



Throw Forward Thursday: The end of frogs

Welcome to Throw Forward Thursday, where every week we jump into the future and see what's going on there. My name is Graham Codrington and join me in the past today. 20 years ago, a fungal disease spread across the world, it affected frogs. It's called *Batrachochytrium dendrobatidis* or BD for short, and it killed frogs, starting in Central America and spreading all around the world.

Millions upon millions of frogs were infected and died and in fact, a number of frog species went extinct. The knock-on effect of that has just been released in a scientific paper which has indicated that, especially in Central America, a few years after all of those frogs died and they really are dramatically fewer frogs in the world today than there were 20 years ago. A few years after that, malaria has dramatically increased and other tropical diseases are now making breakthroughs. The reason is fairly clear, frogs eat insects, if the frogs disappear, the insects multiply, especially mosquitoes.

It's a very simple story, and sadly, it's a story we can see in hundreds of different ways playing out in different parts of the world over and over again. The story is very simply the story of an integrated ecosystem, an integrated biosphere. Very often we think about the end of the big animals, the pandas, and the rhinos, and those are important to consider. Sometimes we don't think about the end of frogs or the end of insects, as we talked about a number of months ago here at Throw Forward Thursday. We need to be thinking about the impact of climate change, our activities, and everything that happens in the world and its impact through this integrated biosphere, to us.

The world is, yes, quite resilient, even possibly antifragile in parts, but it's also exceedingly fragile. We need to make sure that we focus on even the smallest of creatures because where the frogs go, the insects come, diseases multiply and it has a direct impact on us.

Come with me to the future where hopefully we take more interest in and care of the entire biosphere and we find a way to bring the frogs back.

As always, thank you for joining me in the Throw Forward Thursday studio. If you'd like to connect with me, give me some feedback or ask any questions, go to askaboutthefuture.com. Otherwise, make sure you like and subscribe wherever you're watching this and I'll see you next week as we jump into the future again.

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