**Webinar Notes**

**Wednesday April 21 2021.**

Before I introduce Bob I would like to make a few comments about the extraordinary times that I feel we will be experiencing on the road to carbon neutrality.

This journey starts out with despair but ends with hope.

I despair when the level of carbon in the atmosphere is now over 420 ppm

I despair when the WMO states that 2020 will be one of the warmest years on record following the warmest decade on record.

I despair when I hear that the ocean has the highest heat content on record

I despair when I hear that the Artic ice sheet will be the lowest recorded level this summer

I despair when the IEA states that the annual increase in global CO2 emissions in 2021 will be the second highest on record following the surge after the financial crisis in 2010

I despair when I hear that coal fired plants are continuing to be built across Asia and China. Have we learnt nothing from history?

I despair that Canada has set a new carbon emission reduction target of 36% below 2005 levels yet has invested $ 12 billion in the expansion of the TMX to pour 900,000 barrels of oil into Asia.

I despair when I witness the last of our old growth forests being cut down and removing 300 years of stored carbon.

And I particularly despair when I learn that in the 5 years since the Paris Agreement, the world’s 60 largest banks have invested $ 3.8 trillion into the fossil fuel industry.

It is always darkest before the dawn. So there is also hope.

Tomorrow, Earth Day will be the first day of this new dawn. President Biden will meet with all the 40 largest carbon-polluting nations and forge a new international collaboration. He will also announce a new carbon reduction target for the US and has already found grounds to collaborate with the Chinese.

I have hope when I hear Mark Carney today announce that banks, insurance companies and financial investors have banded together to invest $ 70 trillion in assets into accelerate a low carbon economy.

I have hope when a number of countries have pledged to increase areas of conservation to 25 % of lands and oceans by 2025 including Canada to protect biodiversity and increase carbon sequestration.

To Quote Shakespeare Julius Caesar

‘*There is a tide in the affairs of men, which taken at the flood, leads on to fortune. Omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows and in miseries. On such a full sea are we now afloat. And we must take the current when it serves, or lose our ventures*.’

Earth Day 2021 marks the beginning of the flood tide. It will be sweeping in by November 2021 with the UN Summit and it will continue to charge forward over the decade as these new initiatives begin bear fruit.

Communities will band together in hope and finally push their national leaders to transform the way we live. Dawn will break in 2021 and the next three decades will be the most exhilarating ride mankind has ever witnessed.

The essence of hope is telling the truth. We all have to realize that the emperor has no clothes. We can no longer hide behind false statements or not being prepared to face reality. Once we all understand the facts we can have a serious conversation on creative solutions.

Our guests will tell us the reality of climate change in the Arctic and what can be done to mitigate this change. There are enormous consequences arising from the extraordinary warming the Arctic with global implications on climate and biodiversity loss.

There is no one better to inform us on the truth and reality of these changes than our panel of guests today.

Bob Sandford is the Chair of the United University Centre for Global Water Futures and an award -winning author. He has direct links with the worlds leading scientists and is eminently positioned to tell us the reality of climate crisis in the Arctic