

## **Ko te Juggernaut Moni — He Tohu Whakatūpato | The Profit Machine — A Warning Signal**

*He aha ai te tipu o ngā moni hua ā-umanga? He aha te tikanga o tēnei mō tō tātou ao?*

*Inanahi, i roto i te tuhinga **DealBook** a te *New York Times*, i tiro hōhonu te kairīpoata a Peter Coy ki tēnei pātai, ā, he kitenga whakaohoho tāna: “E hia rā ka taea e te mīhini whiwhingamoni e haere tonu? Kua roa kē e tere ana.” Kei konei tā mātou tirohanga mai i te aronga o Te Ao Māori — arā, te toitūtanga me te whakatupu anō.*

*Yesterday, in a **New York Times DealBook** article, contributor Peter Coy goes deep and presents provocative findings on the question: “How long can the corporate profit machine keep going up? It has been in overdrive.” We examine this from a Te Ao Māori sustainability and regenerative lens.*

[DealBook: Astonishing corporate profits](#)

### **Summary**

Corporate profits in the United States have surged to historic highs, with companies posting record earnings despite slowing economic growth, weak consumer sentiment, and rising energy costs linked to the Iran war. Analysts expect profits to climb even further in 2026, driven by technology-enabled productivity gains, an unusually long stretch without recession, growing corporate concentration, and decades of policy settings that favoured lower taxes, cheaper capital, and weaker labour protections.

Yet many of the forces behind this “profit juggernaut” may be losing momentum. Political, social, and regulatory pushback — particularly around worker wellbeing and market power — could begin to constrain future profitability.

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### **An Alternative View: What Will Stop the Profit Juggernaut?**

#### **A Sustainability, Ethical, and TAHITO Te Ao Māori Worldview Perspective**

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#### **1. The “profit juggernaut” is not a sign of strength — it is a sign of imbalance**

From a Te Ao Māori perspective, extreme corporate profitability is not evidence of a healthy economy. It is evidence of over-extraction — of people, of ecosystems, of communities, and of future generations.

In Māori ethics, when one domain grows disproportionately, it signals a breach of *ōritetanga* (balance): a disturbance in the relational balance between:

- Taiao (the natural world)
- Tangata (people and communities)
- Ōhanga (the economy)

**A system that concentrates wealth while degrading ecological and social foundations is not a juggernaut — it is a waka paddling hard in the wrong direction.**

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## 2. Profit growth is not limitless — planetary boundaries are

Where mainstream economics asks, “*What will stop profits?*”, a Te Ao Māori lens asks: “*What limits have already been crossed?*”

Corporate profitability has been fuelled by:

- Cheap natural resources
- Cheap labour
- Cheap energy
- Weak regulation
- The externalisation of environmental and social costs

But the era of “cheap everything” is ending.

Climate instability, biodiversity collapse, water scarcity, and social inequality are not abstract risks — they are hard limits.

**From a TAHITO values perspective, the true constraint is not market cycles, but the carrying capacity of Papatūānuku.**

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## 3. The true risk is moral hazard, not margin compression

A Māori worldview emphasises whakapapa — the interdependence of all things.

When profits rise while wages stagnate, ecosystems degrade, and communities struggle, the system is not succeeding; it is violating its whakapapa obligations.

The profit juggernaut is sustained by:

- Suppressing labour costs
- Ignoring environmental impacts
- Concentrating ownership
- Prioritising shareholders over stakeholders

This is not efficiency; it is ethical erosion.

The real question is not “*How long can profits rise?*” but:

**“How long can a system survive when it undermines the very relationships that sustain it?”**

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## 4. A Te Ao Māori economy measures prosperity differently

In TAHITO and Māori economic thinking, the purpose of enterprise is not to maximise profit but to maximise mauri — the life force and wellbeing of all interconnected systems.

A Māori-aligned economic model prioritises:

- Regeneration over extraction
- Collective wellbeing over individual gain
- Long-term stewardship over short-term returns
- Reciprocity (utu) over accumulation

- Balance (ōritetanga) over dominance

**Under this worldview, the profit juggernaut is not a triumph — it is a warning signal that the system is drifting away from its ethical and ecological responsibilities.**

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## **5. What will actually stop the juggernaut?**

From a sustainability and Te Ao Māori perspective, the forces that will constrain runaway profit growth are already visible:

- Environmental limits: Climate impacts, resource depletion, and biodiversity loss will impose unavoidable costs.
- Social limits: Workers, communities, and consumers are increasingly demanding fairness, dignity, and transparency.
- Cultural limits: Indigenous worldviews, including Te Ao Māori, are reshaping expectations of corporate behaviour.
- Regulatory limits: Governments are responding to inequality, climate risk, and monopoly power.
- Investor limits: Capital is shifting toward ESG, impact, and regenerative models.

**In short: the juggernaut will stop when society decides that profit without purpose is no longer acceptable.**

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## **6. A Te Ao Māori alternative: The regenerative economy**

Rather than asking how to sustain high profits, a Māori worldview asks:

How do we sustain life?

A regenerative, kaupapa-led economic model would:

- Restore ecosystems rather than deplete them
- Share wealth rather than concentrate it
- Honour whakapapa relationships across generations
- Embed tikanga in governance and decision-making
- Treat finance as a tool, not a master

**This is not anti-profit. It is pro-balance, pro-future, pro-mauri.**