from the article...:

“So, while I think these extreme temperatures provide some evidence of an acceleration in the rate of warming in recent years [...], it’s not necessarily worse than we thought.”

And wrote...:

“There it is! Even in the face of extreme anomalies that are off the charts in unprecedented ways (‘gobsmackingly bananas’ as one climate scientist put it), the scientists remain nuanced and rational. As they have always been. ‘And as they should’, I would have said a decade ago. But now perhaps they shouldn’t.

When scientists don’t understand a phenomenon, they will put on their investigation nozzles, think cap, lab coat and analysis boots. They snap to it, form a hypothesis and start testing. They observe, measure, debate. They adjust their models and keep digging. They have their data peer reviewed and

falsified. They keep at it, tweaking the numbers, doubting themselves at every turn before they publish the results in a renowned scientific magazine, where it is open to the scrutiny of other scientist.

That's fine. That's the way the scientific method works. But when global warming is running out of control, when all major KPI's are accelerating the wrong way, when our living environment enters a state of cascade failure, the precursor to suprasystemic collapse, this no longer works. We are way too slow to respond to what's happening right now.

When a problem accelerates beyond our control, we must outpace the acceleration. But we're like rabbits on the rail track, staring in the headlights of an oncoming freight train at high speed, unable to move out of its way. Our little bunny tail is shaking from excitement, but we don't blink; we're just fascinated by that big thing heading our way and just can't believe it will run us over. Maybe it will just go away and we'll wake up from the nightmare.”

1.3

SM865

This is how a crisis manager would solve the climate crisis

I'm going to tell you a fairytale. The purpose is twofold:

- 1 – I'm going to make a point about actual, real and tangible effort.*
- 2 – I'm going to explain the difference between local and global.*

This is a thought experiment, so bear with me please. Thanks.

I've been a successful international program and crisis manager for over a decade. I'm not saying that to boast, I'm saying that because it is relevant to my story. Whenever I was asked to pick up the pieces from a botched-up project or program, I would tell the steering group/ executive committee three things:

- 1 – You must stick with it.*

I need your loyalty more than you need mine. If you ever fuck me behind my back, I walk.

- 2 – People will protest and complain about me.*

If that happens, you're going to say that I have the full confidence of the board and then you refer them back to mé.

3 – You will support and execute my recommendations.

No politics this time around. Trust my track record. What I say goes, just follow my lead.

Now, mind you, I'm talking about huge international ICT programs here, with hundreds of millions of dollars at stake and lots of heads on the block. And I can assure you that I laid down my terms in the politest way possible, always with a friendly smile on my face. If they went along and supported me in my approach, I fixed their problems and went on my merry way (*).

Now, suppose that the world hires a crisis manager to fix the climate crisis (and boy, do we need one!). Suppose that we also erect a Global Executive Climate Change Mitigation Committee (the GECCMC), chaired by the newly appointed President of the United Nations of the World and supported by a Global Intervention Squad (to take over the governance of every country that doesn't adhere to the schedule). And finally, suppose that the committee has granted the crisis manager all of the demands above. The Global Crisis Manager now presents his program plan to the committee.

“Ok, if you want this fixed, this is what needs to be done, starting NOW’:

1 – All poor people must remain poor

2 – All rich people must abdicate their wealth

3 – Population growth must become population decline

4 – Economic growth must become economic decline

5 – We all must decrease our income by 20%

6 – We all must give up 50% of our savings

7 – We all must go in complete lockdown for another 10 years

That is the energy equivalent of the actual, real and tangible effort to mitigate climate change. Take it or leave it.”

Do you feel it? That’s right. The moment you scale up a perfectly fine project and crisis management process to global levels, it crumbles beneath your feet. There IS no Global Committee, no Global Intervention Squad, no President of the World! And that’s why our living environment has now entered a state of cascade failure, the precursor to suprasystemic collapse. No sane crisis manager would pick up this project now. No way in hell.

(*) If you’re interested in that approach, I have authored a book about my experiences as program and crisis manager within the magical world of botched-up projects: *The Perfect Project – Why People Are Key To Success*.

1.4

SM878

Why sea level rise doesn't appeal to our senses

Somebody wrote:

“If [Antarctica’s Glacier named] Thwaites continues to retreat at current rates, it will contribute several cm's to global sea level rise by 2100, thus been nicknamed ‘Doomsday Glacier.’” [sic]

This was my response:

“I guess this is *nó*t the way to make the general public worried about human-caused climate change and accelerated global warming. You can almost *h*ear the derogatory snorts: ‘A few centimeters in 75 years? Oh, come on! I’ve got better things to do than worry about *thát*!’

I believe we should stop talking about the year 2100 all together:

https://lnkd.in/e6zqV2_3

[‘On the difference between linear and accelerated decline’]

Perhaps this works better to make our anxiety juices flowing:

<https://lnkd.in/epswWK6S>

[‘How long can we keep accelerating until it blows?’]

Although sea level rise is as much a concern as average surface temperature increase, rising atmospheric CO₂-levels, the increase in the Earth’s energy imbalance, global ocean acidification, the meandering and accelerating jetstream, the destabilization of global ocean currents, plastics and PFAS pollution, the extinction of insect populations and the catastrophic droughts, heatwaves, downpours and floodings, it is the least ‘sexy’ one and the least ‘touchable one.’”

1.5

SM895

Blaming rich people for our global problems is petty

I quote: *“Taylor Swift is one of the biggest celebrities in the world. And the biggest celebrity climate polluter.”*

And I say: I understand why we’re doing this, blaming the filthy rich for our common problems. We like to point the finger at others. The rich and famous are the first ones to start with, right after we put them on a pedestal to adore them. Sometimes we do that simultaneously. We love to hate. We should remember though that when we point our finger at others, three fingers point right back at ourselves.

Look, don’t get me wrong. Private jets, yachts, mansions, supercars, shaking dozens of \$ 1000 bottles of champagne empty before noon? Báááád! But do you know what’s even worse? Using absolute numbers to play the blame game. I’ve added up the amounts in this post: all the mentioned rich and famous people together emit 34.000 tons of CO₂ (per year I guess, the author doesn’t mention).

Global daily (!) emissions of CO₂ of fossil fuels and industry are 100 million tons. The collective yearly emissions of this select group of superstars represent just 0,03% of daily global emissions, but only 0,00009% of yearly global emissions. And yes, that is just nine-hundred-thousandth of one

percent. Global private jet travel emits about 1,8 million tons of CO₂ per year, 1,8% of daily global emissions, but only 0,005% of global CO₂-emissions.

Let's keep our eyes on the ball here, folks. Think! Blaming rich people for our global problems is petty.

1.6

SM897

Conducting a poll is not going to change anything

A poll was done to check the ‘readiness’ of people to engage in ‘climate action’ and make this world a better place. ‘If we can’t solve the problem on a global level, let’s just ask the people down below. Perhaps they have the answer’, you can hear the pollsters say.

This was my response:

“I love these polls! Look at the numbers, it’s way better than we think. Far greater numbers of people want to make this world a better place. Yahoo! (praise be).

- Quote: *“69% of the global population has expressed a readiness to contribute 1% of their personal income towards climate action.”*

What if we told them that they must contribute 20% of their personal income and 50% of their savings? Because that’s what it really takes.

- Quote: *“[...] it’s refreshing to see that there’s a collective willingness and readiness to address climate challenges”.*

That ‘collectiveness and willingness’ is just an intent, with no action on global levels. That’s where it’s getting worse at every turn.

- Quote: *“If we can just recognize we’re not as polarized as we’re told we are, more transformative action can happen.”*

I can’t believe we’re this naive! People don’t think their ‘polarized’ at all. Nobody is waking up in the morning to deliberately fuck up the environment, biodiversity and climate. Overall, we don’t think we do bad things. Instead, we blame others for the bad stuff, but we deem ourselves to be ok. We see what is wrong in others, but we can’t see it within ourselves.

Conducting a poll is not going to change anything.”

The Tough Choice: Collapse Resilience

In 2015, author, public speaker and change specialist Bart Flos published his fifth book, *Vooruitkijken voor gevorderden* ('Futurology for Fanatics'). In this book he paints a hopeful picture of the limitless possibilities of the human species *Homo sapiens* to shape its own future.

Fast forward to 2022

Since the publication of that book, things have quickly gotten out of hand with the environment, biodiversity and climate. It prompted Flos to write his sixth book: *Demens als grens* ('Our Inner Limits'). It was much less hopeful as a plea, unfortunately, but it still contained solutions to turn the tide.

Fast forward to 2024

"After the publication of *Our Inner Limits*, I could not have imagined how quickly things would get so much worse. The year 2023 is the year that we passed the 'elbow' of the exponential curve. What we are left with now is chaos and unpredictability. I wrote almost a thousand posts about it and I didn't want them to get lost in the endless timelines of our social media platforms," says Flos.

This is one of the eleven addenda to *Our Inner Limits*, in which Flos's posts are included in book form. It takes you on a head-on confrontational journey from ignorance via climate change to overconsumption, collapse and acceptance. We will break the last ultimate taboo together: daring to say that we have waited too long, that it is now too late and that we will have to passively suffer the consequences of our destructive collective behavior as a human species.

Want to learn more? Go to www.demensalsgrens.nl