

Addressing Tipping Points for a Precarious Future

Timothy O'Riordan and Timothy Lenton

Print publication date: 2013 Print ISBN-13: 9780197265536

Published to British Academy Scholarship Online: January 2014

DOI: 10.5871/bacad/9780197265536.001.0001

(p.xix) Acknowledgements

We are especially grateful to the British Academy and to the Royal Society Global Environmental Change Committee for having the faith in the whole enterprise. We have been supported throughout by Fellows of both learned Academies as well as by their very competent administrators.

About the cover art: still image from "Critical Transitions" by Tone Bjordam Norwegian artist Tone Kristin Bjordam works with video, animation films, photography, painting, drawing and installation. Bjordam has for many years been working on projects visualizing the movement and progression of liquid color in fluids and unfolding organic forms in motion. She stages controlled, yet playful experiments and creates imaginary landscapes.

The art video "Critical Transitions" was made in 2012, inspired by discussions with scientist Marten Scheffer who studies the nature of change in complex systems.

Climate, forests, coral reefs, financial markets and even our minds occasionally reach a tipping point where they go through a radical transformation. Foreseeing such critical transitions or even noticing that they are unfolding is challenging as they are embedded in the omnipresent permanent flow of change.

Dazzled by myriads of such minimal motions, how can we see that they sometimes erupt into transforming change? Emerged in chaotic and turbulent transformation how can we see where we are going? Science seeks universal early warning signals for critical transitions, but often we may only realize the world is not the same anymore in the hindsight.

For more information about this project: www.tonebjordam.com (p.xx)

Access brought to you by: