



LEAVES, A Newsletter of the INTERNATIONAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM
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From the Editor, Request for information for upcoming newsletters

This newsletter is an opportunity for IEF members to share their experiences, activities, and initiatives that are taking place at the community level on environment, climate change, and sustainability. All members are welcome to contribute information about related activities, upcoming conferences, news from like-minded organizations, recommended websites, book reviews, etc. Please send information to newsletter@ief.org

Please share the Leaves newsletter and IEF membership information with family, friends, and associates and encourage interested persons to consider becoming a member of the IEF.

IEF 30th Annual Conference

This year's annual conference is now planned for 14 – 18 October. It will be entirely virtual and accessible to everyone in the world. Events will take place at 9am and 9pm GMT to accommodate people in all time zones. The overall topic will be *From Ethical Crisis to Collective Action*. Mark your calendar!

Members Corner

We welcome our new IEF members and associates!

Members

Deborah Rana (USA)
Dr. Kakha Nadiradze (Georgia)
Nafeel Mohamed (Sri Lanka)

Associates

Hans Harmsen (Greenland)
Apeksha (India)
Neha Singh (India)
Devesh Kumar (India)

Browning Mill Pond RI, 2026-3-21, Image Credit: IEF



Quote of the Month

O SON OF MAN!

Wert thou to speed through the immensity of space and traverse the expanse of heaven, yet thou wouldst find no rest save in submission to Our command and humbleness before Our Face.

From the Hidden Words by Baha'u'llah



NASA, *Earthset*, April 6, 2026, as seen by the crew of NASA's Artemis II spacecraft

Publications and Re-publications

Several articles by Baha'i authors writing about the environment were recently published:

IEF member Ian Hamilton wrote one of the chapters for the book *A Language for our Common Future: A Vocabulary for Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyles*. The chapter topic was **Values and Consumption**. See the next article below.

IF20 (the G20 Interfaith Forum) has just re-published four IEF articles concerning the climate change COP30 in Belém, Brazil.

- [Confrontation in Belém](#) by Arthur Dahl
- [Reflections from Belém](#) by Monica Maghami
- Regenerative Agriculture at COP30 by Hugh Locke [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#)
- [Our Full Selves: The Value of Permission](#) by Daniel Perell

A Language for our Common Future: A Vocabulary for Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyles

An editorial team from the [Sustainable Consumption Research and Action Initiative \(SCORAI\)](#) and the [Hot or Cool Institute](#) in Berlin recently finalized this book project for the Routledge-SCORAI book series "[Studies in Sustainable Consumption](#)". The book was released as an Open Access publication in [September 2025](#).

In response to urgent socio-ecological crises, sustainability transformation requires a compelling language for a shared understanding of (un)sustainable consumption and lifestyles. Despite its growing use in research and policy circles, the meaning of the term sustainable consumption remains quite undefined. Some associate it with daily household decisions such as minimal shopping, leisure flying and taking cruises, and green and ethical shopping. For social activists, sustainable consumption may suggest changing personal and community value systems, norms, social practices, personal priorities, diet or adopting a minimalist way of life. From a policy perspective, sustainable consumption may signify a personal carbon budget, shorter workweek, limits on advertising, more efficient buildings and mobility infrastructure; while the political economy perspective points toward a diminished role of the financial sector, degrowth, a steady state economy, taxation reform and reining in corporate power.

A Language for our Common Future: A Vocabulary for Sustainable Consumption and Lifestyles is a major publication with contributions from over 130 of the world's leading researchers on sustainable consumption. It contains around 90 accessible entries across five main topical clusters/ thematic fields:

- 1) Daily Household Decisions and Lifestyles;**
- 2) Concepts, Frameworks and Applied Theories;**
- 3) Political Economy of Consumption;;**
- 4) Social Activism and Value Shifts; and**
- 5) Governance, Policy and Choice Architecture.**

Entries include varied topics such as Circular Economy & Society, Work-Life Balance, Social Tipping Points, Hedonic Treadmill, Buen Vivir, 1.5-degree lifestyle, Quiet Sustainability, Universal Basic Services, Income vs. Happiness, Climate Justice and much more.

IEF member Ian Hamilton wrote one of the chapters for this book on the topic of **Values and Consumption**. It is chapter 53. All the chapters are short, very readable and freely accessible. Check them out [here](#).

The publication has four key aims:

- To develop a shared vocabulary for the community working on sustainable lifestyles and consumption.
- To highlight innovative concepts and introduce "a vocabulary for the future" for researchers and innovators.
- To enrich a systems perspective on sustainable consumption and lifestyles.
- To highlight the topics that should be covered in teaching sustainability and sustainable consumption.

Sources:

<https://scorai.net/vocabulary-book-project-on-sustainable-consumption/>

<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/oa-edit/10.4324/9781003584056/vocabulary-sustainable-consumption-lifestyles-lewis-akenji-halina-szejnwald-brown-philip-vergragt-laura-maria-wallnöfer-thomas-smith>

Conscious Capitalism and the Rise of Women in Business Leadership

By IEF member Jorge Conte

Jorge Conte posted this blog on the IEF website on 8 November, 2025. We are including it here to make it available to a wider readership.

In the twenty-first century, the world has witnessed a progressive transformation in the way leadership is conceived. The traditional business model, guided exclusively by profit maximization, has evolved towards a more holistic and humane vision of economic development: "conscious capitalism". This concept, promoted by John Mackey and Raj Sisodia, authors of the book "Conscious Capitalism", states that companies can be profitable and, at the same time, generate social and environmental well-being.

The rise of women to business leadership roles has been a direct manifestation of this model. In contrast to rigid corporate systems of the past, conscious capitalism opens up spaces where empathy, collaboration, and diversity are not just added values, but central elements for the growth of an organization.

The philosophy of conscious capitalism is based on four essential principles:

- 1. Higher purpose:** Companies must exist with a mission that transcends the mere generation of wealth, positively impacting society.
- 2. Integration of stakeholders:** Shareholders, employees, customers and communities must benefit equitably from the operation of a company.
- 3. Conscious leadership:** Leaders must act responsibly, ethically and with a long-term vision, promoting the well-being of their teams.
- 4. Conscious culture:** An organizational environment based on trust, diversity and equity is fostered, where people's well-being is a driver for innovation.

These principles have directly influenced the consolidation of a more inclusive and diverse leadership, where women have played a key role in the transformation of companies towards more sustainable and ethical management models.

Conscious capitalism has been a catalyst for female empowerment within the business world. Traditionally, corporate structures have been dominated by male leadership, but the 21st century has marked a significant change. In countries that have promoted this economic model, a greater integration of women in strategic and management positions has been observed, generating a positive effect on the organizational culture.

Since female leadership is often characterized by a greater focus on social and environmental well-being, business leaders have promoted sustainable and ethical practices within their companies. Its management based on collaboration and diversity has strengthened innovation thanks to a greater inclusion of diverse perspectives. Finally, due to

their commitment to equality, they tend to adopt more equitable work policies, reducing the wage gap and promoting the development of talent without distinction of gender.

Examples of this shift include global companies such as Patagonia, whose CEO, Rose Marcario, led sustainability initiatives aligned with conscious capitalism. In Latin America, women executives have played fundamental roles in the growth of companies with a social focus, demonstrating that this model is not only profitable, but indispensable for the future of the company.

The adoption of conscious capitalism has redefined the way businesses will operate in the 21st century. Their integration into corporate strategies has made it possible to promote sustainable development, they have integrated environmental objectives into their business planning, reducing negative impacts on the planet. Foster more ethical business models by promoting more transparent and fair supply chains, thus preventing labor exploitation and strengthening local communities. The inclusion of women in leadership positions has improved decision-making and raised the standards of corporate social responsibility. Finally, today's customers prefer brands aligned with conscious values, which has driven a transition towards sustainable consumption models.

Conscious capitalism is not simply a business trend; it is a revolution in the way we understand economic success. In this context, the rise of women to leadership roles has been a clear expression of the benefits of this model, demonstrating that inclusion, ethics and sustainability are fundamental pillars for the growth of any company that wants to survive in the 21st century.

Addressing the Debt-Climate Nexus

G20 Interfaith Forum Environment Working Group Policy Brief 20 January 2026

The G20 Interfaith Forum published a policy brief prepared for the 2025 G20 meeting in Johannesburg in 2025 on the debt-climate nexus. The policy brief was prepared by the IF20 Environment Working Group, which is chaired by IEF President Arthur Dahl and includes IEF member Monica Maghami.

Introduction

Since COP27 the worldwide debt problem, which is especially problematic for low-resource countries, has been increasingly discussed in relation to the climate crisis at UN climate conferences.

Climate change is an existential problem. Climate disasters fall disproportionately on poor, indebted countries, which have meagre resources to adapt and build resilience to the rapidly warming climate catastrophe.

Poor countries are spending more on servicing debt payments than they are on life-saving public services, including responding to the climate emergency (UNCTAD 2025). They receive meagre assistance from high-income countries whose emissions have caused global warming, and are spending twice more in debt payments than what they receive in financial assistance to fight the climate crisis (IIED 2024). For many of them, debt servicing is equivalent to half of combined food import bills and public health spending. This results in

obligations to repay large sovereign debt rather than spending on government programmes for people's health and education, and a healthy environment.

At the same time, when a climatic disaster hits, poor countries are pushed to more borrowing to assist affected communities and to fund reconstruction, trapping them in a vicious cycle of indebtedness.

Addressing the debt-climate nexus is a moral imperative that high-income countries must address and find ways to alleviate so the low-resource countries that are most harmed by climate change have the resources to care for their people and the environment.

In this policy brief, we examine the debt-climate nexus in detail, and then present an alternative integrated framework.

The Debt-Climate Crisis Nexus

The debt and climate crises are challenging.

On the one hand, the impacts of global warming are aggravating debt problems in poor, climate vulnerable countries (ERDNC 2025, Woolfenden and Khushal 2022):

- Following climate disasters, many of them have little or no option other than to take on more loans to support their people and to rebuild infrastructure. This has impacts into the future. Pre-existing debt, together with the rising cost of reconstruction, worsens the chances of recovery and makes it more difficult to repay debts.
- Climate change degrades productive capacity and, in turn, the capacity to service debt.
- The bulk of climate finance in the past decade has been provided through debt-creating instruments. Continued borrowing to meet climate finance obligations reduces debt sustainability and fuels the debt crisis.
- Climate vulnerabilities increase the costs of borrowing. A study (V20 2022) shows how climate risks increased the cost of debt for the countries in the Vulnerable Twenty (V20) group, adding US\$ 40 billion of additional interest payments over the past 10 years and this number is set to increase to US\$ 168 billion in the next decade.

On the other hand, debt has an impact on climate (ERDNC 2025, Woolfenden and Khushal 2022):

- High debt levels translate into more revenues spent on servicing debt, leaving poor, climate-exposed countries with scant resources to invest in climate mitigation and adaptation and to respond to climate emergencies, and making them even more vulnerable to disasters.
- Poor countries are forced to exploit their natural resources such as oil, gas, and minerals to increase export revenues in order to repay debts. Debt burdens are being used to justify raw material extraction for the green transition. This not only worsens the climate crisis but also keeps these countries locked in an unsustainable development model that hampers their ability to address climate change.

The debt crisis and the climate crisis reinforce each other, particularly in poor, climate-vulnerable countries, where limited resources are stretched thin by both high debt repayments and the need to address the growing impacts of climate change. Addressing one crisis requires action on the other.

Continue reading this article here: https://iefworld.org/IF20debt_climate

MEGA Newsletter

Mobilising an EarthGovernance Alliance 17 March 2026

MEGA has issued its latest newsletter on 17 March with much that would be of interest to members of IEF. It opens with a reflection on Planetary health and global governance in preparation for the One Health Summit taking place in Lyon (France) on 5-7 April 2026. This is followed by updates on a number of earth governance initiatives and campaigns, including 1 for 8 Billion; the International Court of Justice case on climate change; environmental protection and an International Anti-Corruption Court; national measures to prohibit ecocide; and how the current session of the International Seabed Authority might address the critical issue of Deep-Sea-Mining. It closes with information on new resources relating to earth governance, including the Global Catastrophic Risks 2026 Report, a Pocket Guide for Environment and Sustainable Development Governance, and the Forest Government Index.

The International Environment Forum is a member of the MEGA Steering Committee, as is the Bahá'í International Community. The Climate Governance Commission, one of the two co-hosts of MEGA, is organised by IEF member Maja Groff, so our ties are very close.

The MEGA Newsletter can be viewed [here](#).

You can subscribe to the newsletter at <https://earthgovernance.org/newsletter/>.

Environmental Governance Guide

Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future 20 March 2026

Stakeholder Forum for a Sustainable Future, in collaboration with UNEP, has just published two useful tools on environmental governance and the review of the Sustainable Development Goals.

A Pocket Guide to Environment and Sustainable Development Governance – Third Edition

The adoption on 25 September 2015 of the 2030 Agenda and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) marked an increased focus on governance issues. Policy objectives and targets (“What”) are key, but they cannot be implemented without adequate and tailored governance frameworks (“How?”). This Pocket guide is not about setting policy targets, but about how to achieve them.

This Guide starts with sustainable development as a foundation, but then concentrates on environmental governance as one of the three dimensions of sustainability governance. It provides background information on global environmental and sustainable development governance to allow both governmental and nongovernmental stakeholders to familiarise themselves with key issues more comprehensively.

A Primer for Stakeholders to Prepare for the 2027 Review of the SDGs

This primer is intended to galvanise the global stakeholder community thinking about how they might approach, as an organisation or a coalition of stakeholder groups, the 2027

review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (the SDGs). It proposes activities stakeholders might undertake between UNEA 7 and the 2027 review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and in particular the Sustainable Development Goals. It will also enable greater stakeholder input to the UN80 process.

Sources:

<https://stakeholderforum.org/publications/a-pocket-guide-to-sustainable-development-governance/>

<https://stakeholderforum.org/a-primer-for-stakeholders-engaging-in-the-2027-review-of-the-2030-agenda-and-sustainable-development-goals-focusing-on-the-environmental-sdgs/>

