Before you read this

What follows describes a programme in development. The evidence on plastic pollution it cites is documented, cited, and independently verifiable. The architecture it proposes was built drawing on established work in citizen science, environmental litigation, deliberative democracy, and institutional scenario design. It has not yet been tested at the institutional scale it requires. The invitation is not to accept it as it is. It is to engage with it, challenge it where it falls short, and contribute to making it better.

The Threshold Initiative is in founding development and is not yet incorporated. A fiscal sponsor, to be named, comes first; a Swiss foundation follows.

THRESHOLD | thresholdinitiative.org

Power is the problem

Plastic entered commercial use in the 1950s on a promise of necessity. The promise was delivered. Our lives are measurably better.

The question of what to do with the material when it was no longer in use was never asked, and was never resolved. It became rubbish, thrown away.

There is no such place as away. There is only everywhere. Two billion tonnes in seventy-five years, and everywhere now includes our blood.

This was known, measured, and written about as a threat to life on earth for over fifty years. The facts are done. The research is done. The understanding is done.

What has not been done is to stop it.

For half a century, every pathway has failed. Regulation has been outpaced. Voluntary pledges have been broken. Advocacy has been absorbed. Markets have not responded. Litigation has resolved single cases while the system continued.

The reason is not ignorance, and it is not lack of will. The reason is power. The wealth created by plastic does not want the wealth to stop, and has the resources to ensure it does not.

That is the problem this programme is designed to address. The Threshold is what follows.

A verified, legally usable evidence base, built by the people who carry the harm in their bodies. Every observation held to a published standard. Chain of custody from phone to proceeding. A deliberation that judges possible policy initiatives and keeps every dissent on permanent record. An evidence infrastructure built upstream of the actors who will eventually use it, ready before they need it.

Not protest. Not policy. Not litigation. The architecture that makes all three forceful enough, sooner.

The Threshold is still a proposal. Its purpose is to make the cost of continued suppression exceed the cost of accountability.

> *The Threshold is built to be ready. Whether and when the threshold is crossed depends on what is built, and on who joins in building it.*

THE THRESHOLD

THE SUN

The speech that answers Why.

Andrew Henderson | Lead Architect, The Threshold Initiative | Marans, France | October 2026 | v10

OPENING

There is plastic in your blood.

In your children's blood.

In the grandchildren that never came. Because of this.

Yours may be the last generation to carry your family name. Because of this.

How is that acceptable to you.

Thirty years of documentary and reporting on the plastic crisis. Fifty years of research. Petitions that filled stadiums. Summits that filled hotels. Beautifully worded statements of intent, and treaties.

The situation is worse. Every year. Worse.

Because not one of those things asked a question that had to be answered.

Can we take just a minute or two to look into this together.

Not every answer is standing in front of you. Sometimes it arrives from a completely unexpected direction.

In 1799 a French soldier digging fortifications outside Rosetta in Egypt turned up a slab of black granodiorite. Three scripts carved into it. Hieroglyphic. Demotic. Ancient Greek.

The scholars came. They looked. They argued. Nobody could read it.

And yet all across Egypt, on every temple wall, every tomb, every monument, an entire civilisation was speaking. Its laws. Its history. Its beliefs. Two thousand years of knowledge sitting in plain sight. Visible to everyone. And nobody could read it.

Interesting. Completely useless.

In 1822 a Frenchman from a small town called Figeac looked at it differently. Jean-Francois Champollion had spent twenty years learning Coptic, the last living descendant of ancient Egyptian, not because anyone told him to, not because there was a career in it, but because something in him would not let the question go.

He looked at the stone and understood what nobody else had seen. Three scripts. One message. The same thing being said in three different languages simultaneously. And if you could read one, you could read everything. Every wall. Every tomb. Every secret the ancient world had been trying to tell us.

The message was always there. What was missing was the structure that made it legible.

Twenty-two million tonnes of plastic entering the environment every single year. In the water. In the food chain. In the tissue of animals. In the blood of children not yet born.

Everybody knows this. Not just the scientists. Not just the people reading this. Everybody.

Your cleaner knows. Your grandmother knows. The seven year old who refuses a plastic straw knows.

And nothing has changed.

Interesting. Completely useless.

Because knowing is not enough. It has never been enough. What has been missing is the structure that turns what everybody knows into a question that cannot be avoided, cannot be deflected, cannot be answered with a statement of intent.

Until now.

So if you are still with me, we can look into it.

All of that knowledge. All of that concern. Seven billion people who know. Dispersed. Going nowhere.

Not because they don't care. Because there is nowhere for it to go.

The farmer who photographs the plastic in his irrigation ditch. The nurse who notices something in the water her patients are drinking. The school class that comes back from the river with something on their hands that shouldn't be there.

Real people. Real damage. Real witnesses.

Each one of them has seen something that matters. Each one of them deserves to be heard.

Every one of them unheard. Not because what they saw was not real. Because there was no structure to receive it, grade it, connect it to the ten thousand observations that look exactly like it, and turn it into something the system has never had to face.

Until it is legible it is nothing to the world that should really see it.

So who changes it. And why would they.

Ordinary people with phones and honest eyes. A farmer in the Loire. A nurse in Lagos. A school class on a Tuesday morning taking water samples from the river outside. None of them lawyers. None of them scientists.

All of them carrying the same quality that a paralegal mother with no income and no institutional standing carried into a town called Hinkley, California, in 1993.

The refusal to look away.

You see something that is not right. You take out your phone and take a photograph. You submit it, along with where you are and when. The record receives it, holds it to a published standard, connects it to the observations that look like it, and keeps it. You choose whether it carries your name.

That is the complete act. It took four minutes.

It is there because you did not look away.

You did your part. It is there, and it will be seen.

Each observation graded. Each finding traceable. From the moment it enters the record to the moment it is cited in a proceeding. A chain of custody that begins on a farmer's phone and ends on the desk of the institution that has agreed to review it.

Not a campaign. Not a petition. Not another documentary.

A Rosetta Stone. Built from acts of not looking away. Translating what everybody already knows into something the system has never faced before.

A question so precisely formed, so thoroughly evidenced, so completely in the record that it cannot be answered with a statement of intent. Or a treaty that nobody reads.

Change takes motivation. And in this world motivation is a calculation. What is in it for us. For them. For the people who hold the regulation, the money, the power.

That calculation has never had the right information in it. Until now.

Twelve people, seated as those who cause harm, those who bear it, those who govern and enable, and those who know. Judging possible policy initiatives on real evidence, not slogans. Alone first, then again after seeing the group. Every dissent published.

Not because they become good.

Because for the first time they can see clearly the only move that is going to change things for the better. For people. For the planet.

Not activism. Survival. We all want that.

The arithmetic changed.

It may not save you. It may not save the ones you love. We cannot know with certainty what will happen, who will be affected, or how.

This programme will not make everything better. It is not medication. It is not more than we can make it by choosing to do it.

It will not produce declarations. It will not produce verdicts. It will explore and notate everything it sees. It will attempt to identify what matters.

And the only honest claim I will make is that what arrives at the end of that process are the right questions.

Questions that only humanity can answer.

That is not a small thing.

It may be the only thing that has ever actually moved anything.

Because it is not done to you. It is not done for you.

You choose it. You participate. You commit.

And with that single act, the most powerful move available to any human being.

You engage.

Will you do that with me.

What should we say to the person who protests. What can I do. Nothing I do ever matters. There are so many of them.

And it is wrong. What you see could enter the record. It gets graded. It connects. It gets cited. It is on the record, in your name if you choose.

What you do. Matters.

Who is going to do this. Who is there, right now, waiting for the challenge of a lifetime. To stop the self-harm. To make the questions unavoidable. To change what this moment means for the people who come after it.

Is it your neighbour. Someone you once met. Someone braver than you. Someone more certain. Someone more committed.

Why not you.

Why not everyone you know.

Not because you are brave.

Not because you are certain.

Because you can.

And someday. Because you did.

The programme is in development, in public. Everything in these pages is being built toward a single thing: making the step from knowing to doing smaller than it has ever been.

That step will be available to you.

The plastic is in the blood of children being born today.

We knew.

Now you do.

You are not reading this alone.

Neither are we writing it into the void.

Come and find us.

What follows from reading this

You have now read the evidence. The medical evidence is in our blood and our children's. The economic case for recycling, as it has been sold, is dead. The policy interventions exist and have been costed. The architecture that would resolve a case of this shape has been mapped.

From this point you are an informed witness. That is the threshold.

The next question is not whether you care. The historical pattern is clear. Systemic harm has been resolved in every documented precedent (tobacco, asbestos, lead, opioids) not by enough people caring but by enough informed witnesses acting in ways small and large.

The relevant distinction is not between those who care and those who do not. It is between those who act and those who do not.

Three civic acts cross the threshold.

Vote. Vote for political representatives who will price the externality, build the levy, and pass the producer liability framework. Plastic is a political problem before it is a chemical one.

Vote in the Threshold poll. When the Knowledge Base presents the ranked interventions that emerge from the Althing Round, vote on them. The poll is the public record of which interventions citizens have endorsed.

Write your Pledge. In your own words. Write to your unborn grandchildren. Tell them what you knew, particularly about the consequences of plastic and when you knew. What you did, and what you did not do. What you felt and what you hope, in spite of everything, they will inherit. Seal it with your mark. It will be held in the Threshold Knowledge Base, protected and permanent, until the threshold is crossed, or until the year you choose to have it opened and by whom.

The Threshold Effect is the pattern by which documented systemic harm crosses a threshold making it increasingly difficult to ignore, legally, medically, and politically, in documented historical cases, deliberately and systematically. The Threshold Effect is in development.

The case has crossed every threshold but yours.

Whether you cross it is now observed.

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