

Eco-Philanthropist Investment

The deteriorating environment has shown us that our global powers are not fulfilling their responsibility in helping to prevent further destruction nor fixing the problems already made. Unfortunately, the countries with the most power, who should be taking the initiative to fix the problems, have chosen to ignore them, and many have escalated to this point where in a blink of an eye, they will be irreversible. It is good to know that there are movements occurring all over the world trying to stop many of the environmentally draining tactics that are being used in less powerful countries and countries experiencing leadership problems. I believe that starting initiatives such as the Green-Belt movement and the Half-Earth Project, will be greatly beneficial to the environment and are necessary for some of the countries that do not have the bare necessities to survive in a healthy and eco-friendly way. Although allocating land and resources to help species reclaim their population is important to our environment, I think that the state that we are in showcases that the environment needs a little more than preventing further destruction. The new technologies which are involving science in their movements seem to be the most promising in my mind, I think that creating technologies that will not only presently prevent a lot of the destruction being made, but the act of prevention will give the earth time to recuperate from the damage already made. As well as altering the climate, whose rising tendencies are worrisome for a multitude of possible problems such as wildfires, melting glaciers and rising sea levels. This climate warming and or change seems to be the largest problem in our deteriorating environment and this possibility of altering the environment seems to have the greatest potential in the long run.

As I previously indicated, our rapidly changing environment needs much more than simply the prevention of the same type of damage that it has been enduring for decades. As an

Eco-Philanthropist, the possibility of directly altering the climate by lessening the impact of the sun or removing carbon emissions from the atmosphere would help us from reaching a temperature change that would be drastic. I would allocate half of my funds into geoengineering; the idea of geoengineering offers a different perspective than the usual preventative measures and restoring initiatives that are taking place currently. Ideas such as using giant mirrors in deserts as well as in space, seeding clouds, and injecting sulfates into the stratosphere, are all potential ideas involving solar-radiation management that have been made in hopes of reducing the impact that the sun is causing on the earth (Specter). The sun's impact as well is worsening its effects on the environment and the control of radiation would be a great addition to the changing climate. The other route that geoengineering takes is the possibility of removing carbon emissions from the stratosphere which would normally result in trapping in the heat that ultimately contributes to our rising temperatures. Along with the trapping of this heat, these greenhouse gasses lower the air quality, increase the possibilities of extreme weather conditions, food shortages, and wildfires as well. This radical idea that people and scientists once thought to be unnecessary is now beginning to grow in its urgency as a potential solution. These controversial technologies are now being investigated more realistically by the scientific community. The growing atmospheric concentrations of CO₂ are no longer able to be deterred by time, this environmental problem that was once looked at as a faraway problem is becoming more and more serious by the minute (Fred). As I stated before, I think that stopping the emissions and cutting off the production of these harmful causes are no longer enough to stop environmental disasters from occurring. Therefore, I believe the majority of the funds should be allocated to geoengineering, a futuristic idea that is now a necessity for the future of humanity.

This anthropogenic climate change that we are causing to our environment shows us how much power we hold not only to do bad, but also to do good. We can shift this negative impact that we have been causing and turn it into a positive force. We have been able to alter our climate negatively and geoengineering may be the way to make this Anthropocene a positive climate change. I believe as though this growing acceptance of geoengineering by the scientific field and society due to the present urgency because of the proof in the weak state of the environment is beginning a paradigm shift. This fundamental change in views of altering the climate is showing us a shift like that of Temple Grandin, her prominent proponent in the beginning efforts for the humane treatment of livestock.

Similar to the idea of geoengineering the climate, using science in our favor seems to be the growing technique that will allow for us to stabilize our climate. As an Eco-philanthropist, I would provide half of the remaining funds to Daniel Nocera's idea. An idea which seems to be a part of those growing scientific techniques, the "Artificial Leaf" has the potential to provide a source of energy that can eliminate the use of fossil fuels which can be detrimental to our environment. This form of sustainable energy would be able to be used in places in the world that don't have the use of harmful energy sources that wealthy and powerful countries have. If these countries begin to use energy that is derived from fossil fuels that will cause additional destruction to the already suffering environment. His idea is to use the bottom-up approach, which gives poorer countries the availability of energy sources they had never been able to experience. This derives from the idea that these less fortunate countries are experiencing the results of climate change more than the well-off countries that are causing the destruction. He explains to us that when these less fortunate countries begin to use energy and it is not CO₂ neutral, then the environment will not be able to recuperate from it. Therefore, his bottom-up

approach regarding the distribution of his Artificial Leaf is a futuristic idea that will ultimately be globally beneficial. The artificial leaf itself is a device where a silicon coated sheet is placed in water and exposed to sunlight, the process of the bubbles being released is explained as “artificial photosynthesis” (Owen). This solar powered electrolysis of water, essentially photosynthesis can potentially provide the energy that natural photosynthesis provides which is where most of the energy we use comes from. This would be a turning point, a possibility to keep the world running on artificial energy would be revolutionary, as it would be the first time that a part of the world, if not all at one point, would be running on energy that is not derived negatively from the environment. I think allocating half of my remaining funds to this project shows how the world needs an extra push to save the climate and this artificial energy can protect the possible destruction that could occur with the continuation of the burning of fossil fuels. There is always the fear that solutions as such will cause global powers and politicians to believe that it is no longer necessary to continue trying to make industries environmentally friendly, but I believe that it is far too late to rely on those politicians to solve our Earth's problems. They have shown us that they are not going to make necessary drastic decisions in favor of the environment's health, therefore it is in the hands of these scientists and researchers to find solutions that can help the environment despite the lack of support from these powers.

With the remaining funds I think it is beneficial to distribute them equally among the remaining ideas. I do in fact believe that the Green Belt Movement is creating a great change to the landscape of these countries, as well as providing better overall health for their residents. The fact that I am allocating most of the funds to the two prior initiatives, is simply because I believe that the world has been harmed by humans to such a large extent, that it needs science to help find solutions for those problems. The Green Belt Movement as explained in the film taking root,

shows us Wangari Maathai's efforts to not only fight environmental degradation but also her fight in political resistance of their authoritarian government. Her efforts in encouraging the growth of healthy food crops in contrast to the cash crops that had been encouraged by their government, was a turning point for the Kenyan women and children. Previously malnourished, these people were able to create healthy lifestyles and women were able to grow more positive and independent mindsets where they could get involved in politics and ultimately give women a voice in their country. This movement began as a hope to teach women how to grow trees to help the deteriorating environment and soon grew to become a political fight that was necessary for Kenyan people (Merton). It is admirable to see what Maathai was able to accomplish under the Moi authoritarian government who tried to suppress her efforts in trying to educate the common people. She was seen as a threat because she was demonstrating the power of a civil society. Despite being under these conditions, her efforts led to environmental improvements along with political changes for women, who at first did not have any independence. I think that contributing to this movement will be beneficial to the landscape of poor countries as well as a raise in awareness of their troubles. Despite supporting it, I think the earth needs more drastic solutions than a movement like this, initiatives like the prior scientifically derived seem to me like the solution to our environment's health.

Nixon explains to us the occurrence of slow violence among these poor communities and goes in to tell us how Wangari was able to overcome those issues and continue to develop the Green Belt Movement. This environmental aftermath of deforestation, oil spills, wars, toxic drift, and climate change are all examples of the slow violence and environmentalism of the poor, and this exposes the additional problems that poor communities experience (Nixon). These additional problems are most times not the fault of the communities but the fault of those powerful nations

and leaders who are ruthless and do not provide the less fortunate with resources to grow and continue to harm them with the side effects of their actions. As conditions continue to depreciate in the lives of the poor, capitalism seems to ignore this violence and ignore the vulnerable position that they hold.

The remaining eighth of the funds I would allocate to Edward O. Wilson's *Half Earth* initiative, which hopes to commit half of the earth's surface to nature and its species, will be able to save most of all life on earth. The extinction of most species is the result of human activity, if this behavior continues, more than half of all species on earth will be eliminated by the end of this century. He believes that human survival cannot be successful without the living part of the environment. The stabilization of the environment is necessary for humankind; therefore, the environment is not complete without a living portion, the species that are becoming extinct cannot be brought back and if we continue this path, the results will be detrimental to humankind (Wilson). I think that this initiative would be tremendously beneficial, but the backfall is human error. Our current environmental and political climate has shown us that powerful nations and people are not contributing the necessary amount to finding solutions to our suffering climate. An idea like this half earth initiative is simply unrealistic in my opinion, it is explained that half of the land and sea will need to be protected but the historical decisions that have been made regarding environmental aspects show us that politics are not in our favor. The hopes of bringing the environment back to health are not being reciprocated by powerful nations, these nations would ultimately hold the power to the land and sea necessary to complete this project. I think that allocating this small sum of money will help, and the small changes they make will help the environment, but I ultimately do not believe that this project will be the saving initiative that our environment needs.

The scientific innovations being used to help our environment, exposes the reality of our situation, there is a need for a drastic change and solution in our environment. Initiatives like geoengineering our climate and giving the earth a quicker turnaround than many other movements seem to have the most potential. The long-term goal of altering our environment will hopefully provide the environment with a stability that is necessary for humankind. The great initiatives like the Green Belt Movement and the Half Earth project, are greatly beneficial to our landscape and are providing the environment with relief but as I have previously stated, in my opinion are not sufficient in the fight for stabilizing our already deteriorated environment. The idea of the Artificial Leaf is a great example of the new scientific innovations arising and is a great possible energy source, while using the bottom-up approach I hope it will be able to prevent the possible destruction from those communities that have not begun to use energy like those capitalistic nations. The allocation of the funds that I have explained are derived from the realistic nature of the state that our environment is in, the need for drastic change is shown.

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