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„Put a Clover on Your Heart“

**Cross-Promoting Renewable Energies and Sustainable/Solidary Tourism
- An Integrated Solution -**

No ‚Greenwashing‘ the ‚White Industry‘

Recent news were discouraging enough: Allegedly, the United Nations' Millenium Development Goals will not be reached, and global CO2 emissions will not decrease – on the contrary! There is a substantial rise, due to insufficient energy cuts in most industrialized countries and to the skyrocketing energy thirst in China and India. When it comes to energy consumption, tourism has its share – and its headache: over its shifting responsibilities rather than new ideas on how to counteract. ‚Greening‘ is good, greenwashing‘ the ‚white industry‘ won't help any more.

Bad times for those who seek to solve the problems at the point of their appearance. Instead of treating symptoms, it's time to cure the patient – to see the total and get to the point.

The Natural Pattern

We usually try to extrapolize past experiences to projections of the future. The results are determined by *lag indicators*. These are outcomes of actions previously taken, for instance financial. However, in order to grow we also need *new performance drivers* – new ideas, options, complementary links: Mapping one's process and noting *key-bottlenecks* will give us *lead indicators*. Focusing on *key-bottlenecks*, lead indicators aim at *improving one's performance* (innovation) and *maximizing customers' benefits* – an anthropological rather than a mere numerical approach to 'growth'.

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To quote Henry Mintzberg in his book *The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning*: “A strategy of innovation is contained not in ‘plans’, but in the *pattern* of commitments, decisions, approaches, and persistent behaviours that facilitate doing new things ...”¹

Who provides this *pattern*?

In view of his 19th century explorations in South America and Russia, *world citizen Alexander von Humboldt* serves as a shiny example of doing new things: Having dedicated his life to *transdisciplinary scientific research*, he ignored any distinction between natural science and humanities. He branded his book ‘*Kosmos*’ as a *composition of reason and emotion*, and evoked the *natural pattern as best management practice*.

‘Sustainability’ versus ‘Solidarity’

Tourism is recognized useful as a “*vibrant force that others thrive*”², particularly if linked with *eliminating poverty* and *improving people’s well-being*. However, if also used as an *integrative tool*, tourism may serve as the ‘*flagship*’ to *promote the very essence* of a region’s or country’s identity. The thing is that tourism is run ‘sustainably’ to ensure durability and quality. The question is: Does the term „sustainability“ have enough emotional appeal to arouse passion?

We need change, but “*the world changes by contagion*”, as Father Pedro would say, a missionary who in the outskirts of Madagascar’s capital Antananarivo turned the city’s largest garbage dump into an idyllic place – *worth visiting, living, and investing* – and gave thousands of garbage people dignity back and a perspective for life. Father Pedro called it “*solidarity of act*”, and professional developers call his mission a “*lighthouse project*”.

Solidarity is contagious, may light a fire in people’s hearts and minds. The adjective of ‘solidarity’ is ‘solidary’, right? *Solidary Tourism* furthers politeness, spreads joy, creates attachment. Sustainability may well be respected as an imperative to observe technical capacity margins, but does not necessarily induce stakeholders’ *voluntary commitment to make somebody’s vision their cause*. Sustainable business may keep customers satisfied and suppliers content, but what is it that makes tourism fair, visitors enthusiastic, business equitable and customers happy? It’ *solidarity!*

Pirate-capitalism and exploitation determine the other side of the coin: struggling hard, competing fiercely, to be among the fittest to ensure one’s survival: Nature provides the darwinist pattern, right? And Man, with a little help from false friends, quickly identifies it as ‘best practice’, ready to mix ‘need’ with ‘greed’.

¹ Jelinek/Schoonhoven, quote in Mintzberg: “The Rise and Fall of Strategic Planning”.

² Source: Tourism ROI, E-Newsletter Oct. 2, 20008.

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Yet nature also stands for self-sufficiency, complementarity and ecological economy. Nature can sustain itself, it does not need Man, who anyway is just part of it. But Man, in order to sustain, needs nature, needs to preserve it in its human-friendly condition.

Man can take endless analogical lessons: looking at nature as a picture, a work of art, realizing its texture and patterns, checking up whether Man's culture still fits in, and, similar to an exhibition, reflecting about the ‚artist‘, the Creator – and lingering over the *higher purpose* of the Man-made *sustainability* hype: to complement timely values like *appearance* and *flexibility* with old virtues like *accountability* and *resilience*. After all, perception should go well with reality, identity with image, and talk with act – with as little as possible collateral damage.

Bottlenecks

What is ‚collateral damage‘? Garbage, for example. – We produce garbage, a lot of garbage. Nature does not produce garbage, nature recycles, gives back.

Serious business underscores that *intangible assets* should be given *priority* to tangible assets. Tangible assets as incomes and profits should therefore be regarded as the *recompense* of good performance, rather than the end in itself. Application is based upon the so-called *‘bottleneck strategy‘*: maximizing the benefits of the target group(s) instead of one's own profits. Insiders call it *‘cybernetic‘*, misunderstandable as it is, yet useful as a metaphor of sustainable management, the way nature does.

Remember ... that Noah was an amateur, yet his belief was strong enough to build the Arch. So he saved his family, Man, animals, plants. God helped Noah to overcome his ‚bottleneck‘, which was lacking technical professionalism.– Whereas the Titanic was built by megalomaniac professionals. There was no help around, when the ship collided with an iceberg: The ocean-liner sank, for bad rivets – allegedly due to cost-cutting, constructors' fatal bottleneck.³

One of the key-bottlenecks of the future is energy – the lifeblood of our modern lifestyle, part of which is tourism. Travelling means setting out to new shores, mingling with different people, stimulating new cultural and social forms, changing angles. We want to be progressive. Progress includes experience, creativity and belief – all of them driven by energy, personal energy. "Energy should be front and center", says Lee Iacocca⁴, referring to fuels. The idea now is to create *synergies for a higher purpose*: through *cross-promoting renewable energies and sustainable/solidary tourism*.

The ‘Magic Clover’

³ „The Titanic sank for cost-cutting“; source: CNN 18.4.2008

⁴ : Lee Iacocca, "Where have all the leaders gone?" (2007).

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The *higher purpose* of cross-promoting *sustainable/solidary tourism* and *renewable energies* at all levels is ...

to stimulate confidence and creativity for a *higher purpose*;

to provide a joint awareness platform for *all tourism to be sustainable/solidary, and energy to be renewable*;

to generate new outcomes: obtaining *sustained energy* and enjoying *renewed tourism* (some say: to “re-imagine/re-define/re-invent/tourism”).

„Thoughts without content are empty, intuitions without concepts are blind“, says Immanuel Kant.⁵ And in his new book *Energy Autonomy*, Mr. Hermann Scheer, CEO of the World Council for Renewable Energy (WCRE) and President of EUROSOLAR⁶, claims “new alliances between the advocates of renewable energy and sections of society overall ...”⁷

Let’s „put a clover on our heart“: A simple three-leaf clover to be found everywhere, but which may turn *magic*, if it stands for ...

the right people at the right time on the right place – and ...

three basic content factors to evolve and refine *modern times' "key-lifestyle ingredients"*: tourism and energy ...

1. the **innovation factor**: by cross-promoting renewable energies (solar/wind) and sustainable/solidary tourism – within a *Strategic Alliance* as the nucleus of a wider tourism and energy network, and an initiative to *upgrade tourism and energy to a higher level of purpose: a changed lifestyle*, with unlimited access to energy and travel as a gorgeous time of “*life in transit*”⁸; a changed lifestyle, which ...
 - discerns in all biodiversity, including Man, “*the authentic image of the Creation*”⁹ and admires nature as “*the visible part of God’s garden*”, as Gandhi said¹⁰;
 - appreciates authentic culture, respects people’s dignity, evokes renewed (intellectual and emotional) spirituality, and loves peace¹¹;
 - heeds mental, physical and environmental health, favours time, space and calmness, practices solidarity, and shares sympathy and real joy.
2. the **sustainability/solidarity factor**: by providing an *integrated solution*, based on a *clear mission, a shared vision, a joint strategy, and a scintillating (umbrella) brand*.

⁵ Taken from *Energy Autonomy*, Hermann Scheer, Earthscan UK and USA, 2007 (page 231).

⁶ www.wcre.org, www.eurosolar.org

⁷ *Energy Autonomy*, Hermann Scheer, Earthscan UK and USA, 2007 (page 214).

⁸ „We believe the future of business is green ... because we’re all guests on this planet“ (J. W. Marriott, Chairmann and CEO Marriott International Hotels, www.marriott.com).

⁹ Pope Benedict XVI, before the UN on April 18, 2008.

¹⁰ Mahatma Gandhi.

¹¹ “Tourism can contribute to peace and justice in the world, help to overcome patterns of hatred and violence, and strengthen respect for the wonders of nature. Indeed, it is also argued that tourism can help to reduce considerably the pattern of poverty in a country. However, the everyday experience shows that grinding poverty is growing in some of the very destinations where tourism is developing rapidly” (source: World Council of Churches Secretary General on World Tourism Day, 2005).

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3. the **dignity factor**: by respecting the *ethic values of justice, solidarity and fairness*. The thing is that guidelines agreed upon by the (responsible) traveller, host, businessman and investor, are essential to observe the rule.

But again – let’s ask ourselves: Does the term ‚ethics’ have enough emotional appeal to change behaviour and arouse passion for preserving God’s creation which we are part of? Or is it simply – ‚love’?

The ‚Heart’

When we had Cold War, Flower-Power and ‚Woodstock’, Vietnam and nuclear energy were central to society’s concern: Barry McGuire evoked the ‚Eve of Destruction’, Albert Einstein, during the CBS broadcast ‚Operation Crossroads’,¹² warned of a nuclear war nightmare, and Joe Cocker came out ‚With a Little Help from My Friends“. Many people got energy from this music.

Today, Cold War and Flower-Power are gone, but terrorism, energy costs and climate change figure among people’s main concerns. And Einstein’s gloomy warnings remain up-to-date. However: „*We Are The World*.“ There is still music to instigate new energy – and the sun, to provide solar energy.

As climate changes, we must change. We must change our approach to consumption, our way to use energy, our manners, our music – our whole lifestyle. The outset is NOW.

Says Mr. Hermann Scheer: „The turn to renewable energies is a mental and cultural challenge ... The perspective is ‚Solar for Peace’“. – Converging ideas with IIPT’s concept of peace¹³ are obvious. Mr. Louis D’Amore, a strong believer in travellers to be potential ‚*Ambassadors for Peace*’, is well-known as the driving-force of a coalition of world peace partners, who include chapters on education, community-based and cultural tourism, spirituality in tourism and an international student network.

The time is NOW to include renewable energies, for ...
 renewable energies are sustainable;
 they produce no garbage;
 their use is principally ethical.

We are at the crossroads, once again. *Peace through renewable energies and sustainable/solidary tourism* is a strong message. It will need confidence to provide stakeholders with a better perception, a clearer perspective and a stronger impetus – using sustainable/solidary tourism and renewable energies as the awesomely exciting *joint*

¹² Source: Albert Einstein, „Über den Frieden“, 2004.

¹³ IIPT = International Institute of Peace Through Tourism; Louis D’Amore is the Founder and President. The IIPT concept of peace “embraces six dimensions: peace within ourselves, peace with others, peace with nature, peace with past generations, peace with future generations, and *peace with our Creator – which brings us full circle to peace within ourselves ...*”.

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venture to create – a ,new music' – and the *global brand* of a new lifestyle; a lifestyle which keeps in *balance the world's beauty and people's joy*.

Put a clover on your heart – it's a symbol of a fascinating vision.

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