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Facts and figures about the origin of the Universe and Earth, our unique planet. This chapter provides you with background knowledge of our precious planet, the evolution of life on Earth and the emergence of modern humans.

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Facts and figures about the development of human society. This chapter provides you with background knowledge of the whole of human history from the hunter-gatherers through to the reign of consumer capitalism.

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We have the power to control our own lives and influence those around us – this chapter provides a clear set of positive actions that you as an individual can take. Individuals are our powerbase for change.

## **CHAPTER 7: CORPORATE POSITIVE POWER**

Businesses control our lives: what we eat, what we buy, what we watch and even who we vote for. This chapter discusses how we can harness the positive power of corporations, so we can change the world. Companies are one of our major weapons of change.

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Governments look after our safety and our wellbeing. They control the aspirations of civil society through the rule of law and the development of policy. This chapter discusses how regulation, taxation, subsidies and incentives all play a role in how governments can make our societies more sustainable and ultimately reduce our carbon emissions to zero. Governments drive innovation.

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## About the Author

Mark Maslin is a Professor of Earth System Science at University College London. He is the former Director of the UCL Environment Institute and a leading voice in the battle against climate change.

Mark's areas of scientific expertise include understanding the origins of the Anthropocene, the causes of past and future climate change, and the environmental challenges facing humanity in the 21st century. Mark is a Royal Society Wolfson Research Scholar and has been a Royal Society Industrial Fellow. He has published over 175 papers in journals such as *Science*, *Nature* and *The Lancet*.

Mark is the author of eight popular books including *The Human Planet* and *Cradle of Humanity*. He regularly speaks at major literary and science festivals, has written articles for publications like *The Times*, *New Scientist*, *New York Times*, *Independent* and *Guardian*, and has appeared on *Newsnight*, *Time Team*, *BBC News* and *Dispatches*. Mark was also an advisor and key contributor to David Attenborough's 2019 BBC One programme *Climate Change: The Facts*.

To my mother,  
Catherine Anne Maslin  
(1943–2020).

Without whom I would not  
be the person I am today.

For everyone who is prepared to fight for a better world.

# PREFACE

The global awareness of climate change and the environmental crisis has grown very rapidly – through Greta Thunberg-led schools strikes, Extinction Rebellion, the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) high-impact reports, the BBC One documentary *Climate Change: The Facts* and governments all around the world declaring we are in a climate emergency.

This awareness is continuing to grow.

The science shows us that our planet and our species are facing a massive crisis, which we have caused.

Such is its urgency that we need to act now.

There are many books out there on climate change.

Some want to scare you and some want to preach at you.

*This book is different.*

It is for anyone and everyone to pick up and read.

I wanted to write a book that makes people feel smarter, more knowledgeable and empowered to act.

This is a book you can quote in the pub or at a dinner party or even in Parliament.

This is a new style of book to engage everyone who wants to make a difference.

This is a short and punchy handbook that will empower you by providing the knowledge and insight to act to save our planet.

\* \* \*

This is not a linear book.



You do not have to start at the beginning or the end.

Each chapter is self-contained.

Choose the most relevant chapter for you and read that one first.

The book is inspired by Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*. Like that book, it is written in short sentences and phrases – each one laden with meaning.

Because to save the planet and ourselves we need to be on a war footing – we need to engage every part of our society in the battle against climate change and environment destruction.

Each factual statement is supported by numbered key references that are listed in full at the end of the book, so that you can check every statement I make.

I want this book to be read by everyone – because I honestly believe that together we can make this a better, safer, healthier planet for all humanity.

# INTRODUCTION

In the second half of the 20th century, our creativity and cooperation brought about unprecedented peace, prosperity and individual freedom.

Yet our institutions and the paradigms that enabled these successes are not keeping pace with our rapidly changing world.

Growing environmental stress, climate change, accelerating technological change and intensifying social inequality increasingly appear beyond the ability of our governments and our societies to manage.

We have entered a new geological period of time – the Anthropocene.

We have become the new geological superpower on our planet – changing the climate and the environment quicker than the moving of the continents or the waxing and waning of the great ice ages.

Climate change is the greatest threat we have ever faced.

**WE HAVE ENTERED A NEW  
GEOLOGICAL PERIOD OF  
TIME – THE ANTHROPOCENE**

**FACTS HAVE THE POWER TO  
CHANGE OUR WORLD**

Climate change denial is still rampant, paralysing all areas of our society.

We can all help to deal with denial – this very human emotion.

Facts are power.

Facts have the power to change our world.

We need to develop new modes of thinking for the 21st century to creatively and collectively tackle these challenges.

This book provides a simple, powerful, indisputable message about our future and the world we decide to leave our children.

No waffle, just facts.

This is a clear call for action.

The 21st century is when we save our planet from ourselves.

**NOW WE ARE CREATING  
GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE**

Climate change in Africa created modern humans.<sup>23</sup>

Now we are creating global climate change.<sup>51</sup>

This climate change is threatening to destroy us.<sup>51</sup>

We need to use all our evolutionary gifts to save ourselves and our planet.



# **CHAPTER 2:**

# **HISTORY OF HUMANITY**

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