



**2012**

## **ANNUAL REPORT**

Earth Policy Institute (EPI) works to provide a roadmap for saving civilization, which it calls Plan B. It continues to refine this Plan and to support it with the latest scientific data. Human behavior changes either in response to new information or new experience. EPI disseminates new information to guide the process of change. Its goal is to generate visibility and to build public support for global action to stabilize climate, stabilize population, and rebuild the economy's natural support systems.

### **THE RESEARCH AGENDA**

Two major activities have kept the research team hopping this year. The first centered on research for *Full Planet, Empty Plates: The New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity*, the book by Lester Brown that was released at a press teleconference on September 28, just two months after delivery to W.W. Norton & Company. Belying the book's short page length (123 pages) is a mountain of data and resources supporting each fact, all of which have been posted on the Institute's website. The second major activity has been researching new Data Highlights, Plan B Updates, and Eco-Economy Indicators, along with Book Bytes, and two PowerPoint presentations summarizing *Full Planet, Empty Plates*.

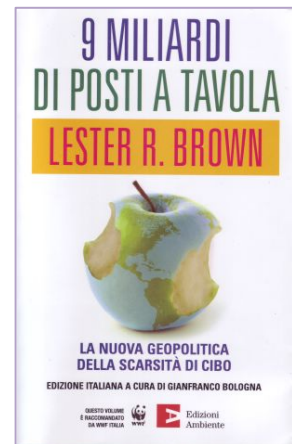
The major theme of the book is that we are entering an era of food scarcity that is leading to intense competition for control of land and water resources—a new geopolitics of food. This new era is visible in dangerously low levels of grain stocks and the deepening of hunger, with some families resorting to scheduling foodless days each week. While some 3 billion increasingly affluent people are moving up the food chain, consuming more grain-intensive livestock and poultry products, climate change, water shortages, crop-shrinking heat waves, and the diversion of grain to fuel cars are making it more difficult for farmers to keep pace with demand.

The tightening grain situation has led many grain-importing countries to buy or lease large tracts of land in other countries to grow food for themselves, often in countries whose populations receive assistance from the U.N. World Food Programme. This onslaught of land acquisitions has now become a land rush as governments,

agribusiness firms, and private investors seek control of land wherever they can find it. Many of the land deals are made in secret, and much of the time the land involved is already being farmed by villagers, who are summarily displaced. The potential for conflict is high.

Meanwhile, a second book has been taking shape: Lester's autobiography, *Breaking New Ground: A Personal History*. While the fact-checking has been less intensive than with a data-driven book such as *Full Planet*, staff have been engaged in compiling Lester's speaking engagements for the past 50 years, going through old files from his USDA, Overseas Development Council, and Worldwatch Institute days, and compiling a chronicle of his life through photographs.

Books notwithstanding, the research team has been mindful of global environmental trends. For instance, with the drought and heat toasting much of the country, the team closely monitored the corn crop. On July 19, EPI held a press teleconference where Lester stated that the USDA's estimate of a corn harvest shortfall of 12 percent was likely to be closer to 25 percent. The Institute's findings meshed with reports from farmers who were expecting exceptionally poor harvests. On Monday, June 23, the *Guardian* asked for an op-ed on the harvest, prices, and weather—and wanted it that evening for a Tuesday release on its environment page. By close of business EPI submitted the piece, which was posted in its entirety.



The op-ed caught the attention of news organizations including NPR's Talk of the Nation, the Leonard Lopate Show, Alternet, and Bloomberg television. Meanwhile, the Institute released the *Guardian* piece as a Plan B Update to its public and media lists. Food related issues were the major news draw to the Institute this year. In addition, an interview with Lester published in IFC's magazine *Handshake* resulted in additional articles quoting Lester.

Janet Larsen's Update "Meat Consumption in China Now Double That in the United States" also garnered global attention. Janet found that a quarter of all meat produced worldwide is now eaten in China. Since 1978, China's meat consumption has risen from 8 million tons to 71 million tons. The piece was reposted on major blogs including Sustainablog, the Economist, and the Permaculture Research Institute of Australia. Robert Samuelson cited it in his May 13 *Washington Post* Op-Ed piece *The Boom on the Farm*.

Janet also wrote "The Dust Bowl Revisited," an Update to coincide with the November release of Ken Burn's PBS dust bowl series. Shortly after Thom Hartmann had her on his television program, "The Big Picture," to discuss it and the World Bank's warning of a 7 degree temperature rise by 2100.

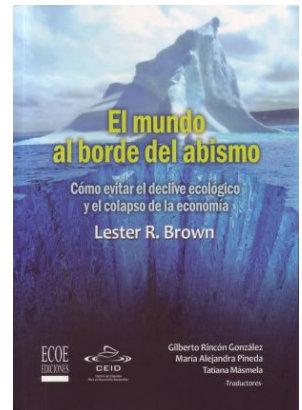
The tsunami that wiped out a number of cities in Japan and created a meltdown in the Fukushima nuclear plant that resulted in all of the country's nuclear reactors being shut down for a time, led Matt Roney to write an Update entitled "Fukushima Meltdown Hastens Decline of Nuclear Power." Fukushima led some European countries to phase out their nuclear programs entirely, while other

countries were proceeding cautiously with their nuclear program. As Matt noted, the world's fleet of reactors is aging and new plants are suffering construction delays and cost increases, likely presaging a long-term decline in reliance on nuclear power.

During the sprint to complete *Full Planet, Empty Plates, Mother Earth News*, which often reprints EPI's releases, asked for a piece on wind power, which was then sent to them within a day and a half. A few months later, the piece was transformed into a long article entitled "Exciting News About Renewable Energy" and published in the October/November issue. Retitling the piece "The Great Transition," EPI released it as two Updates, which were reposted to major environmental blogs and websites and retweeted over 50 times, most notably by Eco Watch and Earth Business Network.

Subjects covered by Data Highlights included meat consumption peaking in the United States, the rise in Arab grain imports, the growth in hydropower, the free fall in Arctic sea ice, the shortfall in contraceptive coverage, and how governments spend \$1.4 billion per day in subsidies that destabilize the climate. And five Eco-Economy Indicators were released on grain, temperature, wind, forestry, and the economy.

In addition to posting the immense database supporting the analysis in *Full Planet, Empty Plates*, the research team developed two PowerPoint presentations relating to the book. The first was a comprehensive look at the book, while the second was a shorter version. Another presentation was developed to draw attention to some of the 150-plus datasets that accompany the book. Collectively the presentations have been viewed online more than 20,000 times. EPI's PowerPoint presentations and data are some of the most downloaded items from the Institute's website. (See Appendix A for a listing of all Institute releases.)



## THE OUTREACH EFFORT

It will take an enormous dissemination effort to guide the global transition to a Plan B economy. Thus, EPI promotes its analyses through its worldwide network of media contacts, publishers, and the Internet. Press teleconferences are also convened to draw special attention to a topic. Additional outreach efforts go into speaking engagements, direct mail and electronic sales promotions, social networking, and the Institute's website.

### Publishing and Book Releases

EPI's books are the foundation for reaching its global constituency. Thus far, the Institute's books have been published in 33 languages. Major languages (more than 50 million speakers) include English (three publishers: US & Canada, UK & Commonwealth, India & South Asia), Arabic, Chinese (two publishers: Mainland and Taiwan), Farsi, French, German, Hindi, Indonesian, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Marathi (India), Polish, Portuguese (Portugal and Brazil), Russian, Spanish (Latin America and Spain), Thai, Turkish, and Ukrainian. Other languages include Bulgarian, Catalan, Czech, Croatian, Danish, Dutch, Esperanto, Greek, Hungarian,

Malayalam, Norwegian, Romanian, Slovenian, Swedish, and Vietnamese for a total of 137 contracts. (See Appendix B.)

Lester's travel schedule was less rigorous this year, partly because he was focusing on the two books in progress. However, there were a number of significant speaking events. The *New York Times* invited Lester to speak at a conference it hosted on energy. Two alma maters coerced Lester to speak. Harvard University gave him their first Environmental Alumni Award. And the University of Maryland asked him to give the inaugural talk for a new environmental lecture series. He also spoke at the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary event for the Club of Rome's "limits to growth" and at a major food conference in Milan. Books launched included the Chinese and Japanese editions of *World on the Edge* early in the year and the Dutch, Italian, and Spanish editions of *Full Planet, Empty Plates* in November.



### Media Outreach

EPI works closely with the world's major news organizations. Since it began operation in May 2001, EPI has generated over 46,000 news clips, about 17 each weekday. Institute researchers have given some 600 interviews for radio and television, including national and international networks such as ABC, NBC, Bloomberg, the BBC World Service, Voice of America, CNN International, Al Jazeera, CCTV (China), NHK TV (Japan).

A new part of the Institute's outreach this year was making a video summary of *Full Planet, Empty Plates*. This five-minute clip has been posted to the Institute website as well as on the sites for Barnes & Noble, Goodreads, W. W. Norton, and the many blogs where EPI usually posts research. Thus far, it has been viewed over 2,000 times. The Institute's international publishers are beginning to post the video on their sites as well.

### Plan B Teams

With the original *Plan B*, over 700 individuals bought a copy, read it, and then became personally engaged, buying 5, 10, 20, or even 50 or more copies for distribution to friends, colleagues, and political leaders. They became EPI's Plan B Team. The release of *Full Planet, Empty Plates* swelled the number of team members to some 4,000. Some members purchase copies and then return to purchase more. Ted Turner is the de facto captain with his distribution of some 4,200 copies to the Fortune 500 CEOs, state governors, Congress, university presidents, heads of state, ministers of environment, ministers of energy, ministers of agriculture, heads of the major environmental NGOs, the major media outlets, and, perhaps most importantly, to each of the world's billionaires.

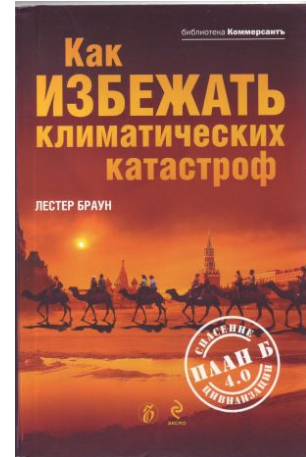
### Website

EPI incorporates Web 2.0 tools into its media outreach and communications marketing strategy to disseminate releases, data, and any information that the research team releases for the public. Included in these tools are blogs, RSS feeds, public and media listservs (containing some 14,321 and 1,813 addresses respectively), networking sites, podcasts, Twitter, and a micro-blogging site. This year also included the successful launch of EPI's mobile website, designed specifically for mobile devices.

Interacting with EPI's audience and promoting like-minded campaigns is crucial to the Institute's outreach efforts. Twitter has proved to be an essential tool for promoting events, releases, and *Full Planet, Empty Plates*. It has exponentially increased in size and influence. With 10 posts per week on average and around 125 followers added each month, EPI now has over 4,000 followers. The Facebook Fan Page has also grown from some 2,800 at the end of 2010 to over 6,100 fans. EPI's newest social media venture is Pinterest, a virtual bulletin board. On this visual site, the Institute posts photos of EPI's books, graphs that accompany its releases, and videos, all of which link back to EPI's website. Over 100 followers signed up in just the first month.

Twitter and Facebook are consistently among the top referrals back to EPI's website, along with international Google search engines and EPI's Wikipedia page. When Googling for issues on which EPI works, the Institute is often at the top of the list due in large measure to the over 275,000 links to its website. Some of the most popular search terms that lead to the site include lester brown, plan b, bottled water facts, world on the edge, and peak oil. EPI's publications and data are clearly a major attraction. On average, EPI's website has 24,000 unique visitors per day spending about 11 minutes per session.

EPI live-tweets its press conferences, providing an easily accessible channel for journalists. Prominent reporters and their affiliated news organizations repost EPI content, creating a multiplier effect. Notable reporters include David Roberts of *Grist*, who posts direct links to EPI's website regularly, Anca Novacovici of the *Huffington Post*, and John Vidal of the *Guardian*. Other notables who retweet and re-post include Daryl Hannah, Sean Ono Lennon, Occupy Wall Street, Earth Business Network, Greenpeace USA, Sierra Club's Beyond Coal Campaign, Sustainablog, and Treehugger.



Unique in publishing, EPI posts its publications online for downloading the day of release, allowing free global access. Books are posted in PDF. Through October some 46,900 PDFs of *World on the Edge*, *Plan B 4.0*, and *Plan B 3.0* were downloaded. Data downloads generally exceed that of individual book chapters. The meteoric interest in e-books prompted EPI's publisher to request a delay of six months for the full posting of *Full Planet, Empty Plates*.

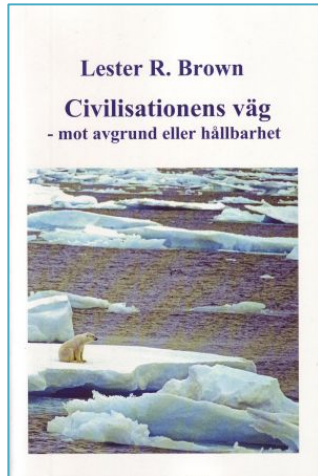
EPI's podcasts of its releases and book chapter introductions generate an average of 280 monthly downloads. The most downloaded podcasts in 2012 were the press teleconference for the release of *Full Planet, Empty Plates*, and the Update on meat consumption in China, and the Indicator on wind power.

Through its blog, the Institute posts "inside" information, giving readers insight into the Institute beyond its research. For instance, in addition to the blogs on World Water Week and Rio+20, were ones on the completion of EPI's mobile website and new shopping cart, Lester's trip to Harvard to receive the first-ever Alumni Environmental Sustainability Award, how some people are working with Plan B, and Matt Roney's graduation from Johns Hopkins University with a Master of Science degree.



## FINANCIAL REVIEW

Total income for 2012, including publication sales, royalties, honoraria, interest, grants, and gifts, is estimated at \$1.592 million. Earned income came to just over \$120,000, covering 11 percent of expenditures estimated at \$1,052,236. Grant income totaled \$825,000. EPI ended the year with a surplus of around \$1.5 million.



The reason for the large surplus is that the Institute received a surprise donation in March of half a million dollars. The donor, Henry Ingwerson, is a retired Air Force Colonel, who wrote, "We both don't want the human species to go extinct because if it does that would cancel any meaning that our lives have, so here is the principal part of my life savings toward the prevention of extinction." This gift brought EPI's end-of-year donations to \$608,000.

For 2013, the Institute expects donation, grant, and earned income to decline. The donation income will be down mostly because the Institute is not expecting another surprise half-million-dollar gift. Earned income will drop due to fewer book sales and a decrease in honoraria.

**Table 1. Estimated Expenditures (in dollars) for 2012 and 2013**

| <b>Category</b>                             | <b>2012</b>      | <b>2013</b>      |
|---|------------------|------------------|
| Salaries and fees                           | 468,251          | 466,318          |
| Benefits                                    | 132,198          | 130,480          |
| Rent and utilities                          | 105,827          | 110,000          |
| Lease interest                              | 2,457            | 2,200            |
| Depreciation & amortization                 | 22,970           | 16,000           |
| Equipment maintenance                       | 355              | 300              |
| Prof. fees & contract services <sup>1</sup> | 101,194          | 50,000           |
| Legal, accounting & audit fees              | 42,746           | 44,000           |
| Taxes                                       | 4,316            | 4,400            |
| Insurance                                   | 6,135            | 6,200            |
| Office supplies & expenses <sup>2</sup>     | 304              | 300              |
| Telephone                                   | 14,734           | 15,000           |
| Meetings and travel                         | 4,791            | 4,800            |
| Research materials & subscriptions          | 18,718           | 20,000           |
| Publications shipping <sup>3</sup>          | 9,727            | 9,800            |
| Outreach <sup>4</sup>                       | 20,324           | 15,000           |
| Promotion & distribution <sup>5</sup>       | 29,883           | 30,000           |
| Publication printing & storage              | 60,536           | 110,000          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>                                | <b>1,052,596</b> | <b>1,042,298</b> |

<sup>1</sup>Contract & consulting, including public relations, web development & computer tech support & software maintenance

<sup>2</sup>Including computer peripherals and software, and office postage

<sup>3</sup>Plus FedEx and couriers

<sup>4</sup>Broadcast fax, photocopying, press conferences, business hospitality

<sup>5</sup>Promotional materials, postage and printing, and bank/credit card fees

## APPENDIX A

**LIST OF PLAN B UPDATES, ECO-ECONOMY INDICATORS, BOOK BYTES,  
AND DATA HIGHLIGHTS – 2012**

|                 |    |                |   |
|-----------------|----|----------------|---|
| <b>January</b>  | 11 | Indicator      | Bumper 2011 Grain Harvest Fails to Rebuild Global Stocks                          |
|                 | 19 | Data Highlight | Governments Spend \$1.4 Billion Per Day to Destabilize Climate                    |
|                 | 31 | Indicator      | 2011: A Year of Weather Extremes, with More to Come                               |
| <b>February</b> | 16 | Indicator      | Global Economy Expanded More Slowly than Expected in 2011                         |
| <b>March</b>    | 7  | Data Highlight | Peak Meat: American Meat Consumption Now Falling                                  |
|                 | 14 | Indicator      | World Wind Power Climbs to New Record in 2011                                     |
|                 | 21 | Book Byte      | How Much Will it Cost to Save Our Economy's Foundation?                           |
|                 | 27 | Data Highlight | Growth in World Contraceptive Use Stalling; 215 Million Women's Needs Still Unmet |
| <b>April</b>    | 4  | Data Highlight | Wind Tops 10 Percent Share of Electricity in Five U.S. States                     |
|                 | 11 | Book Byte      | Getting the Market to Tell the Truth  |
|                 | 18 | Outreach       | Plan B Documentary  |
|                 | 24 | Update         | Meat Consumption in China Now Double That in the United States                    |
| <b>May</b>      | 2  | Data Highlight | Arab Grain Imports Rising Rapidly   |
|                 | 22 | Update         | Fukushima Meltdown Hastens Decline of Nuclear Power                               |
|                 | 31 | Book Byte      | Redefining Security for the 21st Century  |
| <b>June</b>     | 14 | Data Highlight | Hydropower Continues Steady Growth  |
|                 | 27 | Book Byte      | Two Views of the Future   |
| <b>July</b>     | 12 | Book Byte      | Throwaway Economy Headed for Junk Heap of History                                 |
|                 | 18 | Press Advisory | USDA Grossly Underestimates Decline of 2012 Corn Harvest                          |
|                 | 24 | Update         | World in Serious Trouble on Food Front  |
|                 | 31 | Book Byte      | We Can Reforest the Earth   |



|                  |    |                |  |
|------------------|----|----------------|--|
| <b>August</b>    | 8  | Update         | Rising Temperature Raising Food Prices   |
|                  | 16 | Update         | Offshore Wind Development Picking Up Pace  |
|                  | 29 | Indicator      | World Forest Area Still on the Decline   |
| <b>September</b> | 5  | Promo          | Announcement for Full Planet, Empty Plates: The New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity |
|                  | 14 | Data Highlight | Heat and Drought Ravage U.S. Crop Prospects—<br>Global Stocks Suffer             |
|                  | 25 | Press Advisory | Teleconference Reminder for Full Planet, Empty Plates                            |
|                  | 27 | Book           | Full Planet, Empty Plates: The New Geopolitics of Food Scarcity                  |
| <b>October</b>   | 3  | Release        | Full Planet, Empty Plates PowerPoint Presentation                                |
|                  | 9  | Data Highlight | Arctic Sea Ice in Free Fall  |
|                  | 16 | Data Highlight | Data from Full Planet, Empty Plates  |
|                  | 23 | Update         | The Great Transition Part 1: From Fossil Fuels to Renewable Energy               |
|                  | 29 | Update         | The Great Transition Part 2: Building a Wind-Centered Economy                    |
| <b>November</b>  | 7  | Release        | Full Planet, Empty Plates Fact Sheet   |
|                  | 16 | Update         | Dust Bowl Revisited  |
|                  | 19 | Indicator      | Taking Stock: World Fish Catch Falls to 90 Million Tons in 2012                  |
|                  | 27 | Release        | Full Planet, 1st Holiday Promo   |

**APPENDIX B**  
**LANGUAGES IN WHICH EPI'S BOOKS ARE PUBLISHED**

| Language           | Eco-E | Reader | Plan B | OTE | PB<br>2.0 | PB<br>3.0 | PB<br>4.0 | WOE | FPEP  |
|--------------------|-------|--------|--------|-----|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----|-------|
| English            |       |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| US & Canada        | X     | X      | X      | X   | X         | X         | X         | X   | x-WWN |
| UK & Commonwealth  | X     | X      | X      | X   | X         | X         | X         | X   | x-WWN |
| India & South Asia | X     | X      | X      | X   | X         | X         |           | X   | x-WWN |
| Arabic             | X     |        |        | X   | X         |           |           | X   |       |
| Bulgarian          |       |        |        |     | X         | X         | X         |     |       |
| Catalan            | X     |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Croatian           |       |        |        |     |           |           | X         |     |       |
| Czech              |       |        | X*     |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Chinese            |       |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Mainland           | X     |        | X      | X   | X         | X         | X         | X   | X     |
| Taiwan             | X     |        |        |     | X         |           |           |     |       |
| Danish             |       |        | X      |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Dutch              |       |        |        |     |           | X         |           | X   | x     |
| Esperanto          |       |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Farsi              | X     |        | X      | X   | X         |           | X         | X   | X     |
| French             | X     |        |        |     | X         |           |           | X   | x     |
| German             |       |        |        |     | X         | X         | X         |     |       |
| Greek              |       |        |        |     |           |           |           | X   | x     |
| Hindi              |       |        |        |     |           | X         |           |     |       |
| Hungarian          |       |        | X      |     |           | X**       | X**       | X** |       |
| Indonesian         | X     |        | X      |     |           | X         |           |     |       |
| Italian            | X     | X      | X      |     |           | X         | X         | X   | X     |
| Japanese           | X     | X      | X      | X   | X         | X         | X         |     | X     |
| Korean             | X     |        | X      | X   |           | X         | X         | X   |       |
| Malayalam          |       |        |        |     |           |           |           | X   |       |
| Marathi            | X     |        |        | X   | X         | X***      |           | X   |       |
| Norwegian          |       |        |        |     |           | X         | X         |     |       |
| Polish             | X     |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Portuguese         |       |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Brazil             | X     |        |        |     |           |           | X         | X   | x     |
| Portugal           |       |        |        |     | X         |           |           |     |       |
| Romanian           | X     | X      | X      | X   | X         | X         | X         | X   | X     |
| Russian            | X     |        |        | X   |           |           | X         | X   |       |
| Slovenian          |       |        |        |     |           | X         |           |     |       |
| Spanish            |       |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Latin America      | X     |        | X      | X** | X         | X         | X         | X   | X     |
| Spain              | X     |        | X      |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Swedish            |       |        |        |     | X**       | X         | X         | X** | X     |
| Thai               |       |        | X      |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Turkish            | X     |        |        | X   |           | X         |           |     |       |
| Ukrainian          | X     |        |        |     |           |           |           |     |       |
| Vietnamese         |       |        |        |     |           |           |           | X** |       |

o = under consideration; \*Electronic translations of some chapters

\*\*Electronic of entire book; \*\*\*Abridged edition