

Serious Global Problem Areas

[1] ozone depletion;

[2] CO₂ pollution;

[3] ground and water pollution;

[4] deforestation;

[5] desertification;

[6] biological species extinction;

[7] instabilities in the value of money, concerning both the continuing problem of world-wide inflation and the threat of collapse in the international banking system;

[8] continuing local wars, between neighboring nations and within nations;

[9] the accumulation of armament stockpiles and military forces;

[10] disinvestment, the decline in public and private capital stock as manifested, for instance, in failures of equipment modernization and replacement, in inadequate resource allocations to education and human services (i.e. to human capital investment), and in the destruction of capital through processes varying from deforestation to urban decay.

[11] widespread and growing human disease, most prominently in non-industrial nations and in the urban cores of industrial nations, of which drug abuse and AIDS are the most virulent manifestations;

[12] the instability of global peace, that is, the continuing (though presently latent) potential for war, particularly nuclear war, between major blocs of nations;

[13] the disintegration of urban areas, including aspects of disinvestment and disease but also crime, pollution, both overcrowding *and* under-utilization of land, urban sprawl, and an overall decline of all aspects of what makes cities effective and habitable;

[14] authoritarianism, the depersonalization and bureaucratization of human relationships, lack of personal civic involvement and sense of responsibility and efficacy, excessive reliance on police power and intrusion, and disrespect for personal liberties;

[15] population instability, normally manifest as dysfunctional population *growth* but also latent in the potential for catastrophic *decline* from disease (as from AIDS in Central Africa), from malnutrition or starvation, and from war;

[16] illiteracy so widespread as to render many of the world's people unable to contribute more than marginally to the world's work;

[17] malnutrition, the imbalance in diet, particularly in shortage of protein intake, and starvation, the shortage of caloric intake;

[18] poverty of such an extreme degree as to debilitate the economic and psychological functioning of the afflicted individuals.

About this list of problems:

- The problems are connected with change—thus they are appropriately represented by a model that emphasizes dynamics (as the GVI approach does).
- The problem list is representative, not complete; additional thinking and work will identify others;
- The change factors and problems actually are just the “tip of the iceberg”-- a great variety of human and environmental indicators need to be stored to keep track of and analyze the conditions which underlie the changes and problems; these will make a very much larger list;
- The problems are connected [03_couplings-general.doc] to each other and to the underlying conditions, directly and indirectly.