

International Initiatives For Operational Progress Toward Sustainability

Meeting at the Factor 10 Institute, Provence

June 2000

Carnoules Appeal for Global Welfare

1. Life-sustaining ecosystems are declining globally at a rapid rate. But sustainability is no longer a question of the environment alone. Social and economic sustainability is also at stake.

2. At the same time, the world population is growing, the gap between the rich and the poor is widening, and increasing resource demand lead to a dramatic challenge on the global scale.

3. Although incremental step by step approaches have led to improvements, progress towards sustainability cannot be achieved through these approaches. They have not reversed the deadly trend of destroying the vital functions of the eco-sphere that underpin all economies. A radical paradigm shift is required as regards social equity, our management of natural resources, and the efficiency by which they are used.

4. A number of communities and firms have already begun to act with a clear view where they want to be in the next decades. However, they are hampered by the present economic framework.

5. Only governments can set the framework for the progress necessary to reach sustainability by:

* Acknowledging the situation, and working out a view of where they want to be in the next decades and putting into place policies that can bring us there. This requires a systems perspective rather than "fixing problems" which often induces subsequent problems.

* Increasing the economic value of the natural resources, in particular materials and land.

* Implementing a socio-economic system which is compatible with life and welfare - i.e. a system without perverse subsidies and with taxation that reflects social and ecological values.

* Embedding this systemic approach into education and research.

* Agreeing on comprehensive indicators for adequate social, ecological, and economic performance.

* Supporting international trade in such a way that it is consistent with the required changes, and with consideration of our need to bridge the gap between the rich and the poor in the whole world.

* Using their enormous purchasing power to these ends.

Restructuring the global economy to make it socially, ecologically and economically sustainable, presents the greatest investment opportunity in human history.

Originally signed by:

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If you agree with this statement, send it to your candidates for public office and the members of parliament.

Looking for more information on how to approach sustainability? See:

www.factor10-institute.org

- Die Zukunft erkennt man nicht – man schafft sie
- L’homme ne prévoit pas l’avenir - il le bâtit
- We do not foreknow the future – we build it

New book by F. Schmidt-Bleek(in German): “Nutzen wir die Erde richtig?“, Fischer, Frankfurt, 2006