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This publication contains the collective views of an international group of students and does not necessarily represent views, decisions, or the stated policy of the Roosevelt Group

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Introductory Remarks

About the Roosevelt Group

Our world is facing pressing issues, to which orthodox approaches have yielded only unfruitful answers—we must surpass this shortcoming. Our work brings together varied students at the University of St Andrews, uniting them in synergistic written reflection, discussions, and through the organisation of our lecture events; our aim is to produce bold, innovative, and pragmatic thinking on the challenges of the modern era and develop useful skills and relationships.

Never before has such singular progress been made toward a better world. We live in a world of constant improvement—to industry, to technology, to all the mechanisms that drive our society ever forward. The knowledge that we have amassed over the course of millennia is now readily available to anyone with access to an internet connection; and this knowledge is growing exponentially, stretching well beyond the limits of human understanding. We have reached heights of expertise and capability completely unimaginable mere decades in the past; we are able to grow back limbs, cure diseases that years ago would have decimated us; we have set foot on the Moon; observed and recorded hundreds of millions of galaxies, each containing celestial objects billions of times larger than our Earth.

And yet never before has there been such radical and widespread inequality; never before have we been closer to scarcity. The bees that pollinate our crops are dying, our seemingly endless reserves of natural spring water are being depleted, our livestock is diseased and kept alive almost miraculously by a cocktail of medicines. Never before have we been closer to man-made environmental catastrophe; never before have we been threatened by such destructive weaponry.

This is the world we live in: a world of constant dichotomy, constant uncertainty and constant peril. This is why we are at a unique moment in history. Now, and only now, do we exist in this balance: we have achieved so much, just enough to become aware that there remains so much to be achieved. And we must achieve it

We must overcome political squabbles in the face of the issues that are severe enough to break us. We must eliminate poverty and homelessness. We must extend human rights to those in lack of them. We must protect our environment while developing our industry to the needs of a new economy,

This task is undoubtedly a daunting one, but it comes down to us. This is the task of our generation: to overcome the failures of our predecessors, and to secure our progress toward a better world. It is larger than life, but it can be accomplished: the power that each of us holds is inconceivable, and its underestimation is what limits us; but it is there, latent, ready to be exercised. Now is when we hold this power, and now is when we must exercise it.

This is what we believe in, and this is what we are working toward. We want to gather those who are passionate about these issues, passionate about enacting change, and push the limits of what these individuals can achieve. We want to voice our concerns about the picture we paint of the world and offer, in its place, alternative, solution-oriented ideas on how we can tackle the most pressing issues of our time.

Executive Board

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Letter From The President

For too long shouts of environmental distress have been met with inaction. Society is at a crossroads of crises and dilemmas but instead of coming together to fight these calamities, people seem ever-more vindictive and disparate. Now more than ever do we need people who can stand up not only for what is right, but synthesize wisdom, ethics, and complex logic across fields of thought. We cannot wait for some Deus-ex Machina to whisk away carbon emissions, replenish biodiversity, create the perfect society, or end the ills of the people. We must each take small steps towards a greater future.

In 2018 common rhetoric implied we had 12 years before irreversible damage destroyed our climate, fast forward two years later and not much has changed nor has it been pivotal rhetoric in either the United States or United Kingdom's elections. 94-year-old environmentalist Sir David Attenborough is still desperately warning us about our impending doom, even without a future of his own to worry about, but we seemingly do not care. NASA reported August's CO2 PPM as 414 whereas it was only 390 a mere decade ago and the last time it was consistently above 400 the Earth was in the Pliocene Era 4 million years ago and the atmosphere and seas were 3°C and 30m higher. These seas are now littered with our discarded plastic which is now 1/3 as prevalent as sea life and a collection twice the size of Texas floats in the Pacific Ocean. As we clear lands for beef and palm oil plantations to sustain our growing and unquenchable society, we eradicate our biodiversity which has collapsed by 2/3 in the past 50 years.

While this war seems at times unconquerable and as if every battle is lost and worthless, it is worth noting the successes. Electric vehicle manufacturer Tesla became the most valuable car maker in the world and electric models are becoming the norm for all car manufacturers, portraying the importance people put on the sustainable future of transportation. Ecosia, a search engine which uses its profits to plant trees in vulnerable areas planted its 100 millionth tree this summer, only about a year and a half after their 50 millionth. Boyan Slat's The Ocean Cleanup has vehicles skimming the dirtiest rivers and parts of the ocean removing thousands of pounds of trash per day. Oil used to be seen as black-gold and bring a country or business riches but it has depreciated harshly and even went into negative value this summer and trillions of dollars have been divested from fossil fuel companies.

Our battle may seem Sisyphusian but we must hang onto our belief that a better system is possible and fervently believe in the power of the younger generation who the past year have been shouting a resounding call for climate action. Roosevelt members look to contribute to the discourse in this journal and propose our own solutions and offer our opinions. There is no one answer, everyone must do what they can to help society reach this desperately monumental goal. As Teddy Roosevelt said, "If he fails, at least he fails while daring greatly, so that his place shall never be with those cold and timid souls who know neither victory nor defeat"

**Sincerely,
Dain Rohtla**

Long Reads

The Incompatibility of Globalization and Stopping Climate Change

Clark-Robert Cossin

With climate change continually becoming more apparent, there seems to be a misunderstanding of how to stop it. While shifting our interest towards decreasing emissions remains a valiant endeavor, we still seem to lack understanding on how to decrease the unnatural reactions from this unprecedented period of climatic heating. Taking public transport, using disposable goods instead of plastic, etc. are all clearly helpful in terms of taking steps to fight this worrying phenomenon. However, we seem to forget the impact globalization has upon our planet, and that this impacts the environment far more than our minimal efforts mentioned above. First of all, globalization is the concept of businesses or corporations operating on an international scale; indeed, its economic meaning highlights the manufacturing and transportation of goods, for the most part, in an environmentally non-friendly manner. Therefore, to stop the acceleration of climate change, it is necessary to decrease globalization as well. I will show how globalization is detrimental to different regional environments, and attempt to discuss alternatives to globalization that could be beneficial for our planet in the long term.

In recent years, impacts of climate change continue to become clearer. Increasing temperatures, rising water levels, and a temperamental environment all are effects of this phenomenon that scientists attest began in the late nineteenth century

The links to globalization and a progressively erratic climate are becoming irrevocable. As early as 2000, O'Brien and Leichenko wrote of the increase in vulnerability for small communities from the climate warming.

Furthermore, they point to corporations as the major winner of this phenomenon, due to people having to pull smaller amounts of resources from a variation of areas, exporting them to greater territorial swathes. While globalization seems all encompassing and beneficial on an economic scale, it actually represents a detriment to small communities and the environment that surrounds them. [1] Glaciers on every continent continue to melt at an unprecedented speed. Glaciers in Peru for example help sustain different communities, which makes climate change for them far more harmful. Indeed, Lennox points out that in Peru—with large corporations buying plots of land and increasing production of potatoes and milk by over 500% in ten years—the climate has increasingly changed for the worse for the inhabitants of these areas. The populations inhabiting the Andes lived off the land as farmers. Due to a greater demand for dairy products worldwide, transnational companies began to settle in Peru in regions at high altitude. In the Cusco region of Peru, for example, only thirty percent of the population now lives off of farming, due to the climatic situation becoming more drastic, and companies buying the vast majority of their land. [2]

This highlights the complex nature globalization and climate change creates for disenfranchised communities. While this does not specifically refer to our situation in the western world today, it remains essential to demonstrate how by the buying of specific products coming from other countries we affect less fortunate communities than our own.

When thinking of our daily consumption of different goods, I notice that when it comes to groceries, electronics, etc. these different commodities do not come from areas close to us. Rather they travel hundreds if not thousands of kilometers to arrive for us to use only for a short period. The lithium used in an iPhone, for example, comes from Bolivia, and the phone itself is manufactured in China—demonstrating not only the environmentally unethical side to its production, but the globalizing effort it takes to produce a single one of these products. Plastic, another commodity used by us on a daily basis, oftentimes has to make at least a hundred kilometer trip to arrive to us as a bottle or a bag due to it only being produced in specific regions. Therefore, I suggest that part of us stopping climate change at its alarming rate is a decrease in usage of goods coming from different countries and regions from our own; in other words, stopping the globalizing trend. This would mean not having strawberries in December, not having avocados, perhaps not having milk in some cases depending on where you live. This would also mean not buying goods off the Internet, which is a major enabler of globalization and environmental destruction. If it becomes necessary to buy products from other countries, we should use them for their entire lifespan and not be enveloped in this world of desiring the latest thing. If we lived off food and different materials coming from the regions in which we lived, climate change would be far less drastic than it currently is.

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Farm and Ranch Sustainability: Lassoing Cattle's Potential

Gabriel Flouret

In terms of establishing a widespread environmentally sustainable food culture, many large scale farms and ranches must rethink their long-term planning when it comes to cattle management. In 1906, American journalist Alfred Henry Lewis stated that civilization is only nine meals away from collapse. The Dust Bowl, the advance of the Gobi Desert, and current droughts in Iran, economic trends, and diseases like Mad Cow and Covid-19, have shown global food systems' fragility. According to the United Nations, by 2023, the world population will have reached eight-billion. Large-scale farming practices in developed nations must lead by example and prioritize the land's sustainability and consumers' long-term health. Additional government funding and changes in practices are worth the cost to mitigate critical threats to mankind and the ripple effects of potential global catastrophes. However, in a global capitalist market, the consumer bears much of the responsibility and can choose to support individual institutions and buy certain foods. Alternative solutions to cattle management and beef and dairy production must be explored on a global scale to diminish the carbon footprint to allow for an increase in sustainability from farm to table. The United States, which produces twenty percent of the world's beef, and Uruguay, which has four bovines for every citizen, face the same problems: methane release and water consumption..

Diminishing the amount of water used and methane released in beef and dairy production subtly plays a sizable role in climate change. Plausible solutions often require additional funding; however, the following only requires more labor, but with a great deal of return. Farmer's allowance of excessive use of the land leads to methane gas release. In terms of cattle production, methane gas is released through exposed moist soils, the animals' digestive tracts, the making of dairy products like Greek yogurt, and the transportation of the product.

Conventional grazing practices consist of leaving cattle on a single pasture for as long as an entire season. As a result, cattle over trample and overeat pastures, causing increased exposure to the soil. In turn, the conventional method leads to a loss of vital topsoil because of a lack of drainage; thus, sparking the development of a moist soil environment, which releases methane and creates a rather miserable environment for the cattle. The mud makes it difficult for grass to grow, as cattle continuously walk over the same ground, forcing the farmer to rely upon feed that must be bought and transported.

An environmentally sustainable fashion of raising cattle is through holistic and regenerative grazing practices. The aforementioned strategies reduce the release of methane gas, water consumption, and decrease farmers' reliance on externalities. Holistic and regenerative practices are avoided by large farms because they require moving the cattle daily, if not every few hours. Farmers must set and move fences and establish a source of water, all in addition to moving the cattle. Though more time consuming and labor-intensive, holistic and regenerative grazing are sustainable and beneficial to both the land and the cattle. Topsoil is saved, grass grows taller, water is conserved, methane release is reduced, and the farmer likely reclaims independence by not having to rely upon ordered feed. Furthermore, the effect of cattle trampling lush green grass is reversed and helps in fertilizing more greenery.

The burden of sustainability in the global economy falls onto not only the shoulders of the farmer but is equally, if not more so, the responsibility of the consumer. Consumers make decisions based on cost and practicality. Often, the continuation of certain choices subjects them to further negative externalities. Beef and dairy alternatives are accessible to many, though cattle remain a staple to many in places such as Brazil, Hong Kong, and Argentina. Markets of more developed nations such as the United States, France, Germany, among others, allow for more choice.

Buying beef and dairy from local farms and ranchers practicing holistic and regenerative grazing will, as a byproduct, support local farms as they are the ones who can more easily adapt. Larger livestock companies will likely only change when provoked or incentivized by governments because they will always have clients, like chain restaurants and markets, in need of cheaply produced beef and dairy.

The American Bison is on the rise as a more environmentally friendly and healthier alternative to beef. American Bison, which neared extinction in the 1890s, is a more independent animal that can withstand harsh conditions, produces fewer greenhouse emissions, has leaner and more tender meat, and USDA regulations require American Bison be raised without antibiotics or hormones. Research from the Cary Institute of Ecosystem Studies found that traditional beef requires 25x more land than average livestock and 11x irrigated water. [1] Any reduction in beef is great for the environment. The American Bison's undomesticated nature also demands that it be raised in a more ethical environment, which for American Bison means more space.

Overall, current cattle practices worldwide and consumption trends are detrimental to the sustainability of global lands and farms. While economic incentives may compel large cattle organizations to transition their methods, the livelihoods of the future generations' lands and waters should be motivation enough. Beef and dairy are integral to the global economy and must be sustained in order to conserve jobs and culture. The methods of cattle farming, yes, support livestock, but the techniques used, considerations, and ethics are questionable. Suppressing methane emissions, water consumption, and damage to the environment as a result of better cattle and land management is a change that, once launched, creates a positive feedback loop for the earth, the cattle, the farmers, and the consumers.

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On The Economic Benefits of Environmental Business

Dain Rohtla

While this journal mostly deals with moral reasoning for environmental considerations in business, I want to diverge to discuss a more grounded appeal. While Earth requires less carbon emissions and a multitude of environmental improvements, it is not only this moral perspective that will persuade politicians, businesses, and consumers. An environmental business model is an economic boon.

The CEO of the world's largest asset manager, BlackRock, who manages more than \$7 trillion, more than the GDP of the 4th and 5th biggest economies combined, writes an annual Letter to CEOs in which he discusses the state of global business. In 2019 and 2020 the letters dealt with focusing on purpose not only profits, and taking care of the environment, respectively. BlackRock has the power to stem the tides of global commerce. Pushing these sentiments holds considerable weight not only for how public companies should act but it gives credence to political agendas.

The richest people and the biggest decision makers earn the majority of their money not from a wage salary but ownership of stock. Behavioral economists argue that the stock market is irrational; it plays on the psychology of those involved. Otherwise it would not be at an all-time high as millions of Americans are about to be evicted and are out of work; nor should Tesla stock be priced ~1,600x earnings. Just look at Reddit's WallStreetBets and how they pushed archaic GameStop up 3000% in a couple of months.

The Warren Buffet Indicator is the ratio of the Russel 1000 index to the US GDP, which is currently severely overvalued, at about 180%. Unemployment is also as high as the Great Recession. The iShares ESGU ETF is an investment security which holds American equities that perform well positively with environmental, social, and governance characteristics. Over the past 3 years (As of Feb 6) it has increased in price 48.98% whereas the primary US index the S&P500 has only increased 40.76% within the same period. Acting in a socially conscious manner bodes well for stock price, which is how executives make most of their earnings and drives their decision making.

In the age of social media, consumers have a wealth of information about businesses and their characteristics drive consuming behavior. Barstool Sports is a sports podcast/merchandise/gambling business. Through my experience as part of their target demographic, consumers generally do not buy their clothes for the looks, but for the meaning and beliefs the organization hold. This is common throughout brands and young consumers today. 4ocean makes bracelets for \$20 dollars but they are popular because each bracelet funds 1 pound of ocean trash to be removed. Millennials and Gen Z are a large portion of the buying power and workforce and will only grow in the short term. Research from Cone Communications show that 70% of millennials will pay more for a product if it is about an issue they care about and 62% say they will take a pay cut to work for a responsible company. [1]

The Yale Program on Climate Change Communication reported that Americans are willing to pay more for renewable energy. National polls of adults found that the average American is willing to pay an additional \$16.25/month for renewable electricity and 14% of those polled were willing to pay between \$31-200 extra. [2] This is just another example that people are willing to pay more for perceived-ethical products and services. Switching a business model to one that incorporates stakeholders and prioritizes the environment can be good for business.

Academics Bowman and Haire investigated how corporate social responsibility prose in financial reports related to performance. The researchers found that companies with corporate social responsibility prose performed better than those without, 14.7% return on equity compared to 10.2% over 5 years. [3] This research was published in 1975, and nearly every trend of ethical business has exploded recently, such as the popularity of Fairtrade groceries, this inequality is likely greater now.

before the 2011 Christmas season, outdoor clothing brand Patagonia launched "Don't Buy This Jacket" and "Buy Less" ads as a sustainable conjecture. Sales rose 30% the following year. [4] By attaching such an environmental perspective to the brand they were able to attract customers, regardless that such action was against the apparent aim of the firm.

In the spring of 2011 oil was over \$110/barrel and fossil fuel companies Exxon Mobile and Royal Dutch Shell were some of the largest companies in the world. From their share price highs in 2014 to December 2020, Exxon and Shell's stock dropped 58% and 59% respectively. Since then fossil fuel companies have become demonized as more attention is put on climate change.

In 2010 a large fossil fuel divestment movement started which popularized the idea of investing in environmentally damaging businesses as morally depraved. This sparked trillions of dollars being removed from the industry and harming these companies, causing scores to go bankrupt, even the largest coal company, Peabody.

The public perception of socially responsible business should be at the forefront of the collective thought of office C-suites. The environmental implications of commerce have as tangible an impact on a firm's bottom line and the executives' pay as anything.

As stated in the Letter From the President, there is a myriad of reasons why society must strive for environmental progress and reduce greenhouse gas emissions among other issues. Many issue moral appeals but people lack such foresight not at any fault of their own, and regularly the ultimate decision maker is the wallet. Therefore, it is important to balance such a discussion with these profit driven arguments. Environmentally friendly business has shown to be beneficial to companies' financials and their stock prices.

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Enforcing Climate Accountability Through Sanctions

Andrew C. Richardson

Climate change will likely be a central issue for the incoming Biden administration, given their planned historic 2 trillion dollar investment[1] into green and renewable energy. A renewed U.S. interest in climate change could greatly make it much easier for the international community to prevent it. Thus far, cooperation has been the guiding force of climate policy. Nonetheless, given the international scope of this issue, accountability will be equally important to environmental policy moving forward. This article investigates whether economic sanctions targeting carbon emissions can effectively enforce accountability in the global effort to combat climate change.

Until present, climate policy has been spearheaded by multilateral agreements based on voluntary cooperation between states. The Kyoto Protocols, for example, was a multilateral treaty between 191 states, which exempted India and China and allowed developing nations to voluntarily comply with the emission standards of the treaty. The Paris Climate Accords set out voluntary individual measures called Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) [2] that each country submitted ahead of formally joining the Paris Agreement. The NDCs aim to meet a collective goal to stop the global temperature from rising by 2 degrees Celsius.

Despite the multilateral and cooperative nature of climate policy, sanctions could play an important role regarding accountability. With Biden's administration set to re-enter the Paris Climate Accords, critics (notably President Trump's administration) have argued that it could create a situation where the United States is forced to shoulder a heavy burden on curbing emissions [3], other major polluters may be able to continue polluting. The pledges made by China and India [4] were relatively easy to meet, while Russia, initially, did not even bother to make a pledge of its own. The NDCs that Russia ultimately submitted in November 2020 were rated as critically insufficient by Climate Action Tracker (CAT). [5] Given that China emits the most greenhouse gases in the world. [6] doubling the next largest polluter, the United States, significant progress cannot be made on this issue if they are not drastically cutting their emissions. Likewise, the same logic also applies to India and Russia, who are the world's 3rd and 5th largest emitters. Those in the United States who are already skeptical of making significant investments into green energies will ask why the U.S. should shoulder an economic burden, while the world's largest emitter continues polluting. The Trump administration has touted this line of argument, withdrawing from the Paris agreement and rolling back environmental regulations. The United States' whose initial Paris goals were deemed as insufficient is now rated critically insufficient, according to the CAT. [7]

In order to ensure the success of multilateral deals such as the Paris Climate Agreement, countries will need to be held accountable for not sufficiently reducing their carbon emissions.

Despite the clear promise of sanctions as a tool for climate change mitigation, they have their pitfalls. For example, political movements that focus on environmental policy [8] and sustainability are most successful in prosperous countries that have their basic standard of living related needs met. Economic sanctions targeting countries such as Russia, Venezuela, and Iran have led to irreversible environmental damage. In response to its isolating sanctions, Iran has turned to exporting oil and depletion of other natural resources [9] in order to continue developing economically, which has led to accelerated environmental damage. In fact, TIME listed four of Iran's cities in their ranking of the 10 most polluted cities in the world. [10] With regard to how sanctions could be implemented, Neil Bhatiya [11] points out the lacking international legal norms surrounding carbon emissions and other factors contributing to climate change. In order for a government to impose an import tariff targeting countries that do not abide by the terms of the Paris Agreement, there would need to be a shift in the way states view climate change and a consensus on when the use of climate change-related sanctions are justified under international law.

Historically, U.S. imposed sanctions have failed previously and caused significant damage to the world's most marginalized. American sanctions on adversaries such as North Korea have been unable to change their policies as planned. [12] This begs the question, 'why bother sanctioning countries' if it will only harm them without accomplishing the goal? Sanctioning highly polluting countries who are extremely impoverished, could exacerbate the issue by keeping them poor and unable to invest in green systems.

A form of sectoral sanctions is often discussed as the most applicable to the example of climate change. Rather than apply sanctions similar to those used on Iran, which fully barred westerners from doing business with Iranian actors, green sanctions would likely resemble the sectoral sanctions that the United States and EU levied against Russia after their expansionism in Ukraine, which only targeted specific activities of the sanctioned actors. For climate sanctions, the corporations and organizations targeted should be sanctioned on their high emission activities, but westerners should be able to do business with them in other areas that are not necessarily leading to emissions. Thus, sanctions can send a clear message regarding climate change without crippling all other aspects of the sanctioned country's economy and potentially making it harder for them to make green investments.

Countries such as Canada and the UK have led the way, showing how countries can place a price on emissions going forward. The United Kingdom's tax on plastic packaging created in or imported into the UK creates incentives for domestic and foreign manufacturers to use recyclable materials. Likewise, Canada's carbon tax, which is expected to increase 566 percent over the next 10 years [13] creates a framework for pricing carbon emissions. The 2018 Greenhouse Gas Pollution Pricing Act [14] includes a charge on fuel and a charge on greenhouse gas outputs by manufacturers in order to incentivize fuel producers and large polluters to invest in green energies.

One potential avenue for the implementation of corporation centric climate sanctions is through the expansion of the Global Magnitsky Act. The original Magnitsky Act was passed by Congress in 2012 to counter Russian corruption and human rights violations. In 2016, it was expanded to the Global Magnitsky Act, allowing the United States to target sanctions on any individuals around the world engaged in human rights violations. In November 2019, Senator Ed Markey introduced the "Targeting Environmental and Climate Recklessness Act of 2019", which would build on the Global Magnitsky Act to allow the President to block access to the U.S. economy for individuals and companies that engage in reckless actions that thwart the international effort to mitigate climate change. This bill has been introduced but has not passed the U.S. Senate or House, indicating that such legislation may not have enough broad support to be signed into law in the United States.

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A Nuclear Future?

Katie Bono

The situation in the world today has never been more dire and yet our push for a sustainable future is faltering in the hands of our world leaders. The current goal for many nations is carbon neutrality by 2050, with some aiming for as soon as 2030. In order to achieve carbon neutrality, we must consider the nuclear option. Half of global energy goes into making heat; we need it to produce steel, cement, glass, and various chemicals. The volume of heat production from nuclear power is most comparable and best positioned to displace fossil fuels in supply chains. It is quite difficult to imagine countries like the US or the UK meeting their carbon neutrality goals without the massive support that nuclear energy could provide. Nuclear energy is, of course, contentious; who among us can overlook the horrors of Chernobyl? Nuclear scientists, though, are less worried about the effects and risks of radiation than the average person.

There is widespread scientific disagreement about the number of people who had deaths related to the explosion at Chernobyl. Some place the estimate as high as a million deaths. In reality, only 28 deaths have been directly linked to the explosion according to the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation (UNSCEAR) with the UN placing the toll of related deaths at 43. An estimated 6,000 cases of thyroid cancer resulted from the explosion, 15 of which proved to be fatal. The cancer cases were completely avoidable though - they were a result of the Soviet government failing to prevent consumption of contaminated milk.

In fact, low-level radiation risks as a whole are difficult to estimate as everything emits some degree of radiation and there is not enough consensus on how well cells respond. Beyond the contaminated milk, the UN says there has been no other evidence of pervasive health conditions that resulted from the explosion. While the risk of nuclear accidents is undoubtedly not as great as the public perceives it to be, many argue that any level of risk is simply too great, while others believe these risks can and should be mitigated for the sake of a carbon-neutral future. All in all, a better understanding of radiation risks means a more balanced assessment of other factors related to nuclear energy such as weapons proliferation, high costs, and waste disposal.

The proposed solution to our nuclear woes is small modular reactors (SMRs). These are smaller plants that are an alternative to the exponentially more expensive full-sized nuclear plants. The SMRs are meant to have way less construction associated with them and it is thought that constructing the plants more frequently will allow for greater efficiency and a more streamlined building process. In fact, SMRs have been designed from the start to be constructed en masse and to be less obtrusive than traditional power plants. Currently Rolls Royce has proposed building 16 SMRs throughout the UK over a ten-year timespan. SMRs have been heralded by President-elect Biden and Prime Minister Johnson as the key to long-term energy policy and a carbon neutral future.

Globally, 67 SMR technologies are in various stages of development, although only one SMR is currently in operation off of the Arctic coast of Russia. It is truly difficult to compete with the sheer scale of energy that nuclear plants provide and for the United States, nuclear energy is one of the largest sources of clean electricity. If agencies like the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) are given proper jurisdiction, then we can ensure safe disposal of nuclear waste as well as supervision to prevent weapons proliferation.

Nuclear energy would require intense international cooperation because it may be a necessary course of action given that other forms of sustainable energy will not be sufficient to overturn fossil fuels alone. This is easier said than done because historically nuclear programs have prompted cause for suspicion and distrust. Their potential for clean energy and as a source of economic growth are impossible to overlook though. Currently, nuclear plants in the United States are shutting down due to competition from natural gas, wind, and solar farms. If the industries focused less on competition and more on the common goal of carbon neutrality, then perhaps a sustainable future is in sight. Further, legislation and support of nuclear energy could pave the way for further clean energy legislation.

In terms of actually constructing SMRs, experts have judged the ten-year plan proposed by Rolls Royce to be far too optimistic. While SMRs are smaller scale, they have the same degree of complexity as full-sized nuclear power plants and are subject to the same rigorous safety standards due to radiation risks. Organizations like Greenpeace are quite skeptical of the nuclear plans, especially in terms of the weapons proliferation issue. Funding may have been underestimated as well - the US may simply lack the necessary subsidiary funds to sufficiently develop the industry as costs there would triple the costs in Europe.

Nuclear energy is evidently not easy. Many nations are rightfully suspicious and right not to trust each other. At this point though, we need to pursue every possible solution to reach carbon neutrality because any path that is better than the one the world is on now is worth a go. Nations need to put their trust in the IAEA to make sure that UN member states continue to utilize nuclear energy peacefully and safely. Nuclear energy provides ten percent of the world's electricity and one third of low carbon electricity - it is simply not a part of the carbon neutral equation we can afford to forego at this point. For all its faults, nuclear energy may be our best mid-term solution to the climate crisis. Until other forms of clean energy have the capacity to replace the amount of electricity currently produced by fossil fuels, nuclear energy is the viable option.

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Where Does 4Ocean's Money Go?

Edmund Petty

With a message of environmentalism at its forefront, the 4Ocean company has gained significant popularity primarily through its sales of bracelets made from recycled ocean waste. Each bracelet retails for \$20 (or about 15£) a piece and is accompanied by a guarantee that the firm will remove one pound of plastic pollution from the ocean; when investigated, however, the companies methods as well as the bracelets notable price tag calls into question the actual goals of 4Ocean. Ultimately the question becomes: is 4Ocean an ocean-waste cleaning company that uses bracelets as a gimmick to fund their benevolence, or a bracelet company using environmentalism as a gimmick to fill their pockets?

Plastics entered the public eye at the dawn of World War II, and throughout the preceding years, plastic production surged out of necessity. In fact, since the mid-1940s, plastic production has increased exponentially [1], with total global production of 1.5 million metric tons in 1950 utterly dwarfed by the 368 million metric tons produced in 2019 [2] (for perspective, at an average human mass 62kg (137lb), that's $\frac{3}{4}$ the population of earth). As a result, it is understandable that humanity's current state is often called "The Plastic Age." While the worldwide production of plastics—totaling over 8,300 million metric tons—has helped to create a life of incomprehensible plenty in many countries around the globe.

Plastic simultaneously now makes up 11% (about 913 million metric tons) of the world's waste; 79% (about 721 million metric tons) of which ends up in landfills or other natural environments, and ultimately through rainfall, the ocean. [3]

An accurate measurement of ocean waste is difficult to obtain, not only due to the breadth of measures required but due to the varying nature of plastics and plastic degradation. In the simplest sense, there are two types of plastic that undergo similar degradation methods, buoyant and non-buoyant plastics. [4] Buoyant plastics float through ocean currents, degrading into progressively smaller pieces as they are broken apart by the elements. Eventually, buoyant plastics clump together into "patches," ultimately conglomerating into the massive "great patches" which patrol our oceans. [5] Measuring the size of these patches is incredibly difficult, and calculations of the largest patch, the "Great Pacific Garbage Patch," range from 700k square kilometers (270k sq mi), a little larger than Texas, to over 15 million square kilometers (5.8 million sq mi), almost the size of Russia. The Ocean Cleanup Organizations measurements of the GPGP in 2018 reported it to be made up of over 80k metric tons of plastic, of which 92% were no larger than 0.5cm. The total amount of plastic pieces making up the GPGP was additionally reported to be 1.8 trillion. [6]

The second classification of plastics, the non-buoyant, enters the ocean similarly to the former, degrading into smaller pieces, some of which are light enough to join the great patches. The larger pieces which remain non-buoyant, however, wash up along coastlines and are buried under layers of sand. Eventually, the buoyant plastics become undetectable microplastics, while the non-buoyant plastics become the much more apparent rubbish littering the ocean floors and coastlines. While the beaches may be more visually appealing without large plastic trash, it is important to remember microplastics remain undetected, and it is essential to manage both. [7]

Plastic pollution is an ever-growing problem [8], one Alex Schulze and Andrew Cooper personally noticed when on vacation in Indonesia, where the beaches were filled with plastic waste. In response, they founded the Florida based company 4Ocean, with their staple product being a bracelet made from the same recycled plastics they observed. This brings to light another concern, 4Ocean is a for-profit company, unlike the majority of other groups with similar goals. While not operating as a non-profit does allow 4Ocean to sell a product that does not directly relate to their cause, it also affords far less transparency. How much does it actually cost the company to remove one pound of plastic, and how much money is made?

According to a United States based retailer, the bracelets are purchased at a wholesale cost of \$10, and then upmarket to their retail price of \$20. Therefore, with a report of 12,286,782lb of plastic recovered since 2017 [9] (as of January 13th, 2020), we can roughly calculate a revenue of around \$123 million (or about 89.5£ million). Costs, however, obviously have an impact on the total profits from the \$10 4Ocean receives for the bracelets.

There is no explicit mention of microplastic removal on the 4Ocean website; instead, it primarily features examples of the company removing much more visible (non-buoyant) plastics. From this evidence, it appears that the majority of 4Oceans pledge is fulfilled through the retrieval of visible plastics, so the costs of expensive microplastic filtering technologies is most likely negligible.

The locations where 4Ocean operates are also very important to calculate profits. One of the company's main cleanup locations is Indonesia, the very place which inspired 4Oceans founders, which happens to be ranked as the second largest contributor to ocean plastic pollution in the world. [10] While any removal of pollution is a net gain for the environment, especially in a country with high levels of pollution, a simple google search for "Indonesian ocean pollution" will make it immediately apparent that finding and removing a pound of trash is far from a difficult task (see Image 1). Due to how readily available a pound of plastic is in these locations, the cost of plastic retrieval and vehicle/tool maintenance is negligible as well. To be generous, we can say \$1 of the bracelet cost is devoted to locating the pound of plastic and maintaining the equipment used to retrieve it, or \$12.3 million of 4Oceans total revenue.

Due to mass production capabilities, it's reasonable to assume the bracelets are inexpensive to produce, however because they are fairly nice quality we can assume it costs \$2 or 20% of the total revenue to produce, so \$24.6 million has gone to production. While volunteers sometimes staff 4Oceans retrieval operations, they have stated that none of the volunteer missions count towards their pledge. This means that each employee collecting plastic as well as the company management earns a salary.

Management also needs to pay for office spaces; therefore, if employees are well paid and accommodated, \$3 of the bracelets wholesale cost or 30% of total revenue, \$36.9 million, will be devoted to them. Lastly, because 4Ocean operates as a for-profit and US based, they are subject to US corporate income taxes of about 21% or \$25.8 million. This leaves around 20% or \$25 million in bracelet revenue alone, going straight into the company's owners' pockets, in addition to 30% of revenue already included in their management paychecks (see Figure 1). While obviously, the owners deserve a working salary, \$25 million is far from small change. Additionally, although 4Ocean frequently donates to charities with like minded goals, the sizes of such donations when considering 4Oceans profit from their bracelets alone, are bound to leave many environmentalists wanting.

Ultimately, when deciding for yourself whether or not to support 4Ocean, the answer is anticlimactically subjective. 4Ocean's appeal suffers most prominently from two flaws. Firstly, they appear only to collect the visible, non-buoyant plastic, which, while helpful, fails to address the threat of microplastics.

Secondly, while the calculations made were all hypothetical, they are likely close to the truth, and some may find the size of the owner's salaries disingenuous to their message. While either claim can be proven false provided evidence, from the outside view, both flaws are undisputed. It's possible that the \$25 million of bracelet revenue is going into a worthwhile cause such as expansion or development, but there is no transparency on the 4Ocean site to prove it. At the end of the day, if your choosing to buy a bracelet, 4Ocean is probably one of the most environmentally friendly options you have, but if you are truly passionate about stopping ocean pollution, your \$20 is probably best donated elsewhere

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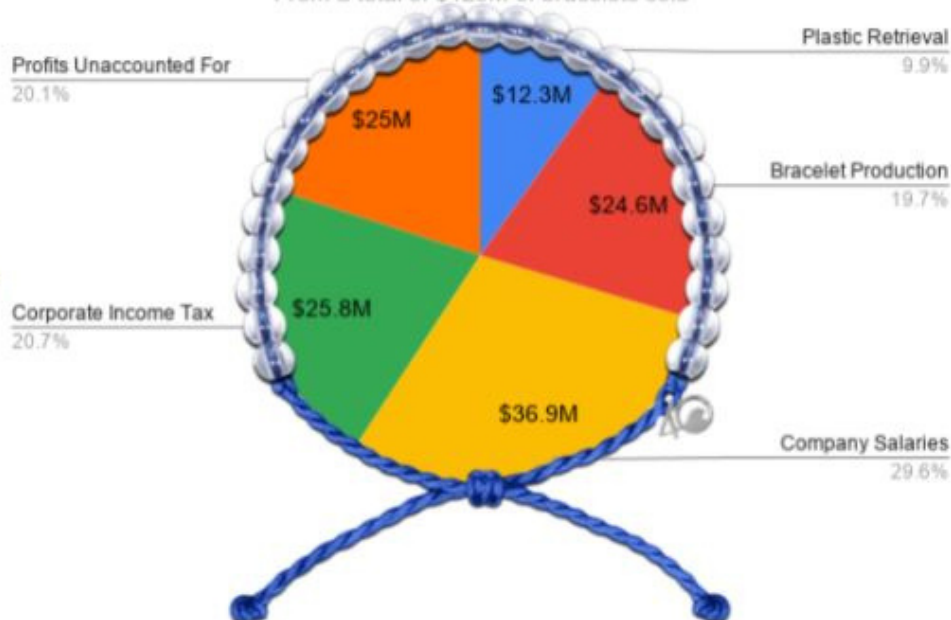
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Hypothetical 4Ocean Bracelet Wholesale Cost Breakdown

From a total of \$123M of bracelets sold



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Selected Quick- Takes

Legalisation of Abortion in Northern Ireland

Lydia Hoffman

The legalisation of abortion in Northern Ireland in October of 2019 initially appeared to be a groundbreaking step forward in the region's human rights legislation. Though the procedure has been authorised in the United Kingdom for decades, the historically conservative Northern Ireland had maintained a legislated ban on them, prohibiting abortions in all cases, with the sole exception being instances in which the mother's life was in danger due to pregnancy complications. While the initial ruling was cause for celebration for women across the nation who lobbied for legalisation, the Democratic Unionist Party have prevented abortions from becoming widely available and are delaying implementation.

The anti-abortion religious organizations of Northern Ireland are steadfast in their desire to roadblock clinics from administering the procedure; conversely, women's rights activists have taken to protesting the government's inaction. Thus, women seeking abortions have continued to travel to the mainland United Kingdom. In the face of COVID-19, flights between England and Northern Ireland oscillate from sparse to non-existent, and the options for travel become limited to the arduous ferry journey that runs between the two islands.

This is a tremendous task for many, especially when faced with the dangers of travelling during the pandemic. While the passage might dissuade some from crossing the sea to receive an abortion, it increases the need for some to turn to unsafe alternatives. In preventing the necessary funding and servicing, politicians place women in dire circumstances in which they must choose between traveling great lengths to access safe procedures or seeking out potentially hazardous unauthorised abortions at home. Evidently, the 2019 ruling has done little to afford women the access to safe healthcare in their country.

After determining that abortion is within a woman's human rights, Northern Irish politicians are obligated to ensure that they may be performed in a way that protects the health and safety of the individual. It is imperative that the well-being and safety of women across the country is prioritized. The ruling's symbolic importance with regards to abortions and public health is completely lost when implementation is not put into effect; it is up to the government to ensure that this issue is prioritized to maintain the legal human rights of its citizens.

The (im)morality behind Human DNA Editing

Kira Siebrecht

Headlines such as, “Designer babies aren’t futuristic. They are already here.”, and ‘Scientists can Design ‘Better’ Babies’. Should they?’ give humanity an eerie, eye-opening insight into the fact that modifying our next generation is more of a reality rather than a dystopian fairytale. CRISPR, a gene editing technology, enables scientists to precisely change a human’s genome and select certain traits upon birth acts by removing and substitute DNA. This technology allows humanity to dictate their “genetic fate”, explains Dr. Doudna, co-developer of gene-editing technology. While CRISPR offers exceptional potential medical benefits, are humans being ignorant and hubristic in their attempt to assume the position of ‘God’?

CRISPR technology has been left relatively on the back burner until the 21st century. It wasn’t until the 2010s that Rodger Novak, founder of CRISPR Therapeutics, a leading corporation in gene editing, and Ante S. Lundberg, senior executive of CRISPR Therapeutics, said that the recent exponential growth of the CRISPR technology began attracting great public debate. With growing pressure, government and scientific officials are trying to delineate certain moral and legislative limitations for the expansion of this technology. However, the technology’s imminent high risk and potential of large rewards makes drawing these limitations quite complicated.

Marcy Darnovsky, a scientist from the Center of Genetics and Society, thinks “no researchers should have the moral warrant to flout the globally widespread policy agreement against modifying the human germline” as the dangers and ethical hazards are significant when modifying a human embryo. The complexity of gene editing leads the experimenter to almost inevitable failure. Firstly, the off-target effect (selecting the wrong DNA sequence to modify) can cause the offspring to develop significantly worse problems than initially presented. Smolenski estimates DNA is incorrectly cut during CRISPR experiments up to 60% of the time. Secondly, the existence of repeating genes increases risk for error. Out of 3.2 billion base pairs in a human genome, certain sequences of base pairs may be repeated in more than once. Scientists must then perform their intended DNA modification on all related base pairs, growing the risk of unreliability of the procedure. Two scientists Chiarella and Guevin from Ethics and Medics, a highly respected research organisation, explain that modifying more than one sequence of DNA may lead to unknown mutations and hazards. These additional ‘related base pairs’ may affect different bodily processes, causing unpredictable effects on other body systems or traits. Furthermore, we must remember the high stakes of such procedures. These experiments would be carried out on unconsenting offspring, who will risk permanent damage to their well-being if any margin of error occurs. At least currently, the high risks do not seem worth the level of reward.

However, that is not to say CRISPR technology will remain this risky. Researcher Ben Merriman from the University of Chicago remarks that with continued experimentation, CRISPR has the potential to become reliable. If so, applications may include having patients successfully evade fatal, hereditary diseases such as cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, HIV/AIDS, mental and neurological disorders, which are all monogenic (controlled by one gene) diseases. In 2019, scientist He Jiankui's genetically modified two twin girls born from a HIV positive father. He attempted to modify the girls' DNA so they possessed a gene that prevents HIV infection. It is not confirmed if He was successful in his attempts because he was thrown in jail for this illegal project and unable to further study the DNA of the healthily born twins. It is difficult to classify the actions of He as moral or immoral. What if He's work kept the twins from contracting HIV from their HIV positive father? What if He's research could be extended to further cases, keeping another child from developing a fatal hereditary gene in a future experiment? Would He's projects still be deemed illegal? The morality of CRISPR technology once again becomes a bit hazy. In order to develop CRISPR technology to become reliable enough to save lives, governments must allow the technology to keep developing without strict limitations.

However, the idea of allowing CRISPR technology to advance further leads to another roadblock of potential issues. If governments allow CRISPR technology to advance, officials risk being unable to regulate who has access to the technology. Just as Einstein regrets creating the atomic bomb, saying "Had [he] known that the German would not succeed in producing an atomic bomb".. He "would have never lifted a finger", governments may regret allowing the creation of potentially dangerous technology. Individuals may use DNA editing for negative purposes such as biological weaponization.

Unsupervised individuals will be granted the tools to enable them to play God and modify human and animal life.

Biological weaponization is not the only fear. If CRISPR is left unregulated, humanity may have the option to design the phenotype of the upcoming generation, which can lead to greater ethical concerns. Dr. Doudna, who won a Nobel prize for her work in CRISPR, explains a reality where doctors, "offer a menu of traits and say, check off" to expecting parents. In a time where physical image is constantly emphasised by globe-dominating social media and advertising platforms, it seems like a naive idea to allow the advancement of a technology where modification of a couple's offspring's appearance is plausible. The morality of Human DNA editing will continue to be a controversial, volatile subject as development in CRISPR technology either halts and continues to advance.

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Children's Rights to Education, Health and Protection

Catherine Herff

In our world today, we would expect that all children have the right to health, education and protection, and that all communities and societies strive to give the future opportunities for growth. However, this is not the case. Millions of children around the world, especially in conflict-stricken and developing countries are still being denied their fair chance to have these human rights. The worst part is the fact that the only logical reason is solely related to the country, gender or specific circumstance which they were born into.

First, I want to address the matter regarding children's health care. Despite the numerous strong health care systems and aid programs many countries provide, there are still more than ten million children dying in developing countries each year. The World Health Organization found that between 2000 and 2003 more than 10.6 million children under the age of five died each year, with 37 percent of those being within the first four years of their life. The serious failures to provide a basic hygienic environment and adequate nutritional intake were the underlying clinical causes of these deaths and will continue to contribute to the mortality rates without some sort of change.

The actions of UNICEF's Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), ultimately changed the way children are viewed; as human beings with the same rights as adults, not just objects of charity. However, there are still pressing matters on the issue of children's educational rights, where in many parts of the world, over 175 million children are not enrolled in pre-primary education. This hinders their growth in critical areas of knowledge and

skills needed for life, and, according to the 2017 UNESCO report, out of every ten children, six leave primary school without gaining minimum proficiency levels in reading and mathematics.

Furthermore, armed conflict exacerbates this challenge in the sense that there are many cases in which children are forced out of their education systems due to violent conflicts in the areas they live in. The UN Security Council mandated the Action Plans that released thousands of children from armed conflict, and many other actions have been taken to prevent the recruitment of children by armed forces, however, there are still almost 250 million children that live in areas of armed conflict. More specifically, in Afghanistan, child deaths made up almost one-third of their overall civilian casualties in the first half of 2019. The worst, however, takes place in Somalia, where in 2018 over 5,200 children were used, recruited and killed, and over 3 million remained out of school. It is not their faults that they were born in these places of conflict, and therefore they should not be the ones suffering the consequences.

No child in this world should feel as though they are unprotected, uneducated, or lacking basic health care, so therefore it is extremely disheartening to know that this one of the greater issues our world still faces today. Action is urgently required and Member States are heavily encouraged to provide refugee children with the support services necessary. Good governance is hard to come by in these specific countries, however

that doesn't deny the fact that they can still receive assistance in regards to not only a child's individual wellbeing, but also the future of mankind.

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Inside the Xinjiang ‘Re-education’ Camps

Olivia Groom

The Nazi concentration camps are viewed as one of the cruelest schemes in history. With more than 1000 of these camps, 1.65 million people were registered prisoners at one point. Yet, whilst it is rare to find a single person unaware of this past inhumanity, most people turn a blind eye to the occurrence of similar events on a large scale right under our noses.

China is operating a system of internment camps for Muslims in Xinjiang. ASPI identified 380 detention centres established across the region since 2017, ranging from lowest security re-education camps to fortified prisons. This is despite claims by the Chinese authorities that its Xinjiang Data Project was winding down. By September 2020, 1.3 million people had been through Xinjiang’s “re-education” scheme annually for six years. In a clear crackdown against ethnic minorities in China, those detained include Uyghurs, Kazakhs, Kyrgyz and other ethnic Turkic Muslims, Christians, and some foreign citizens such as Kazakhstanis. Known as “Vocational Education and Training Centers”, the purpose of these camps, and the extreme measures implemented within, is apparently to prevent religious extremism and terrorist activities, and to ensure ethnic unity. In reality, these camps are “places of brainwashing, torture, and punishment,” said Nicholas Bequeline, Amnesty International’s East Asia Director.

Those admitted to camps are not put on trial, have no access to lawyers or right to challenge the decision, and it is only the authorities who can decide when an individual has been ‘transformed’ and can therefore leave. Leaked Chinese government documents, which the ICJ have labelled “The China Cables”, include a nine-page memo sent out in 2017 by Zhu Hailun, who was the deputy-secretary of Xinjiang’s Communist Party and the region’s top security official. This memo instructs the camps should be run as high security prisons, with strict discipline and punishments. Anyone who resists or fails to demonstrate enough progress face punishments ranging from verbal abuse to food deprivation, solitary confinement, beatings and use of restraints and stress positions. There have also been reports of deaths and suicides inside the facilities.

Despite this clear breach of human rights, it is doubtful the West will significantly intervene in China’s wrongdoings. Only in the future - whether it is five, ten, or twenty years, will we probably wonder why we chose to do not to do so little. “The only thing necessary for the triumph of evil is for good men to do nothing.” Yet, in 2019 at the United Nations, 54 nations rejected allegations against China and supported China’s policies in Xinjiang. Let us not repeat the mistakes of the past, and allow for the triumph of evil. Then again, perhaps it is already too late.

Closing Remarks

Roosevelt has adapted this past year and thrived. In 2020 our first cohort of members graduated and are now spread around the world. We expanded our membership for the academic year 2020-2021 and are starting a chapter at Yale University.

The committee offers a huge thank you to everyone who contributed to our publications and makes Roosevelt possible. We look forward to seeing the club grow and make an impact.

