



## **Dangers Facing Life on Earth: A Civilisational Risk Report and the Proposal for an *Index of Survivability and Connection (ISC)***

An evidence-based mapping of the sudden and the slow, the everyday and the structural, the outer and the inner dangers confronting human civilisation in 2025–2026 — and a reflective framework, rooted in decolonial, eco-social and contemplative thought, for what it will take to survive and stay in connection.

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(146 citations to primary institutional, scientific and journalistic sources, each linked in the text and listed in the Sources appendix.)

## BEFORE THE BRIEFING

### A Note on the Attached Video

This report was prompted by a short video attached to the original request — titled “*Yellowstone: The Supervolcano That Could Destroy America*”, posted to YouTube Shorts by the channel “Unknown Universe” on 22 July 2026. In the spirit of ‘avoid any tendency to hallucinate,’ it must be said plainly: the video itself could not be played during this research (YouTube returned “Video unavailable”), and its own framing — speculative, “what if” science content on a general-interest channel — means it should be read as an illustrative prompt, not as reportage of an actual eruption or imminent event. No credible volcanological body has forecast an imminent Yellowstone eruption; this report does not repeat any of the video’s specific claims.

What the video is useful for is the question underneath it: humanity lives, quite literally, atop forces — geological, ecological, social, economic, technological — that can end a great deal of life with little or no warning, while other forces erode the same life just as surely, one imperceptible year at a time. This report takes that question seriously and answers it with verified evidence rather than dramatisation: what are the actual, documented dangers — sudden and slow, outer and inner, every day and structural — that civilisation is choosing, through action or inaction, to live with right now?

## METHODOLOGY

### How This Report Reads Danger

Modern risk communication tends to isolate dangers into silos — a war story here, a climate report there, a mental-health statistic somewhere else — which makes each easier to manage editorially but harder to see as part of one interconnected condition. This report instead reads every danger along two axes at once, following Basarab Nicolescu’s call for transdisciplinary vision and David Bohm’s insistence on wholeness and the implicate order beneath apparently separate fragments.

### The temporal axis — sudden and slow

Some dangers strike with little or no warning: an earthquake, a nuclear exchange, a flash flood, a bridge collapse, a mass-casualty terrorist attack. Others accumulate through ordinary, repeated, often invisible human activity — a warming atmosphere, a depleting aquifer, an eroding institution, a shrinking attention span — until a threshold is crossed that can no longer be undone. Ivan Illich’s critique of industrial “counterproductivity” and Erich Fromm’s diagnosis of a “necrophilous”, life-denying social character both describe this second category: harm caused not by a single villain or event but by the normal, unexamined operation of a system.

### **The scale axis — every day and structural**

Some dangers are lived at the scale of a single body, household, or relationship — domestic violence, loneliness, a child's exposure to corporal punishment. Others operate at the scale of entire systems — planetary boundaries, global financial architecture, the algorithmic ranking systems that shape what billions of people believe. Frantz Fanon and Aimé Césaire's analysis of colonial violence, and Aníbal Quijano and Ramón Grosfoguel's account of the "coloniality of power", insist that the two scales are never really separate: structural violence is what makes everyday violence feel normal, and everyday harm is where structural violence is actually felt in a body.

Sections A–F below move through six domains — physical/sudden, ecological/slow, domestic/social, political-structural, epistemic/algorithmic, and consumerist/extractive — each cross-referenced against both axes. A single overview of twelve headline indicators appears in Figure 1; a full conceptual map of where each danger sits on the two axes appears in Figure 2, later in the report.

## Twelve Verified Signals of Civilizational Risk, 2024–2026

Each figure is drawn from a primary institutional or scientific source verified during research.

### SUDDEN & PHYSICAL

**85 sec**

Doomsday Clock to  
midnight (Jan 2026) —  
closest ever recorded

*Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists*

**12,241**

Nuclear warheads  
held worldwide  
(Jan 2025)

*SIPRI Yearbook 2025*

**65**

Active state-based armed  
conflicts in 2025 — most  
since WWII

*UCDP / Uppsala University*

### SLOW & ECOLOGICAL

**7 of 9**

Planetary boundaries  
transgressed  
(2025 assessment)

*Stockholm Resilience Centre*

**73%**

Average decline in monitored  
wildlife populations  
since 1970

*WWF Living Planet Report 2024*

**~4 yrs**

Remaining carbon budget  
for a 50% chance of  
holding to 1.5°C

*Global Carbon Project 2025*

### SOCIAL & POLITICAL

**91 vs 88**

Countries that are autocracies  
vs. democracies — first time  
in 20+ years

*V-Dem Democracy Report 2025*

**137/day**

Women and girls killed by  
partners or family members  
worldwide

*UN Women / UNODC, 2024 data*

**\$18.3T**

Global billionaire wealth in  
2025 — up 81% since 2020

*Oxfam International*

### EPISTEMIC & ECONOMIC

**22%**

Share of people worldwide  
who have ever received  
media/news literacy training

*Reuters Institute Digital  
News Report 2025*

**362**

Documented AI-related harm  
incidents in 2025, up from  
233 in 2024

*Stanford HAI AI Index 2026*

**Jul 24**

2025 Earth Overshoot Day —  
earliest ever; humanity uses  
1.8 Earths/year

*Global Footprint Network*

Figure 1. Twelve verified signals of civilizational risk, one drawn from each of four risk clusters. Full source list in the Sources appendix; each figure is individually cited in the sections that follow.

## SECTION A · SUDDEN, UNANNOUNCED

### Physical Dangers That Strike Without Warning

These are the dangers that need no build-up: an earthquake, a flood, a bomb, a virus jumping species, a drone strike. They kill in hours or days rather than decades, and 2024–2026 data show them intensifying on almost every front simultaneously.

#### Natural disasters and extreme weather

Natural catastrophes caused an estimated €320 billion in global losses in 2024 — the third-costliest year for insurers since 1980 — and roughly 11,000 deaths, according to [Munich Re](#). When cascading and ecosystem costs are included, the UN Office for Disaster Risk Reduction estimates the real annual global disaster bill now [exceeds \\$2.3 trillion](#) — nearly ten times the officially reported direct-loss figure. Single events illustrate the speed of destruction: the March 2025 magnitude-7.7 Myanmar earthquake killed at least 3,600–5,456 people ([Wikipedia/USGS](#)); the October 2024 Valencia, Spain flash floods killed 232 people within hours ([El País](#)); and the January 2025 Los Angeles firestorms caused an estimated \$250–275 billion in losses ([LA Times](#)).

#### Nuclear weapons risk

As of January 2025, an estimated 12,241 nuclear warheads existed worldwide, with about 2,100 kept on high operational alert ([SIPRI Yearbook 2025](#)), and SIPRI concludes “a dangerous new nuclear arms race is emerging.” On 27 January 2026, the Bulletin of the Atomic Scientists moved the Doomsday Clock to 85 seconds to midnight — the closest to catastrophe in its 79-year history — citing the expiration of the New START Treaty with no replacement negotiated ([University of Chicago News](#)).

#### Pandemics and sudden disease outbreaks

WHO declared the mpox upsurge a Public Health Emergency of International Concern in August 2024; by October 2024 more than 20,000 cases had been confirmed across 80 countries ([WHO](#)). H5N1 avian influenza continues to test global surveillance: since 1997, 25 countries have reported over 1,000 sporadic human infections with an approximate 48% case-fatality rate ([CDC](#)), and a new Marburg virus outbreak was confirmed in Ethiopia in November 2025 ([WHO Disease Outbreak News](#)).

#### Sudden armed conflict and mass violence

2025 recorded the highest number of state-based armed conflicts since World War II — 65 ongoing conflicts including 8 direct interstate conflicts, the most since tracking began in 1946 — with global conflict fatalities reaching approximately 244,600, the highest since the 1994 Rwandan genocide ([Uppsala Conflict Data](#)).

[Program, via NPR](#)). ACLED recorded more than 185,000 violent events worldwide in 2025, including over 56,000 incidents targeting civilians directly ([ACLED](#)).

### **Industrial, infrastructural and AI-system accidents**

Ageing or neglected infrastructure keeps converting ordinary weather into mass-casualty industrial failure: the 2023 Libya Derna dam collapses killed an estimated 4,540–5,900+ people during a single storm ([Human Rights Watch](#)). A newer, faster-growing category is technology-mediated sudden harm: documented AI-related incidents in the AI Incident Database rose from 233 in 2024 to 362 in 2025 ([Stanford HAI AI Index 2026](#)), including a case in Uttar Pradesh, India, in which an AI navigation app directed a car over a damaged bridge, killing three people ([AI Incident Database](#)).

### **Sudden climate-linked disasters**

Distinct from gradual warming, acute climate-linked events are already killing at scale: WHO estimates 489,000 heat-related deaths occur globally each year (2000–2019 average), with heat stress now the leading cause of climate-related death in Europe ([UN News, citing WHO](#)). The October 2023 South Lhonak glacial lake outburst flood in Sikkim, India generated a 20-metre “tsunami-like” wave that destroyed a 1,200 MW hydropower dam and killed 55 people, with peer-reviewed research confirming climate-driven glacial melt as a key driver ([Science journal](#)).

## **SECTION B · SLOW, CUMULATIVE**

### **Ecological Collapse Building Beneath Everyday Awareness**

Unlike the dangers above, these accumulate silently through routine activity — burning fuel, clearing land, pumping groundwater, discarding plastic — compounding year after year until systems cross thresholds that are difficult or impossible to reverse.

### **Planetary boundaries**

The Stockholm Resilience Centre’s framework defines nine processes that regulate Earth-system stability. As of the September 2025 Planetary Health Check, seven of the nine have been transgressed — up from six in 2023 — including, for the first time, ocean acidification ([Stockholm Resilience Centre](#)). Only stratospheric ozone and atmospheric aerosol loading remain within safe limits. A 2025 *Nature* modelling study projects conditions will worsen across almost all boundaries through 2050 under business as usual ([van Vuuren et al., Nature 2025](#)).

## Climate change

2025 was the third-warmest year on record, and 2023–2025 is the first three-year period to average above the Paris Agreement’s 1.5°C guardrail ([Copernicus C3S](#)). Atmospheric CO<sub>2</sub> reached 431.44 ppm in June 2026, an unbroken multi-decade rise ([NOAA Global Monitoring Laboratory](#)), and the remaining global carbon budget for a 50% chance of holding to 1.5°C is “virtually exhausted” — about four years of emissions at current rates ([Global Carbon Project 2025, via Carbon Brief](#)).

## Biodiversity loss

Monitored wildlife populations have declined by a catastrophic 73% on average since 1970, with freshwater populations down 85% ([WWF Living Planet Report 2024](#)). IPBES’s Global Assessment finds roughly 1 million species already face extinction, at a rate tens to hundreds of times higher than the average of the past 10 million years ([IPBES](#)).

## Ocean health

Ocean acidification has surpassed its planetary boundary for the first time, with surface seawater pH falling from 8.11 (1985) to 8.04 (2024) — roughly a 40% increase in acidity since pre-industrial times ([Copernicus Marine Service](#)). The fourth global coral bleaching event (2023–2025) affected 84% of the world’s reefs, and the 2025 Global Tipping Points Report identifies widespread coral die-off as the first climate tipping point already crossed ([PIK Potsdam](#)), with the Amazon rainforest, ice sheets, and major ocean circulations at risk near 1.5°C of warming.

## Freshwater, soil, and forests

Renewable freshwater availability per person has fallen 7% over the past decade ([FAO AQUASTAT 2025, via UN News](#)), while 77.6% of Earth’s land became measurably drier over the three decades to 2020, with drylands now covering 40.6% of global land ([UNCCD](#)). Soil erosion carries away 25–40 billion tonnes of topsoil annually, with 33% of the world’s soils moderately to highly degraded ([FAO, Status of the World’s Soil Resources](#)). The world lost 23 million hectares of natural forest in 2025 alone ([Global Forest Watch](#)).

*None of these is a single event with a villain and a headline. They are the accumulated weight of billions of small, everyday decisions — what to burn, buy, clear, and discard — which is precisely what makes them so difficult to see, resist, or grieve in real time.*



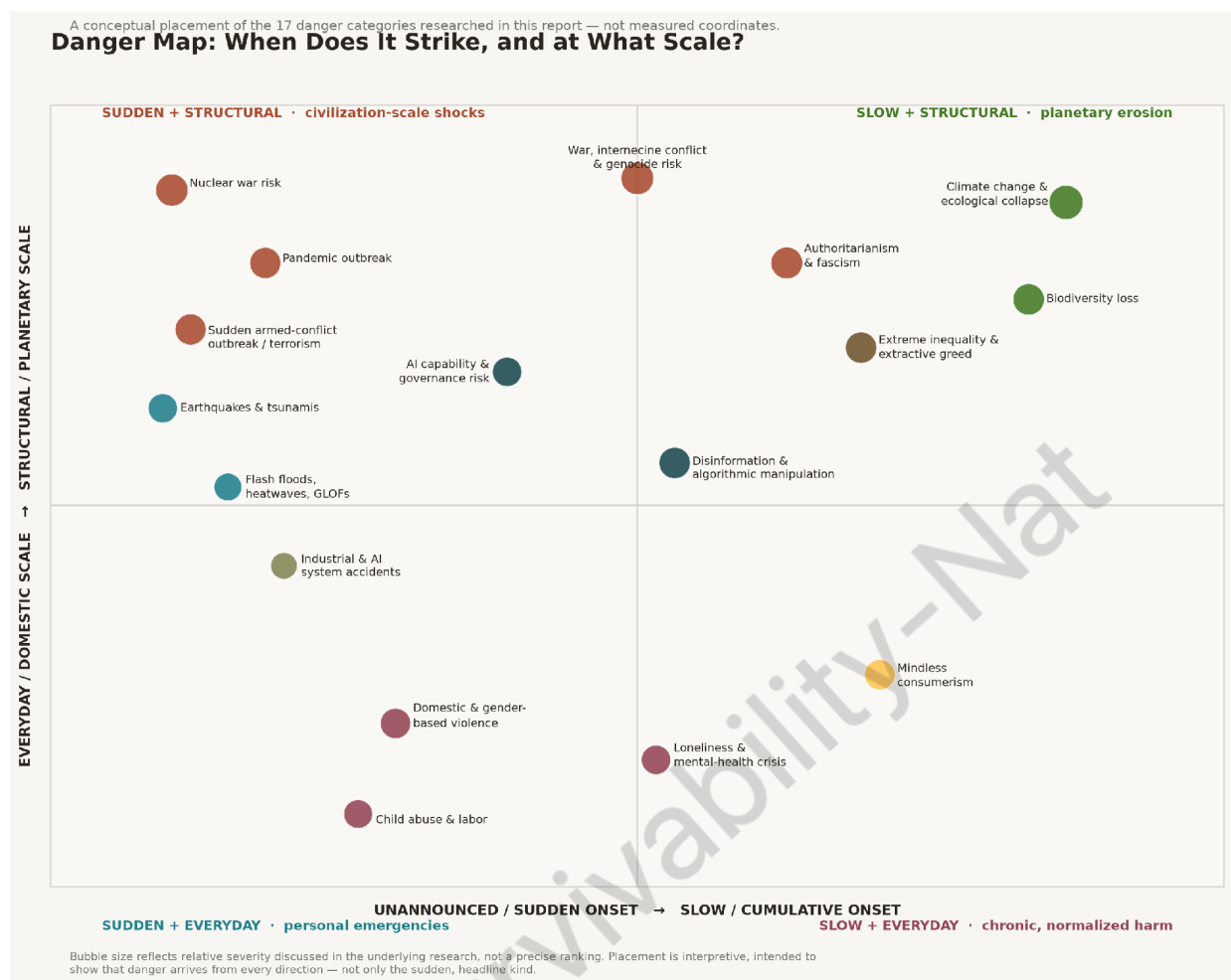


Figure 2. A conceptual placement — not a measured ranking — of the seventeen danger categories researched in this report, along the two axes described in the Methodology section: how suddenly each danger arrives, and at what scale it is usually felt. Bubble size reflects the relative severity discussed in the underlying research, not a precise index.

## SECTION C · EVERYDAY, INTIMATE

### Domestic and Social Dangers Inside the Home and the Self

Some of the gravest violence civilisation tolerates never makes the news, because it happens inside homes, families, and minds — spaces that most legal and media systems still treat as private rather than structural.

#### Domestic and gender-based violence

An estimated 31.6% — nearly one in three — of women worldwide have been subjected to physical and/or sexual intimate partner or non-partner violence in their lifetime, affecting roughly 840 million women and girls; the average annual decline in this prevalence over 20 years has been just 0.2% — essentially no progress



([WHO](#)). Globally, an average of 137 women and girls are killed every day by a partner or family member — about one every ten minutes ([UN Women / UNODC](#)).

### **Child abuse, neglect, and labour**

An estimated 1 billion children — one in two aged 2–17 — experience some form of violence each year ([UNICEF](#)), and 1.6 billion children regularly endure violent punishment by caregivers at home ([UNICEF Data](#)). Nearly 138 million children aged 5–17 were engaged in child labour in 2024, including 54 million in hazardous work — a meaningful decline since 2020, but still short of the SDG target to eliminate child labour by 2025 ([ILO–UNICEF 2024 Global Estimates](#)).

### **Loneliness and the mental-health crisis**

The WHO Commission on Social Connection’s 2025 flagship report finds that one in six people worldwide experience loneliness, contributing to an estimated 871,000 deaths per year — around 100 every hour — through elevated cardiovascular, metabolic and mental-health risk ([WHO Commission on Social Connection](#)). Nearly 1.1 billion people were living with a mental disorder in 2021, and more than 720,000 people die by suicide globally every year — the third-leading cause of death among 15–29-year-olds ([WHO](#)). The U.S. Surgeon General’s 2023 Advisory found that lacking social connection raises the risk of premature death comparably to smoking up to fifteen cigarettes a day ([U.S. HHS, Surgeon General’s Advisory](#)).

*These are not “private” matters in any meaningful sense — they are the domestic register in which structural violence, economic precarity, and a wider culture of disconnection are lived out on individual bodies and in individual households, day after day.*

## **SECTION D · STRUCTURAL, INSTITUTIONAL**

### **Greed, Authoritarianism, Internecine War, and Genocide**

This section requires the most care, because the words “fascism” and “genocide” carry precise legal and historical weight. Following Edward Said’s and Frantz Fanon’s insistence on naming power honestly — without either euphemism or exaggeration — every claim below is attributed to its exact evidentiary source: a court judgement, a UN body, an academic index, or a monitoring organisation.

### **The global retreat of democracy**

The V-Dem Institute’s 2025 Democracy Report finds that 2024 marked the first time in over two decades that autocracies (91 countries) outnumbered democracies (88 countries) worldwide, with 72% of the world’s population — 5.7 billion people — now living under autocratic rule ([V-Dem Institute](#)). Freedom House’s *Freedom in the World 2025* documents the nineteenth consecutive year in which more countries declined in political rights and civil liberties than improved ([Freedom House](#)). In Germany’s February 2025 federal

election, the far-right Alternative für Deutschland (AfD) won 20.8% of the vote — its best result and the strongest performance by a German far-right party since the Second World War ([Bundeswahlleiterin \(Federal Returning Officer\)](#)).

### Internecine warfare

The Uppsala Conflict Data Program recorded 61 active state-based armed conflicts in 2024 — the most since 1946 — and approximately 160,000 deaths from organised violence that year, with 2025 data (cited in Section A) showing the trend still worsening ([Uppsala University / UCDP](#)).

### Genocide and mass atrocity — precisely attributed

The word genocide carries a specific legal meaning, and this report distinguishes carefully between four different levels of determination. **Judicial conviction:** in October 2025, the International Criminal Court delivered its first-ever genocide-related conviction for the Darfur campaign of the 2000s — widely regarded by scholars as the first genocide of the twenty-first century, with United Nations commissions estimating roughly 300,000 deaths ([NPR](#)). **Pending judicial proceeding:** South Africa’s genocide case against Israel over the war in Gaza remains before the International Court of Justice; the Court has issued provisional measures orders but has not yet reached a final ruling on the merits ([United Nations / ICJ](#)). **UN fact-finding recommendation (non-judicial):** the UN Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on Myanmar concluded there was sufficient information to warrant investigation and prosecution for genocide against the Rohingya, and referred the matter onward — this is an expert recommendation, not a court verdict ([OHCHR](#)). **NGO monitoring alert (not judicial):** Genocide Watch’s current risk list flags Sudan, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Myanmar, Rojava (northeast Syria), and southern Lebanon for elevated genocide risk — an advocacy assessment, not a legal finding ([Genocide Watch](#)). Collapsing these four categories into one word would do a disservice to victims and to the historical record alike; each deserves to be named at the evidentiary level it has actually reached.

### Concentrated wealth and human greed

Global billionaire wealth reached \$18.3 trillion in 2025, up 81% since 2020 alone — growing roughly three times faster than in any prior year on record ([Oxfam](#)). The World Inequality Report finds the wealthiest 10% of the global population own 76% of all household wealth, while the poorest half own just 2% ([World Inequality Lab, World Inequality Report 2022](#)). Erich Fromm’s distinction between a “having” and a “being” mode of existence, and Pope Francis’s repeated warnings against an “idolatry of money,” both name this concentration not as an unfortunate byproduct of growth but as a structural danger in its own right — one that erodes democratic accountability and public trust even where it never becomes visible violence.

## SECTION E · MEDIATED, INVISIBLE

### Epistemic and Algorithmic Dangers to Shared Reality

A newer category of danger operates not on bodies or ecosystems directly but on what people are able to know, trust, and decide together — the shared “commons of meaning” that Ivan Illich and Paulo Freire both saw as a precondition for any genuine liberation or conscientisation.

### Misinformation as the top-ranked global risk

The World Economic Forum’s Global Risks Report ranked misinformation and disinformation as the single most severe global risk over a two-year horizon in its 2025 report, and it remains among the top risks in the 2026 outlook ([World Economic Forum 2025](#), [World Economic Forum 2026](#)). Some 70% of people globally believe political and business leaders deliberately try to mislead them ([2025 Edelman Trust Barometer](#)), while only 22% of people worldwide report ever having received any news-literacy training ([Reuters Institute Digital News Report 2025](#)). MIT research finds false news is 70% more likely to be retweeted than true stories and reaches its first 1,500 people roughly 20 times faster ([MIT News](#)).

### Algorithmic manipulation of belief

A rigorous field experiment published in *Science* in 2025 found that changing a social platform’s recommendation algorithm shifted users’ political polarisation by an amount equivalent to roughly three years of natural drift — and 74% of affected users had no idea their feed had been altered ([Piccardi et al., Science 2025](#)). This is precisely the “invisible hand on the steering wheel” that Shoshana Zuboff’s concept of surveillance capitalism describes: a business model built on the prediction and quiet modification of human behaviour at scale ([Zuboff, Journal of Information Technology 2015](#)). Pew Research finds 73% of Americans feel they have little to no control over the data companies collect about them ([Pew Research Centre](#)).

### Ungoverned artificial intelligence

Documented AI-related harm incidents rose from 233 in 2024 to 362 in 2025, peaking at 435 in a single month (January 2026) ([Stanford HAI, AI Index Report 2026](#)). The UK AI Safety Institute finds frontier AI capability has been roughly doubling every eight months, and that universal “jailbreaks” — methods to bypass safety restrictions — currently exist for every major system tested ([UK AI Security Institute, Frontier AI Trends Report](#)). The International AI Safety Report, chaired by Yoshua Bengio and backed by dozens of governments, concludes plainly that no current technical mitigation fully resolves the known risks of advanced AI systems ([International AI Safety Report 2025](#)).

## SECTION F · EVERYDAY, ACCUMULATED

### Mindless Consumerism and the Extractive Economy

Ivan Illich warned that industrial society could produce a “modernised poverty” in which endless consumption masks a deeper impoverishment of meaning, skill, and relationship. The economy behind everyday consumption choices — largely invisible at the point of purchase — is measurably outrunning what the planet can regenerate.

### Living beyond planetary means

Earth Overshoot Day — the date each year by which humanity has used all the ecological resources the planet can renew in twelve months — fell on 24 July 2025, the earliest date ever recorded; humanity is currently consuming resources at a rate equivalent to 1.8 Earths per year ([Global Footprint Network](#)). Global material extraction has risen from 30 billion tonnes in 1970 to 106 billion tonnes today, and is projected to reach 160 billion tonnes by 2060 on current trends ([UNEP International Resource Panel, Global Resources Outlook 2024](#)).

### Waste as the shadow of consumption

The fashion industry alone generates 92 million tonnes of textile waste every year — equivalent to one garbage truck of clothing being landfilled or incinerated every single second ([UN Environment Programme](#), [UN News](#)). The world generated 62 million tonnes of electronic waste in 2022, of which only 22.3% was formally collected and recycled — leaving the remainder to leach hazardous materials, largely in the global South ([ITU / UN Global E-waste Monitor](#)).

### Subsidising extraction

The IMF calculates global fossil-fuel subsidies — explicit and implicit, including unpriced climate and health damage — at \$7.4 trillion in 2024, equivalent to 6.4% of world GDP; the wealthiest half of households capture roughly 75% of the explicit subsidy benefit ([International Monetary Fund](#)). This is the economic architecture that Arturo Escobar’s critique of “development” and Aimé Césaire’s and Aníbal Quijano’s accounts of extractive coloniality both describe: growth measured without accounting for what it depletes — soil, forests, climate stability, and, ultimately, the conditions for its own continuation.

## SYNTHESIS

### Connecting the Dots: How the Dangers Interlock

Read separately, the six domains above could be mistaken for six unrelated news beats. Read together — through Basarab Nicolescu’s transdisciplinary lens and David Bohm’s notion of an undivided wholeness underlying apparent separateness — they reveal themselves as a single polycrisis: a set of feedback loops in which each danger amplifies several others.

#### The Polycrisis Web: How the Dangers Interlock

An illustrative model of reinforcing feedback loops, synthesized from the polycrisis literature and this report’s research — not a measured causal graph.

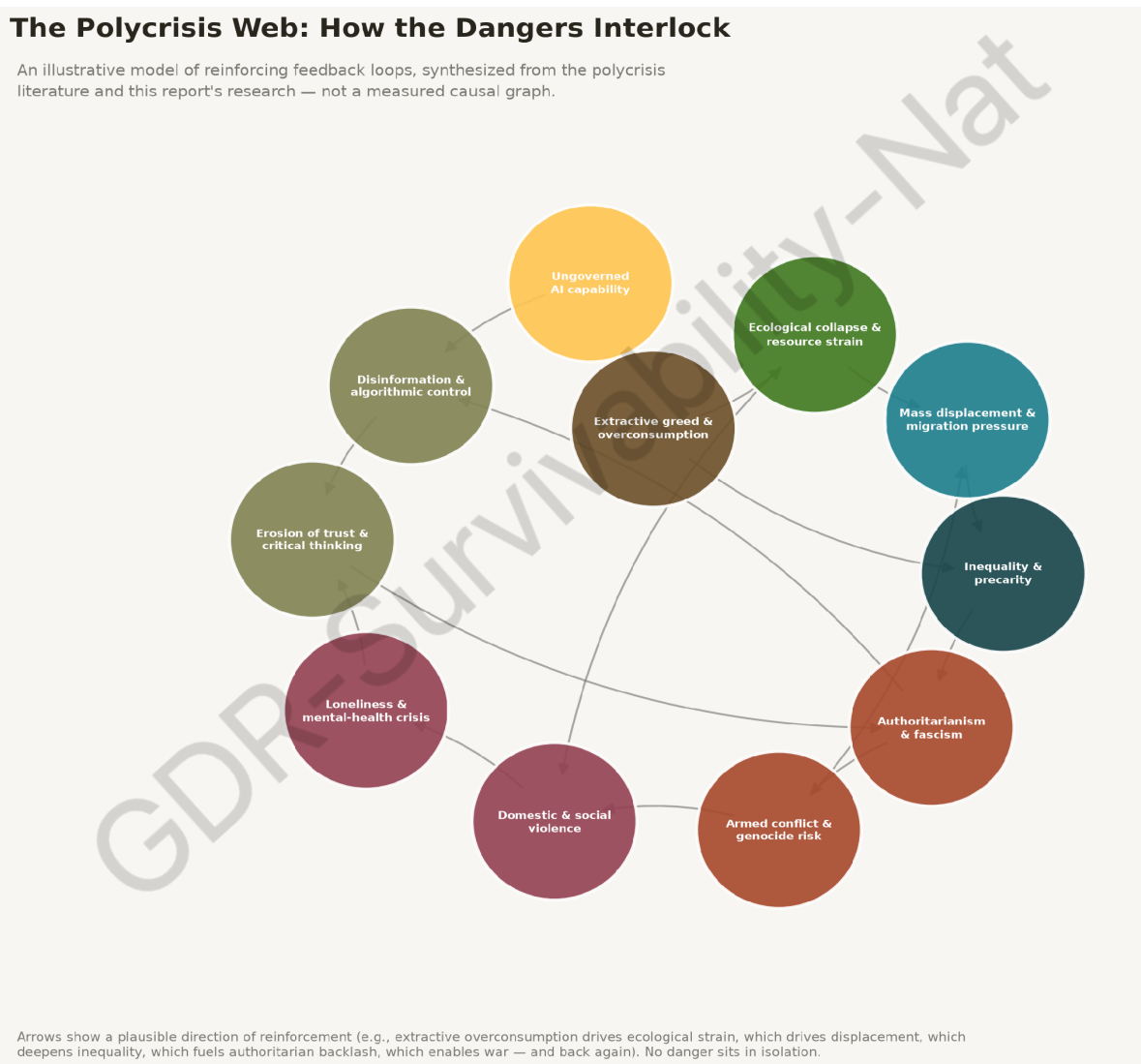


Figure 3. An illustrative — not empirically measured — map of how the dangers examined in this report reinforce one another. Arrows represent documented or widely theorized causal or reinforcing relationships discussed across the sources cited in Sections A–F; this diagram is an interpretive synthesis, offered to aid understanding rather than as a quantified model.

A few loops recur across almost every source consulted for this report. Ecological breakdown (Section B) drives displacement and resource scarcity, which raises the risk of internecine conflict (Section D); conflict and authoritarian consolidation, in turn, both rely on and accelerate disinformation ecosystems (Section E) to manufacture consent and obscure accountability. Concentrated wealth (Section D) funds the extractive economy that drives ecological breakdown (Section B) and the algorithmic attention economy that fuels epistemic harm (Section E). Domestic and social breakdown (Section C) — loneliness, disconnection, unprocessed trauma — leaves individuals more susceptible to the very disinformation and authoritarian appeals that (Sections D and E) promise belonging and certainty instead of complexity and grief.

Aníbal Quijano and Ramón Grosfoguel’s account of the “coloniality of power” helps explain why these loops are not accidental: the same historical logic that treated land, bodies, and knowledge as extractable resources during colonisation is the logic still operating in extractive economics, algorithmic attention-harvesting, and the dismissal of indigenous and Southern epistemologies as “non-scientific”. Arturo Escobar’s critique of development as a Western-universalising project makes the same point from a different angle: what is called “progress” in one register frequently registers as dispossession in another.

Erich Fromm’s diagnosis of a societal choice between “having” and “being”, and Thich Nhat Hanh’s teaching on interbeing — that no phenomenon, including a human self, exists independently of everything else — both point toward the same practical conclusion secular polycrisis researchers increasingly reach by a different road: none of these six domains can be solved in isolation, because none of them exists in isolation. Ivan Illich’s idea of “conviviality” and Paulo Freire’s concept of conscientisation — becoming critically aware of the structures one is embedded in, as a precondition for changing them — describe the kind of collective seeing this report is attempting to model.

## **THE CENTRAL QUESTION**

### **If We Allow All This, What Happens to Life on Earth?**

This report will not manufacture a single, cinematic doomsday prediction — that would repeat, in reverse, the very sensationalism this report set out to avoid in its opening note on the attached video. What the cited science does support is a more sober and, in some ways, more sobering picture: not one collapse but a narrowing of options, arriving unevenly and largely by inaction rather than a single decision.

### **What the tipping-point science says**

The 2025 Global Tipping Points Report, produced by an international consortium of scientists convened partly through the Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research, concludes that warm-water coral reef die-off has

already become the first climate tipping point crossed, and warns that continued warming raises the risk of triggering additional large-scale, largely irreversible shifts — in the Greenland and West Antarctic ice sheets, in Atlantic Ocean circulation, and in parts of the Amazon rainforest — within this century ([PIK Potsdam, Global Tipping Points Report 2025](#)). The IPCC’s Sixth Assessment Report is explicit that many of the changes already set in motion by past emissions — sea-level rise, ocean acidification and warming, and deep ocean-circulation shifts — are irreversible on the timescale of centuries to millennia, even if emissions were to stop today ([IPCC AR6 Synthesis Report](#)). IPBES’s Global Assessment finds current trends in biodiversity loss will undermine progress on 80% of the assessed targets of the Sustainable Development Goals ([IPBES](#)).

### **What the social science says**

None of these ecological trajectories unfolds on a socially neutral stage. V-Dem and Freedom House data (Section D) suggest that the erosion of democratic accountability tends to precede and enable weaker environmental and human-rights protection, not follow it. WHO’s data on loneliness and mental health (Section C) suggest that a population under chronic social and ecological stress, already disconnected from itself, is less resourced — not more — to respond collectively to compounding shocks. And the WEF, Edelman, and Reuters Institute data on misinformation (Section E) suggest that exactly the shared factual ground required for collective decision-making is what is eroding fastest, at precisely the moment more of it is needed.

### **Named without exaggeration**

If current trajectories across Sections A through F continue uninterrupted — more planetary boundaries transgressed, more tipping points crossed, more democratic backsliding, more concentrated wealth, more algorithmically amplified division, more untreated loneliness and violence at the domestic scale — the most credible, source-grounded expectation is not a single extinction event but a compounding erosion of the ecological and social conditions that allow complex, cooperative, dignified life to continue at anything like its current scale and diversity. Fanon and Césaire both warned that dehumanisation, once normalised in one domain, does not stay contained there; Viktor Frankl’s account of meaning as a precondition for survival under extremity suggests the same danger operates inwardly — a slow erosion of the will and capacity to keep choosing life. This is precisely why the report does not end with a diagnosis. It ends with an index meant to be lived, not just read.

## **AN ORIGINAL, INTERPRETIVE FRAMEWORK**

### **The Index of Survivability and Connection (ISC)**

Every danger catalogued in Sections A–F is, at root, a rupture of connection — to the earth, to one another, to future generations, or to one’s own inner life. The Index of Survivability and Connection proposed here is **this**



**report's own original synthesis**, not a peer-reviewed instrument or an existing academic index. It is offered as a practical, reflective tool — in the spirit of Paulo Freire's conscientisation and Theory U's practice of presencing — for individuals, classrooms, and communities to locate themselves honestly within the polycrisis mapped above.

The ISC holds that survivability is not primarily a technical or economic problem but a question of whether human beings can restore three interlocking capacities, corresponding to what Basarab Nicolescu calls the recovery of “multiple levels of Reality” beyond the purely rational-cognitive: Thinking (critical, systemic understanding), Feeling (empathic, ecological, spiritual sensing), and Doing (embodied, courageous, sustained action). None is sufficient alone — thinking without feeling produces technocratic detachment; feeling without doing produces sentiment without change; doing without thinking produces well-intentioned harm.

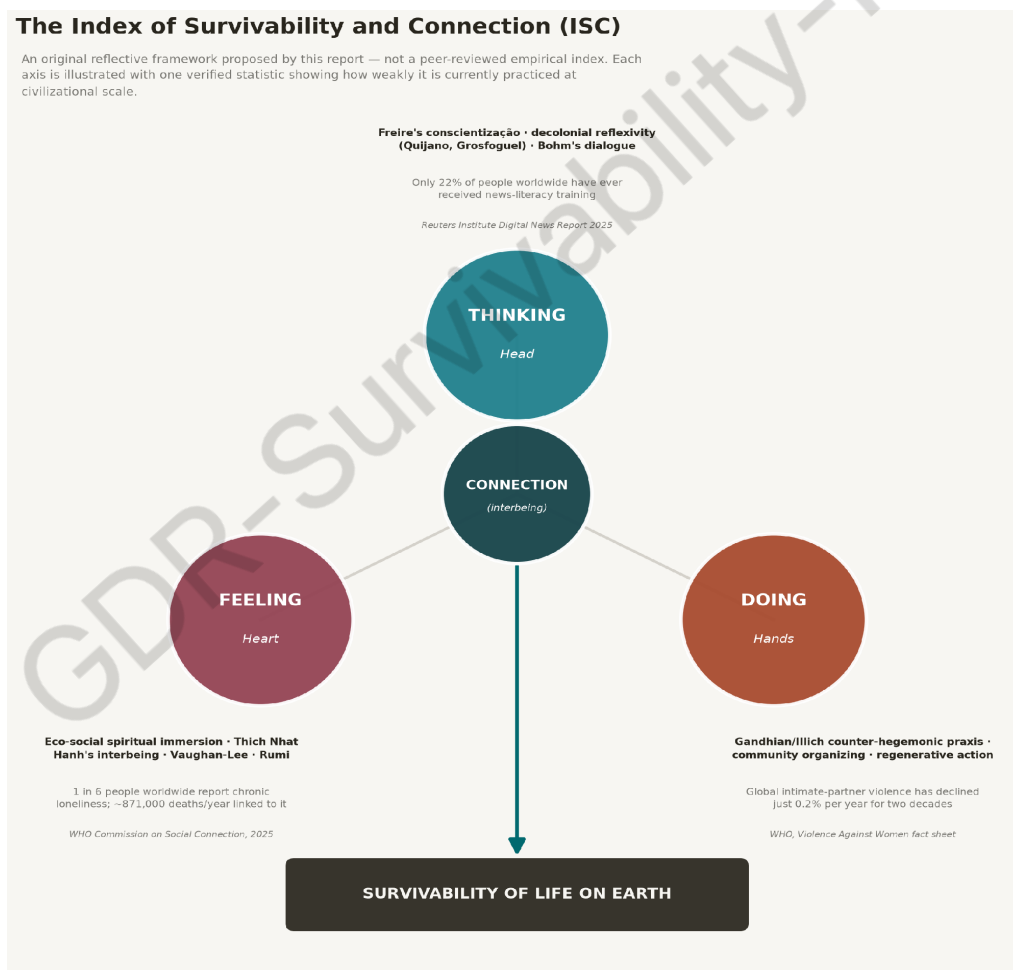


Figure 4. The Index of Survivability and Connection, an original framework proposed by this report. Thinking, Feeling and Doing converge on Connection (interbeing) as the condition for the Survivability of Life on Earth. Each vertex is grounded in an intellectual lineage the report draws on, plus one representative verified statistic from the sections above; the diagram is interpretive, not a measured or validated psychometric scale.

### **Thinking — the head**

Systemic, transdisciplinary understanding of how the six domains interlock (see the Synthesis section above) — the capacity Freire calls conscientisation and Nicolescu calls transdisciplinary vision. Its opposite is the fragmented, single-issue thinking that misses the polycrisis entirely, and the epistemic capture described in Section E, in which manipulated attention makes systemic thinking harder to sustain.

### **Feeling — the heart**

Empathic and ecological sensing — grief for what is being lost, solidarity with those already harmed, and the eco-spiritual sensibility Thich Nhat Hanh, Rumi, and Llewellyn Vaughan-Lee each describe it as interbeing or the soul's longing for union. Its opposite is the numbing and disconnection documented in Section C — loneliness, mental-health erosion — which the WHO Commission on Social Connection links directly to a reduced capacity for collective action ([WHO Commission on Social Connection](#)).

### **Doing — the hands**

Embodied, sustained, often unglamorous action — community organising, regenerative practice, nonviolent resistance in the traditions of Gandhi and Mandela, and what this report's intellectual community would call followership as much as leadership: showing up consistently in service of a greater, shared effort rather than seeking individual credit. Its opposite is either paralysis (feeling and thinking without action) or the mindless consumption documented in Section F, which is action disconnected from either thought or feeling.

### **Connection — the hub**

Where Thinking, Feeling and Doing meet is Connection — what this report, following Thich Nhat Hanh, calls interbeing: the recognition that self, society, and earth are not three separate things to be separately optimised but one interdependent reality. It is this capacity for connection, not any single policy or technology, that the ISC frames as the actual precondition for the survivability of life on Earth, as named in this report's central question.

### **A Reflection Matrix — for personal or group use**

The table below is an original reflective tool offered alongside the ISC, not an empirical measurement instrument. For each domain researched in this report, it invites an honest personal or group check-in across the three ISC capacities. It can be used individually, in a classroom, or in a community circle, in the spirit of participatory, dialogical education that this report's author practices.

| Domain                     | Thinking — Am I aware?                           | Feeling — Am I moved?                                     | Doing — Am I acting?                                        |
|----------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| A. Sudden & physical       | Do I understand the real risk (not media panic)? | Do I let myself feel the fragility the situation reveals? | Have I prepared, at home or at the community level, at all? |
| B. Ecological              | Do I know my own ecological footprint?           | Do I grieve ecological loss or stay numb to it?           | Am I changing consumption, land, or water habits?           |
| C. Domestic & social       | Do I see violence and loneliness as structural?  | Am I present to my own and others' pain?                  | Do I actively build real-world connections?                 |
| D. Political-structural    | Do I follow how power and wealth concentrate?    | Am I outraged without being paralysed?                    | Do I organise, vote, or speak against injustice?            |
| E. Epistemic & algorithmic | Do I know what shapes my feed and beliefs?       | Am I humble about my certainty?                           | Do I verify before I share or react?                        |
| F. Consumerism & economy   | Do I trace where my purchases really come from?  | Do I feel the weight of mindless consumption?             | Am I practicing restraint, reuse, and sufficiency?          |

*Reflection matrix. An original tool offered alongside the ISC framework, not an empirical or validated instrument — it is intended for honest self- or group-reflection rather than scoring or comparison between people.*

## FROM DIAGNOSIS TO PRACTICE

### What This Suggests for Education and Community Life

This report was written for a practitioner working within decolonial pedagogy, participatory research, and eco-social spirituality, so its implications are framed accordingly — not as policy recommendations for governments, but as orientations for educators, facilitators, and community organisers.

### Deschooling the diagnosis itself

Ivan Illich's critique of schooling warns against treating even a report like this one as a finished credential that people consume and file away. The ISC and its reflection matrix are designed to be used dialogically — in Freire's sense — in circles, classrooms, and community meetings, where people generate their own next steps rather than receiving prescriptions.

### **From leadership to followership**

Given the scale of the six domains mapped here, no single leader, institution, or nation can resolve them. What is called for, more than more leaders, is more capable followership — people willing to sustain unglamorous, collective, long-term work rather than waiting for a single saviour figure or a single technological fix.

### **From sustainability to regeneration**

Sustainability asks how to maintain current systems with less harm. Regeneration — the frame this report's author works within — asks how we can actively restore and renew degraded ecological and social relationships. Given that seven of nine planetary boundaries are already transgressed ([Stockholm Resilience Centre](#)), maintaining the status quo is no longer sufficient; active regeneration, not merely reduced harm, is what the data now require.

### **Non-violence as a method, not just a value**

Gandhi's and Mandela's practice of non-violence, and Thich Nhat Hanh's engaged Buddhism, suggest that responding to the dangers in Section D — authoritarianism, genocide, internecine war — with further violence, even rhetorical, tends to reproduce the coloniality of power these dangers spring from. The more difficult, more durable path is organised, disciplined, non-violent resistance paired with truth-telling and reconciliation.

### **Closing**

*Every figure in this report is a verified, sourced fact. Every synthesis diagram is explicitly labelled as interpretation, not measurement. The ISC framework is offered honestly as this report's own original proposal, standing on the intellectual shoulders named throughout — not as an existing, peer-reviewed instrument. What is not in question, across every one of the 146-plus sources consulted, is the direction of travel: on almost every dimension examined, the trend line points toward greater danger, not less. What remains genuinely open — which is precisely why this report does not end in despair — is whether enough people, thinking, feeling and doing together, choose to bend that line while there is still time to do so.*

## APPENDIX

### Sources

This report draws on 146 unique, individually verified primary sources — UN agencies and treaty bodies, peer-reviewed journals, national statistical and scientific institutes, international courts and monitoring organizations, and established news organizations reporting primary data. Every source below was directly consulted during research for this report and is cited at least once, by name, in the body text above. Each entry is a clickable link to the exact page consulted.

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