



The Vanishing Face of Gaia: A Final Warning

By James Lovelock

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The Vanishing Face of Gaia: A Final Warning By James Lovelock

The global temperature is rising, the ice caps are melting, and levels of pollution across the world have reached unprecedented heights. According to eminent scientist James Lovelock, in order to survive an assault from her dependents, the Earth is lurching ever closer to a permanent “hot state.” Within the next century, we will almost certainly be forced to give up many of the comforts of western living as supplies are threatened. Only the fittest—and the smartest—will survive.

A reluctant jeremiad from one of the environmental movement's elder statesmen, *The Vanishing Face of Gaia* offers an essential wake-up call for the human race.

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Editorial Review

From Publishers Weekly

Lovelock (*The Revenge of Gaia*) presents evidence of a dire future for our planet. The controversial originator of Gaia theory (which views Earth as a self-regulating, evolving system made of organisms, the surface rocks, the ocean and the atmosphere with the goal always to be as favorable for contemporary life as possible) proposes an even more inconvenient truth than Al Gore's. No voluntary human act can reduce our numbers fast enough even to slow climate change. Nevertheless, human civilization has a duty to survive in the few safe havens—the far north and south, islands like Great Britain and Tasmania—free from the drought that will overtake most of the Earth. While Lovelock's propensity to ramble is disconcerting, his predictions are persuasive—although some readers will be appalled by his contention that democracy may need to be abandoned to appropriately confront the challenge. (*May*)

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From School Library Journal

In his sixth book on Gaia, the eminent 91-year-old British scientist who originated the Gaia Theory to explain the interconnectedness between our planet's climate and life takes an elegiac tone and cosmic perspective in predicting our near future. Challenging the scientific consensus of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, he believes it is too late to reverse global warming. We must accept that Earth is moving inexorably into a long-term "hot state." Most humans will die off, and we must prepare havens like northern Canada, where some climate refugees can survive. Lovelock rejects the results of climate computer modeling when they clash with scientific observation. For example, he points out that sea levels are rising significantly faster than models predicted. Lovelock advocates solar thermal and nuclear power as the best substitutes for burning fossil fuels, and he suggests emergency global geoengineering projects that might cool the planet. But Lovelock also avows today's ecological efforts are futile. This is a somber prophecy written with an authority that cannot be dismissed. Recommended for all academic and public libraries.—David Conn, Surrey P.L., B.C.

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From [Booklist](#)

Independent scientist and originator of the Gaia theory, Lovelock makes his broadest assertions yet that because the planet is in an unrecoverable trajectory for climate change, life as we know it cannot be preserved. The world, he declares, must concentrate immediately on building "sustainable lifeboats" in various island countries and accept that a large portion of the population will not survive the coming decades. Plans for switching to renewable energy are summarily dismissed as inefficient and not technologically advanced, and while he does admire Al Gore's efforts, Lovelock sees too much activist "cheerleading" and too little concentration on the ugly truths he predicts. Nuclear energy is his only viable answer, but his argument is obviously weak. Although Lovelock, now 90 years old, has been a powerful environmental voice, one wonders if he has finally decided that few of us are worth saving. He does not consider the transformative power of human innovation in crisis, and the arrogance with which he delivers his pronouncements makes this more of a rant than a serious discussion. --Colleen Mondor

Users Review

From reader reviews:

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