



Plan B 2.0: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble

Lester R. Brown

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The world faces numerous environmental trends of disruption and decline such as rising temperatures, falling water tables and rising sea levels. This book highlights how in ignoring nature's deadlines for dealing with these issues we risk the disruption of economic progress.

Plan B 2.0: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble Details

Date : Published February 9th 2006 by W. W. Norton & Company (first published September 2003)

ISBN : 9780393328318

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Format : Paperback 365 pages

Genre : Nonfiction, Environment, Sustainability, Politics, Economics, Green

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From Reader Review Plan B 2.0: Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble for online ebook

Jennifer says

I say currently reading, but that could be a fib. I started this book like a year ago, got all passionate about it and then killed it like a spider (wait, eric kills the spiders) whatever...

It was a bit dry and technical, but if you want to know the ins and outs of renewable energy, the fate of where we're headed if we keep on like we are and what's going to happen when china and india catch up economically... read it, even just the first couple chapters. pretty sobering.

Not to mention the impending doom of our agriculture practices and fresh water crisis which is contrasted to civilizations of the past such as the easter island indians. if you want to know what they did wrong check it out because we're on the same road.

And I haven't even said anything about oil yet.

Michael Berg says

This book is great. I read excerpts of this book while in college and read the entire book after graduation. Lester Brown does a great job of providing background, examples, detail and misc. facts on various environmental issues and challenges.

I would definitely recommend this book to a friend, but with a warning. It is written so anyone can understand and follow along, which makes it a great read for someone interested in environmentalism but lacking the technical mindset.

My only problem with this book is that you can tell the author is an environmentalist, which is both good and bad. He gives a lot of facts, which are great (and technically accurate), but my main problem is his mis-use of statistics and lack of explanation of his assumptions when making claims – I don't expect it in the text, but a foot note or detailed appendices would be nice, especially with some of the claims he is making which seem to be pulled out of thin air. It is common for him to compare an average of something to the minimum of something else – which, obviously, makes the low value look extremely low in comparison; in other words, he does not compare apples to apples, and (surprise!) his case looks even more significant than it probably actually is.

All in all this is a great book and I still agree with everything he says in it, but just don't be fooled by comparisons. Just be sure to take a mental note of what exactly he is talking about and comparing then make your own decisions from there!

Ian Tierney says

The book was a fun read, but I only read the Energy Efficiency Revolution, the Renewable New Energy

Economy, and the chapter on cities. What I wanted when I picked up this book for my book club was to get an idea of where we can go and how to do it. I found that it was generally positive about energy generation, but practical in the ways to go about creating a revolution. The facts and figures provided were really helpful in wrapping my head around the local, national and global state we are in. I would recommend it to students who are looking for really great facts for papers, and to leaders who are curious how a clean energy economy might work.

Jamie says

An important work on the importance of humanity living in harmony with the planet, touches on implications to oceans, water shortages, natural systems climate, food and poverty.

Colin Lee says

My review of plan b here.

I bought & gifted this book to 5 people. It was originally gifted to me as well.

Kate says

"Our global economy is outgrowing the capacity of the earth to support it, moving us ever closer to decline and possible collapse. We have lost sight of how vast the human enterprise has become. A century ago, annual growth in the world economy was measured in billions of dollars. Today it is measured in trillions.

"As a result, we are consuming renewable resources faster than they can regenerate. Forest are shrinking, water tables are falling, and fisheries are declining. We are using up oil at a pace that leaves little time to plan beyond peak oil, and we are discharging greenhouse gases into the atmosphere faster than nature can absorb them.

"Sustaining progress now depends on replacing the fossil fuel-bases, throwaway economy with a new economy, one powered by abundant sources of wind, solar energy, hydropower, and biofuels. The transportation system will be far more diverse, relying more on light-rail, buses, and bicycles and less on cars. And it will be a comprehensive reuse-recycle economy.

"We have the technologies needed to build the new economy, including, for example, gas-electric hybrid cars, advanced-design wind turbines, highly efficient refrigerators, and water-efficient irrigation systems. We can see how to build the new economy brick by brick. With each wind farm, rooftop solar panel, and reforestation program, we move closer to an economy that can sustain economic progress."

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Although the author makes many valid points, and his overall thesis is viable and immediate, he beats the subject to death with enough facts and graphs to make the reader's eyes cross. I think there can never be

enough public discussion of the ecological and economic "cliff" we are facing in the very near future, but somehow I doubt this book will be part of waking up the general public about our imminent danger.

Ed Arnold-berkovits says

Lester Brown tells it like it is, as awful as is really is. No sugar-coating here. Just another wake-up call. At this point, there's so many people hitting snooze and ignoring the truth that it's a wonder we've lasted this long.

The best part of this book is there's actually a way out of this mess described therein. If only the leaders of this country (and others) would accept that our civilization is in trouble and there's a way out of it that isn't endless way and suffering, both here and abroad.

Ktbird says

I skim-read this book. In light of recent politics, its warning might be coming too late.

The Capital Institute says

Plan B 2.0, the second in Brown's Plan B series, looks into green development and the ecological destruction across the globe caused by rapid industrialization and the "throwaway economy," consisting of oil and water shortages, pollution and deforestation. Brown proposes solutions involving sustainable agriculture, wildlife and resource conservation, renewable energy and recycling, among other things. Brown's solution also includes a \$161 billion yearly budget and environmental taxes to make the economy more eco-friendly. Reviewers have suggested that while Brown's propositions are practical and his statistics "intriguing," they are presented in a somewhat disorganized manner, and lack the "meticulous" cost-benefit analysis required for the subject. However, it is widely considered a great launchpad for discussion on an environmentally friendly economy.

Josh Sande says

Lester Brown is known by many in the environmental community to be a bit of an alarmist, meaning of course that his preferred method of motivating or reaching his audience is to present them with troubling facts in hopes that this will spur them into action. While some take offense to this general style of presenting an argument, I actually found the way he lays his argument out in Plan B 2.0, Rescuing a Planet Under Stress and a Civilization in Trouble sobering rather than alarming, and measured rather than irresponsible.

This is where physical geography gets the most interesting for me, when it is focused on how humans affect their environment. I found this book sobering and uplifting at the same time. It presents a universal call to action that is not overly politically divisive, makes clear sense of the problems we face and what cause them,

and is not overly pessimistic about our future. I would recommend it to anyone looking to learn more about global climate change and environmental activism.

J.F. says

Lester gave me a signed copy of this book when he spoke at the Council of Scientific Society Presidents in Washington DC. If you care about the planet, read it. It will scare the crap out of you.

Jason says

The author breaks down various human and environmental threats and explains how our economy is outgrowing the capacity of Earth. Once identifying the major issues, the second half of the book (Plan B) provides solutions to the issues he mentioned in the first part of the book. Issues include deforestation, erosion, fossil fuel and other resource consumption, population, agriculture and diseases, among other concerns. This book provides real suggestions for our real problems as a civilization.

Excellent!

Jeane says

I shouldn't say that I love this book because I hate it that there is even a reason for this book to be written. But well, we are here and we keep going on with destroying what actually gives us what we need to live so to read a book about it all in a way this book was written was very absorbing.

True our daily lives, how we create things and through our wrong and stubborn believe that sources on this planet will never finish we keep using them in an exagerating and stupif way.

Everything is explained very clear and in an interesting way, also what we all but also politician, owners of companies and again just every person can do if we would think about some easy but important decisions we daily make. What we could do to stop the over-using of our planet so that we do have a future, so that also next generations would still have a possibility to exist.

And if for once we would stop thinking as humans do and show some respect for he one that give us a place to live, we would get so much in return.

Peter says

Plan B refers to the authors belief that we need to desert the oil-based, disposable economy that has flourished in the U.S. for the past hundred years. The book is written in two parts. The first section highlights aspects of the unsustainable course that we are on: peak oil, water shortages, rising temperatures and sea levels, and deterioration of natural systems. It's pretty stark, and he does not soften it up-- for one reason or

the other, we've gotten ourselves here, so now it is time to confront it head on.

The second section presents Plan B, his way of dealing with the problems of the first section. A few points particularly stand out. First, several major problems, specifically water shortages and environmental degradation, are driven by overpopulation. While most of the developed world has slowly growing or even contracting populations, poorer countries (south asia and sub-saharan africa particularly) have rapidly growing populations. Not only that, but these countries (such as Pakistan, Nigeria, and Ethiopia) expect 2 or 3 fold increase in population by 2050. So population control is the first big thing. The other is moving past oil. He suggests several well-known alternatives (he seems particularly partial to wind power) to get away from polluters.

The book was written in 2005. Oil at that time was about \$50 a barrel, which was historically on the high side. He notes that oil production is likely to decline. With oil at about \$125 today, he seems downright prescient. One would think this would prompt our leaders to say "wow, I guess oil is going to run out, maybe we should push to develop other sources of energy". But alas, the solutions are a gas-tax holiday (thank you senators McCain and Clinton, this will surely wean us off our unquenchable thirst) and Bush's idea, to drill the Artic National Wildlife Refuge. You'd think that, at this point, with glaciers disappearing and Greenland tottering we'd see some better idea than a gas tax holiday. I mean come on, the information is all out there.

Anyhow, this book really made me think and consider what I might do. Considering I live in one of the worst offenders in terms of unsustainable cities (in Atlanta, transportation planning means no planning at all), I guess there is a lot to do.

So, please read this. And when you are done, pass it on to someone else.

Cary Neeper says

Our world view is changing, thanks in large part to Lester Brown's writing. Everyday I encounter new voices in the social media that understand Lester Brown and the solutions presented by him and the several other authors, each with his own slant on the same problem.

We are capable of pulling back. We are not lemmings, each one of millions running desperately into the sea to relieve the stress of overcrowding or desperate to find relief from thirst. Not yet. At least not all of us.

Still, many of us are hungry or desperate, and some of us need to get busy using less, being more efficient and awakening to the crisis already affecting too many humans and too much life on this beautiful Eden, Earth.

Lester Brown's Worldwatch Institute gave us the first warnings year after year with real data. And the 2001 book Eco-Economy gave us a reliable guide to the policies needed to secure the future.

Recent books echo Brown's 2003 Plan B. Some refine the detailed options, but all agree on the ever more desperate need for the world view that requires an ecologically honest cost/benefit analysis. We still tout economic growth as a panacea for all our economic ills when in fact it is costing us and the Earth far more than it is worth.

The solutions outlined by Brown should be blatantly obvious: Our resource base must be analyzed in

relationship to projected population growth. Our barriers to family planning need to be removed. Ecology and efficiency must trump short-term economic gain. Protecting our remaining world resources like water and forests is now urgent, as is the upgrading of our cities.

We can do this, as Plan B and Eco-Economy and other recent books make crystal clear. The solutions have been studied and refined since the 1970's. It's not magic, just political will and corporate greed that stand in our way. People in developed countries need to use less. We need to shift the tax and subsidy codes; get off fossil fuels, coal and plastic; increase efficiency in electrical grids and automobiles; and redo urban transport. (I have a vivid childhood memory of the rails being torn up in Oakland, California.)

The media can help, as can the wealthy and writers of fiction. Brown tells the tale of soap operas successfully illustrating how individuals can make a huge difference. Fiction can be a powerful paradigm changer.

We cannot buy our way out of overusing the planet, nor the lemming-like desperation of overcrowding that threatens human populations throughout the world. We're all in this together.
