

# FUTURE INSTITUTE FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION

Positioning towards the “New World Order” of 2026

# STARTING POINT AS OF FEBRUARY 2026

WE ARE ENTERING A NEW GEOPOLITICAL AND ECONOMIC WORLD ORDER.



As just recently confirmed by the German chancellor Friedrich Merz, **we are entering a “New world order” at high speed<sup>1)</sup>**.

Though Sustainable Transformation and connected risks will become increasingly important long-term<sup>2)</sup>, **this new world order highly prioritizes coping with global conflicts, national interests and raising trade barriers short- and mid-term.**



Given this development, **our offering becomes more relevant than ever** for companies and enterprises located in Europe.

1) DIE ZEIT (2026). „[Ministerin als Standortnachteil](#)“

2) UN Global Compact & Accenture. „[Today, 88% of CEOs believe the business case for sustainability is stronger than it was five years ago](#)“

# MAIN ECONOMIC CHALLENGES

RESULTING FROM THIS CONTINUOUSLY DEVELOPING NEW WORLD ORDER.

## GROWING CHALLENGES:

## OUR OFFERING:

1

### SOURCING

The new world order is determined by increasing scarcities<sup>1)</sup> and cost<sup>2)</sup> of natural resources as well as critical materials.



2

### USAGE & DISTRIBUTION

Resource & materials savings of any kind will become instrumental; distribution becomes increasingly cost intensive.



3

### CONSERVATION

The UK government officially assesses global ecosystem degradation as a high national security risk<sup>3)</sup>.



A

### SOURCING STRATEGY & STRATEGIC FORESIGHT

Science-backed analysis & forecast of future global developments and derivation of purposeful handling imperatives & holistic strategies.



B

### CIRCULAR SETUPS & OPTIMIZATION INITIATIVES

LCA<sup>4)</sup>-based transformation concepts towards circular material flows and tailor-made optimization computations in resource management and logistics.



C

### APPLIED RESEARCH & EDUCATION

Action-oriented scientific research & education on climate regulation, biodiversity protection and natural disaster mitigation.



1) Cp. Appendixes A, B, C  
2) Cp. Appendix D

3) Cp. Appendix E  
4) Lifecycle Analysis (LCA)

# WE ARE BELIEVERS IN “TWIN TRANSITION”.

WHEREVER ADEQUATE, WE APPLY STATE-OF-THE-ART COMPUTATIONAL SCIENCE  
AS A LEVER FOR SUSTAINABLE TRANSFORMATION.



# LEVERAGE OF BEST-OF-BREED CONNECTIONS

OUR EXTENSIVE NETWORK OF ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

## OUR PARTNERS



Potsdam Institute for  
Climate Impact Research



Frankfurt Zoological Society



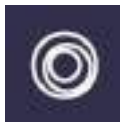
Senckenberg Society



Leibniz Institute



Food for Biodiversity e.V.



Ellen McArthur Foundation

**+ various Partners from Corporate, Finance,  
and NGOs spheres**

## OUR REGULAR SPEAKERS AND FACULTY MEMBERS



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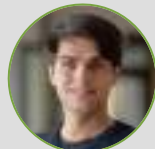
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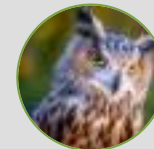
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UN Global Compact founder,  
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**+ many more thought  
leaders from various fields  
of relevant expertise**



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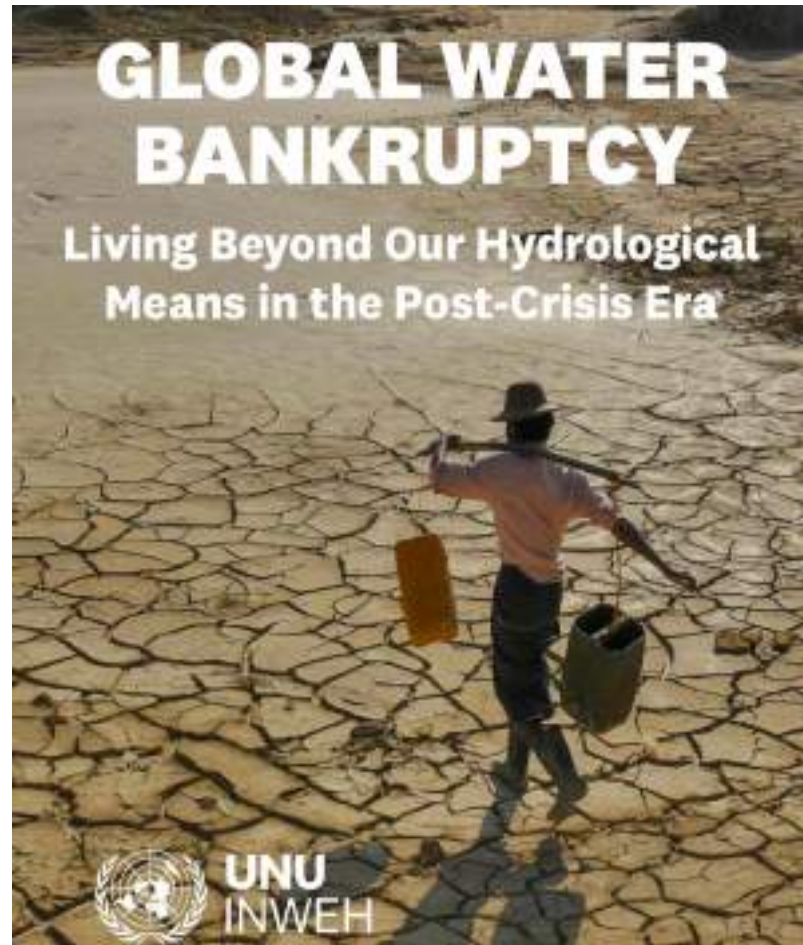


# APPENDIX

# WATER SCARCITY

## APPENDIX A

### Water bankruptcy: The geopolitical crisis is already here



#### Water Bankruptcy



#### Persistent post-crisis state

- Long-term over-extraction has degraded aquifers, rivers, and ecosystems, reduced hydrological carrying capacity, and caused irreversible damage.
- Only partial, costly recovery is possible; governance must focus on demand reduction, reallocation, and adaptation.

#### Numbers at a glance:

- **75%** of humanity lives in water-insecure countries
- **70%** of major aquifers show long-term decline
- **410M hectares** of wetlands lost ( $\approx$  EU land area) = **€4.9 trillion** in ecosystem losses

| Security Dimension     | Scale of Impact                                                                                                              |
|------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Food systems</b>    | 70% of water withdrawals for agriculture; 3 billion people + 50% of food production in declining water storage areas         |
| <b>Economic damage</b> | €295billion/year drought costs: exceeds GDP of 75% of UN states                                                              |
| <b>Conflicts</b>       | Transboundary rivers operate on treaties assuming flows that no longer exist; 1.8B people under drought conditions (2022-23) |

# CRITICAL MATERIALS RUSH

## APPENDIX B

### The Greenland case study: Geopolitical competition for Arctic resources

#### Greenland's strategic value:

The island holds an **estimated 25% of global rare earth reserves** plus significant uranium, lithium, and copper - critical for energy transition, defence systems, and AI infrastructure.



#### Competing interests:

- **US:** 2019/2025/26 purchase offer; Thule Air Base presence
- **China:** Dominates refining (76% rare earths)
- **EU:** Critical Raw Materials Act (2023) targets 10% domestic sourcing by 2030
- **Greenland:** April 2025 independence referendum (63% approval); sovereignty by 2029 reshapes negotiations

| Material                  | Strategic use                       | Greenland stance                           |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| <b>Rare Earths (REEs)</b> | EVs, wind turbines, defence magnets | World's 2nd largest deposit                |
| <b>Uranium</b>            | Nuclear energy, military            | Significant reserves                       |
| <b>Lithium</b>            | EV batteries, grid storage          | Emerging exploration, Australian companies |
| <b>Copper</b>             | Data centres, grid infrastructure   | Substantial deposits                       |

# ADDITIONAL THEMES: ENERGY AVAILABILITY

## APPENDIX C

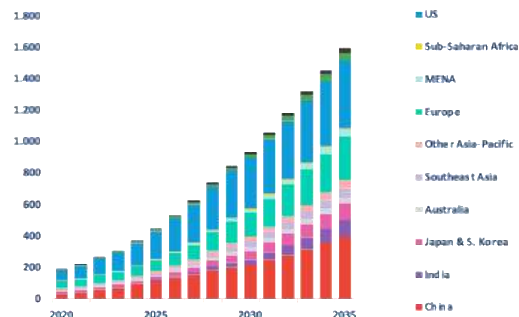
### Energy availability – Becoming exponentially relevant for all nations globally



The **availability of inexpensive energy** at large becomes a **major survival factor for nations globally**. If this energy **demand** is not **fulfilled sustainably**, climate issues will intensify further.

#### AI and data centers deepen the growth vs. emissions dilemma

##### Data-center energy demand



- By 2035 Data centers will consume almost 3% of the global energy demand
- 4<sup>th</sup> largest consumer of energy behind US, China and India

### 1. Foundation for a thriving national industry:

- Already the FUTURE CEO study of 2024 unveiled that inexpensive energy has become a defining location factor

### 2. A factor of national independency:

- EU energy commissioner warns to not “exchange one dependency with another” (Russia -> U.S.A.)
- Propelling renewable energy and new energy research has become real-world resilience policy

### 3. Foundation for future digital growth:

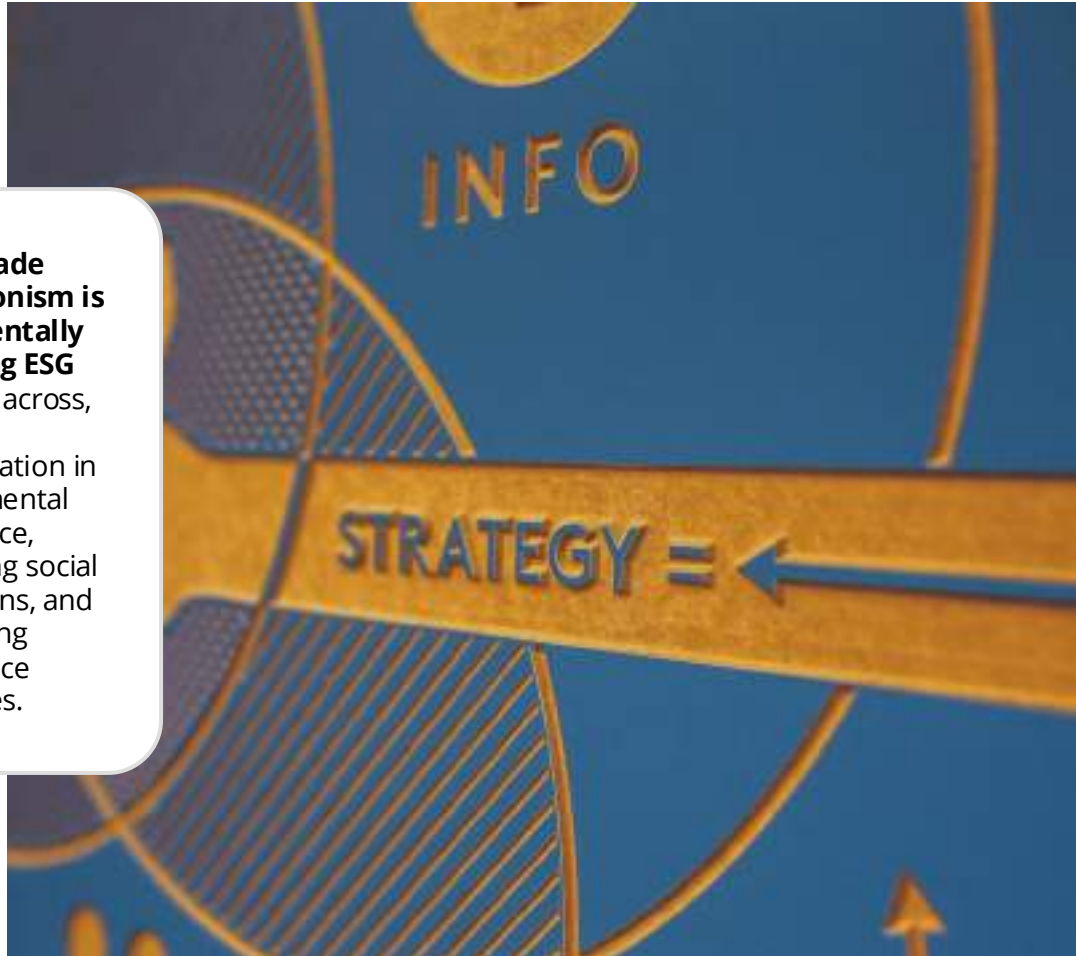
- Energy is already critical today for future technologies:  
“The biggest issue we are now having is not a compute glut, but it’s power,” (Satya Nadella, CEO Microsoft)
- Currently, the gap is being closed with extremely emission-intensive on-site gas turbines also threatening health levels of adjacent neighborhoods

# TRADE UNDER PRESSURE

## APPENDIX D

**Trade policies and geopolitical tensions** will continue shaping global commerce in 2026

**Rising trade protectionism is fundamentally reshaping ESG** priorities across, creating fragmentation in environmental compliance, weakening social dimensions, and intensifying governance challenges.



### Key drivers of pressure

- Strategic tariffs and trade barriers, including export controls
- Shift from cost-driven globalization to friendshoring and geopolitical alignment, with firms prioritizing “trusted” partners
- Rising geopolitical risks slow trade growth and raise costs
- Potential trade divisions along political blocs

### Economic impacts

- Slowing or contracting world merchandise trade growth expected in 2026
- Uncertain global economic outlook linked to trade policy ambiguity
- Regional supply chains gain importance
- Firms diversify to reduce geopolitical risks

# BIODIVERSITY LOSS

## APPENDIX E

### Global biodiversity loss – recognized by the UK as a national security threat



The UK report states that accelerating biodiversity loss and ecosystem collapse pose a **security risk for food, water, climate and economic systems** and increasing migration and conflict.



#### Key arguments of this report:

- The UK government assesses **global ecosystem degradation as a high national security risk**
- **All critical ecosystems are on a pathway to collapse**; some (e.g. coral reefs, boreal forests) may begin collapsing **from 2030 onwards**
- **Food, water and supply chain disruptions** are likely to increase across Europe
- Loss of ecosystem services undermines economic security (UK valuation: **£87bn / ~3% of GDP** as reference)
- **Spill-over risks** include geopolitical competition, conflict, migration, pandemics and economic instability
- **Ecosystem protection and restoration** are identified as more effective and lower-risk than technological fixes alone

# ADDITIONAL THEME: SOVEREIGN AI & CYBERATTACKS **FUTURE**<sup>IST</sup>

Institute for Sustainable Transformation

## APPENDIX F

AI sovereignty and cyber risk are no longer tech issues; they are **systemic ESG and geopolitical challenges**

AI systems, data centers, critical infrastructure are increasingly under attack and with **harmful AI services** crossing ethical boundaries, **AI governance, cyber resilience** is becoming more crucial than ever.



- **State-aligned cyber operations** target AI systems, data centers, public services and critical infrastructure
- States increasingly **compete over control** over data, compute, models and AI supply chains
- Some AI services are societally harmful, **crossing legal and/or ethical boundaries** (e.g. Grok with nude imagery of children and women)
- **ESG implications:**
  - Digital sovereignty intersects with social stability, economic resilience and trust in institutions
  - Energy-intensive AI infrastructure raises climate, resource and biodiversity pressures
  - Governance of AI, data and AI ethics and cyber resilience becomes a core concern

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**PLEASE FEEL FREE TO GET IN CONTACT IF YOU WOULD  
LIKE TO LEARN ABOUT CONCRETE CASES OF OURS.**