

You are cordially invited to a public lecture and webinar by the  
**Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy,**  
co-hosted with the Balaton Group and CIVICA on:

## Navigating the chaos of an unfolding global cycle

By

**Dr Brian Walker**



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**December 15 (Tuesday), 2020 at 10:00 a.m. CET**

[Webinar access](#)

Welcome remarks and chair: *Dr Laszlo Pinter*, Professor and Head of Department, Department of Environmental Sciences and Policy and Senior Fellow, International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD)

Invited comments: *Dr Jill Jaeger*, independent scholar; *Dr Örjan Sjöberg*, Professor, Stockholm School of Economics; *Dr Jamila Haider*, Research Lead, Resilience and Sustainable Development, Stockholm Resilience Center

**Abstract:** The trajectory the world is on is unsustainable; climate change, diseases/epidemics, mass migrations, social-economic collapse, unrelenting loss of biodiversity being some of the symptoms. Transformational changes are needed in the drivers of the current trends, and a tentative list of such drivers includes: (i) the economic system, (ii) homogenization, (iii) human population growth, size, and densities, (iv) consumption patterns, human ethics, and behavior, and (v) governance. Where and how to intervene? The adaptive cycle is suggested as an appropriate framework. A critical phase in the cycle is the brief period after crisis when novelty and innovation can change the future trajectory. Without being prepared for this window of opportunity, deep, systemic change may be unachievable. If response to the present COVID crisis merely reinforces the existing system, its incompatibility with the natural world and its propensity to increase inequity and conflict will likely increase fragility and lead to another version of the present calamity.

The webinar will reflect and build on the following recent paper: Walker, B., Carpenter, S., Folke, C., Gunderson, L., Peterson, G., Scheffer, M., ... & Westley, F. (2020). Navigating the chaos of an unfolding global cycle. *Ecology and Society*, 25(4). Open access at: <https://ecologyandsociety.org/vol25/iss4/art23/>

**Presenter:** Brian was born in Zimbabwe, obtained his Ph.D. in Ecology at the University of Saskatchewan, was a Charles Bullard Fellow at Harvard University, lectured in ecology at the University of Zimbabwe and was Professor of Botany and Director of the Centre for Resource Ecology at the University of Witwatersrand in Johannesburg before moving to Australia in 1985 as Chief of the CSIRO Division of Wildlife and Ecology. He is a Fellow of the Australian Academy of Science and of the Australian Academy of Technological Sciences and Engineering, a Foreign Member of the Swedish Academy of Forestry and Agriculture, a Fellow of the Beijer International Institute for Ecological Economics in the Swedish Academy of Science, and past Chair of the Board of The Resilience Alliance ([www.resalliance.org](http://www.resalliance.org)). He was awarded the Asahi Glass Foundation Blue Planet prize in 2019 and in 2020 received the Order of Australia.

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