

## HOPE IN THE ANTHROPOCENE

Public seminar at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, the Beijer Hall, November 9, 2023



### MORNING SESSION 10:00–12:30

#### Why do humans believe in anything at all?

*Humans have a unique ability to create shared world views, ideologies, and truths, that hold groups together, create shared norms and behaviors. The human ability to work towards joint vision and learn from each other has resulted in substantial progress. Today, more than ever in human history, there is a need to find ways to engage across scientific disciplines and knowledge systems, and come up with new tools to solve old problems. What have we learnt so far that will help build a global vision and practice that is aligned with the biosphere?*

#### 10:00 WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

##### 10:10–10:30 THE ILLUSION OF CONTROL: HOW “MODERN” SOCIETIES THINK

**Sander van der Leeuw.** Sander is an archaeologist and historian, author of twenty books and fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and corresponding member of the Royal Netherlands Academy of Arts and Sciences. He was awarded the “Champion of the Earth for Science and Innovation” prize by the United Nations Environment Program in 2012 and has worked on the social constructions of money and religion, and the illusion that our present lives and future societies can be controlled.

##### 10:30–10:45 INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE IS KEY FOR SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEMS AND THE UN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

**Mariaelena Huambachano.** Mariaelena is Assistant Professor at the Syracuse University, at the Global Indigenous Cultures and Environmental Justice Department and Center. She takes an interdisciplinary approach to Indigenous Studies, Environmental Studies, and Sustainable Development, focusing on food and climate justice, governance, agroecology, public policy, community-driven development, traditional ecological knowledge, and decolonization.

#### 10:45–11:15 COFFEE BREAK

#### 11:15–11:30 DIVERSE VALUE SYSTEMS CONTRIBUTE TO LEARNING AND CHANGE

**Patricia Balvanera.** Patricia is an ecologist focusing on biodiversity, human well-being, social-ecological systems, values of nature, transdisciplinary cooperation, and art. She has co-led the Scientific Committee of the Program for Ecosystem Change and Society (PECS), the Ecosystem Services group of the Global Earth Observation – Biodiversity Observation Network (GEOBON-ES), the Mexican Network on Social Ecological Systems and Sustainability, and the Values Assessment of the Intergovernmental Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES).

#### 11:30–11:45 STORYING THE LAWS OF NATURE – RECONNECTING SOCIETIES TO THE BIOSPHERE

**Michelle Lim.** Michelle is Associate Professor of Law at the Yong Pung How School of Law, Singapore Management University, Singapore. Her work focuses on futures-oriented biodiversity law aimed at advancing equity and sustainability. Michelle is Deputy Chair of the Biodiversity Law Specialist Group of the IUCN World Commission on Environmental Law. She was a Fellow of the Global Assessment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES) and an author of the IPBES-IPCC Co-sponsored Workshop Report on Biodiversity and Climate Change.

#### 11:45–12:20 QUESTIONS TO SPEAKERS AND CONVERSATION,

moderated by Caroline Schill, Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics, Stockholm Resilience Centre and Anthropocene Laboratory

#### 12:20–12:30 CLOSING, Caroline Schill and Richard Julin, Accelerator

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### AFTERNOON SESSION 15:00–17:30

#### Is the end of humanity near?

*Not if... politicians, civil society, corporations, technologies, ideas and priorities are aligned with the biosphere.. the thin layer of life – of which humans are all part. Here, we will explore ways that humanity is currently aligning behaviors and norms to be compatible with a sustainable and fair planet.*

#### 15:00 INTRODUCTION AND WELCOME

#### 15:05–15:20 THREE POTENTIAL FUTURES OF THE BIOSPHERE

**Tone Bjordam.** Tone is a Norwegian artist working on transformation in nature, changes in society and in the human mind: including geological, climatic and biological processes. She explore forms, patterns and processes in nature, in micro and macro perspectives, working with video and performance, photography, drawing, painting, soundscapes and sculpture installations.

#### 15:20–15:45 TIPPING TOWARDS A POSITIVE FUTURE

**Marten Scheffer (online).** Marten is a Dutch ecologist, mathematical biologist and professor of Aquatic Ecology and Water Quality Management at Wageningen University and Research Centre. He was a winner of the 2009 Spinoza Prize. His research focuses on complex systems, and he is currently finishing a book on positive transformations of society.

#### 15:45–16:00 COFFEE BREAK

#### 16:00–16:45 IT IS NOT TOO LATE!

**Rebecca Solnit (online).** Rebecca is an internationally acclaimed author of seventeen books, including “Hope in the Dark: Untold Histories, Wild Possibilities (2004 and 2016)”, “A Field Guide to Getting lost” (2005), “It is not too late” (2023), and is a frequent contributor to the Guardian and Harper’s Bazaar on feminisms, the environment, politics and art.

#### 16:45–17:10 QUESTIONS TO SPEAKERS

#### 17:10–17:15 COMMENT

**Athena Aktipis.** Athena is an associate professor in the Department of Psychology at Arizona State University, director of the Cooperation Lab and co-director of the Human Generosity Project, the first large-scale transdisciplinary project to investigate the interrelationship between biological and cultural influences on human generosity.

#### 17:15–17:25 OPEN CONVERSATION

#### 17:30 CLOSING, Caroline Schill and Dianty Ningrum, Anthropocene Laboratory

*The event is organized by the Anthropocene Laboratory at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, in collaboration with Stockholm Seminars, and Accelerator at Stockholm University.*

*The aim of the Anthropocene Laboratory is to advance a scientific understanding and synthesis of the biosphere that help identify and enable novel pathways towards a sustainable future. The laboratory strives to experiment with a combination of perspectives and insights from the natural and social sciences, the humanities, arts, and other fields of knowledge.*

*The Stockholm Seminars series cover a broad range of sustainability science perspectives with a focus on the dynamics and stewardship of social-ecological systems and are jointly organised by the Beijer Institute of Ecological Economics, the Anthropocene Laboratory and the Global Economic Dynamics and the Biosphere programme at the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences, Albaeco, Future Earth, and the Stockholm Resilience Centre.*

*Accelerator is an exhibition space where art, science and societal issues meet. It is part of Stockholm University. The mission of Accelerator is to engage actively with society, producing exhibitions presenting international and Swedish contemporary art.*