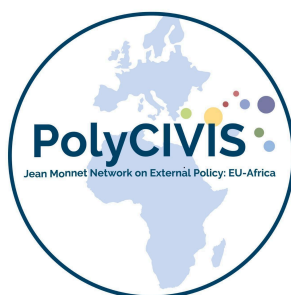


DATABASE: GLOBAL RESEARCH ON POLYCRISIS

AS PART OF THE REPORT: THE POLYCRISIS DATABASE BY POLYCIVIS RESEARCH WORK PACKAGE

March 2025



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Database March 2025 by POLYCIVIS Research Work Package

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DATABASE: GLOBAL RESEARCH ON POLYCRISIS

In order to consolidate our database on the research agendas around the polycrisis, we mapped relevant contacts of research centers, academics, policy makers and researchers working around the global polycrisis.

Most research centers and researchers in this mapping are from the Global North, and our list is mainly gathering men. This is due to the reality of the current research on polycrisis, and this observation helped identify research avenue within the project: we will pay special attention, in our next steps, to invite more researchers from the Global South, and representing a better diversity, to take part to our work and live up with our stated goal to give visibility to African or other Global South voices, including female ones.

1) Research centers, research projects and affiliated researchers

Most of the relevant research centers are included on the actors mapping (deliverable 3.1). However, in this document, we chose to focus on the research centres that research the polycrisis specifically.

The Cascade Institute (Royal Roads University, Victoria, CA) – Polycrisis program

The Cascade Institute (<https://cascadeinstitute.org>) is a Canadian research centre based at Royal Roads University in Victoria, British Columbia. It focuses on addressing the converging environmental, economic, political, technological, and health crises. Its research is conducted by leading complex-systems scientists specializing in rapid change in social and cultural systems.

One of the Cascade Institute's main projects is the Polycrisis program, that lead to the creation of the website <https://polycrisis.org>.

The website is a useful tool, since it gathers a Polycrisis Resource Library ("a growing collection of media that help to understand polycrisis, develop strategies to address polycrisis, and build a field of polycrisis analysis"), a description of essential themes in the polycrisis discussion, a community map (that "charts the emerging community of scholars and practitioners working on polycrisis and closely related topics") and an action plan (that "identifies theoretical, empirical, practical, and community-building gaps in the growing field of polycrisis knowledge and action").

The program is implemented with the following partners: **Centre for the Study of Existential Risks (CSER), University of Cambridge; Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC), Stockholm University; Research Institute for Sustainability – Helmholtz Centre Potsdam (RIFS); Potsdam Institute for Climate Impact Research (PIK).**

The key researchers of the institute, who are working on the polycrisis project, include:

- **Thomas Homer-Dixon (Founder and Executive Director)** – Focuses on threats to global security in the 21st century, including economic instability, climate change, and energy scarcity. In his work, the way people and organizations can resolve their conflicts and innovate when facing global problems is central.
- **Scott Janzwood (Research Director)** – Focuses on scientific uncertainty, policymaking, and global catastrophic risks.
- **Michael Lawrence (Fellow, Polycrisis Program)** – Uses complexity science to study social structures, governance, and global security, and focuses on the psychology of dehumanization, transnational organized crime, and peacebuilding.
- **Megan Shipman (Fellow, Polycrisis Program)** – Expert in global health systems and biomedical science.
- **Katherine Matos (Research Associate)** – Specializes in energy transition and environmental studies.

Horizons Institute (Leeds University, Leeds, UK) – Polycrisis Network

The **Horizons Institute** at the University of Leeds fosters interdisciplinary research on complex global challenges. It supports researchers in building cross-disciplinary collaborations to generate innovative approaches, and focuses on creative approaches and new ideas. The Institute works with researchers, higher education institutions and sector-wide initiatives, both at national and global levels, and aims at supporting a connected and equitable interdisciplinary research community.

Within the Institute, the **Polycrisis Network** ([Polycrisis.network](https://polycrisis.network)) aims to bring together scholars and professionals from various fields to identify, analyze, map and respond to interconnected crises. It focuses on:

Key researchers include:

- **Dr. Sébastien Nobert** – Transdisciplinary social scientist, expert in risk, disasters, and crisis management.
- **Dr. Laura Considine** – Works on nuclear politics with feminist approaches.
- **Dr. Jez Coram** – As an artist and filmmaker, is interested in crisis representation.

Post-carbon Institute (Corvallis, USA)

Founded in 2003, the **Post Carbon Institute (PCI)** aims at understanding and responding to the interrelated ecological, economic, energy, and equity crises of the 21st century. The

institute focuses on the emergence of resilient, just, and sustainable communities coexisting with nature.

At the core of its research, it attempts to comprehend the ‘polycrisis,’ that is defined as a dangerous confluence of crises in interrelated environmental and social systems that threatens modern civilization. To confront the polycrisis, the institute wants to raise awareness around its drivers and its trajectory and enhance community resilience-building as a response. Operationally, the institute does so by growing collective understanding on systems thinking, energy literacy, and environmental literacy ; promoting community resilience by thinking of the place of neighborhoods, towns, and cities capable of withstanding disruptions; supporting innovators to develop best practices and provide leadership in the presence of crises.

Key researchers include:

- **Rob Dietz (Program Director)** – Who is an expert in ecological economics and environmental science and uses his knowledge in moving society in sustainable directions to guide programs at the institute.
- **Richard Heinberg (Senior Fellow)** – Advocates for transition away from fossil fuels and wrote multiple books on sustainability.

Research Institute for Sustainability (Potsdam, DE) – Cascade Institute’s partner

The **Research Institute for Sustainability (RIFS)** conducts transformative and transdisciplinary research to promote societal change towards sustainable development. It aims to integrate scientific knowledge with real-world applications, engaging stakeholders from the outset. They also investigate non-scientific knowledge to cooperate with communities.

RIFS research focuses on: Sustainability Transformations and Society, Transforming Human-Earth Interactions, Advancing Transdisciplinarity and Co-Creation.

The contact within the institute, who can provide advice on polycrisis’ research, is **Dr. Pia-Johanna Schweizer**, a sociologist specializing in discursive governance.

Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC)

The **Stockholm Resilience Centre (SRC)**, was founded in 2007 to study the biosphere, society and the economy as one system to address the complex challenges that face humanity. It gathers 160 researchers and staff from across the world. Its mission is to advance the understanding of human-nature interactions, train the next generation and collaborate with agents who can help achieve sustainable transformation. They emphasize values and

guidelines, such as co-evolution of people and nature, novelty linked to the Anthropocene and biosphere stewardship to ensure resilient, sustainable and just futures.

Key researchers include:

- **Peter Søgaard Jørgensen** – Studies crises in the Anthropocene and pathways toward sustainability through evolution and stability. His focus is on understanding how we got there, the characteristics of the polycrisis and the mobilizations that could allow sustainability.
- **Louis Delannoy** – Focuses on systemic crises and crisis interaction dynamics for social-ecological resilience.

Polycrisis observatory (Toulouse, FR) – Université Populaire Edgar Morin pour la métamorphose

The **Polycrisis Observatory** was founded within the “Université Populaire Edgar Morin pour la Métamorphose” and aims at understanding global crises through common work, to understand their interconnectedness. They rely on interdisciplinary research and systems approaches. The Observatory brings together researchers, experts, and decision-makers to analyze links between climate change, economic shocks, and geopolitical instability.

Universities research projects

Further academic projects around polycrisis include the following:

- University of Bath - Lecture series: Polycrisis! - <https://www.bath.ac.uk/campaigns/polycrisis/>
- Université du Québec à Montréal – Institut d’Etudes Internationales de Montréal – Focus: « Polycrise et insécurités » <https://ieim.ugam.ca>

2) Authors from the literature

Edgar Morin

Edgar Morin is well known as a complexity sociologist, anthropologist, and philosopher. He is the first person to conceptualize “polycrisis,” in attempting to analyze human-nature interaction in an era of globalization, that divided humanity into cultures and civilizations and led to exploiting earth. He has a long career in academia and specialized in various disciplines, and some of his research topics include complex thought, anthropology, cinema, ecology and globalization. He is currently director emeritus of research at the CNRS, and his relevant publications to understand polycrisis include:

Morin, E., & Kern, A.-B. (1993). *Terre-patrie*. Éd. du Seuil; WorldCat.

Morin, E. (2004). *La méthode*. Éditions du Seuil; WorldCat.

Morin, E. (2006). The Seven Complex Lessons. *Revue du MAUSS*, n(2), 59. Cairn.info Journals - Geography and Environment. <https://doi.org/10.3917/rdm.028.0059>

Morin, E. (2012). Pour une crisologie. *Communications*, 91, 135-152.
<https://doi.org/10.3917/commu.091.0135>

Adam Tooze

Adam Tooze is Professor of History, Director of the European Institute at Columbia University, and he holds the Shelby Cullom Davis chair of History. His work focuses on power-dynamics in modern history, and he therefore focused on WW1 and WW2, international economic history, the concrete materiality of industrial and agrarian history, and modern social theory. He took a position on polycrisis in the press, and is, therefore, often referred to as one of the founders of the polycrisis' concept. His publications addressing polycrisis is the following:

Tooze, A., Letta, E., Tubiana, L., Bordoff, J., & Halliday, A. (2021). L'Europe peut-elle mener la lutte contre le changement climatique ? *GREEN*, 1(1), 41. Cairn.info Journals - Geography and Environment. <https://doi.org/10.3917/green.001.0041>

Michael Lawrence

Michael Lawrence is affiliated to the Cascade Institute as a fellow in Global governance. His research is very diverse, and includes a focus on societal collapse, state-building and state formation, international peace operations, the psychology of mass violence, transnational organized crime, social ontology, and applications of complexity thinking in the social sciences.

His work on polycrisis includes the following:

Lawrence, M. (2024). Polycrisis in the Anthropocene : An Invitation to Contributions and Debates. *Global Sustainability*, 1-10.

Lawrence, M. M., Homer-Dixon, T., Janzwood, S., Rockstöm, J., Renn, O., & Donges, J. F. (2024). Global Polycrisis : The causal mechanisms of crisis entanglement. *Global Sustainability*, 7(e6), 1-36. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2024.1>

Martin Belov

Martin Belov is Professor in Constitutional Law, affiliated at the University of Sofia “St. Kliment Ohridski.” His research focuses on (European) constitutional law and comparative constitutional law, which lead him to question polycrisis in relation with the rule of law in a European context, in the following work :

Belov, M. (2022a). Rule of law and democracy in times of transitory constitutionalism, constitutional polycrisis and emergency constitutionalism : Towards a global algorithmic technocracy? In *Rule of Law in Crisis—Constitutionalism in a State of Flux*. Routledge.

Belov, M. (2022b). *Rule of Law in Crisis—Constitutionalism in a State of Flux*. Routledge.

Belov, V. (2024). Standort dialogue between government and business in the context of polycrisis in germany. *Scientific and Analytical Herald of IE RAS*, 5(41), 37-50. <https://doi.org/10.15211/vestnikieran520243750>

Jean-Claude Juncker

While not being a researcher who addressed polycrisis, Jean-Claude Juncker played a crucial role in spreading the notion (especially in the political arena) by using it as the president of the European Commission. He also published work on the topics of European solidarity to face crises. In these publications, he does not always refer to a “polycrisis,” but he uses its features:

Juncker, J.-C. (2007). Le besoin d'Europe. *Revue d'économie financière*, 88, 25-30. JSTOR Business IV Collection.

Juncker, J.-C. (2014). Reunificar Europa. *Política Exterior*, 28(159), 26-30. JSTOR Arts & Sciences VI Collection.

Juncker, J.-C. (2016). STATE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION: AN « EXISTENTIAL CRISIS ». *Vital Speeches of the Day*, 82(11). Academic Search Complete.

Juncker, J.-C. (2018). Europa—Nicht nur ein global payer, sondern auch ein global player, mit dem die Welt rechnen muss. *Zeitschrift für Außen- und Sicherheitspolitik*, 11(4), 431-437. Springer Nature. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12399-018-0724-7>

Juncker, J.-C., & Gressani, G. (2021). Everything is geopolitical. *RED*, 3(2), 84. Cairn.info Journals - International Edition. <https://doi.org/10.3917/red.003.0084>

Thomas Homer-Dixon

Thomas Homer-Dixon is a social scientist and the executive director of the Cascade Institute. He focuses on topics such as climate change, conflict, leaderships, societal collapse and system resilience, through complexity science. His work includes:

Homer-Dixon, T. (2023). *Why so much is going wrong at the same time -Lots of things are going wrong. Does that make it a polycrisis?* Vox. <https://www.vox.com/future-perfect/23920997/polycrisis-climate-pandemic-population-connectivity>

Homer-Dixon, T. F. (1991). On the Threshold: Environmental Changes as Causes of Acute Conflict. *International Security*, 16(2), 76-116. Project Muse.

Homer-Dixon, T. F. (1999). *Environment, scarcity, and violence* (Vol. 1-1 online resource (xvi, 253 pages) : illustrations). Princeton University Press; WorldCat. <http://www.degruyter.com/isbn/9781400822997>

Homer-Dixon, T. F. (2006). *The upside of down: Catastrophe, creativity and the renewal of civilisation*. Souvenir Press; WorldCat.

Homer-Dixon, T. F., & Levy, M. A. (1995). Environment and Security. *International Security*, 20(3), 189-198. Project Muse.

Homer-Dixon, T., Renn, O., Rockström, J., Donges, J., & Janzwood, S. (2022). *A call for an international research program on the risk of a global polycrisis*. Cascade Institute.

Lawrence, M. M., Homer-Dixon, T., Janzwood, S., Rockstöm, J., Renn, O., & Donges, J. F. (2024). Global Polycrisis: The causal mechanisms of crisis entanglement. *Global Sustainability*, 7(e6), 1-36. <https://doi.org/10.1017/sus.2024.1>

Frank Schimmelfennig

Frank Schimmelfennig is a professor of European Politics and a member of the Center for Comparative and International Studies (ETH Zurich), Swiss National Research Council, Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies (European University Institute), and Chairman of the Scientific Board of Institut für Europäische Politik Berlin. His research focuses on International relations, and especially European politics and European integration. In his work, polycrisis is contextual, and highlights the limits of European integration:

Schimmelfennig, F. (2023a). Differentiated integration has been of limited use in the EU's polycrisis. In *Policy Briefs, Integrating Diversity in the European Union (InDivEU)*. <https://hdl.handle.net/1814/74520>

Schimmelfennig, F. (2023b). Polity attacks and policy failures: The EU polycrisis and integration theory. In *The EU under Strain?: Current Crises Shaping European Union Politics*. De Gruyter. <https://doi.org/10.1515/9783110790337-007>

Michael Albert

Michael Albert is Lecturer in Global Environmental Politics et the School of Social and Political Science from the University of Edinburgh. Through his research, he explores the link between energy, environment, sustainability and international relations with Marxist and Neo-Gramscian perspective. These influences are visible in his work:

Albert, M. J. (2020a). Capitalism and Earth System Governance: An Ecological Marxist Approach. *Global Environmental Politics*, 20(2), 37-56. Project Muse.

- Albert, M. J. (2020b). The Dangers of Decoupling: Earth System Crisis and the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution'. *Global Policy*, 11(2), 245-254. Wiley Online Library. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1758-5899.12791>
- Albert, M. J. (2022). Beyond continuationism: Climate change, economic growth, and the future of world (dis)order. *Cambridge Review of International Affairs*, 35(6), 868-887. Ingenta Connect. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09557571.2020.1825334>
- Albert, M. J. (2023). Ecosocialism for Realists: Transitions, Trade-Offs, and Authoritarian Dangers. *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 34(1), 11-30. Ingenta Connect. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10455752.2022.2106578>
- Albert, M. J. (2024). *Navigating the polycrisis: Mapping the futures of capitalism and the Earth*. The MIT Press.

PolyCIVIS: confronting the polycrisis in Europe and Africa

PolyCIVIS is a Euro - African collaboration that brings to the forefront the global polycrisis, allowing a better understanding of the impacts of several concurrent major societal crises challenging the world in the form of a polycrisis.

In the wake of the global polycrisis, urgent challenges have emerged, prompting PolyCIVIS to take action. Our initiative is dedicated to addressing these pressing global issues and their interconnected consequences.

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