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LAUREN FOSTER: Hi, everyone. Welcome to the *Take 15* podcast. I'm Lauren. And today on the show we're tackling an urgent topic, one that everyone, not just investors, should be thinking about. And that is the massive loss of biodiversity across our planet. And I don't use the word urgent lightly.

The United Nations calls biodiversity loss a systemic risk and warns that the COVID-19 pandemic has origins in the illegal trade of wildlife and the destruction of wild habitats which brought animal disease into contact with humans. And a recent paper from UNPRI says the likelihood of this occurring will only increase as the loss of biodiversity continues, reflecting the significance and urgent need for action by investors.

I am so excited about our guest today to help us better understand this topic. His name is Joel Clement. And he's a senior fellow at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

Before joining the Harvard Belfer Center, Joel spent seven years at the US Department of the Interior. And let's just say that's when things got interesting. In July 2017, he became the first public whistleblower of the Trump Administration, accusing Interior Secretary Ryan Zinke of stifling science, ignoring climate change, wasting taxpayer dollars, and risking the health and safety of Americans in the Arctic.

I've been looking forward to this conversation for a long time, actually about a year, ever since I first heard Joel talking to my son's fifth grade science class via Zoom. Now both climate change and ethical decision making are top of mind at CFA Institute. And in the show notes, you'll find a link to our most recent report, climate change analysis and the investment process, and also a link to the ethics learning lab. And now without further ado, here's Joel Clement.

Well, welcome, Joel. I'm really excited to have you on the show today.

JOEL CLEMENT: It's a pleasure to be here, Lauren. Thanks for inviting me.

LAUREN FOSTER: So we have so much to talk about, everything from climate action, the Arctic, biodiversity, whistleblowing and I kind of know what order we'll go in because there's so much to cover, but I thought one sort of fun place to start would actually be where you are right now.

You're in Maine. And some of our listeners may have been to Maine. Some may never have been to Maine. It's regarded really as one of the most beautiful states in the US. I think I read that it's one of the few that still has a pristine night sky. I'm not sure if that's still true. So I'm curious. When someone asks you what life is like in Maine, how do you describe it?

JOEL CLEMENT: All right. Well, so I'm born and raised here in Maine. And I'm actually a tenth generation Mainer so it's in my blood. But you mentioned the dark skies. You mentioned the nature. All of this is true. It's actually the most forested state in the country and the most rural state east of the Missouri River. So it's unusual for an eastern state to have those qualities.

But it also, of course, that nature is part of the culture here. There are two Maines. There's the coastal Maine and there's the inland Maine. And right now I'm sitting in the inland Maine. It's a very different-- lakes and forests. And the culture in Maine and the economy is all driven by those things. On the coast, it's about fishing, and lobster, and so on, sailing. But where I am now, it's about those other things. And it's a big part of the Maine economy, a big part of the Maine way of life up here. We call it the way life should be.

LAUREN FOSTER: I think you have the right idea for how life should be. I was doing some random research ahead of our conversation because I love fun facts. And I found these two rather fun facts about Maine that harvest the most lobster in the US. I guess I might have known that but now I know. But also more blueberries are grown in Maine than in any other state. That I didn't know.

So those are, I guess, positive fun facts. But on the other side, I read some I guess I would call alarming facts about Maine. And I'm going to read a couple of notes here that there are many species at risk of extinction in Maine. So those include the wild Atlantic salmon, the Canada lynx, the piping plover bird, and one statistic that I read that to me was really shocking, and I believe it came from a study in *Science,* was that 2.9 billion-- and that's with a B, which is kind of mind boggling, so approaching three billion birds have disappeared from North America since 1970. That's sort of one in four. And I find that pretty horrifying.

So I thought that might be a good way for us to start a conversation on biodiversity. I know that you recently gave a talk. And you said there's another crisis that gets a bit lost in all the talk of climate action and that's biodiversity crisis. So I'd love for us to talk a bit about that. And we'll have to start with, I guess, the basics. What is biodiversity?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. And thanks, Lauren, for mentioning the bird crisis, because that's not a bad place to start. Each spring, and it's still migratory bird season now, and so I keep close track of the birds coming through. And even I in the short time I've been on this property have noticed those changes. It's shocking.

But biodiversity, that's the abundance of life around us. It's the diversity of species that comprise the ecosystems that we depend on, so everything from birds and fish, carnivores, and so on, but also insects, worms, what we see in our soils. The coral reefs, of course, are teeming with diversity. And it's not just the number-- it's not the number of animals out there that we care about. It's that diversity of types of animals that can occupy different ecological niches and can play a different role in the system that-- what I call our operating system.

Those ecosystems drive everything for us from where we get our clean air, clean water, our food, protection from natural hazards. And each of these species plays a different role in that. You need to have redundancies. If one species winks out, there need to be others that can step in.

So diversity within ecosystems is a lot like diversity in an investment portfolio. You want redundancy. You want to cover all the bases. You want a richness to those investments. And that's exactly the way we look at biodiversity. And historically, that abundant and diverse species complement has really buffered us from disasters, from changes in temperature and weather changes, and from ecological disasters that affect our food supply. You know, Native Americans did an excellent job of growing a diverse set of crops. But they were pollinated by different types of animals. So all of these things, as you can imagine, are very interwoven. And that's why diversity is important.

LAUREN FOSTER: So what's going on, because when I looked up biodiversity, I now see it almost always coupled with biodiversity and crisis. So tell us what is happening and why it is that it seems the world is a little bit slow to wake up to this as a crisis.

JOEL CLEMENT: You know, I think for scientists and ecologists-- and I'm a trained ecologist-- the biodiversity crisis we've known to be upon us for quite some time. But it doesn't always penetrate. It's a lot like climate change. You can talk about it all you want but there needs to be a meaningful way to describe how this affects people. So you'll see an impact on agriculture. And that might convince farmers that they need to diversify crops or try different approaches. There are these very locally based solutions.

The crisis itself has been going on for a long time. It's hard to gain the ear of the public on these kinds of things because they see the animals still out there. But like you mentioned with the birds, people are starting to see those changes. And the problem is once you start to see those changes, it's a very well advanced crisis. That's the same is true of climate change and the public health crisis, for example, we see now with the pandemic.

LAUREN FOSTER: That's what I remind listeners-- I read a good line recently as I was doing some research. And someone has said it's not ESG, which is your environment, social, and governance. It's CSG. So it's not just climate, it's not climate, social, and government, it's environment, social, and governance. I think the focus has been on the climate side of things and not so much on the kind of environmental side of things. So why though do you think not just investors but the wider population has to take action on biodiversity?

JOEL CLEMENT: Well, this is something that comes up a lot when I talk about investors or even in academia and government, that biodiversity and the environment, our operating system, as I describe it, that we depend upon, propping that up is not just a corporate social responsibility issue. It's a business issue. It's a lifestyle issue, the way of life issue.

And it's a purely economic issue to some. And I think that's a better way in some ways to communicate this crisis. Some people aren't bothered that they don't hear or see as many birds or that they can't get to a park or see the outdoors. I think most people want that, but they don't see it as crucial to life. But when you start to see disasters like these climate-induced extreme weather events, when you start to see species winking out far too quickly in certain areas and the ecosystems crashing as a result, a fishery collapsing, for example, because of overfishing, or a lack of kelp, or some of these other things that have caused these cascading collapses, you start to see that this actually is a business issue for our economy.

We need to get beyond, I think, thinking of the biodiversity crisis as a philanthropic thing to address. It's absolutely essential that we address it. Over $100 billion worth of climate change damages in 2020 alone. That was double what it was the previous year. These are not dollars that are just coming out of the federal treasury. That would be bad, too. These are coming out of American businesses. And that's just our country.

So you can imagine that that problem is quite widespread. So I think that's why we need to care about it. It's not just to have nature around. Some of us love it more than others. It's because biodiversity is the underpinning of our economy, both here and abroad.

LAUREN FOSTER: So you've been a longtime climate activist. And I mentioned you're joining us from Maine. But a few years ago you were living in Washington working at the Department of Interior. And I'd love to spend a bit of time just talking about that. As listeners will have heard in the setup, you're a whistleblower. And CFA Institute cares a lot about ethical training and ethical decision making.

So take us back to-- was it 2017 when you wrote the Op Ed? For some people, 2017 may seem like a decade ago. And after last year, it does feel like such a long time ago. So tell us what was going on in 2017 and what went into your decision to weigh up on whether or not to blow the whistle, because whistleblowing comes at a cost, a personal cost, sometimes a professional cost. What were you weighing up when you made that decision?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. Thank you for asking that, because it's certainly a difficult process. And I've seen others go through it. But I came into government many years before that to focus on climate change and to focus on public lands, and ecosystems, and all the things we've been talking about, because public service means a lot to me.

It was finally an opportunity for me to do my part within government rather than coming up with all these ideas. Throwing ideas over the castle walls is fine. But when you're on the inside, you can really implement them. And it was really exceeding my expectations, the way I was able to influence policy or the machinations of even over at the White House.

So I came into 2017 still feeling very enthusiastic about public service. But of course, the Trump administration started on January 20. And that changed a number of things as a lot of people know that Donald Trump was certainly no friend of climate action folks. And so I anticipated, like many others, that there'd be actions taken to reduce our ability to address climate change. I assumed they would focus on emissions, and carbon, and so on.

And I worked on climate adaptation and resilience. I didn't think they-- why would they interfere with our ability to protect people and ecosystems? But as soon as they were legally able to, they reassigned a whole dozens of senior executives at the Interior Department where I worked. And it appeared very retaliatory. 30% of the reassigned people were American Indian, for example. And many of us worked on climate change.

So they did a purge. They weren't particularly careful about it, which sort of characterized the administration. And in my view-- and it was clear to me that it was an intentional retaliation for my work, because they moved me from climate policy work to the office that collects royalty checks from the oil and gas companies. So it wasn't as though they were trying to maximize my assets and my experience.

So I filed a complaint with the Office of Special Counsel saying, hey, I'm working here to protect Americans at risk and to reassign me is not only just getting at me but you're also affecting the health and safety of Americans. It's also bad government. And the decision process, Lauren, leading up to that was, for me, it was very clear I needed to do some in this case because they were violating the mission of the agency that I had come to serve.

They were reducing the ability of the agency to respond to problems that it was responsible for. So for some people, others may have had families, mortgage, and so on that made them feel compelled to stay and work from the inside to change that. But I felt that I needed, above all, to keep my voice.

So number one, I had to call out the bad behavior. And I think that's something we all have to decide where our red line is. I had to call out that bad behavior. And I had to maintain my voice. And in order to do that, I published this op ed in the *Washington Post* saying, hey, I'm blowing the whistle. A lot of people do this confidentially but I think people need to know. We need to shine a light on this kind of thing.

So in terms of ethics, we've seen since then-- that was July of 2017. In the subsequent years, of course, the administration became known for ethical lapses and a lack of integrity. And that was new to a lot of the people I worked with in government, the career ranks and the career staff, not political staff. And so they all had to wrestle with this question over and over.

LAUREN FOSTER: So I'll just listeners know that we will put a link to that *Washington Post* op ed in the show notes. If anyone wants to actually go and read what you wrote, they'll have access to it. And we'll also include a link to our ethics learning lab if anyone's curious about ethical decision making.

JOEL CLEMENT: Also I have a letter. There's a letter in the *Washington Post.* My resignation letter might be helpful in terms of the--

LAUREN FOSTER: Right. We'll look for that and link that as well. I'm curious also just about what the response was like when you blew the whistle. Were you surprised by the responses? Was it different than what you'd expected?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah, it was, Lauren, because I thought I was just going to do my bit and kind of disappear into the sunset. I just couldn't leave without saying something. In the back of my mind, I hoped maybe others would blow the whistle down the road.

The immediate outcome really surprised me. I didn't expect all the media attention. I didn't expect-- I was getting-- when I finally did go back to the office after taking a few days off, there was a stack of postcards and letters on my desk, this new desk, from people around the country saying thank you for doing that. And it stunned me. And I think it was because people were seeing the behavior of this new administration. They were hoping some people would say, hey, hang on a second. There's a line there. You shouldn't be doing that.

And I heard from a lot of the career ranks, the colleagues at the agency and other agencies, saying thank you for being our voice. And I think that's an important role. And some people need to do that. Other people need to hunker down and try and slow down bad decision making, things like that.

But frankly, the career ranks are there to serve the mission of the agencies. They're great at that. And they've continued doing that even during the bad times. And now, of course, there's an ethical administration in place. But the net effect was not what I overall-- I was surprised by the media attention but I expected more people to come forward.

LAUREN FOSTER: It's interesting you use the word voice. Actually, one of our courses is called "Giving voice to values." And it's really important that people find that voice. I was going to ask you whether it was a lonely experience. And it sounds like initially there was a lot of interest. So there were a lot of people. But was it a lonely experience?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. It was very lonely. I will never forget the moment-- I took a few days off after blowing the whistle and then I came back to work. And that day, I got to the front door of the Interior Department headquarters building and I paused. I actually texted my attorney and said, do I have to do this, because I'm going into a building where I'm just kind of blowing things up a little bit.

And there was a lot of media coverage. What's that going to be like? And it is a lonely feeling to walk through those halls. But you're always in the cafeteria or elsewhere, I certainly had a lot of people giving me the thumbs up quietly. They knew their jobs were at stake. They couldn't be seen as Joel's best allies in the building. And I understood that so I didn't compel anyone to sit with me at lunch although a lot of people did.

But there was that. It was kind of a quiet alliance. But still, of course, it feels very lonely. You've voluntarily put yourself apart. But that's part of the process, I think, of keeping that voice sometimes.

LAUREN FOSTER: I was reading something-- there was a panel back in I think it was 2018 at one of our conferences. It was called "the price and the prize of whistleblowing." And Stephanie Gibaud who was a whistleblower at UBS. This is what she said. She said this word whistleblower is so negative. It's really radioactive when someone says he or she is a whistleblower. Do you feel it's a negative word?

JOEL CLEMENT: I don't. I think this is part of the process of maintaining ethics and integrity in any enterprise, be it business or government. I think the reason it's taken on a taint is oftentimes when they're publicized, it may be a national security whistleblower, you know like Edward Snowden or somebody. That gives it a certain tinge of controversy.

But frankly, Congress addressed this issue by creating the Whistleblower Protection Act, the enhancement of the Whistleblower Protection Act. So twice they've passed laws to protect people that do this. It's seen as a great value. The National whistleblower Center has all kinds of resources for people who are considering doing that.

And I think those high profile cases have perhaps put a patina over it. But I'm very proud of being a whistleblower. I've had a lot of whistleblowers reach out to me saying almost sort of welcome to the team. We know what you went through. It's not easy. But it's really important. And I think you'll always be proud that you did that. And I would say the same to a new whistleblower.

LAUREN FOSTER: So what advice do you give whistleblowers who are coming to you as they're weighing up this do I/don't I, the kind of personal cost, the professional cost, that the moral, the ethics of what they're doing?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. I always say imagine yourself 10 or 15 years from now looking back on this. Would you be more proud to have just kept your head down and gone along with it or have spoken up? How would you evaluate yourself looking back, because I find that gives me a lot of clarity. I'm very proud of what I did despite the struggles.

And it's sometimes easier to imagine yourself looking back. How would you feel about that individual? And so I encourage people to do that. People need to look out for their income. They need to make sure they can pay the bills. That's really important. But there are ways to speak out without compromising that.

Unfortunately, whistleblowers are not protected enough, so Congress does need to really firm up the whistleblower protections. There are lots of ways they can do that. I've been working with the Union of Concerned Scientists to help propose ways they can do that. So hopefully that will come along.

LAUREN FOSTER: Let's hope so. So let's fast food. So you resigned in Washington. You moved back to Maine. What have you been working on in the last few years?

JOEL CLEMENT: Well, in addition to the work with Union of Concerned Scientists on publicizing how the Trump administration was politicizing science, which was a problem, I work full time now at the Harvard Kennedy School's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs.

At the Belfer Center, I continued my work on the Arctic region because it's a region in rapid transformation. The Arctic is warming three times as fast as the rest of the planet. And there are about four million people that live up there. It has implications for the rest of the planet.

It's a really important place to study in the context of climate change, both in terms of emissions and resilience. The role of the sea ice and the role of those ice caps in maintaining our global climate are essential. So I've been continuing that work up there working with students, teaching and writing quite a lot about this issue.

LAUREN FOSTER: So take us a little bit deeper, that you said what's happening in the Arctic has implications for the world at large. Just help us understand how that is and why it's so critical that we pay attention to what's happening in the Arctic.

JOEL CLEMENT: Well, on one hand, it's transforming so quickly that losing the sea ice has a lot of dramatic implications in terms of the planet's reflectivity. So we're absorbing more heat because of that loss of ice. There's a feedback loop there. But obviously, if we lose the Greenland ice cap, we lose Miami. We lose most of the low lying Pacific atolls. We're losing a lot of our most populated centers on Earth.

Also, as we lose that sea ice up there, it's changing geopolitics in the North because we've seen in this last year when the ship got stuck in the Suez Canal, looking for alternatives and Russia knows very well that one of the best alternatives in the coming years is going to be that Northern sea route that goes along the coast of Russia as they lose that sea ice. So there are geopolitical implications. There are economic implications.

And of course, the survivability of the coasts around the world depends on what's happening up in that region up there. Setting aside even, of course, the four million people that live up there. 10% of them are Indigenous. They've been doing this for many thousands of years. But they are also now what I would call climate front line communities. They're being affected by coastal erosion, the thawing permafrost, bigger storms, lack of sea ice. Very, very vulnerable to change now up there.

LAUREN FOSTER: So the last few weeks, there have been quite a few headlines about Biden, action on the climate. Is America back in the climate game? It's making some big promises. What do you think?

JOEL CLEMENT: I do think so, Lauren. I'm actually very optimistic. And I'm really happy to be able to say that. I think that this new administration, President Biden has exceeded all of our expectations in terms of what's being said. Now I also know Congress can be a problem going forward. So getting things done is still going to hurt or be difficult. But boy, they're doing a fantastic job. I wrote an article recently about it.

Biden hosted that climate leadership summit just a couple of weeks ago. And a lot of people were asking that same question. Has America's credibility globally plummeted too far? Can you really remedy it when you have such a debacle as the Trump administration was in terms of international action on climate and biodiversity?

And it seemed very apparent to me that, of course you can, that the US came roaring back on this, that it's the largest economy in the world so no one's going to turn their back on those opportunities to get this right. So yeah, I think we're back. I hope we're back in a constructive way. And of course, I hope we can maintain it.

LAUREN FOSTER: It's one of the things I heard you say before is you're a self-described climate hawk. But you also say that recently you experienced a renewal of faith. So it sounds like you're still feeling optimistic about what you've heard and seen recently.

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. Yeah.

LAUREN FOSTER: So the America the Beautiful report that just came out, are you familiar with that?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yes, I am. That's from my old agency put that together.

LAUREN FOSTER: Can you tell us a bit more about what's in it and whether we should be excited about that?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. This is very directly related to the biodiversity crisis that you opened with. Science, for quite a long time now, has been trying to arrive at how much do we need to protect to maintain these ecosystems in order to maintain these economies and so on.

And they determined that 30%, both lands and waters, including oceans, should be protected in some way. And there are some criteria for that. When the Biden administration came in, an executive order early on said, OK, Interior Department, and Commerce, and Council on Environmental Quality, and Department of Agriculture, please put together a report.

How are we going to go about this if this is a goal for this administration? And so this report says, basically, this is going to be hard but we think we can do it. Here are the criteria we need to use. Here's why. And here's how inclusive this is meant to be. It's not just about saving critters or locking up land. It's about preserving economies. It's about increasing access to nature for disadvantaged communities. So it's an environmental justice report as much as it is an environmental protection and economic protection report.

So it's a way to deliver the goods on ecosystem and biodiversity protection while enhancing economic opportunity and enhancing our access to these natural places. So it's a real turning point, I think, for how we manage our public lands in the United States. It's a real opportunity to see this is not just jobs versus the environment, which is always how it-- that's how the industry used to frame it. It's about the jobs that come from the environment. And it's about the importance of leveling out opportunity across different economic strata so that we can all thrive. I think it's a great report but it's only, of course, just the beginning. But they did a nice job with it.

LAUREN FOSTER: And we'll be sure to link in that as well in the show notes. Before we go to the closing questions, I just want to go back to something I mentioned right form the beginning, you know ESG versus CSG. It's not just climate. It's environment. And many of our listeners are thinking about ESG factors as they're investing.

But not everyone is as convinced that they should be thinking about it. And I was wondering, I'm sure you come across many skeptics in your work, but when you do, is there one thing or a few things you tell people to help them really understand that this is personal? It's not just sort of out there in the world. It really affects them in their lives, these decisions.

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. And honestly, I think that's the only way to communicate these kinds of problems, particularly the climate crisis. You have to know what are their values. Right. I mean I think in the business community for example, I talk about how costly climate change is and has been each year and how costly it will be going forward. I mean carbon emissions are going to be more costly. There'll be prices on them, for example.

So if I'm speaking with a business group or if I'm speaking with even people who work within the fossil fuel industry, I say, you know, this is about reducing risk and trying to gain competitive advantage in a new world where carbon is costly and where these impacts are very costly. So in that context, and that's generally the only area these days where I run into people who are resistant, it's about the economy. And it's about jobs.

And the Biden administration is doing the same thing. They're like, look, this is a huge opportunity for us to capitalize on a transition to a new way of powering our economy. And that's important. We can let other countries do it or we can do it ourselves. If we don't, if we delay, it's going to be a heck of a lot more expensive for all of us and the economy will show those impacts. So that's generally how I talk about it with folks even from the fossil fuel industry.

LAUREN FOSTER: And I guess you personally, you looking out and watching the migratory birds, you can see the effects of climate change and biodiversity crisis I guess from your window, right?

JOEL CLEMENT: Yeah. I mean on a personal note, I think a lot of people-- and this is why I think access to nature is so important. I think people have lost track of how connected we are to the natural world around us and the joy that you can get by being surrounded by that. I'm so fortunate here. And I'm very privileged to be looking out at this lake and seeing loons and watching songbirds come through. It allows me to maintain that connection that I feel it was hard to do in the cities. And so I encourage people to get outside.

Sometimes I think that's the most important thing can be done. Get out there and remember the place we have on this Earth, that we are not here simply to make money, buy a big TV, and eventually die. We're here to connect, not just with one another but with the natural world that sustains us. So on a personal note, that's where I come from.

LAUREN FOSTER: That's a good segue into the closing questions. So I started this about a year ago when Trevor Noah-- he's also South African but he has *The Daily Show.* At the end of his segment, he was including what he called the ray of sunshine question, because I think it was just so much doom and gloom that was going on it. It was nice to end on something positive.

So my first question really is what is one positive, long lasting change that you hope to see as a result of the pandemic?

JOEL CLEMENT: As a result of the pandemic? My goodness, I think, first, let me say that the pandemic is directly related to the biodiversity. I think sometimes it's worth saying that if we were not constraining the environment and building out into it as much, we wouldn't be interacting with these kinds of pathogens. So there's a direct connection.

And as a result of this pandemic, I hope people realize that this is not how we want to maintain our place on this planet. If we can dial back those encroachment on ecosystems, we'll be a healthier population of humans. And I've seen some really fantastic reporting on that. I've seen some really good studies coming out that now that we have an actual case of economic disaster related to the biodiversity crisis, let's get it right next time. Let's be more careful and let's find ways to reduce that.

The 30 by 30 Initiative is an example of that. But I think there's a stronger interest in protecting nature. I think some people saw these news reports of dolphins reappearing in Southeast Asian rivers or clear water running through Venice. And they sort of like that. So I think there might be a little bit of an awakening to the possibilities there.

LAUREN FOSTER: So the second question is what I call the NASA question. It came from I think it was like a middle school question for kids in science. And that is you're about to go on a long duration space flight. And you can take one object, one item with you. What does Joel take?

JOEL CLEMENT: Oh my goodness. It would come from very close by here. I'm torn. An Indigenous colleague carved a loon, which would be fantastic to bring with me because it would remind me both of the natural places and the Indigenous people that stewarded these lands for so long.

Maybe I'll go with that. I think that's the way to go, because my connection to nature is absolutely essential to me but my respect for the Indigenous cultures that stewarded nature for all those thousands of years for us is also immense. So I think that's the object I would bring.

LAUREN FOSTER: OK. Now I we're going in a totally different direction. This is a fun one that I added a few months ago because I listened to a great episode, an old episode, of *This American Life* that was about superpowers. And so you're going to get to pick a superpower, but it can only be one of two things. You can either choose flight or invisibility. Whichever one you choose, you're the only person in the world who has that one. And which one do you pick? And what do you do with it?

JOEL CLEMENT: OK. So I can only pick one of these two superpowers.

LAUREN FOSTER: Yeah Either flight--

JOEL CLEMENT: Because I have other--

LAUREN FOSTER: You have another one you'd rather like?

JOEL CLEMENT: Well, the superpower that I've always wanted to have is to be able to communicate with everyone, whether it's an animal or someone from Kazakhstan, just to have that language superpower. But setting that aside, I think flight, obviously, would be amazing. And maybe I would use it because let's just assume that's carbon free flight.

Let's assume I'm not burning any carbon. That's an opportunity to get out and spread the word and talk to people about what we need to do. I'm modeling good behavior by not burning carbon but I'm still able to do the travelling, and get to these places, and communicate with more and more people about the importance of climate action. So I think I would use it as sort of a way to turbocharge the work that I do in a carbon-free way.

LAUREN FOSTER: Well, that's an excellent answer. Well, it's been a delight talking with you, Joel. Thank you so much for joining me today.

JOEL CLEMENT: Thanks so much. I enjoyed it.

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