Environmental Systems and Societies

**The Earth Laughing  by Karen I. Shragg**

I woke up on this beautiful  
Earth Day morning and heard  
the Earth laughing  
Her lilacs were shaking  
Her tulips were full of dew from her tears  
Dropped of a nervous laugh  
Not a joyful one  
A laugh that comes from a place  
of disbelief  
As her soaring eagles observed  
The holes drilled into her oceans  
The caverns dug into her mountains  
The efforts to squeeze the last drop  
Of resources out of her  
Gave her reason to laugh  
The kind of what-are-you-thinking laugh  
And she laughed with a shudder of  
mourning dove wings at this peculiar species  
This two legged creature so smart in some ways  
So naïve in others..  
"To have conquered flight  
To have reached my moon  
To tap into my resources and turn them into  
Schools and libraries, to hospitals and universities  
Speaks to your cleverness"  
she said through a whisper of a cloud  
"But to behave as if I can keep up with your inventions  
To act as if I have enough fuel to fund your  
Never ending wars  
To ignore the signs of your damage which  
Are melting my icecaps drowning my islands and  
Killing my polar bears as you  
populate my landscapes far beyond their capacity.  
My water cycles' ability to quench your thirst  
Is at best naïve and at worst self-destructive  
I am exhausted!  
Please know I cannot offer what you demand of me  
I cannot offer infinite resources that took me  
Billions of years to create  
I cannot offer you  
What you ask of me, by the 9,000 more of you added per hour  
For my resources cannot supply  
An endless stream of you and your modern ways  
And the more of you that get that in your hearts  
As well as your heads  
The sooner I will heal and be able to sustain  
A saner number of you and my other creatures  
which aren't as clever  
Or naive.