

APR 24, 2022

# Earth Day Special Issue

This is The Weekly Letter for April 24, 2022. [About this newsletter](#)

## Earth Day Reads

[6 Quotes from Thich Nhat Hanh on Saving the Planet](#)—*Tricycle*

[Laudato Si' \(On Care for Our Common Home\)](#)—Pope Francis

[Dare to declare capitalism dead - before it takes us all down with it](#)—George Monbiot, *The Guardian*

[Why Indigenous Resistance is More Important than Ever](#)—Kaitlin Grable, Greenpeace

Video: [Greta Thunberg's speech at the UN Climate Action Summit in 2019](#)—*PBS NewsHour*

[Grist 50 2022](#)—*Grist*

## My View



Original graphic

The facts are hard to bear: one million animal and plant species are [at risk of extinction](#); millions of humans die each year due to air pollution; we are racing toward catastrophic climate tipping points.

We have treated the non-human world (and, often, humans as well) as a massive resource to exploit. Since the Enlightenment, Western thinkers have celebrated everything that is remarkable about human beings, but at the cost of claiming a false separation between us and the natural world that we are an inextricable part of. Rather than venerating life, our society seems to venerate wealth above all. And to power the creation of wealth, we have dug up the life of the past (fossils) and burned it, jeopardizing life in the present and future (see note 1).

However, by facing ecological crises and working to redress them, we can begin to rethink the relationship between human societies and the non-human life that we share this planet with. We can move away from the idea that we are separate and instead embrace our interdependence with all living beings. This is a long-term project (note 2), but we don't have to start from scratch. Many societies, especially Indigenous societies, have successfully balanced the needs of humans and the needs of the ecosystems that we are a part of.

And we can still prevent further ecological destruction. On climate change, we have vanishingly little time but yes, we can act. An excellent [article](#) by the columnist and activist George Monbiot written after the COP26 summit ended with the rallying cry: "We do not consent to the destruction of life on Earth." We have the power of refusal. We have the power to rebel against the corporate practices and governmental policies that are causing destruction. And we have the power to build a truly sustainable society.

Let's get to work.

Notes: 1—Rebecca Solnit evocatively frames the digging up and burning of coal in the chapter "Carboniferous" of her book *Orwell's Roses*. 2—One model for an ecological transition is [The Great Turning](#), as outlined by Joanna Macy.

## Get Involved

Some of the many organizations working for the planet:

[350.org](#)

[Center for Biological Diversity](#)

[Extinction Rebellion](#)

[Fridays for Future](#)

[Friends of the Earth](#)

[Greenpeace](#)

[Indigenous Environmental Network](#)

[League of Conservation Voters](#)

[Sierra Club](#)

[Sunrise Movement](#)

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Jamie Larson

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