

Simon Mainwaring:

From WeFirst and Goal 17 media, welcome to Lead with We, I'm Simon Mainwaring, and today I'm speaking with Paul Hawken, whose decades of thought leadership, writing, and collaboration with leading brands, has laid the groundwork for the critical global shift towards a regenerative economy.

Simon Mainwaring:

And we'll be discussing how together we make the critical transition by following the actionable roadmap laid out in his new book, Regeneration.

Simon Mainwaring:

Paul, welcome to Lead With We.

Paul Hawken:

Thank you so much, I love the term. I love it. I can't even tell you how much it means to me, because when I did Drawdown and also Regeneration, and worked with big community of researchers and scholars, and advisors, I said, "This is we talking to we", as opposed to on the stage talking and I know you don't listen up, it's the other way around, which is we're a community, we know a lot together, we love to work together, let's share it together.

Paul Hawken:

And so when I saw Lead With We, I said, "Oh yeah."

Simon Mainwaring:

You know, I really appreciate you saying that, because I think a lot of the stress or tension around what we're going to talk about today comes from this sort of false separation, this binary idea, where it's me against you, us versus them, male versus female. Would you say that fair?

Paul Hawken:

More than fair, I think that what has crept into our politics, into our economics, into our cultural beliefs, and into the climate world as a whole, very much so is othering. And we are othering each other, that's racism, that's anti-Semitism, that is obviously the Me Too movement and sexism.

Paul Hawken:

But it's also the climate movement, which is basically using words like, "We're going to fight, tackle, combat, it's a battle, we're going to mitigate." Nobody, Simon, wakes up in the morning and says, "I can't wait to mitigate," they don't even know what it means.

Simon Mainwaring:

Right.

Paul Hawken:

And so what we have done in our languaging about climate is about really global warming actually, but what we've done is separate human beings from it, as if it was out there somewhere, and our job is to fix it, and there's no "it", because the way we're thinking about it is the problem itself.

Simon Mainwaring:

It's absolutely true, this idea that we're somehow separate from each other and separate from the natural world, is a fiction that I don't know how we manifested and maintained for so long. But I want to step back for a second and ...

Simon Mainwaring:

You've been a thought leader, out front, inspiring folks for so many decades now, but I'm often intrigued by where did your journey begin, as someone who's a leader today.

Simon Mainwaring:

I was doing some reading, and way back when [Mitsukoshi 00:03:08] ... Was that something that informed way back when in your day, this sort of Japanese thinking, the relationship to the environment and so on, where did your journey begin?

Paul Hawken:

My journey began outside, when I was four or five years old, six years old, and in my house it wasn't safe. I mean, boohoo, I don't go into that. But I'm just saying, I was not safe inside my home, so I went outdoors.

Paul Hawken:

As much as I could, as I often as I could, I went outside. And here's the interesting thing about that, if you're three, four, five years old, you can master the inside of a house in the couple hours, light switches, a refrigerator, if you have a TV, turn it off and on, whatever. I mean, you're done.

Paul Hawken:

If you go outside, which I did, and sat outside, walked outside, you don't know what's going on. And you don't know the names of things, you don't know who's making that sound, you lift up a rock and things are crawling away, what they are, where are they going. There were snakes outside, what is that snake, where is it going, where does it live. It goes on and on.

Paul Hawken:

So what developed in me, Simon, was curiosity. Like, you go outside and you don't know anything. There's a leaf, what is it, what kind of tree is that, what are those berries on the tree, are they good or are they poisonous? All that sort of stuff.

Paul Hawken:

And for me, you can spend 10 lifetimes outside and not understand what's going on. But you can study it, you can embrace it, and I always felt safe outside.

Simon Mainwaring:

I think feeling safe outside is an idea that we've lost. I think sometimes we huddle together in fear in cities, and as you say we other each other. And they're all symptoms of a larger fear-based mentality, which works against an inclusive idea, which is so critical to what we're talking about today, and in your new book *Regeneration* and so on.

Simon Mainwaring:

But from that beginning, you then went on to really commit your life to it. You wrote the Ecology of Commerce that business readers like Ray Anderson said, "It was like a spear in the chest," and really transformed their business and by extension their industry. Natural capitalism. You founded Project Drawdown, which is a non-profit that really researches global warming. Plus you've been an intrapreneur yourself, you've got Smith & Hawken, you've had a wholesale food company, you've had OneSun.

Simon Mainwaring:

So you're uniquely positioned at the intersection of all of these different sort of turning points, or sort of thought leadership streams in and around the impact of humanity on the planet.

Simon Mainwaring:

We've now reached a unique moment in time where, much like the IPCC report declared, it's code red for humanity, where we're at a point of crisis, and we have one or two responses. We can either show up meaningfully, collectively, inclusively, or we can sort of capitulate in some ways, and throw our hands up and point at each other and blame each other.

Simon Mainwaring:

Now, how would you characterize this moment through the lens of the last five decades that you live. Is it our last and only attempt to course-correct before things are irrevocable, or do you feel like this is actually a positive turning point, and we can build on something very positive that's already underway?

Paul Hawken:

It's a really good question. There's two things that are going back 50 years and what I would call, in the last few weeks, the release of the sixth assessment of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, Core Red, occurring at a time when the Northern Hemisphere was basically on fire, Siberia, Greece, Spain, Canada, United States, California. And interestingly, fires in many cases that we couldn't put out.

Paul Hawken:

When I was a lad, I went to high school in Sierra Nevada here in California, and we would be called at fires, to go out and work the fire lines. And people knew what they were doing, and no one liked it, but you know what you do. You never had the sense that this fire can get out of control. You knew how the [inaudible 00:07:29], how to control all that sort of stuff.

Paul Hawken:

Now it's so dry, and the winds are so different than they were when I was growing up, the wind is different. They don't talk about that enough. Which you try to do is make sure you don't get killed, and which you try to do is make sure that you can save as much as you can save downwind.

Paul Hawken:

So it's a very different regime, ecological regime we're in today than we were, say, 50 years ago, or 30 years ago and so forth.

Paul Hawken:

I think what happened in the last 50 years or so is that that's when global warming came into the public sphere. Now, it was talked about, it was reported, there was news commentary about it, and basically all that happened until today, a very small group of people have known about it, noted it, written about it, talked about it, and have tried, effectively, by the way, to take action. But it's a tiny, tiny minority of humankind.

Paul Hawken:

And right now, after 50 years of being in the public sphere, global warming that is, and the dangers that we predicted then, 10 years ago, 20 years ago, 30 years ago, the predictions were not only right, but things are happening sooner than those predictions, not later.

Paul Hawken:

Even though that's happening, 98 to 99% of humanity is disengaged, and not doing anything about it. And so my question isn't to point fingers and blame people and so forth, it's to step back and say, "Wow, what was that massive failure of communication? Where did it originate from?" And it goes right back to what you brought out about othering, about this separation, so forth.

Paul Hawken:

The language that was used was about ... Just numbed people. First it was about threat and fear, and the science justifies that, by the way, so it's not irrational. But there was threat and fear, and then when activists took hold of it and said, "Look at the science," then it was blame, and shame, and finger-pointing, and then polar bears and calving glaciers.

Paul Hawken:

I mean, it's imagery to somehow startle us in such a way that we did something. And the fact is, we know from neuroscience and brain 101, it doesn't work. And it just turns people off. They go numb.

Paul Hawken:

And so you have about, like I say, 40 to 50, no one knows exactly, percent of the world that actually understands that global warming is not the [inaudible 00:10:22], but does nothing about it. They're sympathetic, and if they watch a documentary on Netflix they think they've done something and so forth.

Paul Hawken:

And so that's what we have to just, "How do we do that?" How do we communicate going forward, because it has to be different than what we've done in the past. And that's what Regeneration is absolutely about.

Simon Mainwaring:

And I want to get specific on that term, Regeneration, but it almost sounds like, and I agree with you, this crisis is, in a sense, a good thing, because it's really captured our attention, it's almost like humanity is guilty of kicking the can down the road until there's a moment of urgency. And we saw that with the pandemic, when we were facing a challenge larger than ourselves, and it was really something that everyone had to pay attention to. We mobilized in ways that were unimaginable before.

Simon Mainwaring:

And so, arguably, this point of tension, or inflection that we're at, is a good thing. And you characterize it now in terms of how we can end the climate crisis in one generation. And I really want to call out, this is Paul's new book, *Regeneration: Ending The Climate Crisis In One Generation*. And there's an urgency to that. And that informs the whole roadmap.

Simon Mainwaring:

So let's start at the beginning. What does regeneration mean? It's one of those buzzwords you're hearing more and more out there, but just tease out some of the higher order themes within it, because I know it's a complicated idea.

Paul Hawken:

It is complicated and simple, both, from my point of view. I knew I was going to write this book five years ago, so this is not trying to converge, and I've seen, like you are, this word become very popular, and the reason I think it's becoming popular, because regeneration is a burgeoning movement across the world.

Paul Hawken:

Most people think it applies to agriculture. Not. It does, really, saliently and potently apply to agriculture, it applies to everything. Everything we do, everything we make, everything that we serve ... Services that we get and return. It applies to culture, applies to just all aspects of human behavior.

Paul Hawken:

The definition I use for regeneration is putting life at the center of every act and decision. It's a very simple definition. And that's just an orientation, looking at what we do, what we think, what we buy, how we interact with each other, with a natural world, with the world of goods and services. And is that what we're doing? And what does it mean?

Paul Hawken:

So for me regeneration is a word that actually has big arms. And the reason for that is sustainability was an interesting word, but I don't think it had big arms, and no one knew exactly what it meant anyway. Like when did you achieve sustainability? Is it a balance point, how you measure it, who's to say? All that sort of stuff is so ambiguous.

Paul Hawken:

Regeneration is a little different in a sense it's innate to being a human being. All 30 trillion of your cells right now are regenerating every nanosecond, or we wouldn't be having this conversation.

Paul Hawken:

So every human being is regenerating. Furthermore, everything we do ... Not everything, but basically what we do as living beings, we are living beings, we're species, we're here on the planet, walking around. I mean, we regenerate ourselves by breathing, the air, water, or food. Some people can't, we do it with our children, we do it with our pets, we do it with our garden, we do it in how we care for others, we do it in our synagogue, our church, our temple, whatever ...

Paul Hawken:

All these, doing that, we don't use that term. But life creates the conditions for life, and so what we are doing on a daily basis is trying to create the conditions for life. And what's happened is we have created, inadvertently, mistakenly, an economic system that is the opposite. It's one that extracts life, it's an extractive economy. And so if you follow the breadcrumb trail back in anything you buy and any service you receive, you'll find that it is extracting life from the living world, from the oceans, from the land, from the forest, from the soil. And from people, by the way.

Paul Hawken:

And so what we're looking at is basically an economy that is not about stealing the future. When you take life, you are degenerating, that's what degeneration is. And so we're stealing the future from our children, and their children, and generations to come. And this is an inflection point. This is the point where we go, "Got it, whoa, let's do a 180."

Paul Hawken:

And we can have a prosperous economy with the GDP, that's about healing the future instead of stealing it.

Simon Mainwaring:

Now, before I shift to the positive focus of your plan in regeneration, I want to kind of honor the cynics with one more question, which is, I see certain forces working against this shift, whether it's legacy industries like energy and so on, where a few ill-organized players cannot compete with a lot of disparate non-profits and social enterprises and well-intended companies.

Simon Mainwaring:

I see a large majority of people in the Global South, shall we say, where they want their day at the banquet table of capitalism, they want their consumer goods, they want their cars, their flat screens, God knows what. And then there are the vast majority, who live on under 10 dollars a day, for whom fixing the world is a luxury they can't even entertain, they're just trying to survive or get clean water.

Simon Mainwaring:

So, the risk of oversimplifying, just those three forces, how do we overcome the inertia of that? Some of it, we are very proactive and intentional, and the part of legacy brands, some of it, just the distraction by survival in the case of others. How do we work against that? How do we compete with that?

Paul Hawken:

It's an interesting question in terms of its pronoun, because you used "we", and actually "we" can also be a burden. It's how do we, basically, address poverty, corruption, banality? And when I finished the book, *Regeneration*, I hired a decolonization editor, because in our language, if you're white, especially if you're white male, you will say things with great intention, good intention, and you won't realize that from the point of view of a brown, black or indigenous person, they look and they're going, "Really?"

Paul Hawken:

Because embedded, and stitched into those sentences, paragraphs and words is privilege, and settler mentality, and colonist mentality, and dominant mentality and so forth. We don't see it, we're born into

it, okay? And so it was focusing on ... So he did that, [Kyle Whyte 00:17:59], University of Michigan, citizen of Potawatomi, Native American, and on the very first page I used that editorial "we", we are facing, I don't know, the greatest crisis civilization has ever blah blah blah ... Okay, we, we, we, we. And he circled it and put it in the margin notes, he said, "Who is we?" Good question.

Simon Mainwaring:

Good question.

Paul Hawken:

You don't speak for me. You don't speak for my culture. And so speak, for sure, but don't "we" us. So I mean, it runs [inaudible 00:18:39], but I don't think so, what you're saying is about community. Soil is a community, so you don't put poison on it. You want healthy plants, you've got to have a healthy soil, you don't put poison in it, pesticides or herbicides or anything else.

Paul Hawken:

And so the same thing, we talk about these forces, the inertia, the word you used, ugly things, we will have to step back and understand that basically all solutions are regional, or local in a sense.

Paul Hawken:

And we, as individuals, in terms of agency, we can also influence. And one of all things that's happened, 350.org was started by Bill McKibben, really was responsible more than any other organization, for stopping the Keystone Pipeline for the tar sands oil to the Gulf Of Mexico, the refinery is there.

Paul Hawken:

And James [Hamming 00:19:43], who is one of the co-leaders now and so forth, has started the campaign which is so elegant, which is he's going out to the creatives who are doing ... They're basically greenwashing ads for the fossil fuel companies, "Oh, natural gas is a clean energy, it's a transition fuel," or BP saying, "Oh we understand the problem, we want to be part of the solution," and then signing new oil leases.

Paul Hawken:

And he's going out to the agencies, and the companies that use those agencies, and saying, "Look, you're using agencies that are basically, like I said earlier about banking and finance, that are advertising for companies that don't get it and are destroying the world as we know it."

Paul Hawken:

And so those agencies, what are they going to do if they have clients leaving them because they are advertising for Exxon and Chevron, and BP etc., and they have six other clients, they're going, "You know ..."

Paul Hawken:

So we have these kind of acupuncture points in society that we can identify and use sort of moral weight of what's going on, what you talked about earlier about this inflection point, to say, "Really, are you going to continue to do this, because if you are, it doesn't make any sense, and we're going to publicize this, just like ..."

Paul Hawken:

And so I do feel like ... And I don't want to go on too long here, but maybe we should go back to this, because 4.3 billion people do live on less than 10 dollars a day, and they are crucial to our understanding and solving the crisis of global warming.

Simon Mainwaring:

You know, we keep touching on the role of narrative here, or storytelling, or the meaning that's implicit within certain language we've used, and how we need to use new language, or refrain that language to make us work together in new ways. And I think one of the big missing puzzles in all of this, we've got the stakes, we've got an existential crisis, we've got the stakeholders, even the investor class, arguably, at the table now, but I think what is so powerful about the book *Regeneration* that you put together, and the expansive plan you laid out, is it's a new narrative for business, the private sector, but even more broadly. The ecosystems, equity across the board.

Simon Mainwaring:

You know, when you think about this, like how would you characterize the narrative to the CEO that its necessary market is need to lead, that any organization on behalf of all its stakeholders need to lean into right now. How would you characterize that narrative, that story, so that you can engage the hearts and minds, so that you can leverage the power of storytelling, we're all still human beings sitting around campfires telling stories, so what must that story be like to really overcome a lot of those things you just pointed to?

Paul Hawken:

I think there are CEOs of some of the largest ... I know who they are ... Of some of the very very largest companies in the world who are asking that same question, and the reason they're asking the question, Simon, is because I think pretty much up until now sustainability or ESG was really about renewing your social license. In other words, values change, perceptions change, and what people, consumers think as acceptable or unacceptable, it keeps changing and you keep renewing your license, you know, "Oh, we don't do this anymore, we're doing this, or we're committing to net zero by 2050, how we're going to get there we have no idea, but we're committing."

Paul Hawken:

But I have met these CEOs and they are of the largest companies, and the difference today is that they get it. I don't mean they get it intellectually, I think they do, they get it emotionally. They get it as fathers, as uncles, as brothers, as sisters, as community members, as members of churches, synagogues, temples. I mean, you see it in their eyes, it's completely different. And then there are like ... It's an "Oh my gosh" moment, as like, "Whoa, and here I am at the helm of one of the biggest companies in the world that arguably serves people with what they need," could be food, could be other things and so forth, and "What do we do?"

Simon Mainwaring:

I think it's really powerful what you're saying, and I think the pandemic was a sort of like a dramatic dry run in that in the sense that when we saw the people we care about most in our lives directly affected, we snapped of what little bubble we weren't even aware that we were in, and sort of leaned into our role within the community, because our community was thrown front and center in front of our eyes.



Simon Mainwaring:

And I think we need to embrace community to then reawaken our role within that community. And I know you've led this incredible work inside the world's largest companies like Walmart, Nestle and so on. Not specific to them, but more broadly, what would you say the biggest obstacles are in business for large legacy industries that really shape people's lives all around the world? What are the biggest obstacles in the way, and what are the key steps through your line of sight over decades now, the key steps that make all the difference in their transformation?

Paul Hawken:

The biggest obstacle always is Wall Street, that is stock valuation, if the valuation of the company doesn't go up, CEO's failed. So growth is the biggest obstacle. And growth itself is just a question of what's growing, not growth itself. Arguably, once we stop growing physically in our 20s, 20, 19, 18, whatever, we hope we continue to grow, but we don't grow in size, we grow in depth and complexity, and understanding, and compassion. That is our hope, that as human beings we never stop growing. And I think the same thing exists for the economy as a whole right now, which is what's going to grow and why, and is it growing in such a way that creates more life.

Paul Hawken:

And here I'd go back to an essay that's in the book by Lao [inaudible 00:26:04], whose DNA is Navajo and Cherokee, and she wrote essay called The Forest is Forming, recounted the studies that show that three thousand years on the East Coast first nation peoples moved into forest and the forest completely changed from what they were to new regimes, and then hickory nuts and butter nuts, and chestnuts and plants that ... Annuals and perennials and so forth. They changed these forests into farms, that is to say, food producing, it's agriculture.

Paul Hawken:

And so when the colonists and settlers came in, they just started, "Oh my God, these forests are so well tended, they're so beautiful, this is like the virgin, Adam and Eve forest." No it wasn't. These were forests that were co-created with human beings.

Paul Hawken:

And what's interesting about the essay is she talks about these people in first nations, and indigenous people as a whole in very interesting way, and that is that these were human beings acting as keystone species.

Paul Hawken:

Now, keystone species is a species, can be a bee, a hummingbird, it can be a wolf, can be a beaver. What is common to those four very different insects and species, and that is that in their daily life, how they live their life in their region, in their ecosystem, creates more life for other lifeforms. And it's like amazing, and when you remove them, like the wolf in Yellowstone and other things, when you remove them, you see a collapse of ecosystems. So we know it's true both ways.

Paul Hawken:

So really what regeneration is about, why not all of us becoming keystone species. Let's become a keystone species, so that how we live our life, it actually creates more life now and into the future. And

then the question is, how do we do it? What does it mean in terms of materials, how do we relate to each other, what do we buy, how do we buy it? Do we really take the boreal forests and make cardboard boxes for Amazon, is that a really good idea? Or how about plush toilet paper for Procter & Gamble out of virgin trees in the boreal forest, which is the largest stock of carbon on terrestrial systems in the world. You know, it's like toilet paper? Not a really good idea.

Paul Hawken:

And so without finger-pointing and shaming I'm just saying, once you see that, and understand that, and understand that this can bring us back to life.

Paul Hawken:

And going back to 4.3 billion people who are poor again, is that when you look at the climate solutions, we'd look into what we know, how to do it right now and so forth. I mean, this creates tremendous benefits for people who ... Future existential threat? They are worried about existential threat the moment they wake up in the morning in terms of food, food security, just security overall, education for their children, warmth, heat, housing, clothing. I mean, every day they wake up and they are basically in stress about those things.

Paul Hawken:

And so it's not like, "Oh, the wealthy, the privileged need to help the poor." I don't mean that at all. I mean, these, the poor do not want to be ... Poverty does not want to be fixed. Poverty wants to fix itself. They have pride, they have dignity, and when you look at these solutions on regenerating life on Earth, it provides meaning to people, and ways, and the means for them to change their lives, improve their lives, and increase their sense, again, of purpose and dignity. And the one thing we know about the cause of depression, we can say, "Oh, it's this and this and this and this," you go right to the core of the cause of depression, which is epidemic in the world, is lack of purpose.

Simon Mainwaring:

You know, it's so funny, because if so much like those who've benefited from the ways the things are right now, are going straight from sort of apathy about the issue to hopelessness. They skipped over embracing their own agency to drive change. So how do you correct for that? Like before I talk about the frameworks and contrary actions that all of us can take, how do you engage? I mean, on one hand you've got a group of people who are almost arguably incapable, but they are desperate to self-determine and get out of the situation they're in.

Simon Mainwaring:

On the other you got a large number of people around the world that are prosperous and so on, but they seem like they are either waiting for somebody else or they're pointing fingers, or they've given up hope already.

Simon Mainwaring:

How do you elevate those two from where they are right now?

Paul Hawken:

Well, we don't, what Regeneration tries to do is connect what is, and it's called action and connection. And what I don't think most people understand is that tremendous work is being done in this area. The purpose of Regeneration, the book, the book is a neurotransmitter, really. And the last eight pages is called Action and Connection, and that's a wormhole to the website, the real purpose of the book is the website. It's not the website there to serve the book.

Paul Hawken:

I don't want to cut down a lot of forests and sell a lot of books in the world. Everybody has to read the book, actually they can go straight to the website if they want to get things done.

Paul Hawken:

When I did Drawdown, it was definitely never been done before, the list of all the solutions that are [inaudible 00:31:59] and scaling, and if we continue to scale them at a certain rate, could we achieve drawdown by 2050, which means could we reach that point in time where greenhouse gases peak and go down on a year to year basis. That was Drawdown.

Paul Hawken:

But that was what we could do book, and I knew Regeneration is what we can do for sure and how to do it. And that's what missing. So the website is the world's biggest, largest list and network of climate solutions and how to get them done on all levels of agency, you're an individual, you're a school child, you're an institution, you're a university, you're a city, you're a company, you're a church group, you're a province, you're a governor, whatever it is. At all levels of agency, who are the people who are just kicking butt out there and getting it done all over the world.

Paul Hawken:

How you can learn more, what to read, what podcasts to listen to. Who are the bad actors, which is like, "Come on guys, stop this." You are, like I said, making plush toilet paper out of boreal forest, really? Whose idea was that?

Paul Hawken:

And so that, really, you can go there and then find out what lights you up. It could be something you know how to do already and don't feel effective. It could be something you don't know at all. You're so curious about it, "I want to learn about this," and there you are, you have everything you could possibly want to learn about it, and the access, it just links everywhere. We're not saying we know, we're saying, "We know, you're we, the big "we", we do know so so much," and our job at Regeneration is to open that up, and we have climate action systems, you can form learning [inaudible 00:33:56], we work with Damon Gameau at 2040 in Australia in terms of regenerated network where you can connect with people themselves.

Paul Hawken:

So what we're trying to create is something that is obvious, which is the way you heal a system is to connect more of it to itself. This is true about the immune system, we know there's cold. We know it about ecosystems, science is baked on that one, all right. We know it for social systems too, and economic systems, and cultural systems, and the Earth systems, what Regeneration is about is trying to help the world connect to itself, or connect more to itself, and as my wife said after I said, "Okay, I'm

doing another book," she said, "Really? What is it about?" I said, "About how to get it done." She said, "If you don't tell me how to get this done I'm leaving you." And so I was, "Got it."

Paul Hawken:

And so that's the part, that's the real, I see that's the delivery, that's what we're trying deliver to people, the book is about enthraling them into the beautiful complexity and interconnection of the world. It was like, "Wow."

Paul Hawken:

But now you're there, go over here to the website, and you learn, basically, how to make a difference.

Simon Mainwaring:

I know Regeneration, your book, is incredibly optimistic, it lays out an actionable plan. But at the same time I'd love you to sort of just share a final thought about ... A caution, that if don't engage with this, what does it mean for our future and what does it mean for companies, large or small, that may find themselves on the wrong side of history, as these chickens come home to roost, shall we say?

Simon Mainwaring:

So if you were to give people a little bit of the heads-up about what's to come if they don't embrace, or don't take a player role, what would you say?

Paul Hawken:

Well, either way, one way to look at it is kind of gallows humor, but this is the warmest summer in history of humankind. Recorded history. This summer. And this will be the coolest summer for the rest of your life.

Simon Mainwaring:

Wow.

Paul Hawken:

Okay? In other words, that is the inertial quality of global warming, and it's not a linear system, okay? So we're dealing with that no matter what we do. It's locked in place, let's get real. But we also know now, with the sixth assessment, by the way, it was in there, but it was announced prior to it, that we used to be told and think, and the science showed us that if we reached a point where greenhouses gases leveled off in the atmosphere, that warming would continue for decades and centuries ahead, that not only it would not abate, but it would increase, even though there were no more ... The levels of greenhouse gases have peaked.

Paul Hawken:

Now we know, and they found out a fundamental error in their models, that actually as soon as they peak, that within a relatively short time warming also peaks, and then, as we drawdown, that is sequester, bringing carbon back home, that cooling begins.

Paul Hawken:

So now we have a goal that's reasonable in terms of time, in terms of three or four decades. And we have in our book that we can achieve a 100% renewable energy by 2042 and it's fairly straightforward. And we don't think it's [inaudible 00:37:49] or even optimistic, because the International Energy Agency, [McKenzie 00:37:56], the World Bank, have predicted the growth of wind and solar in a rate in which cost would go down for twenty years, and they've been wrong every single year without exception, they've underestimated the rate of growth, and they've underestimated the rate at which cost will go down.

Paul Hawken:

And so we look at what's happened, and use that as a way to project going forward, so there is good news here, and at the same time there is not good news if we think somebody else will do it. No one's coming to save us, we have been around long enough to see that the large institutions are hidebound, and frankly most governments are corrupt overtly or subtly. Those are the people that from the government to the conference, or the parties, and negotiate and all that sort of stuff. God bless them, I hope they make progress, we need help from wherever and whomever it can come.

Paul Hawken:

But going back to action, what we need to do, just go do, act, do. And if you think you're small, then welcome to the world. Of course you're small. We always were. But we become big by what we do, what we embody, what we express, and who we are. And that's where action changes belief. Are you just Simon Mainwaring, or are you of the podcast, look at your agency, and look what it might do, just even one person, like you said, when I wrote Ecology Of Commerce, if only Ray Anderson had read the book, that book was an amazing success, just because of that.

Paul Hawken:

So we don't know, as individuals, the manifestation, the ultimate impact of what we do. What we do know is if we want to come to life, let's make a life that has meaning. And you do that by addressing the offering that's in front of us, which is to regenerate life on Earth.

Simon Mainwaring:

Paul, firstly I want to thank you for devoting your life to this work, and more specifically, on behalf of everyone, and also your wife, putting the book together that tells us how, and for those of you can't see this, who are listening, I'm holding up Regeneration: Ending The Climate Crisis In One Generation.

Simon Mainwaring:

And even more specifically, grab the book, and then go to the courses at Regeneration.org, find that particular vehicle, community, organization, way of showing up that's going to be meaningful to you, because that's ultimately healthy self-interest. You're going to find greater fulfillment in your own life. You'll feel like you're part of the solution.

Simon Mainwaring:

And I would encourage everyone, and ask on a very personal level, please buy this book. Please ingest it, but also buy for everyone else that's in your sphere of influence, that has some sort of lever or power. It might be your CEO, it might be a founder, it might be someone in charge of sustainability at your company. It might be everyone in your company.

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Simon Mainwaring:

But to Paul's point, when we do this together, there is nothing we can't achieve. And the roadmap is here. So please do that, not only for our future, but for yourselves as well.

Simon Mainwaring:

So Paul, thank you so much for today, and just a pleasure to learn more from you.

Paul Hawken:

Thank you, Simon, and I'll say the same to you, which is thank you for everything you're doing, for your mind, for your heart, for your scope, and for your dedication to each other, to our communities everywhere, known and unknown, and for generations who will never ever know anything about what we do, but will benefit by the actions that other people take right now, including ourselves.

Simon Mainwaring:

Thank you Paul.

Paul Hawken:

Thank you.

Simon Mainwaring:

Thank for joining us for another episode of Lead With We. Our show is produced by Goal 17 Media, and you can always find more information about our guest in the show notes of each episode.

Simon Mainwaring:

Make sure you subscribe to Lead With We on Apple, Google or Spotify, and do share it with your friends and colleagues. You can also watch our episodes on YouTube at WeFirstTV, and I'm excited to share that my new book, Lead With We, comes out November 9th, and is available for pre-order now on Amazon, Google Books, and Barnes & Noble, so check it out.

Simon Mainwaring:

See you on the next episode, and until then, let's all Lead With We.