



Today & Tomorrow

Individual responses for the sake of sustainable development



Sustainable development is not an unknown concept today. Since its existence over decades, a number of newspaper articles and radio programmes have dealt with the issue. The matter of sustainability expanded beyond the scope of international scientific conferences, and has become an internal element of government aims and corporate strategies. At the same time however, many different explanations exist for this concept. And exactly this is where the problem lies: we are still concerned with clarifications instead of working towards saving the future of our planet and our children. Because sustainable development means no less than maintaining the existence of mankind.

Numerous scientific research results have proved that the comfort-centred lifestyle and the consumption patterns of our present world and within that, the so-called developed societies are not sustainable. Today these facts could be expressed in numbers as well. One of the indicators of sustainable development is the ecological footprint, showing to what extent are the Earth's resources exploited. This could be calculated by dividing the Earth's biological capacity – 11.3 billion hectares of biologically productive area – by the population – 6.5 billion. According to this, one person has approximately 1.75 hectares of land. Unfortunately, however, one person “consumes” 2.3 hectares on average, which means that 30% more resources are used than what the Earth could reproduce. In other words it could be said that we have outgrown our planet. „We stretch much further than the length of our ecological cover, and we exploit natural resources to the extent that the Earth could no longer reproduce those. The consequences of this action are well foreseen and terrible” – said James Leape, Director of WWF a couple of years ago. The ecological footprint of mankind is growing and growing, and based on the latest data by 2050 we will need five (!) Earths' land.

So what could be done? Something must be done, today this is very clear. The most appropriate solution is change, which is not only justified by the threatening ecological catas-

trophe, but also by the fact that with the increase of our wealth we have not become more harmonized or happy, on the contrary, it rather brings about poverty and the growing consumption of anti-depressants. So we need to change, and we need to change exactly those things that initiated our present situation. For example, our consumption patterns need to be altered, and we need to switch to a more modest energy and natural resource consumption lifestyle. Of course this will only lead to spectacular results if change comes from the masses. We cannot expect political parties, the economy, or the society as a whole to take the first steps; it is something that everyone needs to take individually. This individual response could be the key to the success of sustainability.

The first step of change could be raising attention, since in order for people to be willing to change; they first need to be aware of the situation the Earth is in together with what they could do to prevent a catastrophe. For this action, the media is necessary as it speaks to large masses of people and may also serve as a forum of sustainable development's implementation. Today & Tomorrow would like to play the role of such a forum. We wish to do this by providing space for mutual thought, raising attention to the importance of action, offers examples of solution, and, by initiating the Reader to think in a sustainability-conscious way, increases the number of those who are willing to change. And we do this because we do believe in future and that the Earth could be saved.

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