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A LETTER FOR THE HOPEFUL INHABITANTS OF THE ANTHROPOCENE

'Two mental constructs will direct human thinking in the next Millennium, relativity and holism.' – Albert Einstein, 1926.

Dear Global Citizens of 2012,

The relative calm we experience in the early 2100s makes it easy to forget just how turbulent and uncertain life was in the first half of the 21st century. We now consider the horrific events of September 11, 2001 to have been the trigger for the Great Emergence. More accurately, it began with the quiet observation in 2000 by Nobel Chemist Paul Crutzen and his colleague Eugene Stoermer that human civilization had shifted into the Anthropocene, the Age of Man. The stable twelve thousand year Holocene had come to a close.

What has become clear a century later is that 9-11 marked the turning point from the expansionist industrial era to the beginning of the interdependent knowledge era. With that shift, gradually over time, a competitive world culture began to give way to the cooperative world culture we experience today. It would take half a century before we would see how much the global community benefited from having women leading the majority of nation states and global institutions. Embedded within the cooperative world culture that characterizes the Great Emergence, of course, lies the exponential and cumulating growth of knowledge that defines human civilization today. This emergence was probably inconceivable by concerned holistic systems thinkers staring over frightening exponential growth curves of atmospheric carbon, soil loss, and biodiversity loss around the beginning of the 21st century. How their concerns could have been ignored remains a mystery to this day.

Today it is obvious that our survival as a species resulted from the shift to holism as the organizing paradigm for the human economy. In the year 2020, when the future looked particularly grim, a young South African PhD student studying holistic finance at the Capital Institute discovered a letter from Albert Einstein to Jan Smuts (the last South African leader to oppose apartheid before Mandela) written soon after the publication of *Holism and Evolution* in 1926. The letter was a footnote in the landmark "Third Millennium Economy Report" published

by the Capital Institute and a group of leading ecological economists and systems thinkers in 2012. That report explained how our ethics, our economy and finance, and our governance systems all need to be grounded in the biophysical reality of the earth as understood by modern science, rather than in failed Cartesian ideologies from what were once called "political parties" competing for power. It was the inspiration for the vital Earth Reserve Cooperative, providing all critical biosphere operating data with which to holistically manage the global economy.

The idea of holism was nearly a century old in 2020 when the Einstein letter to Jan Smuts went viral on CommunityShare, the community owned social network platform that replaced Facebook without warning not long after its historic IPO. Holism was an idea whose time had come. What had been so hard for many early holistic management practitioners like Allan Savory to explain suddenly became obvious. Almost overnight, the financial markets connected the dots and discounted the reality that peak oil didn't matter after all. Statesmen and corporate executives had no choice but to negotiate how to share the economic pain of leaving all remaining coal and Tar Sands oil safely sequestered in the ground, as well as 80% of conventional oil, and 25% of natural gas in order to mitigate the looming ecological catastrophe that was plain for all to see.

The expansionist industrial era was over for the developed world. Despite the difficult decades that followed, the ground was laid for the cooperative, knowledge driven Great Emergence that exploded seemingly out of nowhere. Nowhere and everywhere: the vast and ever compounding knowledge resource network that defines our post-modern economy, creating the unbounded prosperity we enjoy today.

With gratitude for your courage,
Jack Fullerton, grandson of the Founder, Capital Institute 2112

Listen to the interview with John Fullerton, shown at the second In100Y-seminar in June 2011. www.in100y.dk/videos/speakers-attending-in-spirit/