

# Education for the Anthropocene: How to prepare for unprecedented challenges?

Prof Thomas Reuter  
University of Melbourne

**WAAS Conference on the Future of Education**

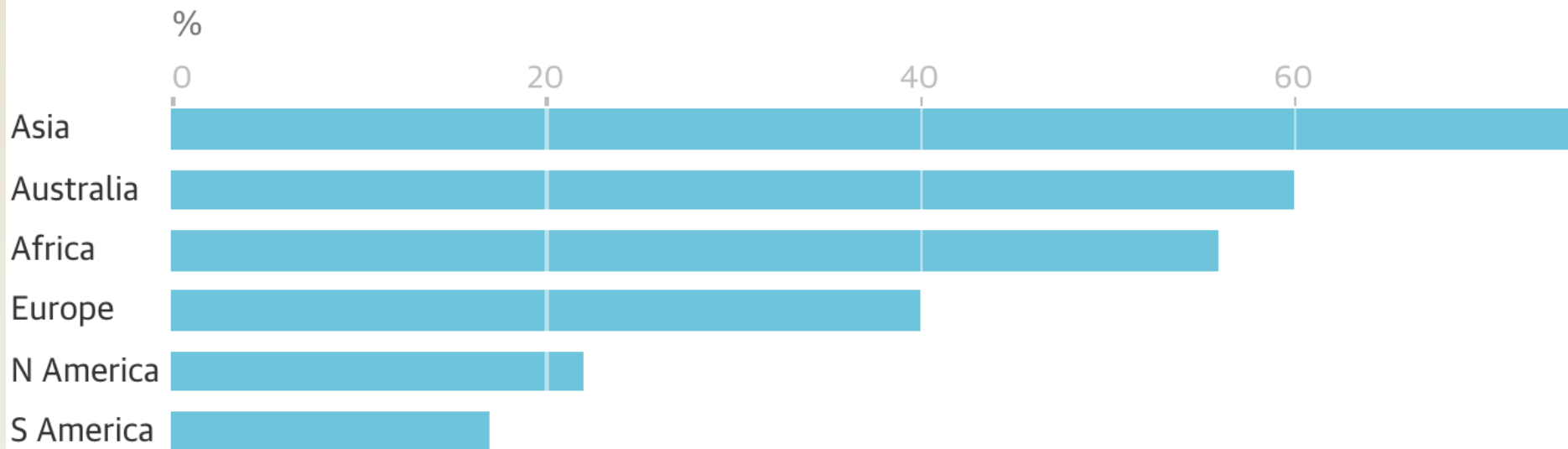
**Panel Discussion 1.2: *Educating culturally different, environmentally responsible and globally aware citizens***

**Belgrade, 12 November 2019**

# The Anthropocene: Uncertain Futures

Planet Earth has left the stable climate of the Holocene and entered a more uncertain Anthropocene epoch. Evidence shows we exceed planetary boundaries, including climate change, ocean acidification and mass extinction. The cause of the crisis lies in the anthropocentric assumptions underpinning our economic and social structures.

% of species which have lost more than 80% of their range



# Geocentric Education

1. Stewardship: Taking responsibility for the Earth?

Key controversy:

MORE CONTROL OF VS MORE RESPECT FOR NATURE



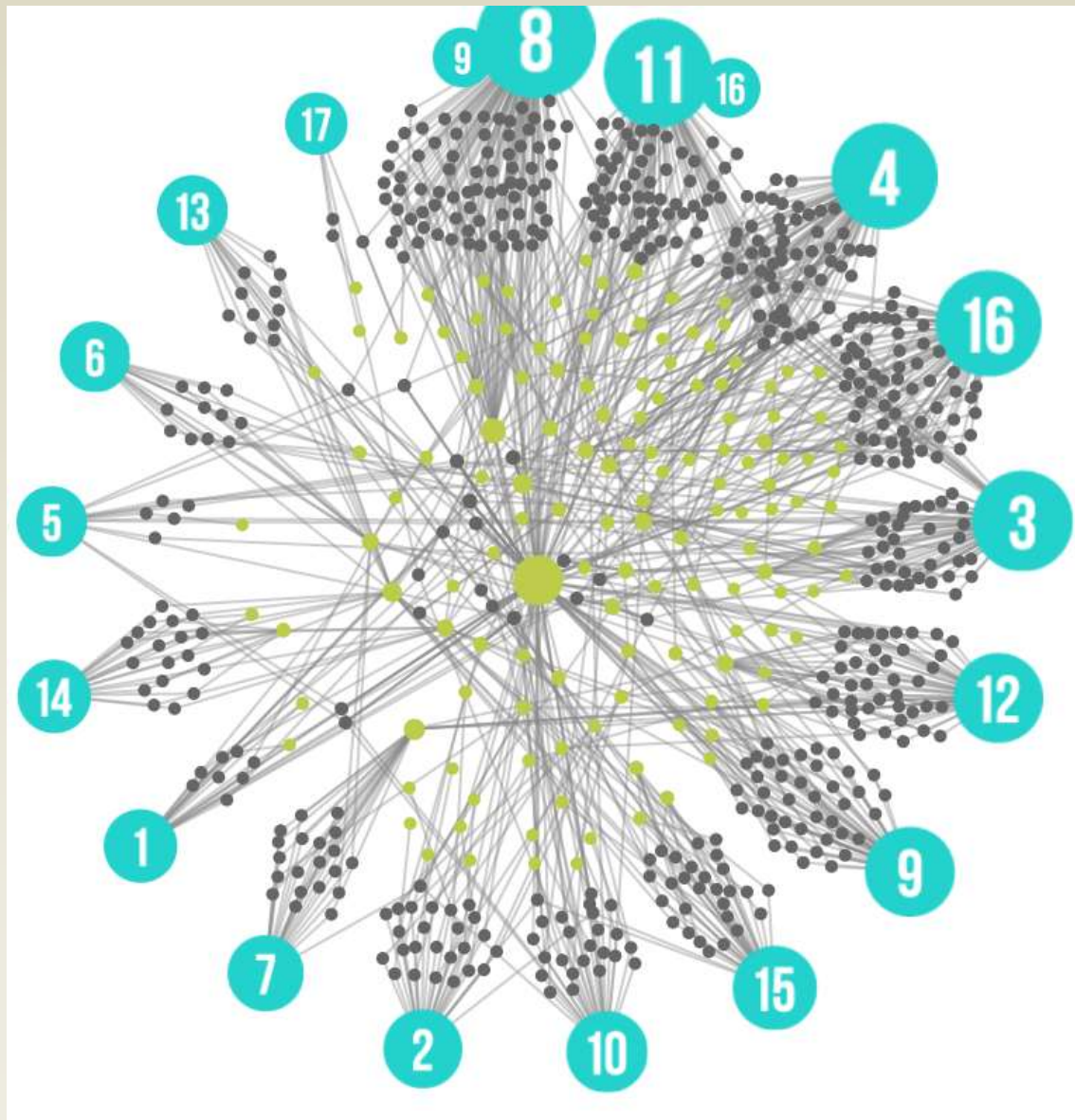
# Geocentric Education

## 2. Integrated learning.

Key issue:

SYSTEM THINKING.

Requires More interdisciplinary & Inter-sectorial Learning (=outreach by educational institutions)



# Geocentric Education

## 3. Collective Wisdom.

Key issue:

Teaching young people to question unconscious cultural assumptions about the modernist way of life and create opportunity to deliberate and reflect on new values and life-styles



# Geocentric Education

## 4. Sufficiency.

Key issue: SURVIVAL IN CONTENTMENT.

Young people will need survival skills not just as individuals but as communities (= practical & social skills).

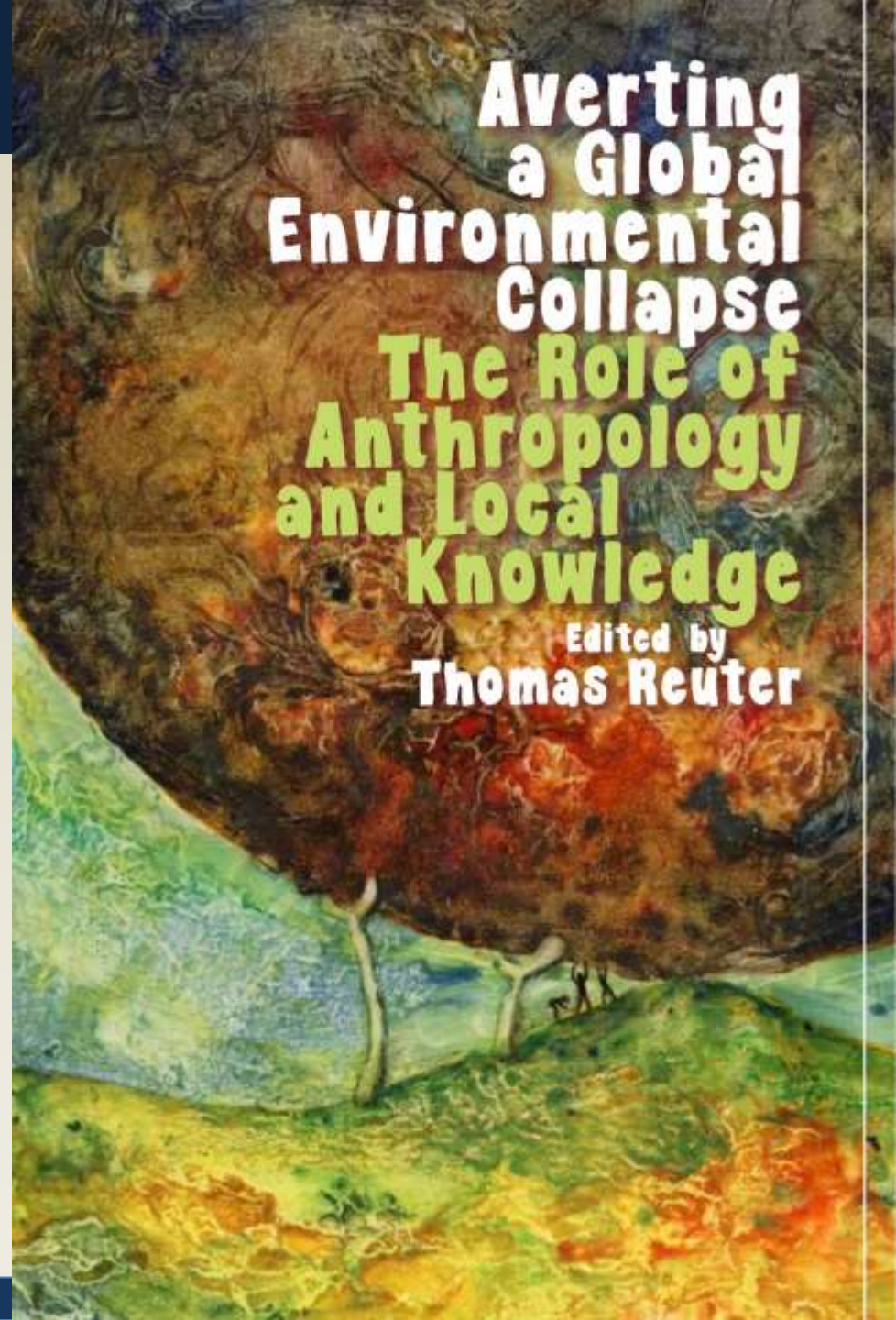
An anti-consumerist/materialist philosophy will be essential.



**NB: Advertisement ;-)**

5. Teaching more SOCIAL SCIENCE to better equip youth to AVERT A GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL COLLAPSE

-- namely by studying social impacts of climate change, potentials for adaptation & scope for local sustainability action)



# ANY SMOKE SIGNS?

Italian education minister Lorenzo Fioramonti (5\*) at the end of September send a letter to schools urging lenience in dealing with students participating in F4F climate strikes. Now he is calling for making climate change and sustainability studies a compulsory school subject in Italy (would be a global first).





**THANK YOU  
FOR YOUR ATTENTION**

**Contact:**

**Prof Thomas Reuter**

**Asia Institute**

**University of Melbourne**

**Email: [thor2525@gmail.com](mailto:thor2525@gmail.com)**